

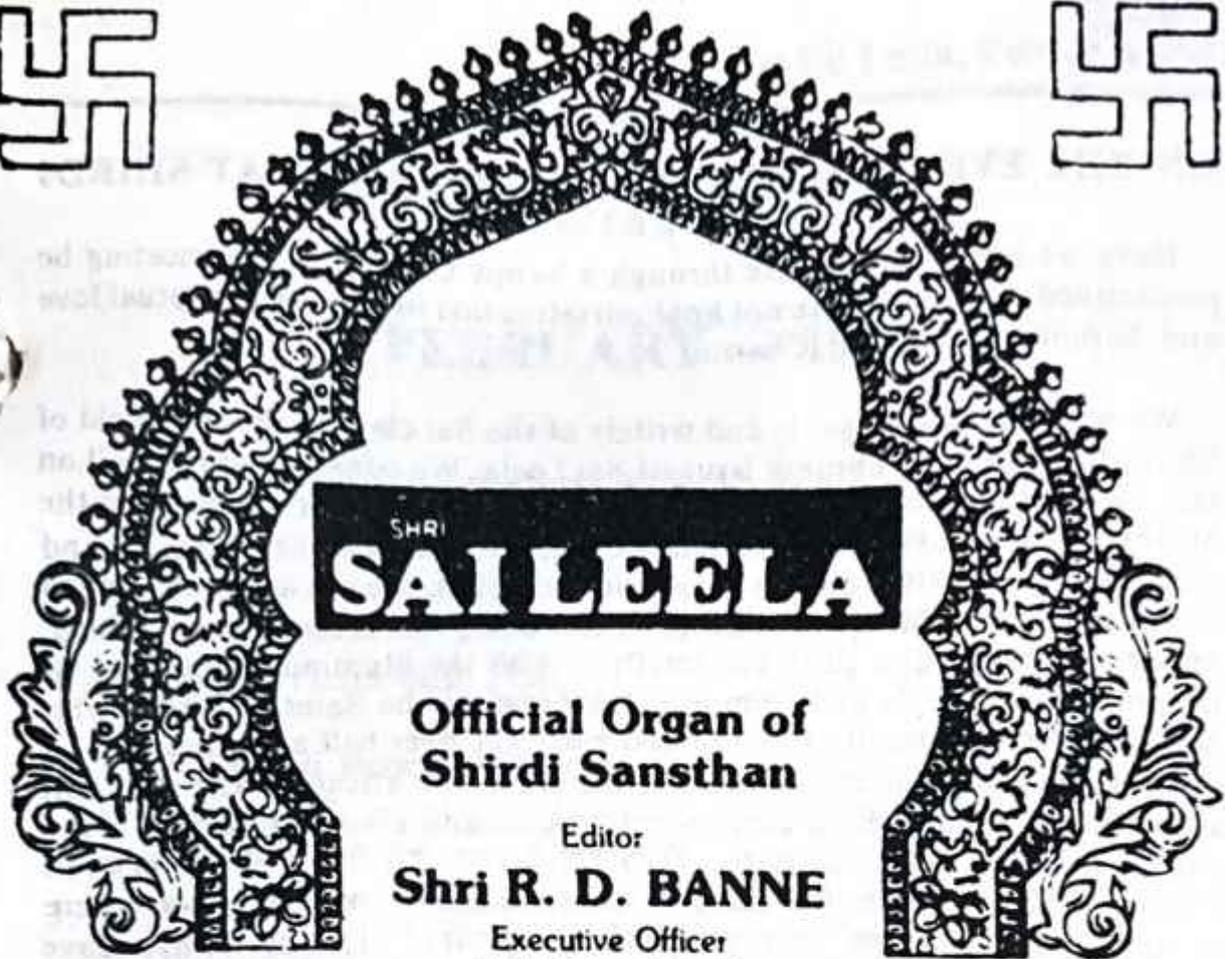
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SHRI **SAI LEELA**

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF SHIRDI SANSTHAN





SHRI
SAILEELA

**Official Organ of
Shirdi Sansthan**

Editor

Shri R. D. BANNE

Executive Officer
Shirdi Sansthan of
Shri Sai Baba

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

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



ON THE EVE OF THE 13TH WRITERS' MEET AT SHIRDI

Have we not clustered here through a happy chance? If this meeting be predestined, why should we not hold ourselves fast in a chord of mutual love and happiness? (Sai Sat Charita)

We welcome you all poets and writers of the Sai clan on the threshold of Shirdi through this February issue of Sai Leela. We congratulate you all on this eventful day for this unique opportunity afforded for exchanging the brotherhood of love and affection, experiences and visions, thoughts and ideas among ourselves on this auspicious occasion. We are again meeting in Shirdi in this 13th Meet of Sai Leela writers and poets to enoble our minds, enrich our hearts and edify our intellects with the illumining memories of the miraculous deeds and immortal teachings of the Saint of Shirdi who had inhabited himself at this sacred place for over half a century. Let us distribute among ourselves the love, the trust, the affection and the faith and enliven our lives with energy, enthusiasm and divine grace that is the gift of this abode of Sai Baba: ही शिरडी दवारका हरीची । दिव्य पुरी कांचनमय श्यामसुंदराची ॥ Baba who is the Lord of compassion showers His grace here in abundance करुणाघन नित्य करी वृष्टी श्री कृपेची ॥ The scriptures have described the poet as द्रष्टा because he can visualise spiritual truth in his intuitive moments. Geeta calls the Lord as Supreme poet because He can see, fashion or creat the past, the present and the future. God is omniscient and omnipotent. He has visualised this great Epic of life. Saints like Sai Baba were representatives of God. They had the poetic creativity and genius of God. They worked for the good of humanity with this power of divine, omniscience and omnipotence derived from God. We human poets and writers should surrender in true love and faith to the Supreme poet SaiNath for His compassion and grace on this auspicious occasion.

Let us try to be unified with Sai. The pangs of longing for union with this Godly Saint would be the best topic or the content of our humble writings. Let us cross the barriers of selfishness, ripples of individual joys and sorrows, selfcentred way of thinking and merge in the divine atmosphere of Sai love or devotion. Let us try to realise the meaning of human existence in this soil which is scented with the grace of Baba and move higher and higher on the plane of spiritual development. Let us inherit the impassioned devotional love of Uddhav or the enlightened intellect of Arjuna, the true devotees of Lord.

Has not Baba assured that He would stand by the side of one who could sing His glory, His Leelas and plunge himself in His devotion.

(Sai Sat Chairta)

SHRI SAI LEELA

FEBRUARY — 1989

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THE CHAVADI PROCESSION AND WORSHIP OF BABA OF SHIRDI

Hemadpant in his "Sri Sai Sat Charita" enjoins on all devotees of Sai Baba of Shirdi to remember the "Chavadi" procession and Baba before retiring to bed at night. With the book in hand the worshipper of Sai reads the chapter devoted to this phenomenon and although the exercise is done daily there is always a breathtaking freshness and beauty about it springing in the mind of the devotee, for the spectacle is so unique so as to keep him in thrall. It is indeed a train of thoughts and feelings that stream through his mind filling it with multifarious reactions as joy, awe, wonder and an ineffable feeling of happiness so as to almost drawn him in a sea of sheer bliss. The most astonishing fact about the worship of Sai Baba in His temples (as for instance in Mylapore, Madras) at the present day and the worship accorded to His Incarnation is, while the temple "Deeparaadhana" in the traditional elaborate aagamic way is done only on Thursday of the week early in the night, the worship of Him in the Chavadi in flesh and blood took place every day.

In Hemadpant's "Sat Charita" no clues are available about the origin of the night Chavadi worship of Baba or for that matter the midday "Aarati" in the Masjid or "Dwarakamayi". The pioneer in the worship of Baba as a Deity was the village goldsmith Mhalasapathy and it must have been the mystic power of Baba that was the fountain head of such a worship. But how Mhalasapathy's simple worship in the form of applying sandal paste to His face and the submission of flowers at His feet blazoned into the midday "Aarati" and the more elaborate Chavadi "Puja" in the night is a phenomenon not easy of an explanation. But even as Baba was one of the rarest of Phenomena mankind has witnessed in the modern age, the ritualistic worship of Him as living god was a phenomenon reflective of the collective thinking of His devotees. Whatever may have been cause, the acts themselves are elevating and inspiring people to unheard of heights and attitudes.

Every part of the "Chavadi" worship scintillates with light and charm. Beginning with the "Bhajan" in the courtyard of the Masjid and culminating in the "Aarti" in the Chavadi one appears to be transported from the materialistic to the spiritual world. Just look at the participants. They range from the learned solicitor Dixit to the

common unlettered villager, but in the worship of Baba all merge into one. It is purest "bhakti" that beams from their faces without distinction of caste, creed or status. Filled are all with the same beatitude and a crescendo they all ascend to the same level. It is this wonderful harmony that is the most precious aspect of Baba worship, a harmony of minds of people walking different paths of life but filled in their souls to overflowing with love or adoration unsurpassed.

A modern worshipper of Sai Baba of Shirdi is swayed with bliss supreme even by a mere recollection of the chavadi worship even as the recollection of His varied "Leelas". The wonder of the "Chavadi" worship is, it is so natural or uninhabited or exhibiting in the highest degree the free flowing love and devotion of "bhaktas" drawn to Him like a magnet. A magnet indeed Baba of Shirdi was, a magnet surcharged with mystic power which no one with faith in his or her heart could overcome or resist. And it was precisely by this magnetic power that Baba drew into His fold a multitude of devotees who saw in Him every symbol or attribute of god or Infinity. Baba He was called by many. Deva he was addressed by the more intimate. One man alone, Tatyapa Patil (son of Bayaja Bai) called him "Maama" with pure affection. But a great intellectual remained completely mute as though spellbound by His immensity as god. The "Chavadi" worship of Sai Baba by what one may call a cross section of humanity is the most elevating (elevating in spirit) phenomenon of His incarnation in earth, and the more one learns or imbibes it in his mind and heart, the more becomes one's submission to Him. If a mere recollection is the equivalent of participation in it, it is the highest form of spiritual satisfaction.

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EXPERIENCES OF A DEVOTEE IN DWARKA MAYI

The entire universe is the abode of Dwarka Mayi. Then the question arises, "is there any place which is not included in this". Actually it is our mind which has to guide us to reach this place. In other words our mind can transform any place at anytime into Dwarka Mayi's abode. When we come to Dwaraka Mayi, fear goes away. We receive eternal protection, eternal love, eternal bliss. Dwaraka Mayi's call is the call of a shepherd who can make his cows and sheep recognize his voice and understand his gestures.

There is nothing in this world equal to Mother's love. Even a human mother often worries about the welfare of her children and wants them to progress in life. If it is so, then how affectionate and anxious will be our Dwaraka Mayi towards her children. Her love knows no bounds, it is gangadhara which has no distinction between inanimate objects, insects, animals and human beings. The ganges water is not for a particular caste, creed community or religion.

When one enters Dwaraka Mayi he becomes divine. His heart is purified his mind is sanctified. he glows with divine wisdom. Hatred, jealousy, ego, anger, vanishes from his heart. The Gangadhara of Baba's love relieves him from all sins. A dip in the ocean of mercy of Sai Baba is a unique bliss which is easy to be attained by all. When one enters Dwaraka Mayi, the meaningless material desires disappear from him. Dwaraka Mayi is one way traffic. When one enters it through the ordinary path, (that is from his position at worldly level) he never returns through the same path. He has a heavenly path to go higher. Dwaraka Mayi's abode is one of simplicity. Wealth and authority have no place there. Only those who see Baba in the heart of all creatures are eligible to enter Dwaraka Mayi. Dwaraka mayi's doors are shut for those who cannot control his mind, senses and tongue.

The only greatest service we can do for humanity and Sai Baba is to convert this entire universe into Dwarakamai by converting the people. Conversion has a wide and deep meaning in this context. Conversion does not denote here the usual meaning of making a person accept a new religious faith after giving up the religious faith which he was originally following. It is conversion of mind, after giving up the belief in hatred revenge and self-centred actions, accepting a new

faith, the gospel of love, universal brotherhood, simplicity and utter humility. Let us all be ready for a spiritual conversion which will make us eligible to enter into Dwaraka Mai.

Let Dwaraka Mai make us all secure in life.

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Meaning of Dwaraka Mai:

Dwaraka Mai or Masjid Aiyi means God or Sai Baba, our universal mother in Dwaraka or in the Mosque. The Mosque or Dwaraka has attained sanctity because Sai Baba has chosen these places as his abode.



THE GURU OF SHIRDI

Sri Rama and Sri Krishna are God incarnations as we know. Even though we consider them as 'Gods', they also served their Gurus 'Vasishta, Viswamitra and Sandeepani'. The 'great Divine soul' Rama Krishna Parama Hamsa also was suggested to approach his Guru 'Totapuri' by 'Kalimatha'. Even our Sadguru Samrat also told His devotees about His Guru and His blessings. It is once again confirmed by BABA that for His present stage all the credit goes to His Guru only. In Sai Satcharitra we can find how Baba narrated the grace and mercy of His Guru and how He served His Guru. We consider 'our master of Shirdi' as 'Sadguru Samrat' and we know the value and importance of 'Gurusthan'.

Baba's a very controversial personality, through His peculiar behaviour. On certain occasions He appears to be very happy and pleasant, but the very next moment Baba's behaviour seems to be very mad and bad. Like Baba His deeds also are unknown to us even today. When this 'Secular God' was physically present the staunch devotees as well as close associates tried and successfully failed in all their trials to know the biography from 'his 'Magnet of Shirdi', as the



response from 'Sai Saheb' was a simple sweet smile. It is humanly not possible to assess and estimate 'our Guru, God of Shirdi' for ever and what every body knows is that this unknown fakir is named and noted as 'Sai Baba of Shirdi' only.

'SHIRDI' the abode of this so called 'mad old fakir' is very powerful with 'spiritual atmosphere'. Even though our 'Sai Deva' took 'Mahasamadhi' in the year 1918, whenever the situation warrants 'Our Shirdi mother' is running physically towards his devotees, in distress with a single call to save them stretching His four hands. But it requires 'Sraddha' 'Saburi' and 'Sarvasya Saranagathi' i.e. self surrender. Now let us not bother about the Guru of our Guru but what we will have to understand is that how the need of a Guru is very much stressed by Baba also as He is the light house for us sailing in 'Samsara sagara' for uplift in the life. If we take this 'Sai Fakir' as mad and bad what is our answer for the rush of all sorts of 'people at Shirdi' when 'Sai Deva' was physically present.

Even in this scientific age also people are not so foolish to flock together, unless there is 'something' at Shirdi which we can witness. What is that 'some thing' 'our Guru God' alone knows. That is Baba and that is the speciality of Baba.

When 'Sathe' lost everything in business and was mentally ill due to worries, he paid a visit to Shirdi in 1917, on the suggestion of his friends. In the presence of 'Baba' he has done 'saptaha' parayana of 'Guru charitra'. In the dream 'this chief controller of Shirdi' explained him important items. For the meaning of the dream when 'Sathe' questioned, this 'professor in all' through 'Kaka Saheb' it is told by 'Sai Deva' that if 'Sathe' performs one more 'Saptaha parayana' he will be purified and will be dear to God. As per the order of our 'master' on so many auspicious occasions 'Kusa Bhav' had been to 'Gangapur' and has completed the parayana of 'Guru Charitra' for 108 times. Now let us know what is 'Guru charitra' and what is the result of Guru Charitra parayana admired by Baba.

Sanskrit Guru Charitra was written by 'Sri Vasudevananda Saraswathi Swami' noted as 'Tembye Swamy' one 'Dattamsa'. Swamy born in 1854 and left his physical form in 1914. One thing is during this period Baba was at Shirdi. It is made clear by Baba that 'Datta murthy' is continuing his 'Avatara Karya' as Baba, Akkalkot Maharaj, Tajuddin Baba, and Vasudevananda Saraswathi.

Due to its importance sri Dattavatara Leela or Sri Guru charitra parayana is continued at Maharashtra and Karnataka. As Telugu known Sai Bandhus are innocent of this, Acharya Ekkirala Bhardwaja translated the same into Telugu and English. This Bhardwaja, M.A., I.A.S. was a 'sincere nastik' upto 1963. In 1963 he came under the magic spell of Baba and now he is under the influence of 'Shirdi Fakir' dedicating himself to 'Sai service'. Now an interesting experience of our Acharya at Gangapur is brought to the kind notice of all Sai Bandhus.

The second incarnation of Datta 'Sri Narasimha Saraswathi Swamy' left his physical form during 15th, 16th centuries leaving his 'Padukas' (sandals) for the worship and took 'Nirvana' at 'Krishna river' near 'Srisailam' a well noted Shiva Shetra at Andhra Pradesh.

During his five days stay at Gangapur in 1973 Sri Bharadwaja got acquaintance with a Telugu known 'Sanyasi'. During their casual talk the ever existence of Guru, passed away centuries ago is doubted. But when the departure of Guru was humbly objected by devotees it is assured by Swamy that "for the naked eye it appears that I am away from you. But my 'nirguna roopa' will be here in the form of 'padukas' ever blessing all. Permanently I will have my daily noon 'Bhiksha' here only.

As a response to the doubt the Sanyasi explained his own experience. Due to his sincere 'Japa' 'Dhyana' and 'parayana' he wanted to identify 'Swami' coming for 'Bhiksha' in disguise. One night in the dreams Swamy, warned him and discouraged his trails as His arrival was 'Deva Rahasya'.

But paying deaf ear to 'Swamy' instructions he made his trials severe. In the routine course one day he took bath in river Krishna and due to severe head ache and fever could not move and took rest in a nearby shelter. He woke up from his deep sleep at 3.30 P.M. and went for 'Bhiksha'. It was untime and the same was rejected on the plea that in the noon this 'Sanyasi' has taken Bhiksha from that house owner itself. All his requests are proved in vain and he happened to return with empty stomach.

On the same night 'Guru' again appeared in the dream saying "you cannot catch me. Today I have taken Bhiksha in your shape". Through self surrender only we can win Swamy but not through cunningness. Thus it can be safely said that even till today Swamy is still



alive, the Sanyasi concluded. As told by Swamy, that He himself will be in the form of 'Guru Charitra' and the devotees who perform this parayana will be blessed by Swamy.

In this regard permit me to say that Baba deceived all of us by always uttering 'Allah Malikh' and saying that he is slave to God. It is my sincere opinion that 'our malikh of Shirdi' himself is 'Allah' and nobody comes specially to bless us. All of us are kept under the impression that God is separate from Baba, as our 'father of Shirdi' never claimed supremacy, whole the life of Baba went a 'True fakir' life and stood an example from 1988 'Guru Poornima day' is celebrated as per the instructions of Baba at Shirdi. To quote an example for dual mind once 'Dasganu' approached Baba to obtain permission for a 'holy bath' at Godavari river on a Mahashivratri day. It is replied by Baba "for this you need not go there taking much pains. If you are having 'Sraddha' and 'Bhakti' that holy water is here only. If you do not have them there is nothing even at Godavari. Dasganu prostrated before Baba. To his surprise there was water coming from the feet of our Sadguru. Baba told him that they are 'Ganga' and 'Yamuna' and asked him to take this 'Padodaka'. As Dasganu was very orthodox, presuming Baba as Muslim simply sprinkled the water on his head instead of drinking. Baba simply smiled (of course for his foolishness and misfortune) and kept quiet.

After Maha samadhi of Baba when Dasganu met an yogi he scolded him saying 'you fool doubting Baba as Musiim, you did not consume the holy water. You cannot have this opportunity and you cannot find such a 'Guru' in any birth. Through this it can be said that unfortunate fellows are still there not even now but during the life time of Baba also.

Baba's life is a guide line for us. He is our mother, father, friend, Guru, guide, God, philosopher and all for us and we can blindly trust him as Baba promised that "do not be anxious that I would be absent from you. You will hear my bones speaking and discussing your welfare. But always remember me. Believe in me heart and soul and then you will be most benefited".

I once again humbly prostrate before 'our Guru' to bless all of us.

— P.S. Purushothama Rao,
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ON BEHAVIOUR

“Requite injury with kindness, To the good I would be good to the evil I would also be good, in order to make them good.”

— Chinese Philosopher LAO-TSE.

We should practise goodness not only towards those who have done good to us but also towards those who have wronged us.

Sri Sainath has said the following words regarding our behaviour:—

“Let anybody speak hundreds of things against you, do not resent by giving any bitter reply—If you always tolerate such things you will certainly be happy. Let the world go topsy-turvy, you remain where you are—standing or staying in your own place, look calmly at the show of all things passing before you (Satcharitha, Page 101).

To short tempered R.B. Purandare Sai Baba said, “If any body comes and abuses you or punishes you, do not quarrel with him. If you cannot endure to speak a simple word or two or else leave the place—But do not battle with him and give tit for tat. I feel sick and disgusted when you quarrel with others”. (B.C. & S Para 210).

To Mrs. Pradhan Baba said, “If anyone talks ten words at us let us answer with one word, if we reply at all. Do not battle with anyone (B.C. & S Para 211).

A devotee of Baba reviled another behind his back before other people. He dwelt on the faults of his brother leaving aside his merits and spoke sarcastically so as to wound even the feelings of the hearers. Such a person Baba compared with a pig that eats filth and told him, “After performing many deeds of merit you are born a man. If you act like this, will Shirdi (God) help you in anyway”.

‘He who wants to get rid of the cycle of births and deaths should lead a righteous life, with his mind calm and composed. He should not speak cuttingly to anyone so as to hurt him’.

— Satcharitha, Page 103/104.

The Pandharpur pleader and Mr. Sapatnekar of Akkalkot criticized and jeered at Baba and others behind their backs — Baba remarked “They fall at the feet, offer Dakshina, but inwardly give abuses behind the back”.



All those who revile and scandalize their friends and neighbours behind their backs should value or lodge these words of Sainath in their hearts.

I have an acquaintance who makes comments, criticizes and finds fault with all her friends—with the result all her friends started leaving her one by one. Fortunately or unfortunately I was in her good books (if she had any!)—A few months after I lost my husband (recently) I happened to pass by her house. She stopped me and said “How is that being a judge’s wife you don’t seem to know law?”. I asked her what she meant—Pointing to her next neighbour she said, “I saw you talk to that dirty woman”. For a moment I was perturbed, but quickly gathered myself and told her “See, you are my friend, she is also my friend; I wish to be alike in my behaviour towards you, towards her and towards everyone around here—That is God’s law”.

And this was the very lady who recited the ‘Baja Govindam’ of Sri Shankara daily. If only she had lodged in her heart the wisdom of those verses—at least the 24th and 25th verses—she wouldn’t have behaved or said so.

Verse 24.

त्वयि मयि चान्यत्रै को विष्णु -
व्यर्थं कुप्यसि मय्य सहिष्णुः ।
सर्वस्मिन्नपि पश्यात्मानं
सर्वत्रैत्सुज भेदचानम् ॥

“In you, in me, elsewhere, there is but one Vishnu unable to bear with me, you get angry with me in Vain—See yourself in all things. Give up this false sense of difference from other beings elsewhere—”

Verse 25

रात्रौ मित्रे पुत्रे बन्धौ
मा कुरु यत्नं विग्रहसन्धौ
भव समचितः सर्वत्र त्वं
वान्छस्यचिराद्यदि विष्णुत्वम् ॥

Don’t think in terms of friend or foe, or brother or relation—Don’t waste your energy in enmity or friendship—If you wish soon to realise the supreme, be of equal mind with everyone”.

We can do this only if we dedicate ourselves to God. We have to replace the anger or illwill in our hearts with the name of the Lord. This is the most effective way of purifying our hearts.

All religions have preached the law of returning good for evil. A physical injury can be healed with medicines, but not so a mental injury. Only true devotees can have no aversion to anyone—They know that the soul can never be injured. An oyster (Shellfish) closes its would with a pearl. Let us gather the pearls of Sri Sai Baba's spiritual guidance regarding our behaviour from the Sri Satcharitha to heal our mental injuries and endure them in a calm manner—For Baba says, "He who carps and cavils at others pierces Me in the heart and injures Me, but he that suffers and endures pleases Me most".

—Mrs. Vijaya Gopalakrishna,
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II Stage, Mysore.



“UNFAILING FAITH IN BABA”

Nishta, and Saburi are mainly two things, according to Sri Sai Baba's teachings and are required to get the grace of God. But we loose patience and balance of mind in every pace of our lives. It is very difficult to make them as part of our lives and put them in practice. Progress comes in a slow process.

But to achieve progress pertaining to Nishta-and Saburi is a very difficult thing. So we have to strive hard, get over the ups and downs, in our lives. Praying incessantly to look upon us with a kind heart and a benevolent look, to help us in our difficulties, making us as without loosing faith in God.

Praying often, with heart, in word, and in action. Praying ardently and get his grace to achieve our goal "If you look to me, I will look to you", Baba gives his assurance. . Our fickle minds cannot stay steadily, disbelief plays a major part to topple town our faith and tries to keep us away from God. We praise him when we are in a joyful mood and abuse him when we are in perils and troubles. This nature of our thinking never canbe repaired or mended. It is some thing like a chronic disease.



Our daily life with various hazardous situations, ups and downs joys and turmoils do not permit any body to strive hard and journey in a smooth way, to think of God and to get his grace. Dislinking at every where and make us not to think and not to near God, for even a moment. We are spending much of our times in worldly affairs having no time to think of God.

Major part of our lives are spent in worldly thinking, planning how to get rid of our troubles. Go over and reach the tasteful heights of our lives. We almost forget God, loose patience, and even go to the extent of abusing him, for his hard heartedness in our troublesome moments.

Let us pray to Sri Sai Baba to protect us, to guide us, to lead and show to us the way to reach him. To keep an eye upon us day and night and watch us. Let us spend the days according to his directions, guidance. Praying to show us the way to right thinking talking and doing things perfectly, not to loose touch with him in any manner, at any time, at any where, at any state of our minds. Bowing down at the lotus feet of Sri Sai Baba, this will be our prayer.

— *A.V.S.R. Josyulu,*
Artist,
Behind Vijaya,
Guntur—522 001,
A.P.



THE SAIBABA EPIC

VI

Was or is Sai Baba of Shirdi a Mohemmadan saint,
Is a question that's often asked by several,
But it must be confessed and honestly said
No positive answer could be given in the matter
The general impression of His devotees was and is
That Baba belonged to the Muslim or Mohemmadan sect
And one must concede that in view of the evidence,
Both direct and indirect, there is a lot of force
In this view that holds and considers Him thus
When Baba came to Shirdi with the party of Chand Patel
And stepped down there in front of the Khandoba temple,
Baba, wishing to have the darshan of the village god,
Tried to go inside the temple but Mhalasa, the priest,
Looking to the dress and demeanour of the stranger,
Thought He's a Muslim Fakir and asked Him, instead,
Since his was a Hindu temple, to go away and stay
In the Mosque or takia situate inside the village,
Baba, who was shocked gently told the Khandoba priest,
That both the Hindus and Muslims are the children of God
So no one should make any such divide or difference
Between a Hindu or a Muslim or a Parsee or a Chirstian,
But treat all and all religions with equal love and regard
Ask your Khandoba, Baba told him, being a Bania,
How come he came to wed a shepherdess by her caste
Hearing these words, the priest fell on Baba's feet
And urged Him to make Shirdi His permanent home
Das Ganu, the first man to make a regular research
And systematic study, while still in government service,
Into Baba's life and His work, with a keen intellect
And a policeman's nose, for him then Baba was
Neither a God nor a Divine saint, though he described
Baba as a living God, in several of the books he wrote,
In so many sweet and sonorous words, himself considered

Baba as a Muslim saint with great supernatural powers
And never as his own Guru or God-for he had others -
Once for the Mahashivaratri festival Das Ganu had gone



To Shirdi and was staying there for a couple of days
On the Shivaratri day, wishing to have a holy dip
In the sacred waters of Goda river, also called Ganga,
He sought Baba's leave to go but then Baba said:
Do not go Ganu, Ganga is here, here at my own feet
And knowing that Ganu was neither convinced nor pleased,
Baba asked him to hold his palms under His feet,
Then lo! Water began to flow from both His feet
In a slow, thin and steady current or flow
Ganu, who'd received this sacred water in his palms,
Drank it not but just sprinkled it over his head,
For he thought Baba was after all a Muslim Saint
Baba lived and died in a dilapidated Mosque in Shirdi,
Whose walls, as Baba proclaimed, were all built in gold
He wore a Kafni and tied a piece of cloth to his head
He had an earthen pot for storing water for his use and
Another for keeping His food and His pipes to smoke
Allah Malik, or Allah Malik Hai, He used to say
Or some times Allah Achha Karega or Allah Bhala Karega
Though He often said Yade Huq and prayed to Almighty God
Sometimes He also claimed and proclaimed Mai Allah Hun,
Calling Himself a mere Fakir and His master also a Fakir
Baba knew both Arabic and Persian and sometimes
He uttered different portions from the holy Koran, while
Sitting near the holy fire, facing south in His Mosque,
And occasionally sang some mussalmani songs and verses too
When offerings were made to Him, He recited the Fatia
Or He asked someone else to utter or pronounce the same
Inside the Mosque Abdul sometimes read out the Koran,
Which Baba Himself also sometimes repeated in parts
Sometimes Baba used to order the table to be done

In the Mantap of His Mosque and Himself paid the expenses
Usually Baba did never His namaz prayer say but whenever
He did His namaz that's only on Saturdays, not Fridays
In Shirdi Village, day and night, a Rohilla used to recite
The sacred Kalma inside the Mosque, in a voice, which
Was harsh and shrill and so loud that it was unbearable
For the villagers to put up with, they complained to Baba,
Who then told them to mind their own business and not
The Rohilla since he's only cursing and abusing his wife,

Who was out to pester and harass her husband—the Rohilla
 In the early years of His life in the Shirdi Mosque,
 Baba Himself cooked His food and then, at times
 Pulav with pieces of meat or mutton and rice was prepared
 And that food was later consecrated by some Moulvi to God
 One day when Baba Himself was thus cooking His food,
 To feed the scores of men who used to flock to Him
 A fakir came to the Mosque and going to the boiling pot,
 Put therein some mutton pieces which he had brought
 Balasaheb Mirikar, who was there, was shocked at this
 And asked Baba if animal killing was good and proper,
 When Baba told him in his own cryptic and meaning way,
 That he slays who saves and he saves who slays
 Since Baba's time down to this day, in the Arati sung
 To Him, He's said to be born in the Momin family
 Or sect, rendering His help and succour to all His men
 Those prayers were written by Bhishama, a Vithal bhakta
 On the lines of the prayers said at the Pandharpur temple,
 Which're sent to Baba, who later sent them to Chandorkar
 And thus approved by both of them for use in the Mosque
 Four months prior to His passing away, Baba called
 Appa Bhil to Him and asked him to get him four fowls
 As guests were to come and later that day, at mid-night,
 A huge ball of fire thundered out and streamed there
 Inside His Mosque and went towards the western wall
 And there in the Nimbar remained for quite some time
 Later that ball of fire split into a thousand pieces
 And lit up the Mosque into a blinding blaze, so that,
 Imam and Appa Bhil, who were there, shut their eyes
 Then Baba went to His sacred fire in the Mosque and
 Placed His satka on His bent up neck, praying in Arabic
 And no sooner did Baba near that sacred fire go
 Then the ball of fire flew away, away from His Mosque
 Next morning four fowls're brought to Him by Appa Bhil,
 That Baba cooked in His Dhuni and prepared their polis
 Later that day, when Kashim turned up in the Mosque,
 Baba gave him the food He'd cooked and directed him
 To take it to Shamsuddin meva of Aurangabad town
 He asked him to do Moulu, Kawwali and Nyas there,
 Out of the two-hundred and fifty rupees, which He gave
 He's also asked to go to Banne meva fakir there and



After garlanding him with a garland, which He gave
Simply say of that Aurangabad fakir, Nau Din, Nau Tarik,
Allah Maine Apna Dunia Le Gaya, Marzi Hai Allah Ki
Then Baba gave away the money and garland to Kashim,
Who thereafter, with Imam, hurried and came to Aurangabad,
Where at the railway station itself, both were received
By fakir Shamsuddin mea himself, who then repeated
To them, word for word, Baba's directions given to them
They both went to his house paid him Baba's money
Were upon that day, Nyas, Kawwali and Mouli were done
Next day they went to the house of Banne mea fakir
And saw him standing there with an up-raised arm
They were advised not to disturb the fakir mea then,
Lest, losing his temper, the mea beat and thrash them up
Therefore, after waiting for nearly an hour or so,
Plucking up courage, Imam put the garland from Baba
Around the neck of Banne Mea fakir, who at once
Changed his posture and lowered his upraised arm
When words said by Baba were repeated to that fakir,
He simply gazed into the sky above and started to cry
And just four months after this, Baba breathed
His last, on the ninth day of the ninth Mohemmadan month
That, however, is only a part of the story, because,
Though Baba appeared to be a Mohemmadan Saint or Fakir,
He showed His divine nature to many a man and proved
That He's neither a Hindu or a Muslim but something else,
That is, God Himself, born to guide them in their quest
Several men who thought Baba was only a Muslim,
Who didn't deserve their full respect and reverence
Ended up as His most ardent devotees, all their doubts
And mistrust and suspicious turning into permanent love
Mhalasapati, a pious, illiterate and orthodox priest,
Who at first prevented Baba from entering the temple,
Later worshipped Baba as his Khandoba in person
He was the first person to offer milk and flowers to Baba
Or apply and smear the feet of Baba with sandal paste
For decades, with Baba he slept inside the Mosque
And lived and did as the noblest of all Baba's bhaktas
A Brahmin doctor, who worshipped Shri Ram as his god
Once went to Shirdi with a Mamlatdar as his guide
On the express condition that he should not be forced
To bow down to Baba, whom he thought to be a Muslim fakir
After going to the Mosque, his friend went in, but,
The doctor stood outside the Mosque for a couple of minutes
And casually looked in to see what's going on inside
Then to his surprise he saw the figure of Shri Ramchandra

At the place in the Mosque where Baba was sitting
 So he darted in and sobbing, fell on the feet of Baba
 Later, when he was asked to explain his unnatural conduct,
 He said Baba was but his own Neela Megha Shama Rama
 And not Mohemmadan Fakir, which he had earlier thought
 Once, again, an orthodox Brahmin from Nasik town,
 Well-versed in the Shastras, Mule Shastri was his name,
 Went to Shirdi village to meet the millionaire friend
 Bapusaheb Buty of Nagpur and there, when they both
 Went to the Mosque, in the morning, that Shastri wanted
 Since he was a palmist and an astrologer as well,
 To look into and study the palms of the supernatural Fakir,
 But Baba did't oblige the Shastri and instead of His hand,
 He gave the Shastri four plantains and sent him away
 Then, on that day, on His way to Lendi, Baba wishing
 To wear saffron Kufni, asked a man to fetch Him guru
 Mule Shastri remained in the Wada and did not go
 To attend noon-Arati in the Mosque, like others
 At the Arati time Baba, however, asked Bapusaheb Buti
 To fetch His dakshina from his new Brahmin friend
 When Buti came to the Wada and made the request,
 The Shastri was shocked and aghast and wondered why
 He should, being a Brahmin, obey a Mohemmadan Fakir
 But since his millionaire friend was asking the money
 For and on behalf a saint, he could not refuse and
 So, leaving the pooja he's doing in the Wada unfinished,
 He hurried, unwillingly, to the Mosque along with Buti
 And there stood at some distance, away from the Mosque
 Lest he be defiled and as he looked in at the place
 Where Baba sat, he all of a sudden, saw Gholap Swami,
 His deceased Guru and made sure he was not dreaming
 The vision cleared his lingering doubts about Baba
 So up he ran onto the steps of the Mosque where Baba sat
 Giving His Udhi, as usual, to the people, after the Arati
 And fell on His feet, with a sense of joy and remorse
 To Police Inspector Nimonkar, who worshipped Hanuman,
 Baba appeared like that God with his facial features
 And to Binnewale, Nana's relative, Sai Baba appeared,
 In the form of Datta, the three-headed God he worshipped
 When he was much craving to see that God in Shirdi village
 The Hindu worship of Baba inside their sacred Mosque,
 Naturally irked and enraged many a Muslim fanatic and
 They sought the advice of the Sangamner Kazi, who said
 That since no one could argue and convince Baba,
 The only way open was to threaten the Hindu bhaktas
 With physical harm, if they dared defile their Mosque
 So with clubs in hand several Muslim bigots once
 Went to the Mosque and stood at its entrance
 Mohddin Tamboli, a strong and hefty man, as their leader,
 Tamboli having once worsted Baba in a wrestling bout



When they saw the Khandoba priest approaching them,
Tamboli went to him and explained the situation to him
That he'd be thrashed and killed, if he entered the Mosque
And smeared their Baba with the sandal paste he carried
Then the frail priest, who's never known for his strength
Smelling the danger, crawled up to the Masjid wall
And invoking Baba's name in a trembling whisper,
Began worshipping that wall with his flowers and paste
Seeing this Baba asked him what he's doing there
And, when told of the threats held out by Tamboli,
Baba bid him come inside and do his worship
And apply him his sandal paste wherever he liked
Thus convinced it was impossible for them to prevent
Baba from accepting heterodox worship, the bigots
Left their hope and never tried their hand again
One night, when Baba was sleeping inside the Chavadi,
Mir Jaman, a highly fanatic Pathan staying in Shirdi,
Sought Baba's blessings to kill up the Hindus,
Who were the enemies of Muslims and their Muslim faith
At these words, R.A. Tarkhad, who's sleeping there,
Trembled in his bed, afraid he'd be slaughtered up
But then Baba told that blood-thirsty Pathan,
That the fault was really His and not of the Hindus
And if he wanted to kill, He must be killed and not
The Hindus, for none of them had committed a crime
And thereupon, the Pathan gave up his hatred of Hindus
Thinking that Baba was spoiling the Islamic faith,
Once, while Baba was going out to the Lendi garden,
With a club in hand, a Rohilla went behind Baba
And raised his hand to strike Baba down to death;
Just then, Baba turned His head and looked in his face,
Whereupon he cowered like a leaf and sank like lead
And fell prostrate on the ground, so He's lifted up
And nursed by others and soon he left Shirdi for good
Though the Hindus worshipped Him as their Hindu God,
Baba did not at all object nor displeased them
For, as He Himself told Abdul Rahim, a Muslim devotee,
When asked why He allowed Himself to be smeared
With sandal paste on His hands neck, and forehead,
That one must like in Rome as the Romans live or do
Baba did always love and revere the sacred Hindu gods,
Showing them all very high regard and high respect
Once, when an orthodox Muslim brought a flower-sera
To adorn or decorate the niche or Nimbar in the Mosque,
He told him to take it away to the Hanuman temple
And put it on him and when that Muslim protested
To Baba that Hanuman was a Hindu God and being a Muslim,
He could never so do, since his religion forbade it

Baba then praised and extolled Hanuman as a God
And showered on the Prophet some choice foul names,
Whereupon the sera is quietly removed from His Mosque
There was a Maruti idol in a corner of the Chavadi,
Where Baba used to sleep on alternate nights

One day, when heavy rains poured inside the place,
Where Baba slept, He was requested to go and sleep
On the upper platform where that idol was kept,
But Baba refused to move from that place, saying,
How could He be seated on the high level of Hanuman
When He was once pointedly asked by the Hindu devotees,
Baba said that the ancient Puranas were true and that
Both Rama and Krishna were both Avatars and Gods
Baba would sit up and in reverence hold His palms
Whenever He heard the aratis of Dynanadev and others
Sanskrit He knew, better than Nana, a life-long scholar
For the holy Bhagavat Gita or Bhavartha Ramayana
Or Eknath Bhagavat or Yoga Vashishtha or Panchadashi
And many other sacred books which the Hindus read
He'd a regard, great and high, so that He blessed

His several bhaktas with those holy scriptures
To Hindus He appeared like a Hindu God or Hindu saint
Filling them all with their supreme joy and bliss

And proved He's neither a Hindu nor a Mohemmadan
He bid them all to stick to their Gods and Gurus
And faithfully follow their own religious modes
Conversion He condemned and when once Bade Baba
Brought a recent convert to Islam into the Mosque,
Baba told him, he'd by his act, almost changed his father
And kicked and beat up that convert and sent him away
Baba not merely preached but in fact practised

The basic unity and oneness of all religions and creeds
He allowed the Hindus to worship them as they liked
With all their rituals and noise and din and bustle
Amidst the ringing of bells and blowing of conches
He allowed the Muslims to come up into His Mosque

And therein say their Namaz or their Idga prayers
Or place their Tabut or Tajia on the Masjid floor
During the day, Hindu Books were read out to Him
And, at night, the Koran or the Shariat by Abdul or others
As part of the annual Ram Navami festival in Shirdi



The Muslims took out their procession of Sandal
Dhuni, the sacred fire that Baba kept always burning
In the Mosque, pleased the Parsis and the Hindus too
Baba was not merely a Hindu for a Hindu or a Muslim
For a Muslim, but a Hindu for a Muslim and a Muslim
For a Hindu and that was and is truly quite unique
For Baba His Mosque was not a mosque but Dwarakamayi,
A kind, loving and all merciful and ever vigilant Mother
Who sheltered and saved all who surrendered to Her
Baba once told a lady — Kashibai Kanitkat was her name-
Who was a theosophist from Poona on her visit to Shirdi
That He can bring lakhs of people, men and women onto
The noble path and take and lead them all to their goal,
Adding that His place, the Mosque, was a Brahmin's Mosque,
Where no Muslim could ever cast his dark or black shadow
Some point to His ears and some to His private parts
To make out the point that Baba's but a Hindu saint
But here we must stop this senseless and fruitless talk
For Baba does not really like or relish such a gibbering
One must remember that it was such a flippant whisper
About His caste, creed, community sect or religion
That, two years before He took His Samadhi on a Dasara day,
He took out His clothes, including His langoti and tore
Them all to pieces and threw them into His burning Dhuni
When Baba, all naked, from His top to toe, challenged
The people to come and see and judge for themselves
Whether He was a Hindu or a Mohemmadan, instead of
Carrying on a vicious, malicious campaign behind His back

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JNANA-MARGA: ITS MEDITATION TECHNIQUES

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The pathless path

Anyone who tries to understand what the sadhana for non-dual experience is, is likely to be disappointed at the absence of details regarding the actual techniques in the books. It is obvious that neither Samkara nor his followers intended Advaita to be a mere system of speculative philosophy; yet, if you open any treatise on Advaita, you will find most of its pages devoted to discussions on maya, cosmology, refutation of the theories of other schools, and gloomy pictures of the phenomenal world. Occasionally one may come across some exultant statements about the author's experience of non-dual Reality, but *how* he attained that experience he seldom explains. In his great commentaries Samkara discusses with thoroughness dualistic meditations and rituals but has little to say about the exact practical method of getting non-dual experience. Swami Vivekananda too is more or less silent on this point in his famous lectures on Jnana Yoga, although it is well known that Swamiji had the highest *nirvikalpa* experience on several occasions and has given expression to that experience in a few places especially in his 'Song on Samadhi'.

What is the cause of this paucity of details on Advaita sadhana? It cannot be accidental. More probably, it must have been caused by certain intrinsic features of the sadhana itself. The question naturally arises: Is there really such a thing as Advaita sadhana? Is the very word 'sadhana' admissible within the parameters of Advaita?

Etymologically, the word *sadhana* (or *sadhanam*) refers to an act by which an end (*sadhya*) is attained (by a striver, *sadhaka*). This would imply a three-fold division in Reality and movement in time and space, all of which Advaita regards as illusory. In non-dual experience there is no distinction between the seeker (*sadhaka*) and the end sought (*sadhya*). Therefore Advaita sadhana, if such a thing exists, must be devoid of the *sadhaka-sadhana-sadhya* trichotomy.

In the introductions to his commentaries on Kena Upanisad and Brhadaranyaka Upanisad and in various other contexts Samkara has spoken of two different approaches to Reality. The first one involves

the *sadhaka-sadhana-sadhya* (or *karaka-kriya-phala*) trichotomy; it includes ritualistic karma (the ultimate result of which is the attainment of the world of manes) and *upasana* (the ultimate result of which is the attainment of the world of gods). The second approach is devoid of the trichotomous division and leads directly to the realization of the impersonal Absolute. This direct experience of Brahman is an ontological fact (*vastu tantra*) which is independent of human effort (*purusa tantra*).¹ For the realisation of Brahman no effort is needed other than the removal of ignorance.² And this removal of ignorance is not an act, a karma, but an ontological truth implied in the highest experience. Says Samkara, 'For the acquisition of non-dual knowledge no effort is required; all that is needed is to stop superimposing the not-Self on the Self or stop identifying the Self with the not-Self.'³

No doubt, non-dual realization is also a form of cognition. But then, there is a basic difference between advaitic experience and the experience produced by dualistic meditation (*upasana*). Samkara says: 'Non-dualistic experience demolishes the cognition of such differences as the agent, instrument, action and results, which are superimposed upon the actionless Self... whereas in the experience produced by meditation these differences persist.'⁴

From the foregoing discussion it is obvious that Samkara's main purpose was to establish a direct path of realization entirely different from the paths of *upasana* (meditation) and ritualistic worship which are time-bound, goal-oriented efforts. This new path in which there is no distinction between the end and the means is indeed a 'pathless path'. It is this 'pathless path', that Samkara has termed *jnana*. What he meant by it is probably something like the 'sudden enlightenment' described in books on Zen.⁵ It is a form of self-revelation which takes place spontaneously when certain interior conditions are fulfilled. Jnana, as Samkara conceived it, is not knowledge which has to be acquired but an ontological fact of existence. It is not knowing but *being*. Any form of dualistic 'knowing' is merely *a-jnana*, 'not-knowledge'. The Upanisads express this truth in the form of a paradox: 'It is unknown to those who know, and known to those who do not know'.⁶

Why did Samkara attempt to establish a new, independent path? Are not the traditional paths of *upasana* (meditation) and ritualistic work capable of producing non-dualistic experience? Samkara bases

his stand on the fundamental thesis that unreality cannot lead to Reality.⁷ The Real and the unreal are entirely different and opposed to each other like light and darkness. Falsehood can never lead to truth. If a person mistakes a rope for a snake and holds on to that belief, he can never know the truth of the rope. Only by correctly seeing the rope will his mistaken notion go. This correct perception is a *new* experience totally different from the earlier wrong perception. As long as a person persists in retaining the old wrong knowledge, he cannot have correct knowledge. Truth is not a prolongation of error but a break with it. According to Samkara, ordinary meditation and ritualistic worship are based on certain preconceived notions about the ultimate Reality which are not ultimately true and so, through those methods, one cannot realize the true absolute Brahman beyond all attributes. For the realization of the latter we must break away from those methods based on error, and strike out a new path, the 'pathless path'.

Though Samkara blazed a new trail, he did not leave behind elaborate details of that trail in his works. Many of these details may have remained as an esoteric tradition among his disciples and early followers. Much of this oral tradition seems to have been lost. When we study post-Samkara treatises we find that several of them (e.g. *Vedanta-sara* of Sadananda and *Aparoksanubhuti*) have frankly adopted Patanjali's system of Yoga as the practical means of realizing Brahman. It is therefore difficult now to state what exactly was the original Advaita sadhana taught by Samkara.

Classification of meditation techniques

The English word 'meditation' is a general term which covers various types of mental exercise. Most of these mental exercises are forms of cognition, though they are often supported by feeling and willing also. Cognition has three parts—a subjective part as the knower (jnatr), an objective part as the known (jneya) and the process of knowing (jnana) which connects the other two parts. Meditation is a state of concentration of mind in which consciousness is focussed on one of these three parts. Depending on the direction of the focus of consciousness, meditation techniques may be divided into the following four types.

1. *Objective meditation.* In this type concentration is achieved by focusing consciousness on an object, usually the image of a deity or on a mystic formula known as mantra. Patanjali's technique of *dhyana* and Vedantic techniques of *upasana* belong to this category.



2. *Subjective meditation.* In this type consciousness is focused back upon its own source, namely, the Self. This can be done in several ways. The process of 'enquiry' into the nature of the self (*atma-vicara*), meditation on *asmita* mentioned in Patanjali's *Yoga-sutra*, the *pratibodha* technique taught in *Kena Upanisad*—all these are subjective meditations.

3. *Reflective meditation.* In this type consciousness is fixed neither on the self nor on a definite object but on knowledge or the knowing process itself. This takes place when one practises *manana* or reflection on the meaning of a scriptural statement or on a metaphysical concept. In Christian spiritual tradition the word 'meditation' really refers to this kind of reflection. In Catholic monasteries 'meditation' on various Biblical passages is the major spiritual technique practised, especially by novices. Reflective or conceptual meditations are also practised by Buddhist monks, especially by those of the Theravada school. *Manana* as a spiritual discipline was very popular in Advaita circles during the Middle Ages, but is no longer so. Nowadays people read and hear a lot but are becoming less and less capable of independent systematic, self-directed, deep reflection. It is of course true that all Indian schools of thought hold that *manana* can produce only indirect (*paroksa*) knowledge of Reality. But, as Vidyaranya has pointed out, this indirect knowledge is not only not erroneous but a great help in the practice of other types of meditation which produce direct (*aparoksa*) experience of Reality.⁸ It is therefore good to know a little more about what *manana* really means.

Manana is always done on the basis of *sravana*. The word *sravana* is usually translated as 'hearing'. But Advaita teachers point out that *sravana* really means determining, with the help of six marks (*sad-linga*) the true import of scriptural statements.⁹ Therefore it would be more correct to translate *sravana* as 'study' of scriptures.

What then is *manana*? *Manana* is the application of the knowledge of scriptures in one's own life, even though it is indirect knowledge. According to Suresvaracarya, *manana* is the logical process of *anvayavyatireka* by which one gains an indirect knowledge of one's true nature as Brahman. *Anvaya* 'identity' is a positive method; *vyatireka* 'difference' is a negative method. Both are necessary to gain correct knowledge. Suresvara explains it as follows. Suppose there is a post which one misunderstands to be a man. The method of *anvaya* conveys the true nature of the thing—that it is a post. But by merely saying, 'This is a post, this is a post' does not

remove the illusion that it is a man. To remove that misconception we have to add. 'This is not a man'; this negation represents the *vyatireka* method. Similarly, merely stating 'That thou art' (*tat tvam*) is not enough; it should be complemented by the statement. 'Thou art not a bound, sorrowful, mortal being'.

Thus through *manana*, consisting of the double process of *anvaya*—*vyatireka*, we gain a correct understanding of scriptural truths."

4. *Ahamgraha meditation*. Unlike the other three types, here consciousness is not focused on anything; instead, consciousness is simply allowed to expand. In actual practice this means that the self identifies itself with larger and larger dimensions of Reality. Here 'identification' does not mean a subject-object relationship (as exists in the *objective meditation* mentioned above) which is called *samyoga* or union, *Ahamgraha* is a 'self-self' identification known as *tadatmya*. The effect of this meditation is a progressive expansion of self-awareness. Many of the *vidyas* found in the Upanisads belong to this type of meditation.

Meditation techniques in Jnana-marga.

Jnana-marga is not the exclusive preserve of Advaita alone. The ancient meditation traditions of the Upanisads and the Yoga system of Patanjali may also be said to follow Jnana-marga. Even in the Advaita system various meditation traditions exist. Thus Jnana-marga comprises quite a large number of meditation techniques. They can all be classified under the four main types discussed in the foregoing section. Let us now study briefly some of these meditation techniques individually.

Upsanas

Upsanas represent some of the oldest forms of meditation which had their origin in ritualistic worship. They are objective meditations and are practised in the path of devotion as well as in the path of knowledge. Here we are concerned only with the *upsanas* of "*jnana-marga*."¹¹



Two questions are to be answered before we can proceed further. Meditation can be done only on an object and that too only on an object which has cognizable attributes. But Nirguna Brahman, being the eternal Self, cannot be objectified and, being impersonal, is devoid of attributes. How, then, can we speak of *upasana* with regard to Brahman? The answer given by the majority of Advaita teachers is that *upasana* can be practised directly on Saguna Brahman (Personal God) alone. Sadananda, for instance, defines *upasanās* as 'mental exercises pertaining to Saguna Brahman such as Sandilya Vidya etc.'. Vidyaranya, however, emphatically asserts that *upasana* can be practised on Nirguna (attributeless) Brahman as well.⁶ He argues that since Brahman is knowable it can be meditated upon too.⁷ According to him, those who are unable to practise *vicara* (enquiry) should practise *upasana* on Nirguna Brahman.⁸ Although he does not indicate clearly how attributeless Brahman can be directly meditated upon, he implies that such a meditation can be done indirectly, that is, through symbols (*pratika*).

The second question is, what is the ultimate result of *upasana*? Here again the majority of Advaitins, including Samkara, hold that *upasanās* lead directly to the realization of only Saguna Brahman. But since the realization of Saguna Brahman may in due course, in the higher worlds, lead to the realization of Nirguna Brahman (this course is called *karma-mukti*), *upasana* may be said to lead indirectly to Nirguna Brahman. Says Smkara: 'Like ritualistic karma, meditations too produce results in this world (*drsta*) or in the next world (*adrsta*). Some meditations produce true knowledge and, through that, *karma-mukti*.⁴ However, Vidyaranya confidently declares that *nirgunopasana* can lead directly to attributeless Brahman and, if a person fails to achieve this result, he is sure to get at least *karma-mukti*.⁷

Upasanās have been divided into three types: *angavabaddha*, *pratika*, *vidya* (*ahamgraha*). Of these *angavabaddha* is the lowest of *upasanās*. It refers to some ancient meditations which were associated with certain Vedic rituals like the Jyotistoma, and are no longer in vogue. The highest type of meditation is represented by the *Vidyās*; these will be dealt with in the next section.

The second type, *pratikopasana*, represents the upasana proper. To avoid confusion, this type of meditation alone should be called upasana. In it a single thought-current is directed towards a definite object which is invariably regarded as a symbol (*Pratika*) of Brahman. Since these symbols serve as frames of reference in understanding Brahman, these meditations are also called *tatastha-upasanas*.

Pratikas are of two types: *nama* (name) and *rupa* (form). The most famous of the sound-symbols is Om. How meditation on Om leads to realization of Brahman has been described by Gaudapada in the first chapter of *Mandukya-karika*. As regards form-symbols, several of them are mentioned in Aranyakas and Upanisads. Obviously, in the Vedic period, Surya (sun), Agni (fire), Dyau (sky) and other cosmic objects were widely used as symbols by the Vedic people in the practice of meditation. In modern times most of these *pratikas* are no longer in use and have given way to anthropomorphic images of various gods and goddesses.

Vedantic upasana is to be distinguished from Patanjali's technique of *dhyana* which also often employs impersonal symbols such as 'sorrowless light'¹⁸ as objects of concentration. The *samyama* techniques described in the third chapter of *Yoga-sutra* also belong to an entirely different class of meditations. the difference between Vedantic and Patanjali's techniques is this: the former is meditation on Brahman whereas the latter is meditation on Prakrti. The symbols used in *upasanas* are *brahmasraya* (based on Brahman) whereas the symbols used in *dhyana* are *prakrtyasraya* (based on Prakrti).

Vidyas

Though *vidyas* are often classed under upasanas, the two are quite different techniques. Whereas upasanas are symbolic meditations, *vidyas* are analogical meditations. In upasana the main effort is to concentrate the mind on one specific *pratika* or symbol. In *vidya* attention is directed towards certain attributes or qualities of the ultimate Reality with the help of an analogy. *Vidya* is a technique of 'grasping' the whole of Saguna Brahman by identifying one's inner self with It. This shows that a *vidya* is an ahamgraha type of meditation (unlike upasana which is an objective type of meditation).



The immediate effect of *pratikopasana* is the transformation of consciousness, whereas the immediate effect of *ahamgrahopasana* (i.e. vidya) is the expansion of consciousness.

The difference between the two may be clearly seen in the following two examples pertaining to the sun. The *Chandogya Upanisad* speaks of an *Aditya-upasana*? As Badarayana has pointed out, here the sun is to be regarded only as a symbol of Brahman and should be meditated upon as an object without making any attempt to identify the self with it? The *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* speaks of an *Aditya-vidya* in the following terms: 'Of this Person in the solar orb, Bhu is he head. . . ., Bhuva is the arms. . . , Sva is the feet' . . . Here the sun stands for Virat, not as a symbol but as an analogy. The aspirant is not to concentrate his mind on the sun; instead, he is to identify his self with the person-in-the-sun who stands for Hiranyagarbha, the sun serving only as a background for this identification. *Aditya-upasana* is meant for concentration of mind, whereas *Aditya-vidya* is meant for the expansion of the self. Evidently, the latter is a higher form of meditation than the former.

A number of vidyas like Sandilya Vidya, Dahara Vidya, Madhu Vidya, Pancagni Vidya, etc. are mentioned in the Upanisads. According to one account their number is thirty-two but many more must have existed in the Vedic period? Most of these meditation traditions had become extinct centuries before Samkara wrote his great commentaries. In the absence of *guru-parampara*, it is now difficult to know the real import of many of these vidyas and how to practise them.

However, some kind of new vidya-like meditations for advaitic experience must have been developed during the Middle Ages and practised by sannyasins. Sri Ramakrishna has spoken of some of these meditations which he heard from his guru Tota Puri (whom the Master used to refer respectfully as Nangta, 'the Naked one'). While talking to Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar at Shyampukur, Sri Ramakrishna once said;

Nangta used to tell me how a jnani meditates; Everywhere there is water; all the regions above and below are filled with water; man, like a fish, is swimming joyously in that water. In real meditation you will actually see all this.

Take the case of the infinite ocean. There is no limit to its water. Suppose a pot is immersed in it: there is water both inside and outside the pot. The jnani sees that both inside and outside there is nothing but Paramatman. Then what is this pot? It is 'I'-consciousness. Because of the pot the water appears to be divided into two parts; because of the pot you seem to perceive an inside and an outside. One feels that way as long as this pot of 'I' exists. When the 'I' disappears, what is remains. That cannot be described in words.

Do you know another way a jnani meditates? Think of infinite akasa and a bird flying there, joyfully spreading its wings. There is the Cidakasa, and Atman is the bird. The bird is not imprisoned in a cage; it flies in the Cidakasa. Its joy is limitless. ²³

What Sri Ramakrishna has so vividly described here are *ahamgraha* meditations. Even if they are not regarded as *vidyas*, they are intelligible and of immense practical value to modern people.

(To be contd....)

1. अपुरुषतन्त्रत्वाद् ब्रह्मविज्ञानस्य।

Samkara, Commentary on Kena Upanisad, Introduction

2. स च नित्यत्वात् न अविद्यानिवृत्तिव्यतिरेकेणान्यसाधननिष्पाद्यः।
ibid.

3. तस्मात् अविद्याध्यारीपितनिराकरणमात्रं ब्रह्मणि कर्तव्यं न तु ब्रह्मविज्ञाने यत्नः
अत्यन्तप्रसिद्धत्वात्। ... तस्माज्ज्ञाने यत्नो न कर्तव्यः किन्तु अनात्मनि आत्मबुद्धिनिवृत्तौ
एव।

Samkara, Commentary on the Gita 18.50

4. यथा अद्वैतज्ञानं मनोवृत्तिमात्रं तथा अन्यान्यप्युपासनानि मनोवृत्तिरूपाणीत्यस्ति हि
सामान्यम्। कर्तर्हि अद्वैतज्ञानस्योपासनानां च विशेषः? उच्यतेस्वाभाविकस्यात्मनि
अविक्रिये अध्यारोपितस्य कर्त्रादिकारकक्रियाफलभेदविज्ञानस्य निवर्तकम्
अद्वैतज्ञानम्।

Samkara, Commentary on Chandogya Upanisad, Introduction

5. In the words of Hui-neng, 'The truth of Zen opens itself from within and it has
nothing to do with the practice of meditation. . . The truth of Zen is absolute in
which there is no dualism, no conditionality'. D.T. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism* Ed.
William Barrett (New York: Doubleday Anchor Book, 1956) pp. 73-74.

6. अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातमविजानताम्।

Kena Upanisad 2.3

D.T. Suzuki himself points out the connection between this passage of *Kena Upanisad* and Zen in his book mentioned above, p. 120.



7. Vidyananda does not seem to hold this thesis to be absolutely correct. In *Pancadasi* (9.1, 613) he states that a 'leading error' (*samvadi bhrama*) can lead to truth. The logic behind his argument, 'One may perchance obtain a thing by following a wrong line by mistake', is rather crude and unconvincing.
8. Cf. *Pancadasi* 7.51-55
9. श्रवणं नाम षड्विधलिङ्गैः अशेषवेदान्तानां
अद्वितीय वस्तुनि तात्पर्यावधारणम्।
Sadananda, *Vedanta-Sara*
10. See, Suresvaracarya, *Naishkarmya-siddhih* 3,74
11. The practice of *upasana* in the path of devotion was discussed in detail in the editorials of *Prabuddha Bharata*, May and June 1981 and in some of the subsequent editorials.
12. उपासनानि सगुणब्रह्मविषयमानसव्यापाररूपाणि शाण्डिल्यविद्यादीनि।
Vedanta Sara
13. निर्गुणब्रह्मतत्त्वस्य न हि उपास्तेरसम्भवः।
सगुणब्रह्मणीवात्र प्रत्ययावृत्तिसम्भवात् ॥
Pancadasi 9.55
14. *Pancadasi* 9.59,60
15. *Pancadasi* 9.54, 132
16. अत्र हि कर्मवदेव च उपासनानि दुष्टफलान्यदृष्टफलानि चोच्यते। क्रममुक्तिफलानि च कानिचित् सम्यग्ज्ञानोत्पत्तिद्वारेण।
Samkara, Commentary on Brahma-sutra 3.3. Introduction.
17. *Pancadasi* 9.138-150
18. विशोका वा ज्योतिष्मती ।
Yoga-sutra 1.36
19. आदित्यो ब्रह्मेत्यादेशः ।
Chandogya Upanisad 3.18.6
20. See, *Brahma-sutra* 4.1.4,5
21. *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* 5.5.3
22. For a detailed description of these vidyas see, K. Narayanaswami Aiyer, *The Thirty-two Vidyas* (Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1962).
23. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (New York: Ramakrishna Vivekananda Centre, 1940) p. 915.

VALMIKI'S RAMAYANA AND VYASA'S MAHABHARATHA

(The immortal Epics of India)



The famous line of the English Poet Keats, 'A thing of beauty is a joy forever,' expresses a great truth. His dictum is most fitting for the two epics, Ramayana and Mahabharatha which are really things of beauty. They give us joy forever. It gives us joy to read the epics and re-read them any number of times.

INTRODUCTION

The religious, philosophical, ethical and cultural literatures of India comprise Vedas (Hindu Scriptures), Sastras (science of Dharmas, duties etc). Smritis (Codes of Laws written by Sages), Puranas (Sacred writings of ancient stories) and Ithihasas (Traditional history, story of ancient times). The Ithihasas are two in number and they are Ramayana and Mahabharatha, two great valuable and immortal epics, whose authors are the two great Rishis (sages), Valmiki and Vyasa. They are two priceless treasures of the cultural heritage of India. They depict the lives of Rama and Dharmaputhra, em-



bodiments of Dharma (righteousness, duties) and Sathyam (truth) and others and Sita and Draupadi, great Pathivrathas (chaste and dutiful wives). They are also two invaluable Dharma Sastras (books of proper duties and correct conduct). Both have accounts of great wars. In both a prominent role is played by the person who is an avatara (incarnation) of the Supreme God, Vishnu Paramatma (Vishnu one of the Trinity), Brahma (Creator of the world), Vishnu (Protector of the world), Siva (Destroyer of the world) — in Ramayana by Rama, the hero and in Mahabharatha by Krishna, the friend and protector of Pandavas (collective name for Dharmaputhra, the hero and his brothers, sons of Pandu) and their wife Draupadi. The main theme of the epics which is the object of avatara of Vishnu is protection of Dharma and good people and the destruction of Adharma (unrighteousness) and bad people. Above all this, the epics are two supremely grandworks, comparable with and even surpassing any of the greatest works of the world's literature.

The heroes of the epics are persons of saintly virtues and noble qualities and exemplary character. Rama of Ramayana, though an avatara of Supreme Vishnu behaves like a man and shows to mankind the right way of living. Dharmaputhra, the hero of Mahabharatha is the embodiment of Dharma and Sathyam, bears all miseries and sufferings with limitless patience and courage and never shows anger even in the face of great provocation. The brothers of the heroes have noble qualities and are fearless men; Bharatha who refuses to have the kingdom offered to him and requests Rama to rule over it, and Lakshmana who considers that his life's mission is to serve Rama and his wife Sita; as also Bhima of mighty arm and Arjuna, the great archer, who both implicitly follow Dharmaputhra's commands.

The heroiness of the two epics, Sita and Draupadi, are personifications of womanly virtues and are great Pathivrathas. They share willingly and joyfully the sorrows, miseries and sufferings of their husbands. They bear with unexampled patience and courage their sufferings and the indignities to which they are subjected.

In the two epics, we have also other great characters like Bhishma, Drona and Vidura respectively. The grandfather, the preceptor and the uncle of Dharmaputhra; and Dasaratha, the father of Rama, Janaka, the father of Sita; Vibhishana, the brother of Ravana, the arch-enemy of Rama; and Hanuman, the monkey warrior and



devotee of Rama. We meet with a number of Rishis also in the epics.

The enemies whom the heroes vanquish are most unprincipled stray from the path of Dharma and cause miseries to others. Ravana, the ten-headed Rakshasa (demon) who abducts Sita and other Rakshasas and Duryodhana and his associates, who conspire against Pandavas.

The story of the two epics is almost identical, Both Rama and Dharmaputhra lose their kingdom, live in the forest, suffer from enemies, wage war, defeat their enemies and regain kingdom.

The two epics deal with virtues of Dharma, Mahabharatha rather more specially and very elaborately.

Both the epics read like dramas and are full of incidents and surprises.

It will be seen from what has been said above that the matters dealt within, and the story of, the two epics are similar in many respects.

It is very essential that everyone should know and benefit by the many valuable matters and teachings of the two epics. It is however not an easy task as the epics are in the Sanskrit language and are large work.



A short study of the two epics together, pointing out at the same time their common and similar features as also differences and features special to either of them it is considered, will be of great help to readers to know appreciate and benefit by the many valuable matters and teachings of the two epics. Such a joint and comparative study is modestly attempted in this book. To enable the reader to follow the discussions in later chapters a short account of the story of the epics is given in Chapter, 'A short Account of the story in the Epics—Ramayana' and 'A short Account of the story in the Epics—Mahabharata'.

AUTHORS' PERIOD AND GREATNESS OF THE EPICS

The sage Valmiki is the author of Ramayana. He lived during the life time of Rama. In Adhyathma, Ramayana (a work giving the story and also dealing with the knowledge of the soul) it is said that Rama during his stay in the forest met Valmiki, who gave an account of his life to Rama and praised him. In his early years, Valmiki led a bad life and was advised by some sages, who took pity on him to chant the name of Rama in the reverse manner as "Mara" and he became a sage. After Rama had killed Ravana and become king of Ayodhya, Sitha was sent by Rama to Valmiki's asrama (abode of a rishi) and she gave birth of two sons, Kusa and Lava. Valmiki composed the epic of Ramayana in 24,000 slokas (couplets), which was sung by Kusa and Lava in the presence of Rama during the Asvamedha Yaga (Horse Sacrifice). Sitha was brought by Valmiki to this yaga (sacrifice) when she declared by oath that she had always been a true wife of Rama, an immaculate Pathivratha, and disappeared into the earth.

Ramayana comprises the following seven Kandas (sections):-

- 1) Bala kanda (early life)
- 2) Ayodhya kanda (Events in Ayodhya)
- 3) Aranya kanda (Events in forest)
- 4) Kishkinda kanda (Events in Kishkinda)
- 5) Sundara kanda (Hanuman's meeting Sitha in Lanka)
- 6) Yuddha kanda (War)
- 7) Uttara kanda (Later events)

The author of Mahabharata is the great sage Vyasa, the son of

sage Parasara, the grand son of sage Vasistha, the purohita (the religious teacher, the family priest) of Dasaratha, the father of Rama. He is also the father of Suka Brahmam, the great Brahma Jnani (one who has knowledge of Brahman), who read the Bhagavatha Purana (the story of God Vishnu and Krishna) for the benefit of the king Parikshit, grandson of Arjuna. He lived during the time of Pandavas and was responsible for the birth of the brothers Dhrutharashtra, Pandu and Vidura, fathers and uncles of Pandavas, and Duryodhana and his brothers. Vyasa advised Pandavas and others on occasions. He classified the Vedas into four parts and wrote the Puranas and Brahma Sutra (a work floating to the knowledge of Brahman, the supreme Soul, Absolute Reality) as given in the Upanishads (parts of Vedas dealing with Vedanta, the end portion of Veda dealing with the knowledge of Brahman). He is therefore called Ved Vyasa.

Mahabharatha is a big work consisting of a lakh of Slokas, Vyasa requested God Ganapathi (Siva's son) (Vinayaka) to write the epic as he dictated the slokas.

Mahabharatha comprises the following eighteen parvas (sections)

- 1) Adi Parva (Early periods)
- 2) Sabha Parva (Events in the Assembly Hall of the King)
- 3) Vana Parva (Life in the forest)
- 4) Virata Parva (Life in Virata city)
- 5) Udyoga Parva (Peace mission)
- 6) Bhishma Parva (War under Bhishma's leadership)
- 7) Drona Parva (War under Drona's leadership)
- 8) Karna Parva (War under Karna's leadership)
- 9) Salya Parva (War under Salya's leadership)
- 10) Sauptika Parva (Period, when People, who were sleeping were killed by Asvatthama)
- 11) Sthree Parva (Lament of women)
- 12) Santhi Parva (Preaching Dharmas by Bhishma)
- 13) Anusasana Parva (Preaching Dharmas by Bhishma)
- 14) Asvamedhika Parva (Performance of Horse sacrifice)
- 15) Asramavasika Parva (Life in asrama in forest)
- 16) Mousala Parva (Killing of Yadavas by pestile)
- 17) Mahaprasthanika (starting for Svarga)
- 18) Svargarohana Parva (Attaining Swarga)



The events of Ramayana took place in Thretha Yuga and those of Mahabharatha in Dvapara Yuga. The Yugas (ages) long periods of time, are four in number and in their order are Krutha, Thretha, Dvapara and Kali we are now living in (Kali Yuga). The city of Ayodhya, the forests, and the island of Lanka were the scenes of Rama's activities; Cities of Hasthinapura and Indraprastha (Modern Delhi) the forests and Kurukshetra, where the war was fought, were the places of Pandavas activities.

Both the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharatha are held to be works of supreme merit. Ramayana is said to be the Adi Kavya (the first epic poem) and equal to the Vedas. Rama is pictured in it as the perfect man of all noble qualities and sitha as the model of chastity and the best example of a dutiful wife. Bharatha and Lakshmana, are also great noble brothers of Rama deserving praise and admiration. It contains Adithya Hrudaya, a song of prayer to the Sun God. Those, who read, write or listen to the story of Rama, it is said, will be freed from all sins and will receive the grace of God and attain Moksha (salvation, release from birth and death).

As for Mahabharatha, it is said to the fifth Veda. In fact both the epics were written specifically for the benefit of those who had no authority to read the Vedas themselves, in order to explain to them the matters contained in the Veda, Mahabharatha comparatively the larger work of the two epics, is an exhaustive work dealing with all subjects and matters and it is said that there is nothing in any other work which is not to be found in this work. It contains, besides the events and incidents, detailed exposition of Dharmas, Truths, and Maxims, useful for the life in this world and for the life hereafter. The Bhagvadgita (a discourse of Atma, Soul) addressed to Arjuna by Krishna at the commencement of the great battle, Sanath Sujathiyam, the discourse addressed to Dhrutharashtra, and vishnu Sahasranaman (thousand names of Vishnu) are special features of Mahabharatha. The good and noble qualities of the great characters in it Arjuna and Draupadi should be assimilated in our lives. It can be said, without fear of contradiction that there is no work in the world equal to Mahabharatha .

The two epics resemble each other in their greatness, usefulness and importance.

VISHNU'S INCARNATIONS

According to Hindu religious literature, God is in the form of a Trinity, Brahma being responsible for the creation of the world, Vishnu for its protection and sustenance and Siva for its destruction. When evil prevails over good in the world and Dharma is lost, owing to the evil acts of bad men, and to Rakshasas and Asuras (demons) having abundant powers for evil Vishnu takes birth in the world and saves and establishes Dharma and rids the world of evil and the evildoers. He punishes the evildoers and protects the good men. As detailed in the Bhagavatha Purana, he has taken several births from time to time, such as a fish, a tortoise, a boar and Narsimha (Half man and half lion). He took two births of men which figure prominently in Ramayana and Mahabharatha, namely those of Rama and Krishna. While Rama is the hero of Ramayana Krishna is the friend and protector of Dharmaputhra, the hero of Mahabharatha.

The circumstances and the reason for the incarnations of Rama and Krishna are similar, Ravana, the powerful and wicked Rakshasa, had all the world under his control and caused endless trouble and sufferings to all the Devas (Celestial beings) Rishis and others. Other Rakshasas were also giving trouble to people. Devas requested Brahma to free the world from the evil doings of Ravana and others. Brahma prayed to God Vishnu for his help, Vishnu promised to help them and said that he would be born as sons to Dasaratha, the emperor of Ayodhya and would kill Ravana. Thus, the incarnation of Vishnu as Rama came out

Likewise, before Krishna was born the world was full of cruel and wicked people like Kamsa, Jarasandha and Sisupala. The incarnation of Vishnu as Krishna took place and he was responsible for their deaths and the death of many Rakshasas and for the war of Mahabharatha in which Duryodhana, the arch-enemy of Dharmaputhra and others were killed.



So we see God Himself descending to earth (the word avatara literally means coming down) and in the forms of Rama and Krishna freeing the world from evil and evildoers and establishing Dharma on the earth.

The epics themselves largely relate their achievements. Still there is a difference between Rama and Krishna in that Rama did not consider himself God, but lived and behaved like a man to set an example to mankind. Rama was the hero of one of the epics while Krishna was the friend and protector of Dharmaputhra, the hero of the other epic, his brothers and Draupadi, the heroine.

Rama and Krishna worshipped as Gods all over India and there is no village, be it in the remotest corner of India, that does not boast of a temple for Rama or Krishna. All over India their birth anniversary is celebrated every year with love and devotion even today, after the lapse of many centuries.

LINE OF DESCENT AND ANCESTORS OF RAMA AND DHARMAPUTHRA

Brahma was the progenitor of the line of kings to which Rama belonged called the line of the Sun God. Marichi was Brahma's son. Kashyapa was his son. The Sun God was his son. Manu was his son and Ikshvaku followed him. Pritu, Harishchandra, famed as the king who never failed to speak the truth, Mandata, Bharatha Sagara by whose sons the Sagara (Ocean) was dug, Dilipa, and Bagiratha who brought River Ganga (a holy river of India) from heaven to earth, were great kings of this line, Kakuthstha, who fought for Indra, the chief of Devas, standing on his shoulder, Raghu and Ambharisha famed for his strict-observance of the religious austerity of Dwadasi (twelfth day of the two halves of a month) were other famous kings. Aja was the last of this line before Dasaratha, the father of Rama, the hero of Ramayana.

In the case of Dharmaputhra, the line of descent is said to be that of the Moon God.

The Moon God was the son of Athri, son of Brhama Pururvva. Nahusha, Yayathi, Puru, Dushyantha, Bharatha and Ajameeda were great kings of this line. Santhanu was the father of Bhishma in this line. Vichitravirya was Santhanu's son. 'Drutharashtra and Pandu were his sons. Dharmaputhra the hero of Mahabharatha was the son of Pandu.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE STORY IN THE EPICS—RAMAYANA

To help the reader, to understand and appreciate the detailed discussions that follow in later chapters a short account of the story in the two epics is given in this chapter and the next chapter.

Dasaratha, the great king of Ayodhya, was ruling well but he had no sons to take his place on the throne. With the advice of his religious teacher Vasishtha, and the help of Rishi Risyasrunga, he performed the Asvamedha Yaga and Puthrakama Ishti (ceremony for having children). From the fire of the Homa (ritual of offering in the fire) a person came with a vessel containing sweetened milk (Payasam) and gave it to Dasaratha and asked him to give it to his three wives. Dasaratha did so.

Mean while at the request of the Devas. Vishnu decided to be born as four sons to Dasaratha and to kill Ravana the dreaded enemy of the Devas. The Devas were asked to be born as monkeys, to help Vishnu in his mission.



The wives of Dasaratha gave birth to four sons. Kausalya to Rama, Kaikeyi to Bharatha and Sumithra to Lakshmana and Sathrughna. Rama and Lakshmana went with save Vishvamitra and helped him to perform his Yaga and then proceeded to Mithila. Rama was married to Sita, the daughter of King Janaka of Mithila on his breaking the bow of Siva. When Dasaratha planned to make Rama the Yuvaraja (Crown Prince) his wife Kaikeyi, at the instance of her companion Manthara, asked for and obtained two boons from Dasaratha, one of them giving the kingdom to her son Bharatha and the other asking Rama to live in the forest for fourteen years. Bharatha did not accept the kingdom and after pleading in vain with Rama to rule the kingdom, got his sandals and with their authority managed affairs.

Rama went to the forest with Sitha, his wife, and Lakshmana his brother. There he helped the Rishis by killing the Rakshas Surpanaka, Ravana's sister wanted Rama to marry her and was disfigured. She complained to Ravana who with the assistance of Maricha who took the form of a golden deer carried away Sita in Rama's absence to Lanka, the seat of Ravana. Sitha was kept in the Asoka Vana (forest of Asoka trees)

Rama made friendship with Sugriva, who later became the king of the monkeys in Kishkinda, killed Vali his brother for his misconduct and sent Hanuman, the monkey warrior, to search for Sitha. After Hanuman's success in finding out Sitha, Rama with the monkey armies crossed over to Lanka and killed Ravana and others. Vibishana, Ravana's brother, who had taken refuge with Rama was made king of Lanka. Rama returned with Sitha to Ayodhya, took over the kingship and ruled the people and the country well for thousands of years. Sitha was sent later to the Ashrama of Valmiki and Kusa and Lava were born to her. She came to the Asvamedha Yaga and declaring the oath that she was pure, she disappeared into the earth. Later Rama returned to Vishnu's abode.

Thus in brief, is the substance of Ramayana, God Vishnu taking human form as Rama and killing the enemies of Dharma and establishing Dharma and protecting good people.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE STORY IN THE EPICS—MAHABHARATHAM

In the lineage (vamsa) of the Moon God, great kings ruled like Puru, Dushyantha and Bharatha. After them came Santhanu. Bhishma was his son, who to enable his father to marry Sathyavathi surrendered his right to the throne and also took the vow of Brahmacharya (celibacy) for life. Sathyavathi's son Vichitravirya died without progeny and with Vyasa's help Dhrutharashtra, Pandu and Vidura were born. Dhrutharashtra was born blind and Pandu ruled the kingdom.

Owing to a curse Pandu could not beget children and his wife Kunti with the help of some manthras (Sacred formulae) had sons through the Devas Yama (Dharma Deva-God of death) Vayu (God of Wind) and Indra (chief of Devas). Karna had already been born before Kunti's marriage through the Sun God. Pandu's second wife Madri had twins through Aswini Devas (twin physicians of the Gods). The sons were named Dharmaputra, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, Pandavas being the name for the five together. Dhrutharashtra had hundred sons. Duryodhana being the eldest of them, Dronawas, the teacher for all princess.

Duryodhana fearing the might of Bhima became his enemy and tried to kill him by many means without success. He planned to kill Dharmaputra (also called Udhishtira) who had become the Crown Prince, and his brothers by sending them to live in a palace made of lac and setting fire to it. Dharmaputra was told of this plan by Vidura, his uncle and left the palace with his brothers and mother before it was set on fire.

The Svayamvara (the ceremony of choosing the husband by a princess) of Draupadi, the daughter of King Drupada, was being held and Pandavas attended it. Arjuna hit the mark specially fixed for testing the skill of those who contended for the hand of Draupadi and won her. She became the wife of the five brothers.



Dharmaputhra was given by Dhrutharashtra a half of the kingdom on the advice of Bhisma and Drona and ruled in Indraprastha. He performed the Rajasuya Yaga (a sacrifice performed by kings) Duryodhana who attended it got confused in a hall specially constructed by Maya, the architect of asuras. He also saw the rich and varied gifts made by several kings and got envious of Dharmaputhra. He planned with his uncle Sakuni to deprive Dharmaputhra of his kingdom and wealth and prosperity at the game of dice and get them for himself. He obtained the consent of his father Dhrutharashtra to invite Dharmaputhra to play the game. Sakuni played the game deceitfully and Dharmaputhra lost all his wealth, his kingdom, his brothers and himself also. Sakuni asked Dharmaputhra to play with his wife Draupadi as the stake. Dharmaputhra lost the game and Draupadi. Draupadi was brought forcibly by Dussasana, brother of Duryodhana, in spite of her protests, to the Sabha (Council Hall-Assembly Hall) and she asked the elders assembled there to give an answer to the question put by her earlier through prathikamei, namely, whether Dharmaputhra lost Draupadi first or lost himself first. The elders could not answer the question. The great Bhisma said that the Dharma involved in it was very subtle and it was not possible to give an answer to it.

Dussasana, at the instance of Karna, began to disrobe Draupadi at which the whole gathering trembled with horror. In spite of the piteous plight and appeals of Draupadi, cruel Dussasana continued in his effort and subjected her to disgrace in the presence of the elders and the gathering. Unbecoming and insulting words were also used against her. Dharmaputhra, though seeing all this injustice being done in his presence, kept quiet and did not go to her rescue for fear of violating Dharma and also kept his brothers under check. He did not show the least sign of anger and bore the misery and disgrace with patience.

Draupadi, in this plight, appealed to Krishna to save her honour and as a result the robe of Draupadi as it was being unveiled lengthened and had no end Dussasana got tired and stopped disrobing Draupadi's honour was saved by Krishna, Bhima vowed to avenge the disgrace and kill Dussasana and Duryodhana, Arjuna to kill Karna and Sahadeva to kill Sakuni.

Dhrutharashtra at this juncture gave Draupadi two boons by which she freed Dharmaputhra and his brothers from bondage. He also gave back the kingdom to Dharmaputhra. When Dharmaputhra was returning with his brothers and wife he was recalled by Dhrutharashtra at the instigation of Duryodhana for a second game of dice. The stake was that the loser should dwell in the forest for twelve years and also remain for one year in ajnathavasa (living unrecognised by others) After this period he would get back his kingdom. Sakuni won the game. Dharmaputhra left for the forest with his brothers and Draupadi.

While they were in the forest, Krishna came and saw them and comforted Draupadi. They had many sufferings, caused by Duryodhana, Jatasura, sage Durvasa, Jayadratha, the serpent Nahusha, Yama as Yaksha (demi-god) and Kichaka, brother-in-law of the king of Virata kingdom where Pandavas and Draupadi lived for one year unrecognised.

After thirteen years of exile, Pandavas claimed their kingdom but inspite of the advice of Bhishma and Krishna and others Duryodhana said that he would not part with an inch of space and war became inevitable. Bhishma, Drona, Kripa (brother-in-law of Drona) Asvatthama (son of Drona) and Karna were on the side of Duryodhana. Pandavas had on their side-Drupada, Dhruhtadyumma, his son, Abhimanyu, son of Arjuna, and Krishna, who acted as Charioteer to Arjuna.

Arjuna got dispirited on seeing elders and relatives in the opposite camp whom he had to kill. He was comforted by Krishna who taught him Atma Tatva (spiritual truth, truth of soul) through Bhagavad Gita and asked to follow the Kshatriya (one belonging to the warrior caste) Dharma of waging war. After eighteen days of grim battle and the destruction of countless armies and warriors, Pandavas won the battle.

Dharmaputhra became king of the land and ruled well. He approached Bhishma who was lying after the defeat on Saratalpa (a bed of arrows) and got him to explain to him all Dharmas. When Dhar-



maputhra heard from Arjuna the Krishna had gone to his abode in heaven, he put parikshit, Abhimanyu's son, on the throne and left for Himalayas with his brothers and Draupadi and entered heaven.

This, in brief is the story of Mahabharatha, the story of the struggle of Dharma against Adharma, the struggle of good against evil. We see Dharma and Sathyam triumphing in the end with God's anugraha (grace).

— *K. Venkatramaiah, B.A.,*
Deputy Registrar of Co-op societies (Retd.)
Sudarsan, Krishna nagar, second line,
Guntur - 522 006.



**13th Writers' Meet at Shirdi
February - 1989**

It is proposed to hold the gathering of the contributors to Shri Sai Leela Magazine on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th February 1989. Those, contributors whose articles/poems have been published at least twice in the saileela issues, are requested to submit the accompanying form, duly filled in and send it so as to reach the undersigned on or before 10th February 1989, on the following address:—

Executive Officer,
Shri Sai Baba Sansthan Shirdi,
At Post:— Shirdi-423 109,
Tal: Kopargaon, Dt: Ahmednagar.

R. D. Banne,
Executive Officer

Rules for the Meet:—

- 1) Travelling expenses will be borne by participant.
- 2) Form should be filled in legible handwriting and sent in an envelope superscribed "Writers' Meet" 1989.
- 3) Neither any forms nor any other correspondence about the Meet will be entertained by the Sansthan after 10-2-1989.
- 4) Arrangements for lodging, prasad etc. will be made as usual by the Sansthan for those participating in the Meet.
- 5) Each participant is allowed only one relative as guest.
- 6) Those who are attending the Meet, must reach Shirdi not later than the evening of 17th February 1989.





**13th Writers' Meet at Shirdi
(February 18th & 19th . . . 1989)**

To,
Executive Officer,
Shri Sai Baba Sansthan,
Shirdi.

Sir,

I wish to attend 13th Writer's Meet to be held at Shirdi. I am giving the required information below:—

- 1) Full Name (Surname first):—
- 2) Full Address:—

- 3) Occupation:—
- 4) Education:—
- 5) Age:—
- 6) Since when you are attending the meet:—
- 7) Are you a subscriber to Saileela:— Yes/No.
- 8) What is your contribution to Saileela:— Prose/Verse/both.
- 9) Title and date of publication of your contribution:—
 - 1)
 - 2)
- 10) Name and relationship of the accompanying guest:—

(Signature)



श्री साईलीला फरवरी १९८९

हिन्दी विभाग

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गीत

आशा दीप जलाये ।
साईनाथ के चरण कमल पर
अपना शीश नमायें ॥ आशा दीप....
घोर तिमिर जीवन पथ कंटक
पग किस और बढ़ाये
जीवन में नव जीवन भर कर
उज्वल राह दिखाये ॥ आशा दीप....
मृग तृष्णा सम मानव जीवन
शांति सुधा दिखलाये- पर-
आकुल हृदय व्यथा समझकर
तव पद दरस दिखा दे ॥ आशा दीप...
साईनाथ विराजे मन में
मन मंदिर को सजा ये
मानस पूजा करके हृदय में
जीवन सफल बनायें ॥ आशा दीप...

— के. एस. शशीभूषण,
३-४१, हनुमान नगर,
दिलसूख नगर,
हैद्राबाद-५०० ६६०.



कसम मेरी है अब

साई तुझे वर्षों धुलाये रहे ।
तुम्हे साई गैर समझते रहे ।
मंजिल तलाशने में
समझने में तुम्हे-
जिंदगी लुटाते रहे ॥
तुम्हारे चरणों में ली अब जगह,
कि जिंदगी हसीन हो गई है अब ।
मस्ती भरी गुनगुनाहट है अब ।
मस्ती भरी मुस्कराहट है अब ।
तुम्हे कभी न छोड़ेंगे साई -
कसम ये मेरी है अब ॥

मुहब्बत बेमिसाल

ऐं साई हर कसम खाई,
जन्नत जहाँ में लाने की।
साई तेरी आँखों से,
मुहब्बत मुहब्बत ही छलकती है।
जो जन्नत का पैगाम देती है।
ऐ मेरे साई- तू हर तरफ छा जा,
रहे न कुछ भी और,
न जमी का ख्याल,
न आसमाँ का ख्याल,
रहे मेरे साई, बस हर तरफ,
तेरी मुहब्बत बेमिसाल ॥

— राजेंद्रसिंह सिकरवार,
मोहरकर की गल्ली,
नया बाजार, लष्कर,
ग्वालियर, म. प्र.-४७४ ००९.



आरती

आरती प्रेम से करूँ तुम्हारी ओ! साईदेवा
हर पल लेना खबर हमारी ओ! साईदेवा
आरती प्रेम से.....

दिव्यमूर्ति ओ! बाबा मेरे, तुम करुणा के सागर
प्रेम-सुधा बरसा के भरना मन की खाली गागर
आरती प्रेम से.....

सुखकर्ता दुःखहर्ता तुम हो, मैं सेवक तुम स्वामी
तेरे महिमा तू ही जाने, किसीने नहीं जानी
आरती प्रेम से.....

तेरा दर वह जहाँ से कोई खाली हाथ न जाये
बिन कहे तू सब सुन लें, सब मन की मुरादें पायें
आरती प्रेम से.....



रिद्धि सिद्धि के तुम स्वामी, तुम जल में थल में
तेरी मरजी हो तो सुधरे बिगडी बाड़ी पल में
आरती प्रेम से.....

— विनय घासवाला,
४५, हस्तिनापुर सोसायटी,
करिली बाग, बडौदा,
गुजरात.

भजन

साई! तुम्हारे चरणों मे, अर्पित जीवन सारा
जीव-अजीव सभी हैं तुम्हारे, कुछ न लागे मेरा
करूँ रात दिवस अर्चना तेरी, जो है कर्तव्य हमारा
धरु शीश वहाँ पर मैं, पडे जहाँ चरण तुम्हारा
ना माँगू मैं माया राशि, पाऊँ बस आशीष तुम्हारा
दूर हो तम मेरे मन का, छाये मन में उजियारा
चलता ही रहूँ जीवन पथपर, जैसे नभ में तारा
गाता ही रहूँ महिमा तेरी, मन में हो ध्यान तुम्हारा

— एस. के. खरे,
ए-३, इंडियन आयल नगर,
सेक्टर ५५, नोएडा,
गाजियाबाद, उ. प्र.



भक्त की गुहार

साईराम, साईश्याम
दे दो दर्शन राम
ले लो शरण साईश्याम।
तेरी कृपा बनी रहेगी
तेरी दया बनी रहेगी
रक्षा करना राम
साईराम साईश्याम
दे दो शरण साईराम।

शिर्डीवाले राम
शिर्डीवाले श्याम
दया करो कृपा करो
रक्षा करो साई राम।
दर्शन जो तुम्हरे पाता
कोटि यज्ञ फल पाता।
साईधाम में आनेवाला
कोटि तीर्थों का फल पाता
साईनाम को रटने वाला
भव सागर से तरता है।



— साईप्रीति जगदाले,
कक्षा ६, मठ की कुआँ के पास,
नागोरी मोहल्ला,
छोटी सादडी, राजस्थान.

जय साईनाथ बाबा

जय साईनाथ बाबा
जय साईनाथ बाबा
कफनी है सर पे
आँखों में दया का है सागर
आशीष का इक हाथ
सदा भक्त के सर पर
कुरता और लुंगी पहने हैं
चिमटा उठाए हैं
शिरडी में साईनाथ ही
धूनी रमाए हैं
भक्तों की रक्षा करने का
जिनका सदा है दावा
जय साईनाथ बाबा
जय साईनाथ बाबा
मंदिर की घंटियों में
गुजारे साईनाथ
मस्जिद की अंजानों में
हाजिर है साईनाथ





गुरुद्वारे के शब्दों में
जाहिर हैं साईनाथ
गिरजे की प्रेयशों में
हाजिर हैं साईनाथ
मालिक है सबका एक
काशी हो या काबा
जय साईनाथ बाबा
जय साईनाथ बाबा

— आदर्श कुमार शर्मा,
७८६, पूर्वी निवारगंज,
जबलपूर म. प्र.



भजन

ओ साई शिरडी के मतवाले
संसार जगत में रह बताने वाले।
छुडा माया हमको तू ही सम्भाले
दया कर जीवन देने वालो
करूँ जिन्दगी बस तेरे हवाले।
ममता दिल तेरा भक्तों को सम्भाले
दया के खिलाए हरदम निवाले
कलयुग के अवतार, अवतार निराले।
हिंदु मुस्लिम सब तेरे प्यारे
भक्ति के सहल मार्ग बताये
श्रद्धा के पिये भर भर प्याले।
अल्लह मालिक है अलग जगाए
प्रेमी पुकारे दया करने वाले
साई नाम की डोर सम्भाले।

— शंकरदास प्रेमी,
मकान नंबर- ३-५-१३८,
रामकोट,
हैदराबाद-५०० ००१, ए. पी.



शिरडी महिमा

साई समर्थ सब कुछ कर सकते।
उनके द्वार आया, गया न कोई खाली ॥
शिर्डी सत्य है अक्षरक्ष सत्य।
इस समाधी पर जो चढा वो कभी नहीं गिरा ॥
रे मनुज साई को पहचान उनकी शरण आ।
तेरा बेडा पार समझ मैंने तो यही पहजगा ॥
ओम श्री साई बोल साई साई साई पुकार।
साई की शरण में आजा तेरा बेडा पार ॥
ये शिर्डी है ये बाबा की समाधी है।
कुछ समझ यह द्वारकामाई है ॥
इस समाधी पर पाँव रखते ही।
तत्क्षण कष्टों का हुआ अंत सत्य समझ ॥
मैंने माना गुरु साई को मैं शिल्प साई का।
कब बुलाओगे शिर्डी साई हाथ जोड खडा साई ॥
जब प्रथम बार शिर्डी आया धन्य धन्य हुआ साई।
मेरे जीवन में हुए चमत्कार एक के बाद एक ॥

सारी प्रकृति शिर्डी के वश मे

सम्पूर्ण प्रकृति साई के वश में यह सत्य।
मैंने तो यही जाना अपना गुरु समझ ॥
साई की शरण आया, कण कण में वसे साई।
जो हुआ साई का जग ने उस अपनाया ॥
ठुकराये को साई अपनाता दुःख होता।
साई कृपा बिना हिल नहीं सकता घास का पत्ता,



तेरी इच्छा पूर्ण समझ।
मन की मुराद पूरी करने वाले ऐसी शिर्डी ॥
क्यों इधर उधर व्यर्थ भटकता क्लेश पाता।
मूर्ख साई को पहचान मैं शिर्डी की शरण आया ॥
साई कृपा से होता शान्त कष्टों का अंत।
कब बुलाओगे मुझे शिर्डी पूर्ण मेरी इच्छा ॥

शिर्डी सत्य है

यह समाधी मेरे पिता बाबा की।
चढकर इस पर कोई नहीं पछताया ॥
जो भी माँगे वही मिलेगा यह सत्य।
साई सब कुछ चरण धूली लेने आया ॥
साई क्षमा, दया की मूर्ति परम कृपालू।
मैं दीवाना शिर्डी का साई नाम मन भाया ॥
मैं जब आया शिर्डी फूला न समाया।
मेरे जीवन में हुए चमत्कार एक के बाद एक ॥
साई अंतर्दामी समर्थ कर सकते सब कुछ।
यही समझ में साई की चरण धूली लेने आया ॥
जग झूठा शिर्डी सत्य है कृपा साई की।
साई के चरणों में बैठ मैंने तो सब कुछ पाया ॥

मेरी इच्छा पूर्ण कर साई

मैं अहसान तेरा मानता साई।
सब देव छोडकर शिर्डी शरण आया ॥
मैं साई की चिडिया शिर्डी मुझे खींचती।
शिर्डी आकर मैं फूला नहीं समाया ॥
सब देव देखे साई से बढ़कर, दूजा नहीं समाया।
शिर्डी आकर दर्शन कर बाबा के।
मन प्रसन्न क्या नहीं पाया ॥
मेरे रक्षक साई मैं भक्त साई का।
साई के चरण कमलों में,
मैंने सब कुछ पाया ॥
अब कष्टों का अंत कर दे।
मैंने कष्ट बहुत ही पाया ॥
दया, क्षमा, करुणा की मूर्ति साई।

मदद करो मेरी साई चरणों में आया ॥
 बोल बार बार ओम श्री साई ।
 बोल बार बार साई साई साई ॥
 रघुपति राघव राजाराम ।
 पतित पावन साईनाम ॥
 जय साई कृपा जय साई नाथ ।
 साई के पावन चरणों मैंने सब कुछ पाया ॥

जुल्मों का अंत कर साई

कब से जुल्म हो रहे मुझ पर ।
 अंतकर कष्टों, जुल्मों, दुःखों का ॥
 मैंने अर्पण किया जीवन अपना ।
 साई चरणों में धन्य गदगद हुआ मैं ।
 मेरे जीवन की डोर बंधी साई चरणों से ।
 अंत कर कष्टो दुःखो का तेरी शरण ॥
 शान्तकर कष्टों दुःखों का समृद्धि दे साई ।
 मैंने कोई भूलचूक, गलति की तो क्षमा कर ॥
 मैं किस्मतवाला साई शरण जो आया ।
 मैं धन्य धन्य हुआ जो साई चरण आया ॥

शिर्डी साई प्रेम व क्षमा की मूर्ति

भज मन, ओम श्री साई, साई साई साई ।
 साई के चरणों में जीवन अमृत पाया ॥
 साई दया करुणा की मूर्ति उदार मन ।
 कष्टों का नाश करें सुख समृद्धि देनेवाले ॥
 दिल दरिया एक भगवान वो साई का नाम ।
 व्यर्थ भटक न जोड नाता शिर्डी बाबा से ॥
 क्यों कष्ट पाता इधर उधर जोड नाता साई से ।
 विरोध, जलन, ईश्या, राग, द्वेष, बैर नाश करने वाले ॥



सुख शांती दया मदद करुणा प्यार देने वाले।
विरोध, जलन बैर, का नाश करने वाले॥

— डॉ. यू. हरी राव,
बी.एस.सी., एम्.ए., पी.एच्.डी.
"राजीव", ४५५, ३८ रोड,
ब्लॉक नं. २, राजाजी नगर,
बैंगलोर-५६० ०१०.

बनाए साईं बिगडे काम

दो अक्षर का नाम है साईं
बनाए बिगडे काम
निर्बल को बल देकर निर्भय
करता तेरा नाम
बनाए साईं बिगडे काम
बोलो राम साईं राम
जय जय राम साईं राम

इस भवसागर में है साईं
तू ही हमारा खिचैया
घट घट मे तू ऐसे रमता
जैसे राम रमैया

मन पनघट का कान्हा बनकर
आये सुबह-शाम
बोलो राम साईं राम

रसना को तेरी रटन लगी है
मिल गया तेरा सहारा
तू मंदिर मस्जिद गिरिजा में
और बसे गुरुद्वारा
कण-कण मे दर्शन तेरे,
करे मनवा मेरा प्रणाम
बनाए साईं बिगडे काम

सत्गुरु समरथ शिरडी वाले
तू देवों का देवा
मन भंवर तेरे चरण कमल की
करे है निस दिन सेवा

ओ बाबा, ओ साई देवा
तुझ में चारो धाम
बना दे मेरे बिगडे काम
साई राम-राम-राम ॥

— श्रीमती आशा एल. एन. दुबे,
एम्. ए., बी.एड. (अध्यापिका),
आदर्श शा. उ. मा. शाला,
बालोद, जिला-दुर्ग, म. प्र.



भजन

अपने रंग में रंग ले साई सतरंगी बन जाऊँ
मल-मल कर तेरे चरणों की रज से तिलक लगाऊँ
रोम-रोम में, नस-नस में तू, तू हि तू बस जाए
दो अक्षर के नाम तारे का दीवाना कहलाऊँ
जी करता है सुध-बुध खो दूँ आज से मैं अपनी,
कोई दिखाए गर दर्पण भी तेरी सूरत पाऊँ
भटक रहा है मानव जिसमें यह दुनिया भ्रमजाल
तोड के सारे जग बंधन मैं तुझमें नाथ समाऊँ

— रंजीत सिंह "आफताब",
२९९/४, गोविंद पुरी,
नई दिल्ली-११० ०१९.



दुआ-ए-सलाम साई

या रसूल-ए-पाक साई। मेरा सलाम लेना।
गिरते को है सहाला, मुझ को भी थाम लेना ॥
बन्दों की है नैमत, नाम-ए-साई की उल्फत।
कोई काम और न सूझे, है तेरा ही नाम लेना ॥ १ ॥
दीदार-ए-तिश्रगी से बेजार हो गया हूँ।
तडपा हूँ उम्रभर मैं, मुझको आराम देना ॥ २ ॥
रहम-ओ-करम से इस जहाँ की खैर हो।
नहीं दुश्मनी किसी से, नही इत्तकाम है लेना ॥ ३ ॥



गिरते को है सन्हाला, मुझको भी थाम लेना ।
या रसूल-ए-पाकसाँई । मेरा सलाम लेना ॥

— एस. के. पांडे "सुमन",
४, जयसवाल हाऊस,
कोठी बाजार,
होशंगाबाद-४६१ ००१,
मध्य प्रदेश.



शिरडी में नजारा है

तर्ज हर दिल में तेरा जलवा है, शिरडी में नजारा है,
साई संसार भी तेरा, ये दिल भी तुम्हारा है ।

१) तुम शिरडी के वासी हो, बाबा अविनासी हो,
ए नाथ दया करना, चरणों में जगह देना,
तेरे चरणों में मथुरा-वृन्दावन, मक्का-मदीना है,
शिरडी ही मेरी काशी, काबा भी हमारा है ॥

हर दिल में.....

२) हिन्दू को मिली गीता, अरिजिल है ईसाई को,
मुस्लिम के लिए बाबा, कुरान ही बनाया है,
मंदिर हो मस्जिद हो, गिरिजा हो या गुरुद्वारा,
लेकीन तेरे बन्दों ने, तुझको ही पुकारा है ॥

हर दिल में.....

३) आँधी में है शक्ति, दीपक को बुझाने की,
तूफां में है शक्ति, कश्ती को को डूबाने की,
"दीप" शरण पडा तेरे, बुझने से बचा लेना
डूबे न मेरी कश्ती, तेरा ही सहारा हैं ॥

हर दिल में....

— नरेन्द्र पटेल "दीप",
२६/६, स्टेट बैंक कॉलनी,
विवेकानंद वार्ड,
जबलपूर म. प्र.



साई की महानता

साई कर लेते परख सबसे हृदय समाय
 कौन कहा से किसलिए क्या लेने को आय
 क्या लेने को आय काम कौन सा पटवाने
 लेकर कैसी आस, कष्ट कौन सा बटवाने
 करके ठीक उपाय मनही मन समझाई
 सबके काम निभाय सहायक बनकर साई ॥

साई लेते है सुमन सबके हृदय टटोल
 करे काम सबसे सहज करे न टालमटोल
 करे न टालमटोल, सबकी आस करे पूरी
 श्रद्धा के अनुसार दे संतोष सबूरी
 पूरी होते देख ईच्छाए मन भाई
 होके सभी प्रसन्न बोले जय जय साई ॥

मंदिर साई का निरख मन हो जाय प्रसन्न
 जीवन होने धन्य है खा प्रसाद का अन्न
 खा प्रसाद का अन्न सुहावन स्वभाव होता
 उमड़ भक्ति का ओत पाप कुवृति को धोता
 मनाना है आनंद मोह की तोड स्वयं जंजिर
 बना देता मन, पावन शिर्डी का मंदिर ॥

साई के संसार पर होते नित उपकार
 साई का आश्रय लिए बढ़ते भक्त अपार
 बढ़ते भक्त अपार सुपथ पर आगे हि आगे
 मान मोह मिट जाए भूमित भव के भय भागे
 चित चैतन हो जाय जन जीवन हरसाई के
 यदि शिर्डी में आय दर्शन करने साई के ॥

— उत्सवलाल तिवारी "सुमन"
 सुमन कुटीर, २५/१, सखीपूरा,
 उज्जैन-४५६ ००६.





साईबाबा के ग्यारह वचन

(श्री साईलीला, जनवरी १९८९ से...)

— डॉ. सुधांशु कुमार नायक,
आशा निवास,
भुवनेश्वर-७५१००२.

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**“तुम्हारा ऐ सब भार लोऊंगा मैं;
नहीं इसमें सौंशय ये वचन सत्य मेरा।”**

अर्थात्, यह मेरा सत्य वचन है कि मैं तुम्हारा समस्त दायित्व वहन करूंगा। इसमें कोई संशय नहीं है। यह साई का आठवां वचन है।

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता में भी भगवान ने यही वचन कहा है। उनके अनुसार जो अनन्य प्रेमी भक्तजन परमेश्वर को निरन्तर चिंतन करते हुए निष्काम भाव से भजते हैं उनका योगाक्षेम स्वयं भगवान प्राप्त करा देते हैं। अर्थात् वे उनके अप्राप्त की प्राप्ति और प्राप्त की रक्षा करते हैं -

**“अनन्यश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेम वहाम्यहम् ॥”**

(गीता ९:२२)

अतः हमें यह विश्वास होना चाहिए कि अगर हम अनन्य भाव से भगवत् भक्ति करेंगे तो हमारा भव भार हलका हो जायेगा। यह बिल्कुल सही है। हम जितना अधिक भगवत् चिन्तन करेंगे उतना अधिक विषय वासना से निश्चय ही दूर होते जायेंगे।

इस वचन का सबसे प्रमुख तत्व यह है कि हमें ईश्वर के वचन पर संशय नहीं करना चाहिए। क्योंकि गीता में स्पष्ट रूप से “कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्त प्रणश्यति” उद्घोषणा के साथ साथ यह भी कहा गया कि संशयात्मा का विनाश होता है। “संशयात्मा विनश्यति”। अतः पूर्ण आस्था और विश्वास के साथ हमें अपना समस्त कार्य ईश्वर की इच्छा के ऊपर छोड़ उनका अनन्य चिन्तन करना चाहिए। यही इस वचन का अंतरार्थ है।

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साई का नौवां वचन है -

**“मिलेगी मदद यहाँ सबको ही जानो।
मिलेगा वही उसका जो जो भी मांगो।”**

अर्थात्, यहाँ सबको मदद मिलेगी, जो जो भी चाहेगा उसे वह चीज मिल जायेगी।

इस वचन में "यहाँ" का मतलब है इस धरती में, इस जन्म में और इस देह में। भगवद् उपलब्धि के लिए हमें यहीं सब कुछ करना होगा। "शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम्" - धर्म साधना के लिए शरीर को प्रमुख स्थान दिया गया है। शरीर के बिना हम भगवत् आराधना नहीं कर पायेंगे। अतः शरीर की, स्वास्थ्य की रक्षा होनी चाहिए। उसे साधन बनाकर ही हमें आध्यात्मिक पथ पर बढ़ना होगा। ब्रह्मलीन स्थिति में पहुँचने के लिए यही एक ही जन्म पर्याप्त है क्योंकि हमें सभी प्रकार की सहायता देने के लिए भगवान प्रस्तुत हैं। वे हमें मोक्ष देने के लिए भी प्रस्तुत हैं और मोह देने के लिए भी। हम विषय मांगेंगे या वैराग्य वह हम पर निर्भर है। दाता तो सब कुछ देने को तैयार है। इसलिए हमें सोच समझकर मांगना चाहिए।

इस वचन में सबको मदद मिलने की बात बताई गई है क्योंकि भगवान सबके होते हैं, वे सबकी मंगल कामना करते हैं और केवल अपनी नहीं, सबकी भलाई में ही हमारी भलाई निहित है। इसलिए बहुप्रचलित बैदिक प्रार्थना है -

“सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनो, सर्वे संतु निरामयाः।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु, मा कश्चिद् दुःखमाप्नुयात्।”

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“हो गया मेरा ही तन मन वचन से
ऋणी हूँ मैं उसका सदा सर्वदा ही।”

अर्थात्, जो तन, मन और वचन से मेरा अपना हो गया है मैं अपने को सदा सर्वदा उसका ऋणी मानता हूँ। यह साई का दसवां वचन है।

“मनस्येके वचस्येकं कर्मण्येकं महात्मनः।

मनस्यन्यत् वचस्यन्यत् कर्मण्यन्यत् दुरात्मनः।”

मन, वचन और कर्म में जिसका समन्वय हो वही महात्मा है और जिसमें भिन्नता हो वह दुरात्मा है। शास्त्र में कर्म, मन और वचन में सर्वदा और सर्वत्र भगवत् चिन्तन करने की बात कही गई है - "कायेन मनसा वाचा सर्वदा हरि चिन्तनम्।" इसे श्रीमद्भागवत में भगवद् प्राप्ति का सरल उपाय बताया गया है -

“कायेन वाचा मनसेनिद्रयैर्वा

बुद्ध्याऽऽत्मना वानुसृतस्वभावात्।

करोति यद् यत् सकलं परस्मै

नारायणायेति समर्पयेति तत्

(श्रीमद्भागवत ११:२:३६)

अर्थात्, मनुष्य अपने शरीर से, वाणी से, मन से, इन्द्रियों से, बुद्धि से, आत्मा से अथवा परम्परागत स्वभाव से जो-जो करे, वह सब परम पुरुष भगवान नारायण के लिये ही है - इस भाव से उन्हें समर्पण कर दे। इस प्रकार जो सभी दृष्टि से भागवत प्रेम में लीन हो जाता है भगवान उसी के हो जाते हैं और वह भगवान



का हो जाता है। गीता में इस बात का प्रतिपादन किया गया है - "ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम्।" इस प्रकार भगवान अपने को भक्त का अधीन कर लेते हैं। वे भक्त के लिए सब कुछ करने को तैयार होते हैं, उसका ऋणी बन जाते हैं। यही इस वचन का सारांश है।

- ११ -

**"कहे साई वह भी हुआ धन्य धन्य।
हुआ जो अनन्य मुझमें अभिन्न।"**

अर्थात्, साई का कहना है कि जो उनसे अनन्य और अभिन्न हो जाता है वह धन्य है। यह साई का ग्यारहवां वचन है।

भक्ति में अनन्य भाव सबसे श्रेष्ठ है। राधा उस भाव की प्रतीक हैं। वे कृष्ण प्रेम में इतनी तल्लीन हो गई थीं कि अपने को कृष्ण समझ "राधा", "राधा" पुकारने लगी थीं। अनन्य भक्ति की परकाष्ठा का वर्णन करते हुए भगवान श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं कि जो पुरुष मुझ में अनन्य चित्त होकर सदा ही निरन्तर मुझ पुरषोत्तम का स्मरण करता है, उस नित्य-निरन्तर मुझमें युक्त हुए योगी के लिये मैं सुलभ हूँ -

"अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः

तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः।" (गीता ८:१४)

इतना ही नहीं,

**"तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसार सागरात्।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम्।"**

(गीता १२:७)

अर्थात्, मुझ में चित्त लगानेवाले प्रेमी भक्तों का मैं शीघ्र ही मृत्यु संसार समुद्र से उद्धार करनेवाला होता हूँ। इस प्रकार के अनन्य भक्तों का लक्षण बताते हुए भगवद्गीता में बताया गया है कि निरन्तर मुझ में मन लगानेवाले और मुझमें ही प्राणों को अर्पण करनेवाले भक्तजन मेरी भक्ति की चर्चा के द्वारा आपस में मेरे प्रभाव को जताते हुए तथा गुण और प्रभाव सहित मेरा कथन करते हुए ही निरन्तर संतुष्ट होते हैं और मुझ वासुदेव में ही निरन्तर रमण करते हैं -

"मच्चिता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम्।

कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च।"

(गीता १०/९)

इसलिए भगवान कृष्ण ने अर्जुन को उनसे अभिन्न बनने का उपदेश दिया है -

"मन्मना भव मद् भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु।

मामेवैष्यसि युवत्वैवमात्मनं मत्परायणः।"

(गीता ९:३४)

अतः हमें भी इस उपदेश के अनुसार भगवान के प्रति अनन्य भक्ति निवेदन करना चाहिए। यहि इस वचन का सारांश है जो समुचे ग्यारह वचनों का नवनीत है।

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