

SHRI

SAI LEELA

Official Organ of Shirdi Sansthan



D.D. MERCY

श्री साईनाथ वाचनालय
श्री साईबाबा संस्थान, शिर्डी.

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FEBRUARY 1981

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SHRI
SAILEELA

**Official Organ of
Shirdi Sansthan**

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**To guide the world on the right path
is the principal aim of SHRI SAI LEELA**

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A Self-less Saint

In Chapter X of the Sai Satcharita, Shri Annasaheb Dabholkar has explained the easiest path to cross the ocean of worldly existence in the following way:-

“The Easiest path

Hearing the stories of the saints is not so difficult as the other Sadhanas mentioned above. They (stories) remove all fear of this samsar (worldly existence), and take you on to the spiritual path. So listen to these stories, meditate on them, and assimilate them. If this is done, not only the Brahmins but women and the lower classes will also get pure and holy. You may attend to your worldly duties, but give your mind to Sai and His stories, and then He is sure to bless you. This is the easiest path, but why do all not take to it? The reason is that without God's grace we do not get the desire to listen to the stories of saints. With God's grace everything is smooth and easy. Hearing the stories of the saints, is, in a way, keeping their company. The importance of the company of the saints is very great. It removes our body-consciousness and egoism, destroys completely the chain of our birth and death, cuts asunder all the knots of the heart, and takes us to God, who is pure consciousness. It certainly increases our non-attachment to sense objects and makes us quite indifferent to pleasure and pains, and leads us on the spiritual path. If you have no other sadhana such as chanting God's name, worship or devotion etc., but if you take refuge in them (saints) whole-heartedly, they will carry you safely across the ocean of worldly existence. It

is for this reason that the saints manifest themselves in this world. Even sacred rivers such as the Ganges, Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri etc., which wash away the sins of the world, desire that the saints should come to them for a bath and purify them. Such is the grandeur of the saints." (Pages 61-62, Ninth edition 1980)

In an earlier chapter (Chapter IV page 15) Shri Dabholkar has explained the mission of the saints. After explaining the purpose of the incarnation of God as explained by Lord Shrikrishna in the Bhagwadgita (Chapter IV, 7-8), Shri Annasaheb Dabholkar states that, the mission of the saints is similar to the mission of the incarnations of God and that in our country many saints have taken birth from time to time and have shown the right path to the people.

In the extract at the beginning of this article, while explaining the fruit of the company of the saints, it is stated, "Hearing the stories of the saints is, in a way keeping their company." Bearing this in mind, we started publishing regularly the biographies of the saints in this magazine from April 1974 and the publication is being continued to date. In the meanwhile, the birth centenary of saint Gadgemaharaj came in 1976. The biography of this saint was therefore started from the month of October 1976 and was being published seriatim in this magazine upto the month of January 1981. Hence we were hearing the stories of this saint for the last over four years and thus "keeping his company". It is hoped that our readers have liked this series and enjoyed the company of this great saint for so long a period.

As the main incidents, that took place in the life of this saint, are now known to our readers, it will now be possible to estimate the greatness of this saint in view of his work and preaching. The first and foremost thing that we notice about this saint is that he did not preach only the devotion to God. He himself was preaching through his keertans and he used to

give advice to the people to concentrate on God in view of quotations of previous saints like Tukaram, Kabir etc. During his keertans he used to sing bhajans and also used to make the people sing his favourite bhajan "गोपाल, गोपाल । देवकी नंदन गोपाल ।" He also attended namasaptahas as well as encouraged others to hold such saptahas. He took keen interest in the fairs, which were being held at different places of religious importance and used to preach to the people, gathered there, through his keertans. He used also to manage the bhandaras, that used to follow the namasaptahas; but in spite of all this, Shri Gadgemaharaj did not want that the people should only try for their spiritual uplift. While quoting certain verses from the old literature, Shri Maharaj was always referring to mundane life. He always used to point out to the bad condition of the people and used to request them to leave all vices like drinking, squandering money and taking loans. He wanted all people to lead a much better life than what they were doing. Like saint Ramdas, Shri Gadgemaharaj also wanted people to first lead a happy and prosperous life. Saint Ramdas clearly told in his Dasbodh. "आधीं प्रपंच करावा नेटका । मग ध्यावें परमार्थविवेका ।" meaning that you should first lead a prosperous family life and then think about the spiritual life, which is supposed to help you in the next world. Shri Sai Baba also advised his devotees to keep faith in Him and to lead a prosperous and happy life in the present birth. If a person is not free from the cares and worries of the affairs of this world, then he is not able to concentrate on God. Hence the view-point of all these three saints about the worldly life seems to be alike.

Begging of alms is another peculiar habit of Shri Gadgemaharaj. From his biography, we see that he never maintained a house or a family. He never stored food nor provisions for the next day; but begged his bread from someone and ate it. His argument was that he dedicated his whole life to public service. He never thought about his comforts, but worked

for the well-being of the whole society. Then was it not the duty of the society to give food to him? Saint Ramdas also was an advocate of begging food. He clearly writes in Dasbodh, "ब्राह्मणाची मुख्य दीक्षा मगितली पाहिजे भीक्षा" It is a main rite of a brahmin to ask for alms. Saint Ramdas and all his followers used to go from house to house for begging alms. Of course saint Ramdas was in favour of leading the life cleverly and hence he says that when a person goes for begging alms, he should observe closely the things around him while moving under the garb of begging. Shri Sai Baba is also known to be begging his food in Shirdi village. He also never maintained a house and stored any provisions. He also felt that when he was looking after the spiritual well-being of the villagers and his devotees, it was their bounden duty to provide food for him. He never felt that he remained under the obligation of the devotees by accepting alms from them. Similarly the devotees in Shirdi village also felt that they were acquiring merit by giving alms to this illustrious saint. Even in later years, when the devotees used to offer variety of articles of food to Shri Sai Baba, He never stopped his practice of begging alms. Thus we see that Saint Ramdas, Shri Sai Baba and Saint Gadgemaharaj all had more or less the same views about begging alms and continued that practice throughout their life as a matter of principle.

Humility was another quality which we see in Shri Gadgemaharaj. Saint Tukaram was a person without ego and he always behaved humbly before everyone. Saint Gadgemaharaj also imbibed humility in himself to that extent to which we find it in saint Tukaram. After having achieved so much in life and after getting recognition from the public, it is possible for anyone to get egoistic. It is therefore quite difficult to remain humble at that stage. It therefore goes to the credit of Saint Gadgemaharaj to have followed Saint Tukaram in toto in this respect and to have maintained his humility up to the last.

Love and affinity for the poor, oppressed and invalid or maimed is another great quality which we rarely come across.

The rich and able-bodied are loved by all, but such persons as mentioned above are disliked in general. Saint Tukaram makes a special mention of the love for such persons and says as follows:-

जे कां रंजले गांजले । त्यांसी म्हणे जो आपुले ।
तोचि साधू ओळखावा । देव तेथेंची जाणावा ।

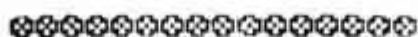
The meaning of this verse is "He is really a sadhu, who considers the oppressed and the invalid as his own kith and kin. We should know that God has manifested in him." In view of the sympathy shown by Saint Gadgemaharaj for the poor and oppressed and in view of the self-less work done by him for giving them utmost relief, we can surely say that God had manifested Himself through this saint. Shri Sai Baba also had great sympathy for the poor and he spent the whole of his dakshina for them.

Saint Ramdas, in one of his shlokas, while advising the people for leading a righteous life, said, "मना चंद्रनाचे परी त्वां सिजावें" । meaning, "Oh man, you should make use of your body for the uplift of others and reduce it bit by bit like the sandalwood", is used for preparing a paste for the worship of God and everyday it gets reduced bit by bit. The life of the sandalwood block is meant only for giving fragrance to others. It exists only for the good of others. If we now look impartially towards the biography of Saint Gadgemaharaj, we find that he also lived only for the good of others. He even discarded his family for that purpose. It has always been a point of dispute whether a family comes in the way of a person's spiritual life. Apart from the biographies of the ordinary people, even if we look to the biographies of some saints, we get baffled. We cannot say definitely anything in this behalf. We have therefore, to come to the conclusion that this depends more or less on the individual. Out of the Maharashtrian famous saints, we find that saint Dnyaneshwar was a bachelor. Saint Eknath led a family life; but he could do the necessary progress on the spiritual path. Saint

Tukaram was similarly a person with family. Though unlike the wife of Saint Eknath, the wife of Saint Tukaram did not co-operate with him in his spiritual work, still inspite of her non-cooperation and opposition, Saint Tukaram continued his progress on the spiritual path. Saint Ramdas resolutely remained a bachelor and Saint Gadgemaharaj thought that the fetters of the family life would bind him and thus come in the way of his selfless work for the poor and therefore he mercilessly cut the bondage and freed himself entirely for dedicating his life to the uplift of the poor. After acquiring a family, it really requires a very strong mind to get out the fetters of the family life. The greatness of Saint Gadgemaharaj thus lies in his resolute mind.

We know from the biography of Saint Gadgemaharaj that he was an illiterate person. He was, however, very intelligent and all that he heard was meticulously assimilated by him. Thus from the quotations of Saint Tukaram and Ramdas given above, it will be seen that he had mastered the teachings of most of the old saints and was keen upon bringing them in practice. We really feel wonderstruck to see how such an illiterate person could think so much and shape his life for the uplift of others. Perhaps we can compare him in this respect with saint Tukaram, who also like Saint Gadgemaharaj had no opportunity to educate himself. We have therefore to conclude that this progress in life does not depend on learning or education but it comes automatically if you are blessed by God. Lastly we see that the behaviour of Saint Gadgemaharaj is very much parallel to another modern saint Shri Sai Baba in many respects. Begging of alms and sympathy for the poor has already been explained above and the parallel has been aptly drawn. Shri Sai Baba was a contemporary of Saint Gadgemaharaj and it is quite interesting to see the common way of thinking of both these saints. The self-less work of Shri Sai Baba is of equal importance and though Saint Gadgemaharaj appears to have drawn his inspiration from some other source, the nature their self-less work is almost

alike. We really lived in company of this saint for the last four years and in appreciating his greatness in many ways, we have to follow his principles in whatever way possible and try to lead a self-less life, which this great saint lived for so many years of his life.



OBITUARY

We regret very much to inform our readers that Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Secretary Saldas Mandal, Shiwaji Nagar, Pune, 5, cast away his mortal coil and left for his heavenly abode at Pune on Saturday the 27th December 1980, after a brief illness. He was 78 years old. As the Secretary of Saldas Mandal, he took great pains to collect funds for constructing the temple and hall at Shiwaji Nagar, Pune, 5.

The seventeenth All India Convention of Sai Devotees was held at Pune in December 1978 under the auspices of the Saldas Mandal. Shri Ramakrishnan toiled very hard to make the Convention a complete success. Shri Ramakrishnan made ceaseless efforts to collect advertisements and funds for the souvenir which was released on the occasion. By his death Shri Saldas Mandal has lost a sincere and honest worker and it will be difficult for that Mandal to fill in the vacuum thus created. We extend our heart-felt sympathies to the family members of Shri Ramakrishnan and pray at the feet of Shri Sai Baba that the departed soul may rest in peace.

— Editor

Sai Baba, the Saint of Shirdi

By Shri M. M. Amingad

(Continued from January 1981 issue)

CHAPTER III

BABA'S SECOND APPEARANCE, AND LASTING STAY AT SHIRDI

Chandbhai a renowned patil of Dhoop
Once lost his fair mare and began to hoop,
With a burdened saddle on his back,
Started in search of his mare in lack.

He tread many a path in forest,
In quest of it anywhere nearest,
But in vain he searched and travelled
To find his fair mare anywhere saddled.

While roaming in a jungle nearby,
In vain he lost his way thereby
To hear a peer's voice calling him
To come and sit and chat with Him.

Suddenly he turned to the voice so pleasing,
And found a teenager lad so beaming,
With a bright appearance so charming,
Sitting in muse under a tree so gleaming.

With a cap on head and a kafani on body bare
With a Satka under his armpit there,
Preparing a chilim smoke for lighting,
A bright boy in teens was seen under a tree sittin

The lad seeing Chandbhai passing by,
Called him to pause a while nigh,

To smoke a pipe and rest a while,
Under the shade of a mango tree file.

Chandbhai came and sat by His feet in grief
When asked by the Fakir about his brief
He told Him he was drowned in severe care,
As he was in futile search of his lost mare.

The Fakir said, "Go and search the nala nigh
Where thy favourite mare is grazing by"
He went and saw his fine mare standing bye
And was struck with wonder thereby.

He thought the Fakir a wonderful lad dear
An Avalia knowing all past, present, future clear
He was back to the Fakir with his fair mare,
Being completely free from his worry and care.

The chilim was filled with tobacco for smoking,
But fire to light and water to wet were wanting,
So He thrust the prong and got the live coal burning,
And dashed the Satka on the ground and water oozing.

Thus Thou lit the pipe with live coal
And wetted the 'chhapi' with water cold
Then Thou smoked and made Chandbhai smoke
Who then bowed his head in complete yoke.

The divine play between Fakir and Patil ended in joy,
And Chand again touched the peer's feet nigh,
prayed the Fakir to reside in his simple house,
And help him the divine cause to espouse.

The Fakir was pleased and said, "Yes sure,
As your prayer has sprung in spirit pure",
Thus the peer Sai with joy began to stay,
In royal renown in Chand's house with gay.

With marriage party alighting there,
Thou wert seen sitting fair,
Under a tree near Khandoba temple,
With a simple and in cheek dimple.

Mhalsapati the priest temple,
Called Thee first 'Sai' simple,
Thus Thou bore the title Baba Sai,
Till the doom's day O! Sai.

It was Mhalsapati and Tatyā who felt,
An urge to serve Thee—peer great,
They did feel something, in them wanting,
Without Thee they felt their heart panting.

This spiritual urge in them continued'
Their aimless spirit got fully thrived,
At the feet of Sai to be more sure,
His parting they could not ever endure.

To them He said, preach as you act
And don't forget the religion you act
As religion is not a market trading,
And serve God without an eye on Grading.

Neither the name nor fame,
Is not for God the meant Game
It is selfless service which only,
That will always please God mainly.

The miracles the peer can do,
Simply by their words Ganu knew,
And Ganu's praise brought into limelight,
The sacred seer Shri Sai to this height.

He is of just worth and strength
As He in all himself seeth,

A yogic mind is needed, to u'stand,
A seer of his status and stand.

He knew past, present and future,
He is here and every w'ere forever,
If you say Sai in prefect devotion,
He is there to guide you in pious notion.

Shri Sai the seer is still a mystery,
Though his name is writ in eternal history,
None can affirm him dead and gone
As He can control and wield every dawn.

Thus O! Sai the peer Thou landest
At Shirdi, the spot on earth holiest,
To make the suffering souls happy,
By enveloping them by Thy enternal trophy.

Thou landest at Shirdi with party marriage,
And lived Thou there Thy full age,
To free the souls from worries temporal
And to give them bliss eternal.

(to be continued)



Dear Editor, Shri Sai Leela, Bombay

I am really grateful for the favours you have shown me and the loving 'Sai Prasad' you have been sending. Your encouragement tempts me to continue my humble contributions to your good magazine. The new get-up is wonderful though costly. Those who had the good fortune of visiting the holy of Shirdi will be compelled to visit the place perpetually through their thoughts, which is important. May Baba bless you to keep it up!

With deep regards, Respectfully yours,

V. Ganesh

Flat 12, 120 B Rash Behary Avenue, Calcutta 700029

Towards A Purposeful Life

(Continued from January 1981 issue)

13. **ELEPHANT** - Even a mighty elephant gets trapped by the touch of a she-elephant and a devotee should be so careful not even to touch a doll, shaped like a woman. Baba has said "Avoid sins if you want happiness and peace of mind".

14. **THIEF** - As a thief cleverly steals the honey collected by millions of bees in the forest, so also a devotee should acquire knowledge from others. "Rejoice at others' happiness" is Baba's command.

15. **DEER** - The deer are trapped by the melodious songs of a hunter. A devotee if attracted by worldly pleasures will never attain salvation. The great sage Risyashruna, even though he had never seen a woman's face, was very easily attracted by the music and dance of court-dancers. To quote Baba "Truth is your best friend; it will save you lot of worries; will give you joy and peace of mind; and what is most important to remember is God ever helps and even serves the truthful".

16. **FISH** - Out of temptation to eat the worm tied at the end of a fisherman's bait, a fish gets caught. Unless a devotee controls the temptation to eat, God-realisation is impossible.

17. **PINGALA** - Ambition is the greatest sin in life. A desire to achieve more, shatters the peace of mind. Ultimately disappointment leads to unhappiness. This is learnt from the life of Pingala, a prostitute, who used to dress neatly and wait for a paramour. Whenever anyone used to approach her, she used to reject him expecting that somebody, who would pay more than him, will come later. There were many days when she used to wait till midnight without getting a paramour, who would pay upto her expectations. This prolonged disappointment brought forth the

truth to her and she repented. 'What a fool I have been! When the all pervading God exists in me, instead of meditating on Him, I have been aspiring for worldly men, who would only give money and misery. God would not only give me money but also a happy and blissful life.' This disappointment changed the attitude of Pingala's life. While glorifying God, Baba has said "But for His will, earth will, crumble to pieces, water will dry up, wind will stop, the sun shall not rise, the moon shall not shine, the rains shall stop, the crops shall not grow; men, animals and creatures all will perish; the world would be no more."

18. BIRD - A Bird got a piece of meat. It was afraid that some other bird might steal it away. It could not therefore eat it peacefully. While it was in this dilemma, an eagle comes and snatches away the piece of meat. Once it loses the piece of meat, the bird regains peace of mind. A devotee who is attached to worldly objects, can never have peace of mind.

19. CHILD - A child is considered to be God. It never thinks of good or bad, fame or ill-fame. It has no botheration to search for food or worry about a family. A devotee meditating on God is also child-like and thus leads a quiet and worry-free life.

20. WOMAN - There lived a young woman in a village and once she had to entertain some guests. At that time she was pounding rice inside the house and the many bangles, she wore, were making noise. The clever girl did not want the guests to know of her poverty and hence one by one she removed all the bangles except one in each of the arms. A devotee also attains salvation by remaining alone like the single bangle on the girl's arm.

21. HUNTER - The concentration power of a hunter is well-known. It is said that when a hunter is sharpening the tip of his arrow, he would not even notice an emperor passing across him. With this concentration a devotee should meditate on God.

22. SNAKES - The snakes remain single. They are too shy to be seen and they never stay in one place. A devotee should remain alone, talk very little, avoid a crowd and always think of God.

23. SPIDER - The spider weaves a magic web around it and roams in it. Ultimately, it swallows the entire web and retains inside. This is similar to the all pervading paramatman, who with His Leelas roams in the world, created by him and ultimately retains everything in Himself. Baba has glorified by saying "this world is nothing else but His own manifestation. His is the order paramount."

24. WASP - The wasp collects a worm and daily goes on pricking it by its sting. The worm by its constant fear of the wasp, ultimately attains its shape. Similarly a devotee by continuous 'Namasmaramam' realises God and attains salvation. While asking the devotees to always chant God's name, Baba has said, "Let your Life serve as a lesson to others".

Thus by following the examples of these 24 Gurus, one can lead a happy and purposeful life.

Our minds are clouded with the conceit of the inventions in science, which have blinded us to the existence of God Himself. But human destiny and the fulfillment of creation lies in removing this conceit and establishing the supreme bond of love, which ties the human world to the feet of God. Revival and regeneration of this fine feeling in the heart of man is the supreme need of the hour and Shri Sai Baba has imposed upon himself this labour of love.

Dear Sai brothers, now our duty is to co-operate with Him in the awakening of the spirit in us to the reality of the world. Let us not pester Him with our petty demands of worldly ameliorations. Let us rise to the occasion and sharpen our intellect with all the retinue in its struggle to catch the glimpse of reality. Only its aim should be to accept its defeat and melt with its whole personality into continual flow of love towards Bhagwan Sai Baba, unchecked by sorrows and unimpeded by other odds of life and pain of death. Baba has lived his philosophy of life and has taught the world not merely by precept, but by example the serious lesson of life. ★

Dr. G. R. Vijaykumar
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Shree Sai Baba is Always with His Children

When my father-in-law, Shri T. Nageswara Rao, showed me the letter of Shri Madhukar Wakhare to the editor, published in the September 1980 issue of Shri Sai Leela, I remembered about the letter of Shri Sai brother T. R. Anand, encouraging me to pen down my blissful experiences of Shri Sai Leelas. The outcome is this article; but Shri Sai gave me so many wonderful experiences making the title of this article real and truth in my life. I do not know which one of those Shri Sai Leelas to pen down first. When I read the article "Shri Sai Baba Came To My Rescue" by Shri Vyayaraju Bhima Raju, appeared in October 1980 Shri Sai Leela issue, I remembered similar Sai Leela happened in my life and I would like to share it with my Shri Sai brothers and sisters.

On 29th morning, November 1979 my marriage took place at Emani (A. F.). After midnight, our marriage party returned to my native place Guntur taking the bride with us. My wedding ring was loose to my ring finger and tight to the middle finger. During the Gruhapravesam in the early morning hours of 30th, our priest frequently asked my wedding ring for using in the puja. After that puja, I was allowed to have a nap. When I got up in the morning, I found my wedding ring missing. Without telling anybody, I searched everywhere in the house, but I could not find it. My mother and maternal uncle sensed my perturbed movements and insisted to know about my search. I told them about my predicament. They searched for it but were not successful. An inmate of my house, Smt. Jayaprada, prayed to Shri Baba and swore that she would offer a coconut if Shri Baba gets the wedding ring back.

On that day I tried to avoid meeting my wife for the news would be bitter to any daughter-in-law on the day of her entering into her husband's house.

I prayed to Shri Sai that His new child should not be punished for my carelessness. If this ring is not found the event would become a painful memory to the new bride and it would be a stigma on her in our superstitious society. I was confident that this was a play of Shri Sai and the wedding ring would be found. Everybody in the house was worried about the missing ring. I told them that Shri Sai would get us the ring, and not to worry about it.

In the night on 30th, when my uncle was searching for a comb over the mirrored almerrah, he found the ring there. He took it and gave it to me.

Smt. Jayaprada broke a coconut at the feet of Shri Sai. We were so happy that our joy knew no bounds because the wedding ring was found.

Many people at a higher spiritual plane say that we should not be after miracles; but Shri Sai Leelas make us feel His presence, His Love and Grace. These Leelas if experienced frequently, how much electrified would be our devotion to Him. By His Leelas we know that He is with us and that will develop in us Nishtha and Saboori. ★

K. Saratchandra
Old Bank St., Near H. P. O., Kothapet, Guntur 522001



Offering To Sadguru Sai

O' SADGURU SAI

I offer you in imagination,
The throne of my heart
Bedecked with jewels,
The creation of my mind...
A cool bath, par-excellent dress,
All shining and edged
With design of gold...
Sandal paste scented

With musk for application
To your pious forehead...
Flowers-colourful and of
Surpassing fragrance and beauty
Jasmine, marigold, champak, roses,
I offer at your holy feet...
Burning incense and camphor
Which I place before you
And hold a sacred light...

O' SADGURU SAI

You are compassion incarnate,
Kindly accept these offerings...
My offerings are nothing
But the offerings of love,
Dedication, devotion and worship...

Mrs. Snehlata Bipin Swadia
307-B Kamal Kunj - Datta Mandir Road
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NEED FOR PRAYER

Shortly before noon, near the Lake Market, I met my young friend Sunder, who had returned from Shirdi a few days back. He had come back from Shirdi, but memories linger... He was ecstatic about his visit. He said, some lakhs of people gathered before the great Shrine of Sai Baba. Such is the compelling influence of Sai Baba, who had shed His mortal coil long, long ago! Such is His infinite mercy towards those, who come to see him! However, had Sunder continued to relate his experiences, we would lose track of the passage of time and block the busy thoroughfare. So, after a brief talk, we parted.

When I left him, my mind recalled my own visits to that holy place.

The august presence of the marvellous statue of the Master poured love-laden light and brightened up the clouds of sorrows of the humanity, who thronged there. The prevailing sentiment, so to speak, is one of joy full to repletion, although I had seen heavy hearts with their burdens of woes to be cast at the feet of Sai Baba as light hearts, who rejoice since their prayers were answered in due time.

Prayers ? What's the need of prayer ?

Is it the act of stretching out the bowls of endless wishes to be fulfilled or placing mile-long petitions of ills of the world to be warded off at the wide-open portals of the palace of God?

Or, is prayer, a magic soap to rinse off the grime of frequent foibles, the countless sins, which tarnish us while we are amidst our mundane avocations?

Is prayer a mere flattery before the Lord out of fear or to gain some favour or is it a sincere song of praise of the Merciful One ?

Is it set-phrases one utters mechanically morning and evening because so-and-so advised it? Or is it an escapism from the problems of life? Is it then a probing into the mysteries of life?

Is it a convenient cloak to hide our guilts? Is it a fortification from the onslaught of evil things or malefic planets?

Is it an electric whip to tame and humble the demonical 'Ego' that romps like a wild elephant in the jungle of our hearts?

Is it the mobilisation of our soul, seeking its way to the original home of bliss? Can it be a knot of the individual soul and the Cosmic Soul? Is it the process of deepening our consciousness? What else could 'prayer' be?

Well, one could go on doing research in this line if one is inclined to do this. We all know, since Vedic times prayer has been dancing on the lips of mankind. We have prayers for health, wealth, peace, prosperity of mankind. Every race, religion including the Theosophists have a set of prayer for them. Each according to their evolution. Prayer, as someone remarked, is, 'a continuation of evolution.'

It is a settled practice with many that they tend to pray God for every little difficulty they encounter in life, whereas, those of a stronger fibre rely on their own strength and intelligence and seek God's help when their problems loom like spikes of the gateway and reduce their minds to a nonplus. Very few of us pray for a 'stronger back' to bear the trouble. Likewise, quite a lot of us pray for a change of bad circumstance and not for a change of character.

Bertrand Russell believed in the human potential and observed in "The Impact of Science on Society" that man should "get on with the job of fertilising the desert, melting Arctic ice and killing each other with perpetually improving technique. Some...activities will do good, some harm, but all alike will show

power. And so, in this godless universe, we shall become gods..." But then, I feel, man cannot become God by displaying his arrogance and not for long, anyway. Prayer to the Supreme Power is an indispensable component of machinery of human life. God does not favour free-wheeling activities of man. Even if man were to forget God, He reminds of it. Sometimes all of a sudden, He causes a crunch, and lo, even he, who boasts of his animal strength and intellectual acumen, is brought on his knees to lift up his hands in prayer. In other words, God, who is the Source of all living beings, wants man back home like our mother. Enough of wandering! Gandhiji aptly said: "Prayer is the longing of the soul." But, most of us have made prayer as a mere appeal to ask useless things whose implications we little know about.

My late father (Sri PSV Aiyer) in one of his writings on Baba wrote: "Let's pray Baba to help us in getting single-hearted devotion to him that we all may come in for His grace and share in the bliss, He is so eager to give." Yes, Baba desired that from his beloved ones. He had remarked, "Look at the mango tree in blossom! If all flowers turned into fruits, what a splendid crop it will be! But do they?" Precisely, as Lord Krishna told Arjuna in the Gita, "Among thousands of men, one, perchance, strives for perfection; even among these successful strivers, only one, perchance, knows Me in essence." We can search our hearts and find out in what category our prayers fall.

Summing up, one can say, the essential condition of prayer is a simple, pure, sincere, loving heart wanting Him alone with a mind totally free of all attachments. A man, who satisfying these conditions, will raise from prayer a saintly being radiating peace and joy all around, his love embracing all, including animals and birds... Thus, the end-product of prayer would then be a total change of heart and mind - from the brute to a true image of God in flesh and blood.



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Baba: a Perfect Actor!

Every Saturday, in the evening I visit the ancient Hanuman temple in new Delhi. After offering puja and prasada, I proceed to the platform in the main hall, occupy a particular place on it, which faces the idol of Shri Hanuman in the sanctum sanctorum and recite Shri Bheemrupi stotra of Swami Ramdas in Marathi, Shri Hanuman Chalisa in Hindi and Shri Vadvanal stotra in Sanskrit. This ritual I have followed for years now. Praise be to the Master, I do not remember a single occasion when I had found my favourite place having been occupied by any other devotee.

It was Saturday, but not an ordinary one. It was the 26th of January too. The Republic Day was being celebrated with much gusto, pomp and pageantry in the metropolis of India. The whole city was wearing a festive look. Thousands upon thousands of people had poured into the city from the neighbouring towns and villages to participate in the celebrations elaborately and meticulously organized by the New Central Government and witness the breath-taking army parade, exhibition of tableaux and performance of folk dances of India. Roads, streets, lanes and bylanes were crowded with jay walkers and merry makers and all around one saw and breathed an atmosphere of bonhomie, gaiety, festivity and fraternity.

In the midst of all this, while on my way to the temple, I was constantly assailed and distracted by one fear. Since thousands of people from the neighbouring areas had wended their way to the Capital, I was sure a large number of religious minded people among them would not let go the opportunity to visit a famous and hallowed place like the Hanuman temple in New Delhi. If this happened, I feared, would I get my usual place on the platform for recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and the other stotras? The matter was indeed so small and insignificant!

Yet human nature being what it is, even this small and insignificant matter worried me no end all the way from my residence to the temple.

I arrived at the temple. For a while I stopped at the marble staircase leading to the main hall and silently prayed to the Master to grant my wish, small and petty as it was and keep the place on the platform 'reserved' for me!

With much trepidation, I stepped into the main hall of the temple and alas! My worst fears came true! The main hall was over-crowded with devotees and the sanctum sanctorum was jampacked with worshippers. There was a serpentine queue also of worshippers waiting to enter the sanctum sanctorum. I nervously but hopefully looked sideways at the platform and lol The worst had come to happen! Devotees had cornered every available space on the platform and my favourite place was occupied by a couple of persons, who seemed to have made themselves so very comfortable that, I imagined, they would continue to sit there till eternity!

Crestfallen and with my enthusiasm almost at its nadir, I joined the long queue of worshippers outside the sanctum sanctorum. After a time, which seemed ages to me in the funny and self-pitying state of mind I then was, I found myself at the head of the queue. I handed over flower garland, prasad and other things to the priest, bowed down before the idol of Shri Hanuman and hurriedly came out into the main hall.

I took a furtive glance at the platform and noticed that there was no change in the situation except that my favourite place on the platform was no longer occupied by persons, whom I had seen earlier. In their place stood a man who, by his dress and deportment, appeared to be a peon or personal attendant of a Maharaja or a big shot. The man was tall, sturdy and had a telling look about him. He was elegantly

dressed in green 'achkan' with a matching belt embroidered with 'zari' and spotlessly white 'churidar' pyjamas and wore a beautiful white turban with golden and red stripes which further enhanced its beauty. Near his feet lay two trays, one filled with puja articles such as a flower-garland, agarbattis, dhoop, camphor etc. and the other with fruits and sweets of various kinds. Obviously, I thought, the man was waiting for the arrival of his master. As I slowly made my way to the platform, I noticed that the man was intently looking at me with a smiling face. But frustrated and sour as I was, I saw wickedness in that smile! I imagined the man was taking a secret delight in my plight and discomfiture! What cheek! I thought.

I inched my way through the thick crowd of eager worshippers and stopped a few inches away from the platform to take stock of the situation. Suddenly and clearly I heard the words, "Welcome sir, I am waiting for you". ("Aiye Saab, main apkahi intazar kar raha hun"). I looked up and saw that the man, with the two trays at his feet, was beckoning me to where he was standing. He put away the two trays, stepped aside and lovingly, with his face lit up with bewitching smile, invited me to occupy my favourite seat on the platform.

I was so elated at my good fortune in retrieving my favourite place that I simply failed to comprehend that something strange and incredible, something out of the ordinary had happened! I not only completely forgot to show the elementary courtesy of thanking the man for his great and gracious act, but even did not take another look at the man.

I settled down in my seat to read the Hanuman Chalisa and the other stotras. It took me six minutes or so to complete the reading and then good manners returned to me as suddenly as they had left me! I decided, though late, to express my thanks to the man for his exceptionally kind gesture in giving up his place on the platform for my sake. I rose from my seat and looked around me for the good samaritan but he was nowhere near me.

Standing on the platform, I surveyed the whole crowd before me to look for my benefactor, who would have been easily spotted by me in the midst of the crowd because of his very distinctive dress. But where was he? I got off the platform and frantically searched for him inside and outside the temple; but he had vanished without a trace!

I approached a priest, who was known to me and who was sitting on the platform a few paces away from me. I gave him an exact description of the man and asked him if he had seen a man of that description coming in or going out of the temple. He said that he had been sitting there for quite a long time, but had not noticed the man I was looking for.

Wisdom then dawned on me! I realized that "the peon or personal attendant of a Maharaja or a big shot" was none other than the master Himself, ever watchful, ever alert, ever compassionate, ever merciful! The dress, the Master had donned, (perfect actor and clever masquerader as He is!) completely misled me and put me off my guard! But I ought not to have been so daft as not to have understood the significance and nature of the words, "Welcome sir, I am waiting for you".

I came out of the temple in a mood full of remorse and self-reproachment. On my way back home, I reflected on the very strange and incredible happening. Recollection came to me of that chapter in Shri Hemadpant's 'Shri Sai Satcharit' in which the author, in his inimitable style, has recounted how the Master, masquerading as a rajput tonga driver had carried Bāpūgir in his tonga to the residence of Shri Nanasāheb Chandorkar, left him there and then disappeared without a trace.

The lesson that was brought home to me (as it was umpteen times before) was that the Master in His infinite mercy fulfills the smallest wish of His devotee just as a loving mother attends to the slightest whim of her beloved child, regardless of the trouble or sacrifice she has to undergo. Glory be to the Master!

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RAMAVALLABHADAS

Marathi literature abounds in devotional and philosophical writings of the great saints Tukaram, Ramdas, Jnaneshwar, Eknath, Namadev and others. However Ramavallabhadas, whose Shri Krishna Jayanti Vratkatha is celebrated with great eclat by Chitrapur Saraswats (who speak konkani), is virtually unknown to many people. The author discovered this repeatedly whenever he mentioned Ramavallabhadas to his numerous friends and acquaintances, including some top literateurs. Hence this article is being written so as to acquaint them of their lost treasure.

Saint Ramavallabhadas in his 'poorvashram' was known as Tukopant. He was born in 1610 A. D. at Deogiri (Daulatabad) of parents of a religious bent of mind. From his childhood, he displayed high intelligence and soon after his Upanayanam, Ramavallabhadas acquired a mastery over the Vedas and the sacred literature. The religious atmosphere at home fostered bhakti in the young boy and gradually he developed a complete dispassion towards the world and its glittering attractions. Ramavallabhadas spent most of his time in Satsang, Shravan, Kirtan and worship. His father went on a pilgrimage of holy places and so even at a young age, Ramavallabhadas had to leave his village and work for administration of the ruler of Deogiri in order to support his family. He, however continued his sadhana as before and gradually his desire for self-knowledge developed into a deep yearning which, in turn, resulted in spontaneous writing of poetry. This intense love for the Lord naturally brought a Guru in the form of a sannyasin, who gave him a Mantra and taught him the traditional wisdom. Ramavallabhadas became a Jnani and he completely renounced the world.

Tukopant's father, Ambajipant, was a Nayak in the historical fort of Deogiri near Aurangabad. In his eighteenth year, he

runs through every line of the bhajans composed by Saint Ramavallabhadas, which are sung during Shri Krishna Jayanti Festival.

Several disciples of Ramavallabhadas-Lakshmidhardas, Krishnadas and others also wrote beautiful songs in the same style as that of their Guru. Krishnadas went to Hemmady in Coondapur district where he celebrated Janmashtami. The author remembers with nostalgia, one of the Janmashtami celebrations at Hemmady which he attended in his childhood. Gradually this vrata spread among the Chitrapur Saraswats all over North and South Kanara. Naturally the vrata travelled with them to Bombay and other places wherever the members of the community migrated.

One of the most enjoyable annual events in the author's childhood was this Krishna Jayanti celebration in Saraswat Colony, Santacruz. In addition to the public celebration, the author's grandmother had her own vrata at home. Of course, we, the children of the Colony, loved and adored Krishna for his pranks and mischief. We admired Him for being so colourful and for His excellent tastes in food, which we received as prasad. (In the last however, Ganesh was a strong competitor of Krishna!)

In the Saraswat Club at Santacruz in Bombay, there is a beautiful sculpture of Krishna which is decorated differently every day of the eight day festival. On Monday Krishna becomes Shiva, on Tuesday or Friday He assumes the form of a Goddess, on Saturday Hanuman and on Sunday the Sun. Slowly we learnt to sing the bhajans set to beautiful ragas and talas unknowingly developing appreciation of the great classical music of India. We knew most of the bhajans by heart. Whenever any word in a bhajan reminded the children of somebody in the Saraswat Colony, they uttered the word loudly; this "mischief" was passed on to the succeeding generations! Last year the author was happy to note that this tradition still continues!

It is only recently that the author began to appreciate the deep meanings contained in the devotional songs of Ramavallabhadās. Here an attempt is made to present a small sampling of his great philosophical poetry and urge the readers to read the original रमावल्लभदासविरचित श्रीकृष्णजयंती व्रतकथा 4th Edition, 1978, B. R. Karkal and G. S. Sthalekar, Flat no. 78, 3/5 Talmakiwadi, Tardeo Road, Bombay, 400 007.

All of us are born innocent. As we grow up, we soon discover that there is no total happiness in any of the life experiences. Certain events such as successes, achievements etc. make us happy for some time and some others such as loss of relatives or friends, failures etc. make us sad. Instinctively we avoid unpleasant situations and hanker after the pleasant ones. Every experience leaves something to be desired and we feel inadequate. We yearn after something that will give us complete happiness. During this time we are constantly exposed to the enchanting stories from the Puranas and learn how Prahlaḍ, Dhruva and others won over the Lord as a result of their intense devotion. We begin to live in a world of fantasy hoping to receive the Lord's darshan and pray intensely. The following bhajan of Shri Ramavallabhadās calls Lord Krishna ardently and requests him to meet the saint.

प्र० ॥ १० ॥ नंदाच्या नंदना । मनाच्या मोहना । तुजवांचुनि
 ताप जाई ना । तूं ये रे कान्हा ॥ १ ॥ भेट देई रे मधुसूदना ॥ १ ॥
 संसारायातना आता मि सोसेना । वृत्तितल्लिन मनभावना । तूं ये रे
 कान्हा ॥ २ ॥ संख्यांची वासना गोविंद विटेना । चित्त चंचल स्थिर
 होई ना । तूं ये रे कान्हा ॥ ३ ॥ राजीवलोचना । सवेग छेदना । जीव
 देईल जरि तूं येई ना । तूं ये रे कान्हा ॥ ४ ॥ कृष्णसंभवन गोपिका
 टांकी ना । वृत्तितल्लिनमनभावना । तूं ये रे कान्हा ॥ ५ ॥ जीवाच्या
 जीवना । सुखाच्या निघना । श्रीरमावल्लभदास माये ना । तूं ये रे
 कान्हा ॥ ६ ॥ भेट देई रे मधुसूदना ॥ श्री ॥

When nothing happens after years of worship, bhajans etc. then we begin to blame ourselves for our sins and ask for the Lord's pardon. In the following bhajan Shri Ramavallabhadas requests the lord to excuse him for his sin.

राग-देस, ताल-त्रिवट

प्र० ॥ १२७ ॥ अपराध क्षमा, करिं गा गोपाळा । परमकृपाळा
देवदेवा ॥ घृ० ॥ सर्वगता तुज, एकदेशि पाहे । यात्रा करीताहे,
तीर्थोतीर्थी ॥ १ ॥ चित्तातीता तुज, चित्ति माझे घरी । अप्रमिता करी,
प्रेमी तसें ॥ २ ॥ चहूंचातीत, स्तुतिचा विलास । रमावल्लभदास,
करूं द्यावे ॥ ३ ॥ श्री ॥

We visit holy places, meet holy men, read 'self-help' books and try anything that anyone suggests such as Asanas, Pranayama, fasts etc. The following bhajan describes these various ways of praying to the Lord.

प्र० ॥ १७२ ॥ अष्टांग योगाचे फळ । सांख्ययोगाचे सफल ।
आणिक कर्मअनुष्ठान । वेद पढावा निर्मळ । दुर्धर तप आणि संन्यास ।
नाना साधनें तुंबळ । शिणोनि आले भक्तांपाशि । तंव ते गुरुकृपा
अकळ ॥ १ ॥ जोगुवा अनुभवावा । मातें घालिन हो साचा । जीव-
शिवभाव वारुनियां । कवळ देई अमृताचा । दारोदार हिंडवेना ।
तुजला गाईन वाचा । संतजन मानवति । उपरी उदो भाग्याचा
॥ घृ० ॥ प्रचीति परडिकरि । शांति दर्शनी बरि । सकळ आंगि
ळेऊनियां । दिवटि ज्ञानाची घरी । तेथे स्नेह जळतसे । उदो झालासे
अंबरि । नरनारि मिळोनियां । एक झालि चराचरि ॥ २ ॥ देखोनियां
गोंधळास । गुरुकृपेचा उल्हास । जोगुवा दिघला तेणे । वेच नाहिं
जयास । मग मागणें खुटलेसे । सुख झालें असमास । सकळाधार
मूळस्थान । रमावल्लभदास ॥ ३ ॥ श्री ॥

(to be continued)

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Sai Baba Corrects A Defaulter

A young man came to Shirdi. At Bhojagraha (Gurukripa) he saw the crowd. His mind was overpowered by a sense of mischief. Without purchasing lunch coupon he entered the dining hall and managed to eat food free of charge.

Under the above circumstances, he could have been caught, scolded and humiliated. It is understood that those who worship certain deities suffer heavily if they commit a default. On these lines Baba could have created pain in his stomach or could have inflicted any other physical or mental punishment.

Merciful Lord adopted a unique method to correct the above defaulter. As soon as he came out of the dining hall, instantaneously Baba made him hungry again. He felt as if he had not taken his lunch. He was extremely sorry for his mischief; but he was also happy to learn a lesson. Such a correction did not leave the bitter effect of punishment. He developed devotion to Baba and not only silently accepted his mistake but took a bold step to narrate the incident to others for the benefit of Sai devotees.

Man by nature is quite selfish. He tries to solve his own problems at the cost of others and in this process many a time he does not care to preserve the rights of others. In daily life he commits several defaults. Force of habit causes similar defaults (to a lesser degree) at the place of pilgrimage. People jump queues, seek favours for personal comfort and gain by creating inconvenience, hardship and loss to others. Those who behave in this fashion should note that the net result of such manipulations is zero as referred to in the above story.

By the grace of Baba, the conduct of Shirdi Sansthan employees and devotees in general is quite satisfactory as discussed in the editorial of December, 1980. ★

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The Ways of Sai Baba are Inscrutable

The ways of Sai Baba are inscrutable. He did not ever blow any mantra or gave initiation to His devotees even during his life-time. He had never attempted to institutionalise the process of Guru - disciple relationship. Yet He took full care of His devotees, who felt that they are totally secured under His all - pervading compassion. He prescribed many a method to several of His devotees in order to awaken their higher senses and to put them on spiritual path. He asked some devotees to recite daily the sacred scriptures (to do nitya parayana); some to repeat God's name of their faith; some to undertake pilgrimages; some to do intense japa and meditation; some to take up repairs to temples and masjids etc. We many recall numerous such instances from 'Sai Satcharita'. Sai Baba had asked Upasani Baba to desist from doing any work and to sit quietly in Khandobamandir for a period of 4 years. Sai baba alone knows the method best-suited to each one of His devotee, judging from the level of the spiritual development one did attain.

It may look curious and even puzzling as to why Sai Baba had asked Upasani Baba to sit quiet in Khandobamandir without involving himself in any work. Sai Baba assured, in no uncertain terms, that He would look after Upasani Baba in fulfilment of the promise made to him viz. to confer a Suvarnapatra on him by transforming him into a Siddha purusha of highest calibre. One may doubt whether it was a joke cut on him or else how can one expect to grow spiritually to the stature of a Siddhapurusha by sitting quietly in a corner? But the words of Sai Baba were always impregent and were never untrue. Let us make an in-depth study to understand the secret of the method suggested to Upasani Baba.

By reading 'Sai Satcharita' one can understand that Sai Baba had asked His devotees not to bother about attaining

ashtanga siddhis, practising yoga and mastering ancient scriptures, etc. He made it clear that those methods would add to more confusion and illusion rather than illumining oneself. One would be intoxicated with pride and arrogance when once he gains proficiency in scriptures or attains siddhis and ceaselessly involves himself in self-aggrandisement rather than self-illumination. This happens because the man, the average man, has not learnt to regulate himself and his thoughts. This must have been the reason why Sai Baba discouraged such methods to His devotees.

The two cardinal principles Sai Baba taught to His devotees were 1. Nishtha (unflinching faith) and 2. Saburi (patient perseverance). He cited certain instances from His own life (service to His Guru for 12 years) to instil confidence in His devotees. In the story of Radhabai Deshmukh (chap XVIII & XIX of Sai Satcharita) Sai Baba narrated how He served His Guru with pin-pointed devotion for 12 years, how He spent days and nights in gazing at His Guru's gleaming eyes for getting His self altogether, how His mind was filled with no other thought except that of His guru, how He achieved total identification with His Guru in thought, spirit and deed. Sai Baba advised the stubborn old lady, Radhabai Deshmukh not to expect to receive any mantra from any body but to follow His own example and to make Him and His physical form as an object and idol of worship and to let her thoughts gradually be filled with that of Sai Baba. To quote from 'Sai Satcharita' "Oh mother, my Guru never taught me any mantra, then how shall I blow any mantra in your ears? Just remember that Guru's tortoise-like loving glance gives us happiness. Do not try to get mantra or upadesh from anybody. Make me the sole object of your thoughts and actions and you will, no doubt, attain paramartha (the spiritual goal of life). Look at me whole heartedly and I, in turn, look at you similarly. Sitting in this Masjid, I speak the truth, nothing but the truth. No sadhanas,

nor proficiency in the six shastras, are necessary. Have faith and confidence in your Guru. Believe fully that Guru is the sole Actor or Doer. Blessed is he who knows the greatness of his Guru and thinks him to be Hari, Hara and Brahma (Trimurti) incarnate".

This gospel of Sai Baba was intended not only to that lucky Radhabai Deshmukh but also a nectar to all His devotees, to every one of us. The method prescribed by Sai Baba has indeed a deep spiritual significance. Such a practice, if followed ceaselessly, would help a seeker to detach his mind from his actions and he would shape himself, in course of time, into a true karmayogi, doing things for things' sake and yet concentrating his mind on Sai Baba, the bliss incarnate. The mind of such a seeker gradually attains a state of steadiness. It is the 'steady mind' that is clearly receptive to spiritual awakening and is sure to attain the state of total identification with the object of worship, as described by Sai Baba in the story of Radhabai Deshmukh. Sai Baba assured His devotees that such seekers are sure to experience a total merger with the divine or cosmic consciousness. Under the wake of this assurance of Sai Baba, under His all-pervading compassion and omniscient guidance, it is up to His devotees to put into practice, honestly and earnestly, the methods prescribed by Sai Baba.

In the context of the golden advice given by Sai Baba to Radhabai Deshmukh and Hemadpant regarding the method of practising meditation, we may try to understand the significance of the method suggested to Upasani Baba. Sai Baba knew fully well that Upasani Baba was a highly developed soul, having done intense tapas and attained the state of samadhi in his earlier years. His mind might have attained the state of 'steadiness'. Sai Baba had therefore asked him to sit 'quiet' in Khandoba mandir, quite aloof from the crowd around. The real intention in asking Upasani Baba to sit quiet was to keep his mind 'quite', free from all thoughts. Upasani Baba was asked to achieve a

state of 'thought-free' and a 'still mind' during his seclusion in Khandoba Mandir. 'Stillness' of mind is the highest state of spiritual development one can perceive and it is possible only when oneself is, in and out, detached. Such a 'still mind' is ready to realise the self and experience merger with the supreme consciousness. We can now understand that what was best suited to him was prescribed to Upasani Baba by Shri Sai Baba.

It may be interesting to know that the method suggested to Upasani Baba was not casual as it was apparent but carries the crux and essence of what all is said in the sacred scriptures. The most peculiar aspect of Sai Baba's methods is that the seeker follows the path laid down in the ancient scriptures unknowingly and involuntarily and every devotee of Sai Baba feels assured that he is receiving the guidance of Sai Baba at every step and at every stage.

It is pertinent to recall here the famous quotation from Jagadguru Adi Sankaracharya (Bhaja Govindam)

सत्संगत्वे निःसंगत्वम् । निःसंगत्वे निर्मोहत्वम् !
निर्मोहत्वे निश्चलत्वम् । निश्चलत्वे जीवन्मुक्तिः ॥

"Satsangatve Nissangatvam, Nissangatve Nirmohatvam
Nirmohatve Nischalatatvam, Nischalatatve Jeevanmuktihi"

Is it not astounding that the method prescribed by Sai Baba to Upasani Baba is not different from the sayings in the scriptures? How apt and true it is that Hemandpant repeatedly proclaimed in 'Sai Satcharita' that the ways of Sai Baba are inscrutable?

Let us humbly bow before the Lord Sainath, the Lord of Lords, to shower His grace in abundance and to guide us on the right path. ★

S. S. Madhava Rao

16-11-741/3 A, Moosarambagh Dilshuknagar, Hyderabad-500036
Andhra Pradesh.

Mrs. Sarojini Mulye



Mrs. Sarojini Mulye is the President Designate of the Seventh Annual Gathering of the contributors to Shri Sai Leela Magazine, which is proposed to be held at Shirdi on the 3rd and 4th of February 1981. She is the daughter of late Shri Laxman Ganesh Mahajani, whose mention is made in Chapters 12 and 35 of the Sai Satcharita as "Kaka Mahajani". Mrs.

Mulye was born on 2nd May 1910 at Bandra and she was blessed by Shri Sai Baba in her childhood. She inherited Sai devotion from her father, who was a sincere devotee of Shri Sai Baba. The name of the mother of Mrs. Mulye was Savitribai, who was also a Sai devotee.

Mrs. Mulye studied upto Matriculation at the Hujurpaga High School, Pune. She was married with Shri Bhaskar Vinayak Mulye at Indore in December 1928. Shri Mulye was originally serving in Holkar State Offices at Indore and after the merger of the states, he was taken over in the Administrative Services of Madhya Bharat and Madhya Pradesh. When he retired from service in 1962, he was holding the responsible post of Education Secretary. After retirement, Shri Mulye is doing social work in various public institutions at Indore.

Mrs. Sarojini Mulye has only one daughter, named Leela. Mrs. Mulye has love for classical music and she plays on the Harmonium and Dilruba, wherein she has passed many examinations. She was an Office Bearer of the Tukoganj Bhagini Mandal for a long time and has liking for social work. Only due to our good luck, we have been able to persuade such an accomplished lady like Mrs. Mulye to preside over the ensuing gathering.

— EDITOR.

What is Vedant Philosophy ?

What philosophy does Bhagawadgita inculcate? At the outset it may be said that, "it showers the nectar of advaita." It sets forth the divine origin of man and the way to reach the divine, being freed from the thralldom of maya. The gradual stages and modes of treading in the path of paramartha are clearly though succinctly shown by the Lord to Arjun. Bhagawadgita is thus the basis of the advaita or Vedant philosophy.

“सो ऽहमस्मि” “He I am” or “That thou art” तत्त्वमसि These two short sentences form the basis of the whole doctrine of the Vedant or the adwait philosophy and on the realization and proper understanding of their inner meaning lies the theory of salvation. In these sentences “स” and “तत्” stand for the Almighty and अहम् and त्वम् for the finite soul are shown by the words अस्मि and असि.

The adwait philosophy inculcates that the supreme soul and the embodied soul are essentially one and that the finite being (जीवात्मा), freed from the veil of maya (माया-Nescience) is Brahma. By समाधि and the other ways discussed herein, the embodied soul begins to realize the intrinsic condition and becomes identified with the Almighty.

During समाधि, the embodied soul and the supreme soul are in union “(समाधि : समतावस्था जीवात्मपरमात्मनो :)”. There is much to be done before one can reach the stage of being able to have a समाधि perfectly. So one can follow the ways of Shri Sai Baba when He went into समाधि. The Bhagawadgita shows साधना (the ways) of salvation and is thus a science for actual practice.

It is not a mere verbal knowledge of “अहम् ब्रह्मास्मि । That is the aim. There should be a realization, experience (अनुभव)

of such a stage, the highest goal of the Vedant philosophy, which is मोक्ष (salvation). When this stage is reached, then the devotee obtains an experience of the condition, described as follows:-

“विद्यते हृदयमंथि : । छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशया : ॥
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कामीणि । तस्मिन् दृष्टे परापरे ॥”

“Samsara or phenomenal existence, whose main factor is the bondage of birth and death in succession, is unreal and is the result of illusion. Due to ignorance, the supreme self, is mistaken for the unreal world in the same way in which a rope may be mistaken for a serpent, in the dusk of the evening. Both bondage and liberation are thus illusory. Since there is no real bondage at all, how can there be liberation from it? Yet, liberation or moksha is relatively spoken of and can only result from a thorough knowledge of the reality behind and beyond and underneath and within the real.”

The Vedant philosophy is discussed in the Upanishads. After passing through the preliminary stages of action and devotion, the devotee becomes fit for the higher stage, which sets forth how the human soul is a spark of the divine soul or Supreme being and how जीवात्मा can reunite with paramatma. This process of जीवात्मा becoming ready to be united with परमात्मा is naturally a long one and must take a long time as Bhagwan well points out when He says:-

“अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्तो याति परी गतिम् ।”

We all acknowledge the gradual rise from one step to another in the pursuit of worldly sciences or arts. Why then and how can the present tendency to jump to the highest step be justifiable? Even at the cost of repetition it must be said emphatically that when several years are required to learn the arts or sciences that enable one to earn one's bread and live comfortably in this world, is it not necessary that much more ~~time~~ should be required for attaining the highest good? Where

then lies the mistake? The fault lies with us, who while earning our bread, forget the higher duties and our God.

Shri Tukaram's memorable words "आत्मा अनुभवी चोखाळील्या वाटा" must always be borne in mind. Vedant does not discourage any good act, but on the contrary that greatest system of philosophy advocates the doing of everything for the public good and offering it up as the worship to the supreme soul.

The Bhagawadgeeta preaches the philosophy, which the great and small may follow, without any distinction. Nothing is to be abandoned for the performance of the functions which lead to paramartha, but everything, every good and useful thing, is to be done in a higher frame of mind, in a self-less manner. Activity, however, is not to be shunned, for the constant refrain of the Lord's advice to Arjun is "Fight for duty's sake" with the mind devoted to the Almighty.

The embodied soul owes a duty to the family, to his country, to the people amongst whom he moves or is born. The service of all these in a disinterested manner is a noble worship of God; the Creator of this phenomenal world in the ordinary sense, who pervades it, witnessing like a lamp the actions of the finite beings who are endowed with a power of raising themselves to the highest stage and being reunited with the paramatma. That thou art (तत्त्वमसि) this is the aim to be realized and of course it is the highest stage.

Why the Almighty created all this world? This question is answered by the Upanishads thus: "एकोऽहम् बहुस्याम् जायेय ।" The endeavours of every man are directed to secure comfort by acquiring wealth in these days of struggle for existence. The general tendency seems to be care for today, with little thought for tomorrow. The life to come is doubted and the past existence is ignored. In persons of such temperament, it is difficult to plant श्रद्धा (faith). Blind faith in the region of the search after

the infinite is better and more safe than no faith at all. It is impossible for a finite being to investigate everything and then to believe it. The collective wisdom and experience of humanity cannot be thrown aside or ignored altogether.

In this connection it may be said aptly that too much of inquisitiveness or display of learning is not desirable or required in treading the path of paramartha. With strong faith in the Almighty, the devotee must proceed realising the moral in the well known words of the Maharashtrian saint :- "कोणीनिंदा कोणी वन्दा ॥ आम्हा स्वहिताचा घंदा". The Almighty can be approached by various ways of worship and all are, if sincerely and truly followed acceptable to the supreme being. This is what Lord Shri Krishna has said to Arjun :

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यंते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।”

True devotees must fearlessly and zealously proceed, working for the good of humanity and lending their help in the national uplift, bearing in mind the hopeful and unfailing words of Shri Krishna :

सेवामेवानुकंपार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।

नाशेयाम्यास्मभावस्थ ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥ १ ॥

The Almighty never disregards His devotees. He gives them ज्ञान by which they can approach Him, provided they unswervingly and constantly devote themselves to Him, living a life of harmony with the Divine Law. It should be ever borne in mind that a bhakta will never be ruined in any sense of the term, for the Lord has emphatically told this to Arjun :

“कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति”

“न हि कल्याणकृत कश्चित् दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति”

With such divine assurances and with the aid of the company of His devotees (saints) the worker in the path of paramartha, should hopefully and undoubtingly go on trying and wishing to

do good to all his family, his country and the world at large because the very desire to do good to others is the surest way of securing one's own good.

Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi was a real or incarnate Saint, in fact Lord, He followed the path explained by Lord Krishna to Arjun. He was all in all a Vedantist. ★

Vaman H. Pandit
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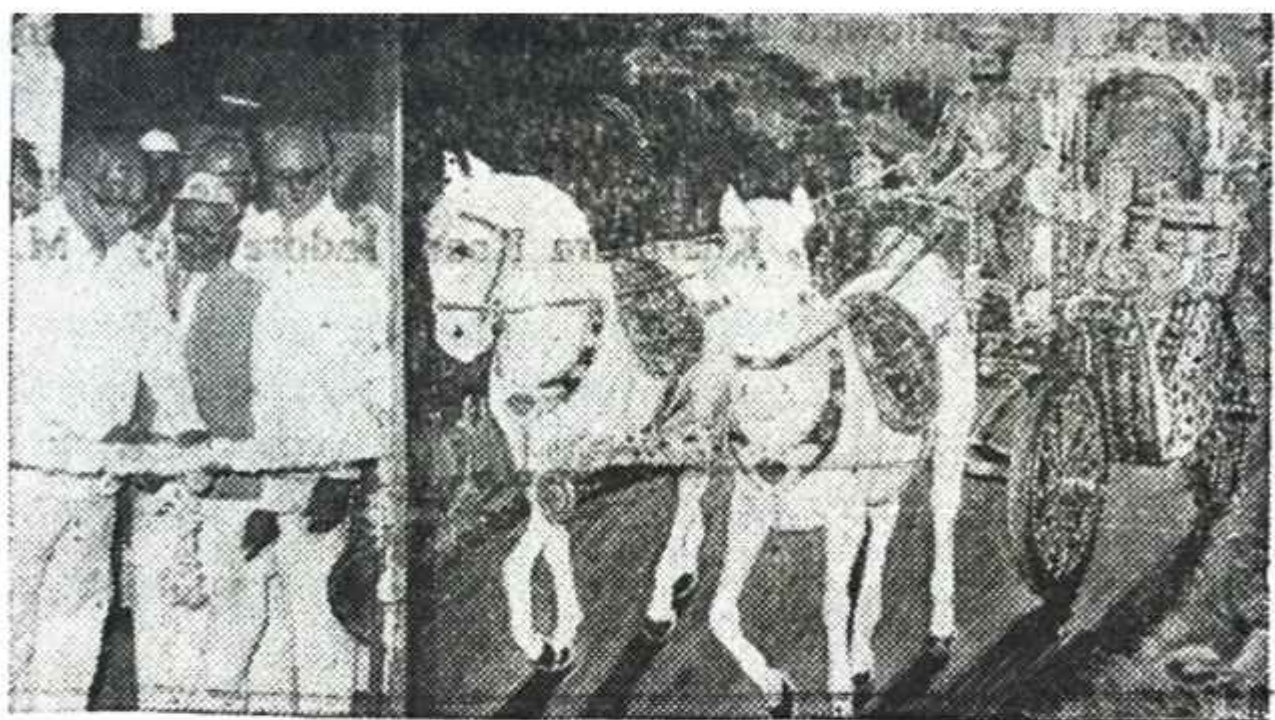
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Presentation of Peacock-Chariot to Shirdi Sansthan



The Peacock-Chariot, Shri Bhausahab Vartak, Barrister Babasaheb
Bhosale and Shri Jadhav Master

Shri D. K. Jadhavmaster, Director of Mahila Kala Mandir, Bombay, fabricated a beautiful Peacock-Chariot decorated with cut-glass pieces and presented it to the Shirdi Santhan at a function, held at Shirdi, on Sunday the 2nd November 1980.

Shri Sai Baba gave darshan to Shri Jadhavmaster and blessed him with these words, "In fabricating a peacock-chariot for me you will reach the zenith of your art and all the devotees from abroad, coming for my darshan will appreciate your art very much." Due to these blessings, Shri Jadhavmaster decided to fabricate a chariot for Shri Sai Baba and overcoming all difficulties he completed the work.

As the Sai devotees in Bombay, should have the opportunity of taking darshan of the chariot, Shri Jadhav inaugurated it at Guruprasad, Kalanagar, Bandra (E), at the auspicious hands

of Shri Gajanan Maharaj Pattekar from Thane. Thousands of Sai devotees saw the Chariot at that time and appreciated the art of Shri Jadhavmaster with one voice.

The Peacock-chariot is eighteen feet in length. It has a pair of two white horses. There are in all sixtyone earthen lamps (पणत्या) on the chariot, which indicate the sixtyfirst year of the mahasamadhi of Shri Baba. There are in all four peacocks, two on each side, which decorate the chariot. The driver is sitting at his place and inside the chariot Shri Mhalasapati, the best of Shri Baba's devotees, is seen sitting and bowing to Shri Baba. Three trucks were required to transport this chariot from Bombay to Shirdi and it is now placed in the garden just opposite to the Samadhi Mandir in a special glass-house erected for that purpose.

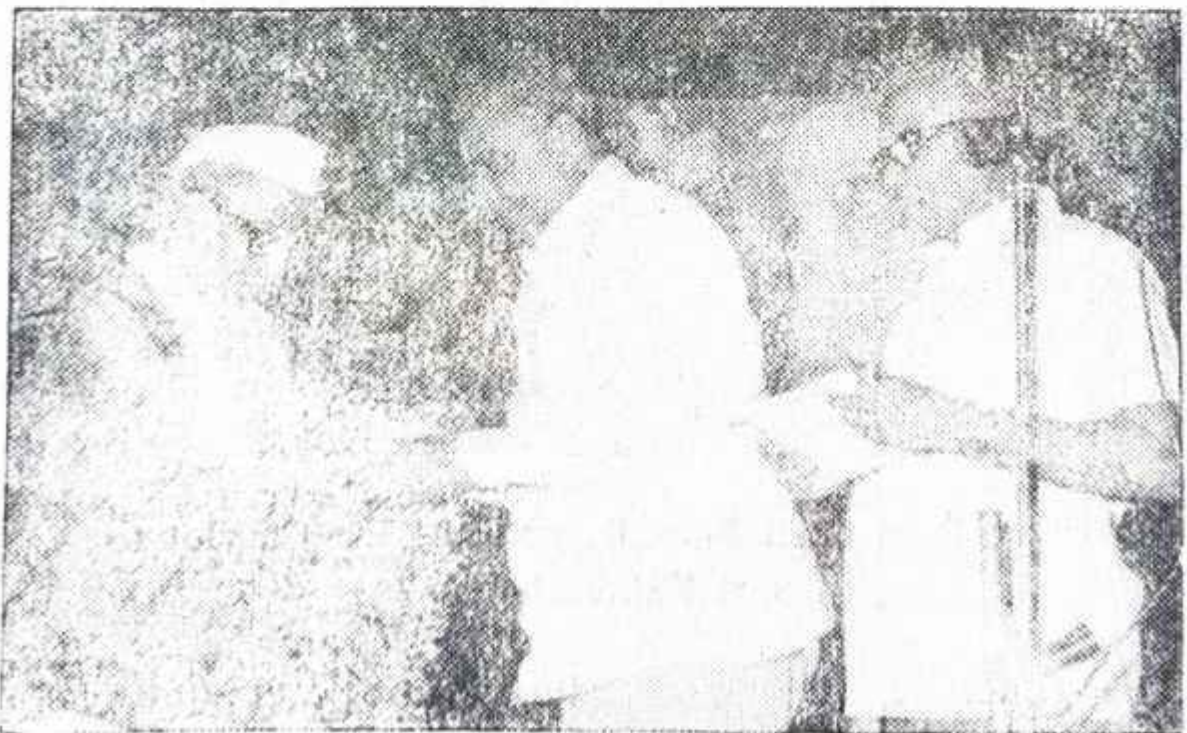


**Barrister Babasaheb Bhosale, presents the Chariot to
Shri Kakresaheb**

The function of presenting this Chariot at the auspicious hands of Barrister Shri Babasaheb Bhosale, Judiciary and Law Minister of the Maharashtra State took place at 6 p. m. on

Sunday the 2nd November 1980. At the beginning Shri Jadhav Master worshipped Shri Baba's Samadhi and offered a shawl. Then the worship of the Chariot was done by Shri Babasaheb Bhosale and the function took place under the Presidentship of Shri Bhausahab Vartak. Ex-Minister of the Maharashtra State.

At the outset of the function, Shri K. H. Kakre, the Court Receiver of Shirdi Sansthan, welcomed all in his inaugural speech and explained what the function was about. Shri Martand Bhagat, the son of Shri Mhalasapati, Shri Nanasaheb Rasne and Shri Amrit Patil, who are old devotees of Shri Baba, who had seen Him in fiesh and blood and who were blessed by Him, were felicitated by the Shirdi Sansthan by offering them a shawl and a cocoanut. Shri Jadhavmaster was thereafter felicitated by offering him a shawl and a cocoanut. The art of Shri Jadhavmaster was highly appreciated and it was wished that in future Shri Jadhavmaster will produce such beautiful pieces of of art, which will bring fame to Maharashtra State.



Barrister Babasaheb Bhosale felicitating Shri Jadhavmaster

Shri Bhausahab Vartak, the President, then delivered a speech appreciating the highly technical art of Shri Jadhavmaster and congratulated him for having fabricated such a masterpiece after taking great pains and labour. Mrs. Vartak also was present on the occasion.

In his speech, Shri Babasaheb Bhosale also praised the artistic work of Shri Jadhavmaster and after wishing a long and happy life to Shri Jadhavmaster, he declared that the peacock Chariot was dedicated to the Shirdi Sansthan and formally handed it over to the Court Receiver.

All the guests, invitees and the President praised Shri Kakresaheb, the Court Receiver, for having looked to all their comforts during their stay at Shirdi. This unique function ended after a vote of thanks was proposed by Shri G. A. Chavan, the Secretary of the Mahila Kala Mandir, Bombay.

OBITUARY

We are sorry to inform our readers that Mrs. Malatidevi Mulay, wife of Shri M. V. Mulay, retired Judge of the Labour Court at Nasik, expired at Ahmednagar on Sunday the 21st December 1980 (Datta Jayanti) after prolonged illness. She was a sincere Sai devotee and stayed at Shirdi for long time for worshipping Shri Sai Baba daily and for attending all the functions in the Samadhi Mandir. Because of her loving nature she was famous at Shirdi as "Mulay Bai". We sincerely pray at the feet of Shri Sai Baba that the departed soul may rest in peace.

—EDITOR

Silver Jubilee Function of The Charity Commissioner's Office

Twenty five years before, a separate office to look after the Charitable institutions in the Maharashtra State was started and the Charity Commissioner was placed at its head. In order to commemorate the occasion a grand function was held at Shiwaji Mandir, Dadar, on Monday the 19th January 1981 at 4 p.m. The whole atmosphere was sanctified by the melodious tunes of Shahanai. The Charity Commissioner himself, and, his officers were welcoming all the invitees. The staff of the Charity Commissioner's office was requesting the invitees to occupy their earmarked seats.

The function started exactly at 4. p. m.. The Dy. Charity Commissioner, Shri Kadam, in his inaugural speech, welcomed all the invitees and requested Shri Babasaheb Bhosale, Judiciary and Law Minister of the Maharashtra State, to take the Chair and to conduct the function. After Shri Babasaheb Bhosale formally took the chair, the Trustees of the various Charitable Trusts, who were the invitees, felicitated Shri Bhosale by garlanding him.

In his speech, Shri Deshpande, Director of Accounts said, "Shirdi Sansthan is a leading Charitable institution in Maharashtra, whose accounts are maintained so meticulously that no one can raise the slightest doubt of mismanagement there. The Shirdi Sansthan is more or less an ideal charitable institution in the Maharashtra State. Shri V. S. Apte, the Chief Accounts Officer of Shirdi Sansthan, then felicitated Shri Babasaheb Bhosale by garlanding him. Miss Rekha Dighe, Senior Accountant of the Shirdi Sansthan, thereafter felicitated Sau. Bhosale by offering a garland to her.

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All Ex-Charity Commissioners were then felicitated at the hands of Shri Babasaheb Bhosale by offering them a shawl and a cocoanut. A medal of meritorius service was presented to all the employees of the Charity Commissioner's Office, who had completed 25 years of their service in that Office. The book captioned "Public Trust Act" written by the Charity Commissioner, Shri G. S. Pande and the Silver Jubilee Souvenir were then published by the President, Shri Babasaheb Bhosele.

Maharashtra is a state where the people, speaking various languages and professing various religions stay in harmony. This was manifested in the speeches, delivered by different people in various languages during the function. Shri Vijay Merchant, who is having Gujrati as his mother tongue, spoke in Marathi. Shri Ruiya spoke in Hindi. One Trustee from Ghatkoper, addressed the meeting in Gujrati, while Shri Gogte spoke in Marathi. One trestee of the Shanmukhanand Society addressed in English. The special feature of the meeting may be mentioned as the speech of Shri Gulam Dastagir in simple Sanskrit, which was understood by all. In a way this speech suggested that Sanskrit was the mother of all Aryan languages. Many trustees from different Charities, who attended the function, praised the staff of the office of the Charity Commissioner for the co-operation that they are giving to them whenever they go to that office for any work.

Shri G. S. Pande, the Charity Commissioner, explained in short the working of his office and pointed out the way in which his office keeps control over the Charitable institutions in the State. In his Presidential address Shri Babasaheb Bhosale said, "All the office-staff should attend to their duty faithfully. This itself will amount to service of the God. The service to humanity is nothing else but service of God. As God does not eat the naivedya offered to Him, but only looks at it and fulfills the desires of his devotees; similarly all the employees in Government

Offices should adopt this same attitude towards the work entrusted to them. This will solve most of the problems of the public.”

After a vote of thanks was proposed by Shri Jadhav, the Dy. Charity Commissioner, the programme of the first day of the Jubilee function of the Office of the Charity Commissioner came to an end.



Joy is A Noble Virtue

A very wealthy man had no children and he was gradually losing the joy of his wealth. He became a picture of sorrow. In the opposite house lived a very poor man with a dozen children, and he was happy all the time. The rich man openly asked the poor man one day what the secret of his joy was in spite of his poverty. The poor man bluntly said : “You want children to inherit your wealth, but to us our children are our wealth. Your wealth gives you fear and anxiety but our wealth gives us perennial joy in spite of our poverty.” On serious reflection, the rich man understood the secret of joy. He decided to treat the poor man’s children as his. Slowly he gave away all his wealth for children’s welfare and thus became the father of all children. He became immortal by the immortal joy he enjoyed. ★

Saipadananda Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji
President All India Sai Samaj Madras 4



श्रीसाईलीला

हिंदी विभाग

फरवरी १९८१

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साई से माँगो

ज्यो कोई माँगो वही मिलेगा, ले लो मेरे भाई ।

देता है फकीर ये साई ॥ ४ ॥

चोरी चपाटी मत तुम माँगो, माँगो भली भलाई ।

सत संतन की संगत माँगो, माँगो उनकी दुच्छाई ।

देता है फकीर ये साई ॥ १ ॥

धन दौलत मत तुम माँगो, माँगो भक्ती सगाई ।

काम क्रोध मत तुम माँगो, माँगो शांती भाई ।

देता है फकीर ये साई ॥ २ ॥

दिल मे काला कभी ना माँगो, माँगो कडी रोषनाई ।

वही रोषनी रहे हमेशा, तुज को फलदायी ।

देता है फकीर ये साई ॥ ३ ॥

किसीका बुरा कभी ना माँगो, माँगो प्रेम कृपाई ।

साई नाम का जप तू माँगो, माँगो दिल सफाई ।

देता है फकीर ये साई ॥ ४ ॥

दत्तु माँगो बाबा साई, तेस्रि चरण भलाई ।

जनम जनम का बालक हूँ मैं, गोदमें लेना माई ।

देता है फकीर ये साई ॥ ५ ॥

दत्तात्रय महादेव मोरे

४७०, शिवाजी नगर, पुणे ५

॥ ' गीत गजानन ' ॥

गीत क्र. १०

अध्याय ५

शेगांव में जब श्री गजानन महाराज का निवास था, तब दूर दूर से लोग ब्र कामनाएँ लेकर दर्शन को आते थे । इस झंझट से बचने के लिए महाराज काननों में भटकते थे । एक दिन महाराज पिंपलगांव को चले गये और सीमा पर शिव मंदिर में पद्मासन लगाकर बैठ गये । जंगल से लौटते समय चरवाहों ने उन्हें मंदिर में देखा । चरवाहों ने सोचा कि यह कोई स्वर्गीय विभूति है । हमारा सौभाग्य है कि हमें उनके दर्शन हुए तथा उन्होंने उनकी पूजा की । सिर पर फूल चढाये और भोग के लिये उनके सामने पत्ते पर रोटी और प्याज रख दिये ।

शाम के वक्त घर लौटकर उन्होंने ग्रामवासियों को उस महात्मा के बारे में समाचार सुनाया । दूसरे दिन भी महात्मा ध्यानमग्न थे । पालखी का प्रबंध कर, तुलसी, फूल, गुलाल उडाते हुए तथा वाद्यों के साथ जुलूस निकाल कर, उनको पिंपलगांव लाया गया । कुछ समय पश्चात् महात्मा ने आंखे खोली । सबको आनंद हुआ । भोग में रखी थालियों में से महाराज ने कुछ चीजों का सेवन किया । यह समाचार चारों तरफ फैल गया तथा दर्शन के लिए लोगों की कतारें लगने लगी ।

मंगलवार के दिन शेगांव में बाजार लगता था । यह समाचार लोगों ने शेगांव में सुनाया । समाचार सुनकर बंकटलाल पत्नीसहित बैलगाड़ी लेकर शीघ्र पिंपलगांव आये । महाराज को देखकर वे हर्षविभोर हो गये । उनके चरणों पर सिर रखकर वे कहने लगे । “१५ दिनोंसे आपके बिना मेरा घर सूना हो गया है । आपका दर्शन करनेवाले भक्त निराहार हैं । आप नहीं चलेंगे तो मेरे प्राण नहीं रह सकेगे ।” जैसे श्रीकृष्ण को ले जाने के लिए अक्रूर गोकुल आये थे, वैसे ही बंकटलाल श्री गजानन महाराज को शेगांव ले जाने के लिये पिंपलगांव आये । महाराज ने हंसकर बंकट से कहा “तू ने विष्णुप्रिया महाशक्ति लक्ष्मी को अपने घर में बंद कर रखा है । इस कारण घर आने में मुझे डर

लगता है, जगदंबा माँ की हालत देखकर मैं डर गया और भाग निकला । चंकटलाल ने भी हंसकर उत्तर दिया “माता लक्ष्मीजी मेरे तालों से नहीं डरी, आपके निवास के कारण वह मेरे घर रही है । जहाँ बच्चा रहता है, वहीं पर उसकी माता रहती है । आप ही मेरे सब कुछ हैं । आप अपनी इच्छानुसार शोगांव में कहीं भी रह सकते हैं । आप शोगांव चलिये और जगत् का कल्याण करिये । हमें कभी न भूलें ।” पश्चात् गाडीपर महाराज को लेकर चंकटलाल वापस आ गये ।

“स्वामी ! लौट चलो शोगांव”

जबसे सिधारे पिंपलगांव

सूनी नगरी सारी । व्याकुल है नर-नारी

लौट चलो, लौट चलो शोगांव

स्वामी ! लौट चलो शोगांव ॥ टेक ॥

तुम बिन सूना लगता मंदिर

दर्शन को है भक्त अधीर

दिखलाओ हम पर दयाभाव ॥ १ ॥

सूनी गलियाँ, सूनी राहें

सिसक-सिसक दम भरती आहें

असीम दुख का आविर्भाव ॥ २ ॥

छाया ऐसा घना अंधेरा

किसने आकर डाला घेरा ?

कालपुरुष तुम हे महाभाव ॥ ३ ॥

बिना प्राण के शरीर कैसा ?

बिना गुरु के जीवन कैसा ?

रहे सदैव सद्गुरु की धांव ॥ ४ ॥

पगले तू ने बन्दी बनाया

“विष्णुप्रिया” को यों फंसाया

तेरा सब पर है प्रभाव ॥ ५ ॥

जिसके घर में वास आपका

डर कैसा उसे भव ताप का

सर्व समर्पित हे दिव्य भाव ॥ ६ ॥

गीत क्र. ११

अध्याय ५

कुछ दिनों के पश्चात् महाराज अडगांव नामक गांव की ओर चले गये । वैशाख मास होनेसे, कड़ी धूप के कारण जल का अभाव प्रतीत होता था । दोपहर के समय महाराज 'अकोली' गांव की सीमा पर पहुँचे । शरीर से पसीना टपक रहा था । प्यास से मुँह सूख रहा था । कड़ी धूप तथा वर्षा में भी यहाँ के लोगों को काम करना पड़ता था । 'अकोली' में पानी की इतनी कमी थी कि घी की अपेक्षा पानी प्राप्त करना बहुत ही कठिन था । भास्कर नाम का एक किसान दो मील अपने खेत में रोटी और सिर पर जल का घड़ा लेकर आया और भोजन करने के तैयारी में था । इतने में श्री गजानन महाराज वहाँपर आये और पीने के लिए पानी माँगा । भास्कर ने महाराज को भला बुरा कहा और पानी देने से इन्कार कर दिया ।

भास्कर का भाषण सुनकर महाराज हंसे और वहाँ से आगे चल दिये । कुछ ही दूरी पर उन्हें एक कुआँ दिखाई दिया । महाराज उसी ओर जाने लगे । महाराज को जाते देखकर भास्कर ने कहा "अरे पगले, यह कुआँ कई वर्षों से सूखा पड़ा है । आगे कहीं भी पानी नहीं मिलेगा ।" इसपर महाराज कहने लगे कि "तेरा कहना सही है, फिर भी मैं कुछ प्रयत्न करके देखता हूँ । तुम जैसे बुद्धिमान लोगों को जल के कारण त्रस्त देखकर मैं निकम्मा कैसे बैठ रहूँ ? समाजहितार्थ शुद्ध भाव से काम करो तो ईश्वर भी स्वयं देता है ।" कुएं के पास महाराज एक शिलाखंड पर बैठ गये । तथा ध्यान लगाकर सच्चिदानंद का चिंतन करने लगे । थोड़ी देर में कुएं में झरने फूटने लगे और कुआँ पानी से भर गया । महाराज ने अंजली भरकर जल का प्राशन किया । यह दृश्य देखकर भास्कर मन में समझ गया की यह व्यक्ती असामान्य है । महाराज के चरणों पर गिरकर वह क्षमा याचना करने लगा । संसार की माया झूठी है ।

सन्त समागम से भास्कर में वैराग्य उत्पन्न हो गया । सच्चे संतों का दर्शन सभी साधनों से अधिक श्रेष्ठ होता है । चमत्कार का समाचार चारों तरफ फैलने से कई लोग महात्मा के दर्शन के लिये आने लगे । पश्चात्, महाराज अडगांव न जाकर, भास्कर को साथ लेकर शेगांव लौट आये ।

सन्त समागम, सरल साधना

सन्त समागम, सरल साधना

सन्त दरस की आराधना

॥ टेक ॥

दुख से पीडित जनता सारी

सन्त कहाते भवभयहारी

करते पूरी मनोकामना

॥ १ ॥

कष्टविना कैसे फल प्राप्ति ?

तप से होती भगवत् प्राप्ति

मन मे हो पर शुद्ध भावना

॥ २ ॥

जलाभाव में जीवन जलता

कडी धूप में मानव पलता

असह्य है यह कडी यातना

॥ ३ ॥

युग युग का यह सूखा कुआँ

पाया जल से वह भरा हुआ

संत महिमा नित सराहना

॥ ४ ॥

ब्रह्ता जल यों भरा लज्जालब

चमत्कार से हुए चकित सब

बदल गई फिर मनोभावना

॥ ५ ॥

नरदेह मे तुम हो ईश्वर

क्षमा करो हे जगदीश्वर !

यों अपमानित शब्द बोलना

॥ ६ ॥

फैल गया फिर शुभ समाचार

श्री समर्थ का जयजयकार

सफल हुई यों आराधना

॥ ७ ॥

राधाकृष्ण गुप्ता 'चेतन'

पाटकर वाडा, भगतसिंग पथ, डोंबिवली (पूर्व), जिल्हा थाने ४२१२०१

संत रोहिदास के उत्कट भक्ती की एक अनोखी गंध कथा

पंढरपुर से चालीस मील की दूरीपर 'आंवेवाडी' नामक गांव में एक चमार रहता था। अपनी पत्नी और एक बच्चा, ऐसा उसका छोटा परिवार था।

उस चमार को दिन में एक रुपये की कमाई होती थी। उस एक रुपये में वह अपना गुजारा करता था।

उसके परिवार के सभी सदस्य भक्ति में लीन हो गये थे। वह चमार पंढरपुर के विठ्ठल का भक्त था, फिर भी अपने गरीबी के कारण वह पंढरपुर में दर्शन के लिए नहीं जा पाया।

हर साल आषाढ - कार्तिक महीने के सारे तीर्थयात्री उसके द्वार पे से गुजरकर आगे विठ्ठल दर्शन के लिए जाते थे। हर यात्री को वह हमेशा नमस्कार करता था। स्वयं पंढरपुर जाने में असमर्थ था इसलिए मन में बेचारा बहुत ही दुःखी होता था। भगवान विठ्ठल को और चन्द्रभागा नदी को मेरा नमस्कार कह देना यह बिनती वह हर यात्री के पास करता था।

एक दिन उसके मन में विचार आया कि मैं स्वयं तो विठ्ठल के दर्शन के लिए नहीं जा सकता, क्यों न मैं उसके भक्तों की ही सेवा करूं? वहाँ जानेवाले यात्रियों में से किसी एक यात्री के लिए मैं जूते बनवाऊंगा। उतनी ही विठ्ठलजी की सेवा मेरे हाथों से होगी। पर यह जूते बनवाने के लिए मुझे अपना पूरा दिन इसमें गँवाना होगा, उस दिन मुझे कुछ भी पैसे नहीं मिलेंगे यही सोचकर उस चमार ने जूते बनवाने के पहले अपने पत्नी की इजाजत की। उनके पत्नी ने बड़ी खुशी से उन्हें इजाजत दी, पत्नी ने उनसे कहाँ आप बड़े शौक से जूते बनाइये। जिस दिन हमें पैसे नहीं मिलेंगे उस दिन का समझ लीजिए हम व्रत रख लेंगे। तुरन्त रोहिदास ने नये सुन्दर जूते बनाये। जिस दिन यह तीर्थयात्री यहाँ से गुजरेंगे उस दिन मैं यह जूते किसी भक्त को भेंट करूँगा। रोहिदास को उस दिन का इन्तजार था, जिस दिन यात्रा शुरू होनेवाली थी। आखिर वह शुभ दिन आ ही गया। रोहिदास बड़ी श्रद्धा से सबको प्रणाम किए जा

रहा था और साथ साथ यह भी देख रहा था कि किस व्यक्ति के पैर में जूते नहीं हैं। तीर्थयात्रा करनेवाले सभी यात्रियों के पैर में जूते तो थे ही यह देखकर रोहीदास निराश हो गये। पर उसको खाली हाथ लौटना नहीं पडा अंत में एक बूढा जिसके हाथ में ध्वज पताका थी, और उसके पैर नंगे थे जो पंढरपुर की ओर जाने उसकी नजर में आया। उसे देखते ही वह चमार खुशीसे झुम उठा। रोहीदास ने पुकारा, “बाबा! आपके पैर में जूते नहीं हैं, क्या आप मैंने बनाए जूते पहनना पसंद करेंगे?” बूढे बाबा ने कहा, “मैं अपने आपको खुशकिस्मत समझूंगा।” इतना कहकर उन्होंने रोहीदास को आशीर्वाद देकर वह चल गये। वहां उस समय एक साहूकार यह सब देख रहा था, उसने यह सोचा कि इतने सुन्दर जूते इस बूढे के क्या काम के? और वह भी विनामूल्य? अगले वर्ष मैं भी नंगे पैर इस यात्रा में आऊँगा तो मुझे भी ऐसे सुन्दर जूते मिल जाएंगे।

अगले वर्ष जब पंढरपुर यात्रा शुरू हुई तब साहूकार ने अपने पत्नी से कहा कि मैं तीर्थयात्रा जाना चाहता हूँ। यह सुनकर उनकी पत्नी को अचरज हुआ। उनकी पत्नी यह जानती थी कि अपने पति का स्वभाव कैसा है। साहूकार से कभी एक पैसा भी नहीं छुटता था। और आज वही व्यक्ति पंढरपुर जाने की बात कर रहा था। साहूकार की पत्नी ने अपने मन से ही समझौता किया कि शायद मेरे पति बदल गये हों। अभी शायद वह भक्तिरस में डूब गये हों। इसलिए उनके मन में पंढरपुर जाने की बात उठी हो। साहूकार की पत्नी बड़ी खुश हो गयी। जब साहूकार ने तीर्थयात्री का वेष धारण किया। सिर में पगड़ी बाँधी, गले में माला पहनी। माथे पर कुंकुम-तिलक लगाया। ये पोशाक साहूकार ने इसलिए किया कि वह नहीं चाहता था कि कोई उसे पहचाने। घर से बाहर निकलने पर वह यात्रियों के साथ चलने लगा, उसने अपने पैर के जूते उतारकर थैली में रख दिये और नंगे पैर उन यात्रियों के साथ चलने लगा। जब रोहीदास का घर पास में आया तब रोहीदास बाहर आया और उसने घनाये हुए नये जूते साहूकार को भेंट दिये। साहूकार ने वह जल्दी से पहन लिये। रोहीदास ने जाते समय उस साहूकार को एक रुपया दिया और उनसे कहा कि वह रुपया चंद्रभागा में अर्पण करें, चंद्रभागा से कहे कि यह रुपया रोहीदास की पत्नी ने दिया है। साहूकार यात्रा के लिए चल रहा था पर उसका पूरा ध्यान अपने जूतों पर था। आखिर उससे रहा न गया और उन्होंने अपने जूते उतार कर थैली में रख दिये और पुराने जूते पहन

लिये । साहुकार ने चमार ने दिया हुआ रुपया लेकर चंद्रभागा में डाल दिया और मुँह से कहा कि, “हे चंद्रभागा, यह रुपया तुझे चमार की पत्नी ने दिया है उसे स्वीकार कर” । इतना कहते ही चंद्रभागा से दो हाथ ऊपर आये । दोनों हाथों में चांदी के गहने थे । उस चमचमाते गहनों का प्रकाश चारों ओर फैल था । साहुकार यह सब देखते ही रह गया । गंगा माताने अपने दाये हाथ से बाये हाथ का कंगन निकाला और वह साहुकार को दे दिया और उससे कहा कि यह चमार की पत्नी को मेरा प्रसाद देना । साहुकार ने अपने दोनों हाथ फैलाये और अपनी अंजली में वह कंगन लिया । अपने कुरते में वह कंगन छुपाकर रख दिया, क्योंकि बाहर रखने से उसका प्रकाश फैल जाता और लोगोंकी उत्सुकता बढ़ जाती ।

उसके मन में विचार आया कि अब विठ्ठलजी का दर्शन करने की जरूरत ही क्या ? वह सीधा घर चला गया और अपने तिजोरी में वह कंगन रख दिया । पंढरपूर से अपने पति इतने जल्दी लौट आये यह देखकर साहुकार की पत्नी को अचरज हुआ । और शंका आयी कि जरूर दाल में कुछ काला है । उसने अपने पति से ही पूछ लिया कि आप इतने जल्दी कैसे आये ? साहुकार ने उसे टालते हुए कहा कि मैंने विठ्ठल का दर्शन लिया और मैं तुरन्त चला आया । साहुकार की पत्नी ने अपनी बात पर जोर देते हुए पूछा कि आपने सच में ठीक तरह से विठ्ठल का दर्शन लिया या नहीं ? साहुकार ने अपने पत्नी को यकीन दिलाने के लिए प्रसाद निकालकर उसके हाथों में थाम दिया और उससे कहा कि यह पेठों का प्रसाद चमार की पत्नी को देना ।

‘प्रसाद’ देखकर साहुकार की पत्नी खुशी से झुम उठी व दौड़ते दौड़ते चमार के घर गयी । चमार की बीबी को साहुकार की पत्नी को देखकर आश्चर्य हुआ । वह बोल उठी क्या आपके पतिराज इतने जल्दी दर्शन करके लौट आये ? साहुकार की पत्नी ने बड़ी श्रद्धा से सारी दास्तान चमार की पत्नी को सुनाई और उस बेचारी ने भी विश्वास करके प्रसाद ग्रहण किया । अपने लिये थोडासा रखकर बचा हुआ प्रसाद पड़ोसियों में बाँट डाला ।

यहाँ साहुकार परेशान था, उस कंगन को लेकर वह उलझन में पड़ गया कि अब इस कंगन को कौन खरीदेगा ? क्योंकि खरीदनेवाला पृछेगा जरूर कि इसे आप कहाँ से लायें ? उसने सोचा क्यों न यह कंगन रानी साहीबा को ही भेंट कर

हुँ? वह सोचा ही रहा था कि राजा के यहाँ से महारानी के जन्म दिवस पर साहूकार को बुलाया गया। साहूकार खूश हो गया। उसने मखमल के सुंदर जूते पहन लिये और वह कंगन साथ में लेकर साहूकार राजमहल पहुँचा।

दरबार की शान तो उस दिन निराली ही थी। महारानी साजशृंगार करके बैठी थी। जन्म दिन लोग मूल्यवान वस्तुओं के तोफे उसे दे रहे थे। साहूकार ने वह कंगन राजा को बताया और फिर महारानी को भेंट दिया। रानो की आँखे उस कंगन को देखकर चकाचौंध हो गयी उस के मन में विचार आया कि अगर ऐसा दूसरा कंगन मिलता तो सोने पे सुहागा। रानी ने राजा के पास दूसरे कंगन के लिये जिद्द की। राजा को तुरंत याद आया कि यह कंगन उस कंजूस साहूकार ने दिया था, राजाने तुरंत नौकर को भेजकर साहूकार को बुला लिया। नौकर जब साहूकार के घर पहुँचा तब साहूकार अपने घर में आराम करता था उसको राजाने बुलाया है यह सुनकर साहूकार को पसीने छुट गये यह कंगन कहाँ से लाया? यह सावाल राजा जरूर करेगा तब मैं क्या जवाब दूँगा? न जाने कितने शंका के साँप साहूकार के मन में कुलबुलाने लगे। साहूकार वहाँ पहुँचते ही राजाने दूसरे कंगन की फरमाईश की। साहूकार ने कहा मेरे फिलहाल दूसरा कंगन नहीं है। जो कंगन था वह तो मुझे हिमालय में रहने वाले एक साधुने दिया था। राजा ने कहा कोई बात नहीं तुम हिमालय में उस साधु के पास चले जाओ और दूसरा कंगन ले आओ चाहे कितना ही खर्च क्यों न आये। साहूकार ने कहा कि आप मुझे आठ दिन की मोहल्लत दे दीजिए। राजाने अनुमती दी।

साहूकार घर आया, उसके तो होश ही उड गये। उसको तो दिन रात एक ही चिंता सताये जा रही थी। उसने सोचा कि चंद्रभागा नदी में एक रुपया फेकने से अगर एक कंगन मिल जाता है तो मैं सौ रुपये उस में डाल दूँ? उसने सौ रुपये चंद्रभागा में अर्पण किए पर साहूकार को खाली हाथ लौटना पडा। चंद्रभागा के किनारे नैया में बैठे हुए माँझी को उसने सौ रुपये निकालकर देने के लिए कहा पर माँझी ने पैसे निकालने के लिए मना कर दिया।

जैसे जैसे दिन गुजरने लगे वैसे साहूकार तो और ही निराश हो गया। उसने पूरी पूरी दास्तान अपने पत्नी को सुनायी। उसकी पत्नी ने सोचा कि इस

उलझन को तो चमार की पत्नि ही सुलझा सकती है। उसने अपने पति से कहा कि हम यह सारी बातें सच सच चमार और उसकी पत्नी को बता देंगे। उसके पास से रुपया माँगकर चंद्रभागा को अर्पण करेंगे तब हमें दुसरा कंगन मिलेगा। साहूकार अपने पत्नी की योजना पर खुश हो गया। वह दोनों चमार के घर गये उनको कंगन की सारी कहानी सुनायी उनके सामने झोली फैलाकर साहूकार ने रहम की, भीख माँगी। चमार को और उसकी पत्नि को सुनकर साहूकार की दया आयी। उन्होंने दूसरे ही दिन व्रत कर के अपने मेहनत का एक रुपया साहूकार को दे दिया। एक दिन व्रत रखकर उस रुपये की पवित्रता अधिक बढ़ गयी थी।

रुपया लेकर साहूकार पंढरपुर चला गया। स्नान कर के बड़े श्रद्धा से उसने वह रुपया चंद्रभागा में अर्पण किया वैसे ही दो हाथ चंद्रभागा से ऊपर आये। चंद्रभागाने अपने दाएँ हाथका कंगन निकालकर साहूकार को दिया। साहूकार ने चंद्रभागा को प्रणाम कर के, पंढरपुर का दर्शन लेकर वह घर आया। घर जानेसे पहले वह राजा के पास गया। कंगन देखकर गनी खूशीसे फुली न शमायी। राजाने साहूकार को पूछा कि आप तो कह रहे थे कि यह कंगन आपको हिमालय पर्वत पर जाकर लाना होगा। इतने लंबे सफर से आप इतने जल्दी कैसे लौट आये? साहूकार हाथ जोड़कर राजा के सामने खड़ा हुआ और उसने सारी सच सच बातें राजा को बताईं। राजा उस चमार से मिलना चाहता था, रानी भी चमार की पत्नी से मिलने उत्सुक थी। एक दिन राजा रानी और राजकुमार हाथीपर बैठकर चमार के घर पहुँचे। राजा रानी और राजकुमार ने चमार को प्रणाम किया। रोहीदास सामने आया उसने और उनके पत्नीने उन्हें तशरीफ रखने के लिए कहा, रानी ने कहा कि ये कंगन आप ही रख लीजिए क्योंकि मेरे हाथ में ये शोभा नहीं देते।

इस बात पर रोहीदास की पत्नी बोल उठी कि ये मौल्यवान कंगन को लेकर हम गरीब क्या करेंगे? हमारी इच्छा है कि हम स्वयं पंढरपुर में जाकर विठ्ठलजी का दर्शन करें। पर इस गरीबी के कारण हम आज तक पंढरपुर नहीं जा पाये।

राजा ने कहा बड़ी सुंदर कल्पना है, हम लोग भी आप के साथ पंढरपुर चलेंगे उस बहाने हमें भी विठ्ठलजीका दर्शन होगा।

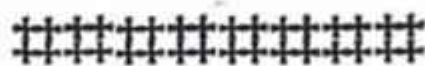
फिर सब लोग पंढरपूर जाने निकले । राजा के साथ रोहिदास बैठ गया । रानी के साथ रोहिदास की पत्नी बैठी । राजकुमार के साथ चमार का लडका बैठ गया । इसतरह सब लोग हौदे में बैठकर पंढरपूर चले गये ।

बन्य है वह लोग जिन्होंने अपने आँखोंसे इस सुन्दर यात्रा की शान देखी ।

सब लोग पंढरपूर पहुँचने पर, सबने स्नान किया । रोहिदास की पत्नी ने पूजा की थाली ली उसमें वह कंगन रख दिये । चंद्रभागा में हलदी कुंकुम डालकर उसने प्रार्थना की "हे चंद्रभागा, तुमने मुझे जो कंगन दिये थे मैं तुम्हे वापस कर रही हूँ ।" प्रार्थना के बाद चमार की पत्नी ने वह कंगन चंद्रभागा में अर्पण कर दिये ।

आश्चर्य की बात थी कि चंद्रभागा से दो हाथ उपर उठे, दोनो कंगन लेकर वह हाथ गायब हो गये । चंद्रभागा को सबने प्रणाम किया और विठ्ठलजी का दर्शन करने सब मंदीर चले गये ।

पांडूरंग का दर्शन होते ही रोहिदास भक्तिसँ गद्गद् हो गये । रोहिदास और पांडूरंग का यह अपूर्व मिलन सब देखते ही रह गये ।



साई प्रार्थना

मेरे मनमंदिर आओ साई, एक बार तो आओ साई
बहुत बार है देर लगाई, करुणा नयनन में घिर आई
बहुत रोई तेरे द्वारे साई, मैं चरणों की दासी साई

"मेरे मनमंदिर आओ साई"

॥ १ ॥

पथ देखत अंखियाँ पथराई, दर दर मायासे टकराई
य देखो प्रभु दशा हमारी, मैं अब शरण तुम्हारी साई

मेरे मनमंदिर आओ साई

॥ २ ॥

थोड़ी कृपा इधर बरसाओ, दरस प्यास को साई मिटाओ
मैं तो एक भिखारिन आई, भेंट नहीं मैं कुछ भी लाई
मेरे मनमंदिर आओ साई

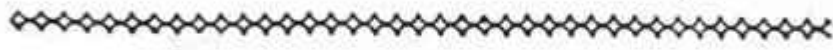
॥ ३ ॥

खाली हाथ द्वार तेरे आई, मैं तेरी प्रेमपुजारिन आई
प्यार करो चाहे ठुकरा दो प्रभु सब विधि शरण तुम्हारी साई
मेरे मनमंदिर आओ साई

॥ ४ ॥

श्रीमती शान्तीदेवी गुप्ता

भगवानदास स्वीट मार्ट, सेठिया बिल्डिंग, एल्फींस्टन रोड, परेल, बम्बई १२



“मन की बात मान”

मन की बात तू मान पगले
छोड़ दे ये अभिमान पगले
साथ न कुछ तू ले जायेगा
कर ले तू कुछ दान पगले

मन की बात

॥ १ ॥

अपने लिये तो सब है जीते
गम के आसुं भी है पीते
सारे गम भुलाके अपने
दुनिया का दुख : जान पगले

मन की बात

॥ २ ॥

काम न आती है ये माया
घर इसने है किसका बसाया
जीवनकी चितामें जलता जा
तब पायेगा निरवान पगले

मन की बात

॥ ३ ॥

रमेश 'आत्मा'

साईं से

(कविवर गोस्वामी श्री "विन्दुजी" महाराज के गीत पर आधारित)

दिखा देते हो रुख जब शिर्डी साईं आप
थोडा सा ।

तो भर लेती हैं आँखे शर्वती दीदार
थोडा सा ॥

ये खिल जाते हैं जब आंसू के कतरे ।
पुष्प बन बन कर ॥

खिला देते हैं प्रेम का गुलजार
थोडा सा ॥

जरा मस्ती के झोके में हिली आँखे,
तो हिलते ही ॥

छलक पडता हैं प्यालों से तुम्हारा,
प्यार थोडा सा ॥

चले बिकने ये अशकों के गुहर
मुझे ऐसा समझाकर ॥

कि अब देखेंगे करुणामय का
बाजार थोडा सा ॥

गिरे अशक पृथ्वी पर तो बनकर
हर्फें यूँ बोले ।

पतित पावन से लिखवाते हैं हम
इकरार डोडा सा ॥

बी. पी. श्रीवास्तव,

रेलवे क्वा. नं. २७७/२ सुभाष कालोनी, मध्य रेल, जबलपुर ४८२००१ (म. प्र.)



श्री चोलकर की बिना शकर की चाय

(श्री बाबा की दिव्य लीला का एक प्रसंग)

याना के कोपिनेश्वर मंदिर में कर रहे थे

दासगणु साईं बाबा का गुणगान ।

दिवानी न्यायालय में कार्यरत चोलकर नामक

व्यक्ति सुन रहा था उसे लगाकर ध्यान ॥ १ ॥

हुआ प्रभावित कीर्तन से इतना वह

कि करने लगा बाबा को मन ही मन प्रणाम ।

शुद्ध हृदय से उसने विनती की

मेरी इतनी सुनलो, हे करुणानिधि, हे दयाधाम ॥ २ ॥

परिवार-पोषण में असमर्थ मुझ निर्धन को

विभागीय परीक्षा में करवा दो सफल ।

श्री चरणों का दर्शन करूँगा तब मैं शिरडी आकर

और चढाऊँगा प्रसाद में मिश्री और नारियल ॥ ३ ॥

किया अनुग्रह बाबा ने उस पर

उत्तीर्ण हुआ वह, हुई नौकरी उसकी स्थायी ।

अपना संकल्प जल्दी पूरा करने की तब

उसके मन में अटल धुन समायी ॥ ४ ॥

विकट समस्या थी उसके सामने यह

कि मार्ग-व्यय वह कहाँ से जुटाए ?

सह्याद्रि पर्वत पार करना सरल है

घर की देहली पार करने में कठिनाई आए ॥ ५ ॥

बहुत सोचविचार कर उसने ढूँढ निकाला

पैसा वचाने का एक उपाय ।

कि पिया करेगा उसका कुटुम्ब

अब से बिना शक्कर की चाय ॥ ६ ॥

इस प्रकार कुछ द्रव्य एकत्र कर

पहुँच गया वह शिरडी घाम ।

करके अर्पण प्रसाद नारियल-मिश्री का

किया उसने श्रीचरणों को साष्टांग प्रणाम ॥ ७ ॥

चोला बाबा से तब वह यूँ

तुम्हारे दर्शन से मिला मुझे आनन्द अपार ।

होगई मेरी सारी इच्छाएँ पूरी

खुल गए मेरे सौभाग्य के द्वार ॥ ८ ॥

आतियेथी बापूसाहब जोग के साथ जब वह

मस्जिद से करने लगा प्रस्थान ।

दिया आदेश बाबा ने तब उन्हें कि अपने अतिथिका

शक्कर संतृप्त चाय जीभर पिला, करना सम्मान ॥ ९ ॥

सर्वव्यापी बाबा का यह वचन सुन

चोलकर का हृदय भर आया ।

प्रेमाश्रु बहाते तब उसने

श्रीचरणों में पुनः मस्तक नवाया ॥ १० ॥

अनुभव हुआ तब उसे कि बाबा

जानते थे उसका गुप्त निश्चय ।

सुदृढ़ हुआ भक्ति-भाव उसका

बोल उठा वह 'साई' बाबा की जय ॥ ११ ॥

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