

# SHRI SAI LEELA

APRIL 1977



**BABA'S PHOTO IN DWARKAMAI  
AND THE STONE ON WHICH HE USED TO SIT**

60 PAISE

# SHRI SAI LEELA

APRIL 1977

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# SHRI SAI LEELA

( Official Organ of Shirdi Sansthan )



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VOLUME 56

APRIL 1977

No. 1

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## Silence and Reverence

This age is noisy, because it is an irreverent age. Silence and reverence go together. At the feet of the Guru, in olden days, sat the disciple. He sat in silence and, in silence, gazed at the Guru's face and read, in the lotus feet of his beloved master, the truths which no words may utter. The Guru was not a "talker". The Guru was not an "orator." The Guru was a man of very few words. The Guru taught by a glance of the eye, by a look of the face. The Guru taught by a gesture of silence : and the pupil sat in reverent silence.

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## EDITORIAL

### Fiftyfive years of Publication

Shri Sai Leela is being published for the last fiftyfive years. With this issue, Shri Sai Leela enters its fiftysixth year of publication. In the editorial for the month of April 1976, a brief history of the travel of Shri Sai Leela during the fiftyfour years prior to 1976 was narrated. The milestones on the way were also pointed out, in that article. Our readers might perhaps recollect that the first issue of Shri Sai Leela was published on the first day of Chaitra (Gudhi Padwa) in Shaka 1845 (1923 AD). As we are stepping into a new year of publication, it would not be out of place here to narrate a short history of this first issue.

Of all the festivals, which are celebrated at Shirdi, Ramanavami is a very important festival. Even though the Samadhi day (Dasara), is also an equally important festival, still it is a common experience that the largest crowd, gathering at Shirdi, is for the Ramanavami festival. As this festival comes in the month of Chaitra, the then devotees must have thought of publishing the first issue in the month of Chaitra. Moreover Chaitra is the first month of the Hindu year. It was therefore quite appropriate to start publication of a new magazine from that month.

This first issue contained only thirty two pages and Shri Laxman Ganesh Mahajani's name appears thereon as its editor. No cost was printed on the issue. It was a sort of a sample issue and it was sent to all known Sai devotees free of cost. From a note printed on the cover page number two, we find that all the persons, to whom the issues were sent, were requested to become subscribers from the next issue. The annual subscription was only Rupees three and six annas (inclusive of postage). The

devotees were informed that the next issue would be sent to them by V. P. P. and that if somebody did not want to become a member, he may inform the editors accordingly, so that the Sansthan may not be put to loss.

The editorial of this first issue was as follows :

## श्री साईलीला (मासिक)

वर्ष १ चैत्र शके १८४५ (१९२३) अंक पहिला

या मासिक पुस्तकाचा उद्देश त्याच्या नांवावरून व्यक्त होत आहे. शिर्डीचे श्री साई महाराजांचे भक्त असंख्य असून ते ठिकठिकाणी पसरले आहेत. त्यांना निरनिराळ्या वेळीं निरनिराळ्या तऱ्हेचे अनुभव महाराजांनी दिले आहेत. इतकेंच नव्हे तर महाराजांनी आपल्या देहावसानानंतर सुद्धा अनुभव देण्याचे चालू ठेवले आहे. किंबहुना ज्यांना महाराजांच्या देहाचे प्रत्यक्ष दर्शन घडले नाही त्यांना सुद्धा अनुभव येत आहेत. थोडक्यात म्हणावयाचे म्हणजे महाराजांचे अनुभव अश्रुतपूर्व, अतर्क्य आणि अनेक आहेत व त्यांच्या अष्टकांतील खालील श्लोकाची सत्यता सर्वांना पटवीत चालले आहेत.

अनेकाश्रुतातर्क्य लीलाविलासैः ।

समाविष्कृतेशा न भास्वत् प्रभावम् ॥

अहं भावहीनो प्रसन्नात्मभावम् ।

नमामीश्वरं सद्गुरुं साईनाथम् ॥ १ ॥

महाराजांच्या सर्व लीलांचा एके ठिकाणी संग्रह होणे शक्य नाही. पण शक्य असेल तेवढा त्यांच्या लीलांचा व त्यांच्या अमूल्य बोधवचनांचा संग्रह करावा, या हेतुने हे मासिक पुस्तक काढले आहे. भावार्थ रामायणांत श्रीरामचंद्राला पार्वतीने “तुं सर्वज्ञ असतांना भ्रांतपणाचे अवलंबन करून तृणपाषाणांना आर्लिगन कां देतोस?” असा प्रश्न केला असता श्रीरामचंद्रानी जे शब्द उच्चारले आहेत तेच महाराजांना लागू आहेत. श्री रामचंद्र म्हणाले—

“भक्त उद्वागवया कारणे । रडणें पडणें अडखळणें ।

पर्वतो पर्वती धावणें । आणि आर्लिगणे वृक्षांसी ॥

उमे जाण तू निश्चित । माझे पाऊल न पडे व्यर्थ ।

जाणे सदाशिव समर्थ । तुझा भावार्थ तो नाही ॥

हे शब्द सर्वस्वी महाराजांस लागू आहेत. त्यांचा एकूण एक शब्द व एकूण एक लीला केवळ भक्तांच्या उद्धारासाठी होती. व त्यांचे एक पाऊलसुद्धां व्यर्थ पडत नव्हते. म्हणून त्या लीलांचा व शब्दांचा संग्रह भक्तानांच नव्हे तर सर्व जनतेला हितकारी होईल अशी आमची खात्री आहे.

असा संग्रह करण्याचा थोडासा प्रयत्न झाला आहे व तो या मासिकांत “महाराजांचे अनुभव” व “श्री साईसच्चरित” या मथळ्याखाली येईल. यापैकी श्री साईसच्चरित पद्यात्मक म्हणजे ओवीवद्ध रचले गेले आहे. व त्याची म्हणजे श्री साईसच्चरिताची सुरवात महाराज देहधारी असतांना त्यांची आज्ञा घेऊन झाली होती. “महाराजांचे अनुभव” या मथळ्याखाली निरनिराळ्या भक्तांकडून जे अनुभव लिहून येतील त्यांचा संग्रह करण्याचे योजिले आहे. असे वरेचसे अनुभव आमच्या संग्रहांत आज आहेत ते या मथळ्याखाली छापले जातील. त्यांत काही चुका असल्यास त्या त्या भक्तांकडून दुष्टी लिहून आल्यास आम्हा आतंदाने प्रसिद्ध करू. तसेच महाराजांचे भक्तांकडून जे जे अनुभव लिहून येतील त्यालाहि सवडीप्रमाणे शक्य तितके स्थळ या मासिकांत देऊ. भक्तांचे अनुभव छापण्यासाठीच हे मासिक असल्यामुळे जे अनुभव लिहून येतील तिकडे पूर्ण लक्ष दिले जाईल हे सांगणे नकोच

समर्थानी कोणास काही गुप्त रितीने सांगितले असेल तर तें या ग्रंथात परिस्फुट होण्याचा संभवच नाही; पण त्यांनी उघडे दरबारात सर्वासमक्ष कोणा एकास उद्देशून जरी काहीं सांगितले असले तरी तें सर्वांच्या हिताचें असल्यामुळे तें सर्वांची सामाईक कमाई आहे. असे सर्व साईभक्त समजत असले पाहिजेत अशी समजूत आहे आणि म्हणूनच त्यांनी आपले अनुभव लिहून पाठवावे अशी आमची प्रत्येक भक्तास आग्रहाची विनंती आहे.

सारांश, ही सरस्वतीची सेवा आणि ती परम दयाळू श्री साई माऊलीचे इच्छेने आणि आशीर्वादाने घडत आहे. अर्थात त्या माऊलीची आपल्या भक्तांना वेळोवेळी आठवण होत रहावी हेंच या सेवेचें ध्येय आहे.

The brief summary of the above editorial is as follows :

“The devotees of Shri Sai Baba are numberless and they are spread far and wide. These devotees constantly get experiences of the devine favours of Shri Sai Baba, which are really wonderful.

It may not be possible to compile one book of all these "Leelas" of Shri Sai Baba. However, it will be possible to publish them in this magazine from month to month. It is therefore proposed to publish these "Leelas" in this magazine for the knowledge and benefit of all the devotees. Shri Sai Satcharit, which is composed in 'Ovee' form, was begun by Shri Dabholkar, when Shri Sai Baba was alive. The composition of that book was taken in hand by Shri Dabholkar alias Hemadpant with the blessings of Shri Sai Baba. It is therefore proposed to print it in this magazine seriatim.

The advice given to different devotees by Shri Sai Baba openly, in his darbar, is not their private property. It is common property of all the Sai devotees. Hence, it is hoped that all Sai devotees would unreservedly narrate their experiences. We request all the devotees to forward to us their experiences and assure them all, that utmost attention will be paid to the experiences that will be forwarded to us by the devotees for publication.

In short this service of the goddess of wisdom is started because of the wish and blessings of Shri Sai Baba and it is the aim of this service that it will always help the devotees to remember Shri Sai Baba".

It will be seen from the above summary of the editorial that there were two main objects of the starting of the magazine, before the then editors:-

- 1) Publication of Shri Sai Satcharita.
- 2) Publication of the experiences of the devotees.

As Shri Sai Satcharita is now available in book-form in various languages, it no longer requires to be given a place in this magazine. As regards the second item, we may say that the power of Shri Sai Baba is endless. He is omnipotent, omnipresent,

and omniscient. Hence, his "Leelas" are endless. With the spread of his devotees, his "leelas" also are multiplying. From nook and corner, various devotees are making it a point to communicate their experiences to us from time to time. From the experiences that are being printed in the issues of this magazine, it will be seen that the assurance given by the editors, in the first issue of this magazine, to go on paying keen attention to the experiences of the devotees, is still being followed strictly by the present editors.

As Sai cult is increasing enormously, the spread of this magazine also is boosted to a great extent. During the last four years or so the number of subscribers, both for the English as well as for the Marathi issue, has doubled. The gathering of the contributors that is being held at Shirdi every year for the last three years; is also helping a lot in this direction. The devotees also are canvassing with others for becoming subscribers. We are therefore thankful to all our readers and subscribers to have given us this encouragement.

From the material that is being published in this magazine at present, our readers will see that in addition to the experiences of the devotees, various other types of articles are being printed here in order to achieve spiritual progress of the devotees of Shri Sai Baba.

There is an eternal triangle behind most of the things that we come across every day. In the case of this magazine the triangle is formed by the subscribers on one side, the Shirdi Sansthan on the second and third side is formed by the power and blessings of Shri Sai Baba. The subscribers, who are the devotees, are no doubt very active in paying their subscriptions and welcoming the magazine on the first of every month. The contributors, who constantly maintain the influx of articles, are also devotees and hence their separate mention has not been made, though the publication of this magazine also depends on them. Because of



the broad outlook of the Court Receiver Shri Pathaksaheb and because of his devotion towards Shri Sai Baba, the attitude of the Shirdi Sansthan has always been favourable to continue the publication of Shri Sai Leela, even though a large subsidy is required to be given for that purpose; but apart from both the aforesaid two sides, the most important third side of the triangle is the blessing of Shri Sai Baba. As this magazine is devoted entirely to the spread of the teachings and advice of Shri Sai Baba, it is able to cross over any number of hurdles, that stand in its way, simply because of the force and favour of Shri Sai Baba, which sanctions its publication. We therefore hope to continue the publication of this magazine, with renewed enthusiasm, because of the cooperation of the human factor connected with it and because of the blessings of the supernatural factor, Who is having a benevolent look on it. ★



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To  
The Editor, Shri Sai Leela  
Dear Sir,

For the past one year I have been subscribing "SHRI SAI LEELA" regularly. It's really interesting to read the various articles, and not only that devotees come to know of the various "SAI TEMPLES" spread over at different places. Mention may be made of 'Sai Experiences' which a devotee Mr. T. R. Anand, had during his visit to Shirdi. (Sai Leela Feb. 77). This clearly shows 'BABA'S' magnetic attraction towards his bhaktas. He is with us, with devotion and if we look to Him, He is always with us.

I extremely thank the editor for publishing the excellent article on 'Sai Experiences'.

Yours Sincerely,  
V. Sunder

27-2-77

# THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

By · Swami Chinmayananda

## You Can Realise This

When all is said and done the student still feels deep down in himself, a lack of full confidence in himself to enter the path of meditation. He is aghast at the stupendous result that meditation promises and he feels that he is too small and insignificant a creature in himself for it. He is sure that he is so full of great weaknesses, and so riddled with imperfections, that he will never be able to climb to the Peak Divine, and gain for himself the realization of the One Infinite Self.

To encourage such weak and hesitant hearts, Lord Krishna says, (VI-27) **"Surely Supreme Bliss does come to that meditator (Yogi) of tranquil mind, with his passions quietened, Brahman-become, and freed from taint"** If these four adjustments are accomplished within, that meditator-Yogi does experience Supreme Bliss which is the nature of the Self. He is to be one (1) whose mind is no more wandering into sense-objects and so is tranquil (प्रशान्त मनसम्); (2) whose passions are quietened (शान्तरजसं); (3) who has Brahman-become (ब्रह्म भूतम्); and (4) who is freed from all his vasanas (अकल्मषम्). Till these four conditions are accomplished, there is certainly no hope of experiencing the Bliss Infinite, which is the very nature of the Self.

Thus, the Lord assures all seekers that they need not become desperate if the final experiences of the spiritual life have not come to them. They are to strive to create these conditions. Once they are fully accomplished, "Infinite Bliss surely descends" into the bosom (सुखमुन्तमम् उपैति).

Again, reassuring hesitant seekers, the Lord says, (VI-28) **"The Yogi, freed from taint (vasanas), who is constantly**

engaging his mind thus, shall with ease attain the Infinite Bliss of contact with Brahman." The meditator who has accomplished these four essential conditions of Self-realisation, "shall with ease attain the Infinite Bliss, which is the experience of the contact with the Supreme Self, the Brahman, the One Self in all", (सुखेन ब्रह्म संस्पर्श अत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते). This repeated assurance is necessary for encouraging hesitant meditators, and pulling them on to the path of meditation.

What then does the imperfect meditator gain during his post-realisation days, in his known-world? What difference will there be in his worldly-life? Every seeker is anxious to know this. Hence Krishna declares, (VI-29) "One who has gained Yoga, with an equal vision, he beholds the Self in all beings, and all beings in the self". One who has gained the highest experience in meditation (योग युक्तात्मा), thereafter in his equal vision, under all circumstances (सर्वत्र समदर्शनः), views the world as an integral part of himself.

In meditation, he lifts himself beyond his physical, mental and intellectual view points. He realises (इक्षते), that the Self in him is the Self in all (सर्वं भूतस्य आत्मानम्), and also that all beings are in his own Self (सर्वं भूतानि च आत्मानि). This is not a rare and unique experience that comes only to a few blessed ones. The choice is ours. If we can bring about in our within the necessary conditions, anyone, at any moment, can come to awake to this perfect state of universal harmony and sense of oneness.

Once this vast and vivid experience of the One Self has dawned there will be a tremeneous surge of true love in one for the whole world around. Then one lives in the harmony divine that graces the universe. Pluck a flower and you disturb a star!! The matrix of life becomes self-evident: there is no other. In one single loving embrace the successful meditator for ever gathers the entire universe unto himself.

At this moment we have a perfect sense of oneness within our own body: at the tip of our fingers, at the feet, in the arms, on the forehead --- we know that there is one single me. As an individual you pervade your entire body structure. Now any harm to any part of your body is harm to you --- and any pleasure at any part of your body is your pleasure.

Though the leg is not the arm, the trunk is not the head, why every part is different in shape, structure and function, and yet, "you" run through them all. You are the matrix that holds them all together. Since we live in the realisation of this ego, the entire body is loved by us.

Now upon the realisation of the Self, the ego ends and the whole universe of things and beings becomes your one essential body! Your vision now becomes equal upon all, your love universal --- the joys and sorrows of the world become your joys and sorrows.

They who have realised this, they alone know how to love without prejudice; they alone have real universal vision! This kingdom of Love, of sheer tenderness, of blissful affection for all, beams out of a man of realisation --- a true God-man upon earth. This is the final destination, and infinite is the reward for the highest experience in meditation. ★

( Courtesy : Geeta Office, Powai )



# Shri Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon (Berar)

By:- Shri S. N. Huddar

## INTRODUCTORY

There have been Sadhus and Saints in all religions and in all the countries of the world. In Bharat also there have been many saints. Mukundraj, Dnyaneshwar, Namdeo, Eknath, Ramdas, Tukaram and many others have been in Maharashtra before the 17th Century. This tradition is continued even to the 20th Century. Shri Madhaonath of Chitrakot died at Hinganghat in 1936, Shri Dadaji Dhuniwale of Sainkheda expired in 1930, Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi passed away in 1918 and Shri Vasudevanand Saraswati breathed his last at Garudeshwar (Gujrat) in 1914.

Shri Gajanan Maharaj appeared at Shegaon in Vidarbha, for the first time on Magh Vad 7 Shaka 1800 (i. e. on 23rd Feb. 1878) in his young age and he passed away on Rishipanchmi, Bhadrapad Shuddha 5 Shaka 1832 (i. e. on 8th September 1910). From this, it is evident that he lived in Shegaon only for 32 years. If he had appeared at Shegaon at the age of 18 or 20, his life span appears to be only 50 or 52 years.

Saints are called Gods on earth. They have conquered the six enemies of mankind (Viz: passion, anger, greed, avarice, pride and envy). They love all the living beings and are kind of them. Saints are also called Kalp-Vriksha Chintamani and Paris (Philosopher's stone which turns iron into gold by its touch). They inspire people to do various deeds for the welfare of the people such as digging of wells, tanks, building of dharmashalas, temples, schools, feeding homes, orphanages etc.

What is there which a saint cannot do? He can create water in a desert, he can reap corn in barren lands, give children to sterile women, cure incurable diseases, establish model religious

trusts and decent colonies or houses as at Shirdi, Kedgaon, Shegaon, Ganagapur, Vajreshwari etc.

Shri Das Ganu Maharaj, an illustrious writer of the biographies of saints, has written "Shri Gajanan Vijay" in Marathi, to narrate the incidents of the life of Shri Gajanan Maharaj in 21 chapters. This volume is read and adored in several houses all over India with great devotion, specially in Vidarbha, Nagpur, Khandesh and Marathwada. How popular this volume is, is evident from the fact that its 12th edition was published recently and 125,000 copies have been published from September 1939 to 1972. As the aforesaid book written by Shri Das Ganu Maharaj is in Marathi, it is proposed to publish its English translation here, for the benefit of the readers of Shri Sai Leela.

Shri Gajanan Maharaj has been a great saint, who possessed yogic powers and had attained the 'Videha' stage in which one does not care for one's body food, clothes, residence etc. He spoke very little and his speech too used to be very mystic and suggestive.

## CHAPTER 1

### APPEARANCE IN SHEGAON

Shegaon is about 10 miles from Khamgaon in Berar. It is a good cotton business centre. It is a Railway station on Nagpur Bombay main line. There are regular bus services from Khamgaon, Akola, Amraoti and other places to Shegaon.

Devidas Paturkar, a resident of Shegaon had some domestic function on Magh Vad 7, 1800 (23-2-1878) and leaf plates (pattal) were thrown after dinner on the roadside in front of his house. In the meanwhile a bright young man came and sat there. He started picking up particles of rice, vegetables etc. from the plates and eating them. Bankatlal and Damodarpanth Kulkarni saw the youth while they were passing by the road. The young man was wearing a petticoat, had a bowl and one chillam (for smoking)

of raw earth with him. Bankatlal and Damodar thought that had the youth been a beggar, he would have asked for alms and Devidaspant, who was liberal minded, would have readily given him food. They remembered the words of Bhagwan Vyas, given in Puranas that the real saints behave like mad persons.

Being attracted by his bright face, stout arms, neck and broad chest, they asked him if he was hungry and if so they would arrange for food. The youth simply looked at them, but did not speak a word. Bankatlal requested Devidas to bring a leafplate of food. Devidas readily brought one plate full of delicious food articles and placed it before the youth, who mixed all the articles and satisfied his hunger.

Bankatlal said to Damodar, if there is no water in his bowl, we should bring water for him. So Damodar asked the youth if he wanted water. He said "If you feel necessary, bring it, Brahma is present everywhere, but when living in society, one has to abide by its rules. This body has taken food, so wise men should realise that the body needs water. If your common sense feels like this, then bring water." Hearing this, they were delighted. Damodar entered the house to bring water. In the meantime the youth hastened to a pond at a distance, where cattle drank water. The youth began to drink the muddy water in the pond. Damodar returned with a lota full of clear, cool and scented water. He said to the youth "That water is polluted by the cattle. Please have this cool water scented with wala". The youth replied, "You need not tell me all these physical things. All this universe is pervaded by Brahma. So there is nothing as dirty, clean or scented. Water is the same everywhere. Scents, good or bad, are the same. One who drinks the water is also not different. Unthinkable deeds of God can be known only by human beings; but instead of trying to know this, every man is engrossed into his family life. In fact, one should try to know how this universe has been created".

Both the aforesaid persons were much moved on hearing this sermon. They bowed to him and the youth soon went away swiftly.

## CHAPTER 2

### SHRI GAJANAN MAHARAJ AT BANKATLAL'S HOUSE

Bankatlal felt very sorry to see that the youth went away. He remembered him all the time. He did not take food nor even drink water. He searched him everywhere in Shegaon, but he could not see him. He had not the courage to tell this to his father. Janakiram, who was a well to do person of Shegaon. Seeing Bankatlal sad and gloomy he inquired "You are a young chap. Why are you so gloomy and anxious? There is nothing wanting in our house". Bankatlal some how consoled his father.

Ramajipant Deshmukh, an old Jagirdar, lived in the neighbourhood. Bankatlal told him all about the bright youth. Ramajipant said "From what you said, it appears that the youth must be a Yogi, as only Yogis behave in this way. You are fortunate to see the Yogi. If you see him again, please take me to him".

Four days passed in this way. Bankatlal was trying to find out the young Yogi. Govind Boa of Barsi Takli, a famous Kirtankar had arrived in Shegaon and his Kirtan (religious sermon with Songs and tales of God and saints) was arranged in the Shiva Mandir. Bankatlal and Pitamber were going to the mandir for the Kirtan. Bankatlal told Pitamber about the young yogi he had seen, and what a wonder! He saw him sitting on a stone slab behind the mandir. Both went to him and bowed to him. They asked "Should we bring something to eat for you?."

The youth said "If you feel so, bring bread and pickles from the malin" Bankatlal went to the malin living nearby and brought bread and pickles and offered the same to the youth, who asked Pitambar to bring water in his bowl from the stream, but warned him to get it filled with water placing it into water, and that it



should not be filled by pouring water in it with hands. Pitambar said "There is very little water in the stream. May I bring clean water from any other place?"

The youth said "You should bring water from this very stream and that too, by dipping the bowl in the water. Pitambar took the bowl and went to the stream. As he touched the bowl to the water, a pit was created and the bowl was filled with clear and clean water. He tried to put the bowl at several place and found that pits were being formed and the bowl itself was getting filled with clear and clean water, though the water of the stream was scanty and muddy. He realised that the youth possessed great yogic powers, without which this was impossible. He returned to the youth with the bowl full of clear water. After eating the bread, the youth drank the water and then asked Bankatlal to give him supari (betel nut) saying "Do you want to satisfy me with malin's bread only?"

Bankatlal gave him supari and also two brass coins (half anna). The youth then smiled and said "Do you think me a Baniya (Grocer) and that is why you are giving me these coins. I do not need them. Family men like you are in want of them. I am satisfied with the coins of devotion. You had this devotion and so you are seeing me again. Now you both go to the Mandir and listen to the Kirtan".

Govind Boa quoted the first line of a stanza of 'Hans Geeta' included in the Bhagwat (A Purana). The youth uttered the second line of the stanza loudly. Govind Boa was amazed to hear this. He said "This person must be a great authority in Philosophy. Please bring him in the mandir".

Bankatlal and others hastened to the youth and requested him to come to the mandir. The youth said "I am listening to the kirtan from this place". Knowing this, Govind Boa himself went there, bowed to him humbly and said, "you are Shri Shankar.

Without you, the gathering in the mandir is ungraceful. It is my good fortune that I am seeing your goodself today. I pray you to grace the audience by your presence”.

The youth said “Govind Boa, there should be consistency in one’s sayings. You just said that all is pervaded with God. There is no difference as ‘in’ and ‘out’. Why are you obstinate now? You are explaining the meaning of the stanza of Bhagwat and acting quite contrary to it. This does not become a kirtankar like you. You should not be a mercenary Hardas or kirtankar. I am hearing you, from this place. Go and continue your sermon”.

Govind Boa returned to the temple and said loudly, “Oh, citizens of Shegaon, a precious jewel in the form of a young saint has appeared in Shegaon. Please take good care of him. He is God in human form and this town has become Pandharpur due to his presence. Serve him well with devotion. Obey his orders as the words of Vedas. You will be surely benefitted. Do not lose this great treasure”.

All the people went home after kirtan. Bankatlal was very much delighted. He told his father all that had happened at the temple and requested him, “Dear father, please bring this young saint to our house”. Father told him to bring the young saint. Bankatlal was delighted to have the consent of his father. He was searching for the saint all the time and at last on the fourth day, he saw him in the Manik chowk in the evening. The cowherds were returning with cattle. Cows and calves had gathered round the young saint. The birds were chirping on the trees.

Bankatlal came home with the young saint in the evening. His father was delighted to see the saint. He seated him on a raised wooden platform with respect. He exclaimed “I think Shri Shankar has come to me at this pradosh time (i. e. evening)” He worshipped him with bel (a tree liked by Shri Shiva) and offered a plate full of puri (fried cakes) dates, almond, plaintains,

musumbi etc. Applied bukka to his forehead and garlanded him. The saint remained there during the night.

Next morning Bankatlal arranged for the auspicious bath of the saint. Some applied sikekai, some soap, some scented oil to his head and body and about 100 vessels of warm water were poured on his body. He wore a pitambar (yellow silk cloth) saffron gandh was applied on his forehead. Plates full of delicious food articles were offered to him. All neighbours except Ichharam, uncle of Bankatlal, partook in the worship of the saint. As it was Monday and Ichharam was observing fast, he thought of worshipping him and offering him food in the evening.

Though the young saint had full diet in the midday, Ichharam worshipped him in the evening and requested him to accept food and also said that unless he took food he would not dine. He offered plates with food sufficient for four persons and a bowl of curds. The young saint ate all the food and just to teach a lesson that insistence is bad, he vomited out all that was eaten. Samarth Ramdas had also similarly taken too much of sweet soup (khir) to satisfy his tongue and had vomited it out.

After washing the site, the saint was seated at a clean place. Many people were coming to see him. Two singing parties sang songs of God. The young saint uttered 'Gan Gan Ganat Bote' meaning 'The Brahma pervades everywhere'. Due to this recitation, he was called "Shri Gajanan Maharaj". Bankatlal's house became a holy place of pilgrimage as Pandharpur, Nasik and Haridwar. Hundreds of people came to see him and dined daily.

Maharaj would take bath some day or would go to the stream and drank its muddy water. He smoked often with chillim (clay pipe) though it was not necessary for him.

(to be continued)

## THE DIARY OF Late Shri H. S. Dixit



To those, who are conversant with the life of Shri Sai Baba, the name H. S. Dixit is not new. He was one of the several devotees, who had the good fortune to have the company of Shri Sai Baba in live form. The mention of his name is often made in the Sai Satcharita. In chapter 20 of Shri Sai Satcharita, Shri Sai Baba is said to have ordered Shri Das Ganu to go to Kakasaheb (as he was commonly known) Dixit's place at Vile Parle in order to get a reply to his question from the maid-servant of Shri Dixit.

In chapter 27, a mention is made about the Vithal-vision of Shri Dixit. Apart from being a devotee, Shri Hari Sitaram alias Kakasaheb Dixit was very intimate with Shri Sai Baba. The building now used as Bhojan griha at Shirdi, belonged to Shri Dixit and is often referred to as "Dixitwada" in Sai Satcharita.

It appears that Shri Dixit maintained a diary in Marathi and recorded therein the incidents that he heard about or saw, when he was at Shirdi. This diary, it appears, was published, after it was translated into English. Late Shri N. P. Awasthi of Pune, had a copy of this diary in his collection of books and another sincere Sai devotee Shri S. M. Garje (80, Shiwaji Nagar, Pune-5) happened to get it from Shri Nanasaheb Awasthi.

At the time of the gathering of the contributors to Shri Sai Leela magazine, held at Shirdi in the last week of January 1977,

Shri Garje happened to mention about this book to me and expressed his wish that some of the incidents recorded therein may be published in Shri Sai Leela as they do not seem to have been referred to in Sai Satcharita. I agreed to his proposal but expressed a desire to have a look at the book. I happened to go to Pune in the last week of February, when Shri Garje was good enough to give me the book obtained by him from Shri Awasthikaka.

The diary is having 140 pages. The first page and a few pages at the end of the book must be missing, because the incident No.118 which starts on page 140 is not completely narrated on that page. Some other pages of the book are partly eaten by white ants. As the first page is torn, it cannot be said where and by whom the English translation was published; but it appears from the note at the end of the introduction (which is reproduced below) that the book must have been published at Madras.

As the book is printed by someone, at least round about 500 copies of it must have been circulated after it was printed. On enquiries at Shirdi Office, it is understood that no copy of the book is available in the Library at Shirdi. The author has thanked the Shirdi Sansthan for allowing him to translate and publish the diary. It is therefore rather strange that a copy of the book is not preserved in the library at Shirdi.

The introduction of the book which covers the first five pages of the book runs as follows :-

In volume II of the Life of Sai Baba, (based largely on Dixit Anka of S. L. Masik) we get a fairly good idea of H. S. Dixit's life and how it was enabled to reach as high a perfection as possible under Sai's guidance. That is largely due to the fact that Dixit himself furnished particulars about his life. These particulars are found partly in the Mahratti diary kept by him during the time he was under Baba (1909-1918) and even after Baba left the body (1918-1926). The diary contains over 121 items and all of them are highly interesting. They deal only with Baba

and persons that approached Baba. The notes are mostly valuable; several of them are highly useful to devotees for various purposes including the promotion of their own health, and the advancement of their spiritual condition. In a few cases, no doubt we have to correct or amplify the notes given by Dixit in his diary with the help of better and fuller accounts by others who have had better chances of knowing the facts and expressing them in proper perspective and with fuller detail in the Sai Lila Masik, etc. We find especially about Nana Chandorkar, the details given here are too few and too weak—due perhaps to Dixit's inability to remember and reproduce what he heard from others, mostly second-hand. In those instances about Chandorkar, B. V. Dev has given a very much better account in the Sai Lila Masik, beginning with I Vol. 6th part which deals with the first meeting of Chandorkar with Baba. B. V. Dev's account is impressive and highly useful. Again take the account of further important incidents in Chandorkar's life where B. V. Dev sets them out in his articles. These are the result of B. V. Dev's carefully contacting N. G. Chandorkar whom he considered to be his Guru, or Upaguru, the stepping stone that took him to his Dattaguru Sai Baba. Therefore, the accounts given by him are fuller, more accurate and more helpful to the reader. So in several of these cases, the readers of this diary would do well to check and compare the valuable accounts in it with other accounts found elsewhere. This however does not detract from the great value of the diary. This diary is the first great source of information that we have for Baba's life at Shirdi. He is the first Pepys who kept a diary which proves to be a good source of history. Just as Pepy's diary and Evelyn's diary are used by writers of English history as giving valuable glimpses of the life and events of the period covered by them, so we have here the diaries of H. S. Dixit and of G. S. Khaparde, the former written in Mahratti and the latter in English. Dixit's diary covers a very long period so far as the incidents are concerned. Some of them refer to Baba's contact and dealings with bhaktas long before Dixit arrived at Shirdi in

1909, e. g., N. G. Chandorkar. But in the case of G. S. Khaparde, it is a regular diary kept from day to day, maintained in strict business like fashion and therefore dealing only with a few months; at first for a few days when he was at Shirdi at the end of 1910 and then for 3 months from Dec. 1911 to March 1912 when he stayed at Shirdi. There is a marked difference between these two diaries. Khaparde writes just like Pepy's from the purely worldly standpoint. Occasional touches there are of spirituality, for any one in dealing with Sai cannot escape spirituality. But most of these details noted by Khaparde are ordinary events—arrival and departure of persons, what happened to whom in what place and why, etc. It is not these that attracted Dixit's attention. He is after that which is really helpful to the soul—noting the incidents of Baba's miraculous action and powers. These are very highly helpful, because a careful study of these would enable one to get a good picture of Sai Baba's helpfulness to sadhakas to achieve the goal and that is what any reader of Dixit's diary should aim at. In the case of Khaparde it is more a source book of historical facts with occasional intermixture of spiritual events and statements. Dixit's diary has one great merit, namely, that he is relating experiences of himself and of others mostly having direct contact with Baba in the flesh. As Dixit was an Ankita child of Baba, (that is, one for whom Baba had given an express undertaking that he would look after everything concerning him so that Dixit need not have any anxiety at all,) his record of incidents (showing how he fared after that undertaking was given) helps others similarly situated and has a special merit. His diary is a valuable study, especially for those who have recently been placed under Baba's protection. Baba did not confine his complete provision, supervision and guardianship (Yogakshema) to Kaka Dixit. There were and are so many others who had not seen Baba during their life time whose care has been and is being undertaken by Baba and several of these were reporting to Dixit or to Sai Journals etc., constantly that under the supervision and guidance of Baba everything was going on in their life well, both temporally and

spiritually. So, for all persons, Dixit's diary affords very good help. It is a pity that others also who contacted Baba in the flesh and to whom also Baba extended similar protection like Das Ganu (See B. C. S. 31) did not maintain any diary showing how their complete life has been covered by Baba's protection and how they progressed. Upasani Baba also was under the complete protection of Sai Baba for years. Unfortunately Upasani Baba did not maintain any regular diary and in fact forgot even the year in which he went to Baba and the period during which he stayed under Baba. For instance the writer of Upasani's biography under directions of Baba, (Upasani Lilamrita) has written as though Upasani Baba spent four years at Shirdi as directed by Baba. It is only by researches made subsequently with the help of Khaparde's diary and letters in the possession of Balakrishna Upasani Sastri that the discovery was made that Upasani Maharaj did not stay at Shirdi all the four years prescribed for him by Baba, but only three years i. e., from June 1911 to June 1914. Even though he visited Shirdi on subsequent occasions, he could never complete four years with Baba. These discoveries, which enable one to study the lives of Sai's devotees, are only possible by reason of the existence of diaries like G. S. K's and Dixit's. This is only one instance to show how for purposes of ascertainment of historical facts these diaries are useful. They have obviously further uses than this bare ascertainment of historical facts. The reader might have noticed how some derived special advantage by making a special study of passages from these diaries in the matter of health, success, spiritual progress etc. In this preface it is enough to indicate that the main reason why these diaries of Dixit and Khaparde are now being translated and are printed is that they serve many purposes of the students of Sai's life, especially those students who wish to improve themselves by a fuller knowledge of the facts of Baba's life and the way in which he operated on those seeking his help and others who by *rinanubanda* had to be drawn to his feet.



P. S. : In translating the Mahratti text, Sri A Ramachandra Rao, Moubrays Road, Madras, has given much help for which thanks are due. Thanks are due to Sri Sai Samsthan of Shirdi for leave to translate and publish this work.

It will be seen from the above introduction that the diary relates to the period 1909 to 1918 and from 1918 to 1926; but the incidents that are printed in the book are not dated. When we know some incidents relating to Shri Sai Baba, we are interested to know when they happened; but the book is silent about the dates of the incidents, though an overall period covered by the book has been given. Shri Garje is requested to select some incidents from the book and it is proposed to print them every month. I am also making efforts to obtain the original Marathi Diary of Shri H. S. Dixit from his relatives at Vile Parle and if the diary is traced, we might be able to know the dates on which the particular incident took place. ★

S. D. Parchure



The Sai Temple - cum - Ashram, at Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh (under construction). An article giving full details of the proposed building, was written by Shri P. L. Goyal and it was published in Shri Sai Leela for March 1977.

# SAINT GADGEMAHARAJ

By Dr. S. D. Parchure M. A., Ph. D.

(Continued from March 1977 issue)

When Gadgemaharaj left his house on that memorable day in 1905, he had no definite destination; but he was quite sure about two things, that he wanted to go away from his house as far as possible and that he did not want to return to his house under any circumstances.

Because of this determination Gadgemaharaj was ready to undergo all the hardships that he had to suffer on his way. After five days from the day he left the house, Gadgemaharaj came to a village, which was about forty five miles away from Dapure. The temples in such remote villages used to be secluded and it was a practice of the people, travelling from village to village in those days, to stay in such temples for the night. At the outskirts of the above village, there was a Maruti temple and as Maharaj went to that village in the evening, he decided to stay in that temple for the night.

While he was sitting silently in a corner of the temple, the people of the village started visiting the temple for taking darshan of Maruti. In a village which has a small population, all people are usually known to each other and hence a stranger is at once spotted out there. The visitors, therefore, at once knew that Maharaj was a stranger to that village. Because of his strange attire, with torn out clothes and because of the stick and pitcher, that Maharaj was carrying, a sort of a curiosity arose in the minds of the devotees attending the temple. They first started whispering amongst themselves. Then they consulted each other and came to the conclusion that the stranger, sitting in the temple, must either be a mad person or an imposter, waiting for the nightfall

when he could commit a theft in the village. The immediate official, known to the village people, was the Patil. Hence they at once reported the matter to him and requested him to drive the person away from the village. The Patil called the Harijans of the village and directed them to accompany the stranger and take him out of the village limits. They accordingly asked Maharaj to accompany them and carried him out of the village limits with a warning not to return to the village, otherwise he would get thrashing!

Gadgemaharaj had decided not to give offence to any body. Therefore after the village people left him, he went on walking ahead. It was the night of the dark half of the month of Margasheersha. The stones on the road were pricking his feet, the cold was biting and he could not know much about the country side due to pitch darkness. After some time, however, he heard the sound of flowing water. He therefore, guessed that there must be a brook nearby. He started walking in the direction of the sound and saw a stream of water flowing by the side of the road. He had no food for the whole day and now the night also had advanced much. He therefore took a wash with the water of the brook. Then with the help of his pitcher, he drank stomach-full of water and sat a little while on a nearby stone, in order to decide about his further move. When he sat thinking in this manner on the stone, one thicket on the bank of the stream attracted his attention and he decided to take shelter in that thicket for the night. The month of Margasheersha is very cold in Berar. Even inside the house the people require good covering to protect themselves from the cold; but in that open place, the biting cold had absolutely no effect on Gadgemaharaj because of his strong determination and within no time he fell fast asleep in the aforesaid thicket by the roadside!

Next day Maharaj got up and started walking towards the next village. His daily programme was more or less the same. He would get up early in the morning and start walking. He

would visit five to ten villages during the course of the day according to their distance from each other. During the noon he would go to some house and ask for bread to eat. Some people used to give the bread at once. Some other people used to flatly refuse to give anything; but Maharaj would never argue with the people. He would quietly go to the next house. If somebody gave him anything, he would eat it. Often times old and stale bread was offered to him; but he would eat it without any dissatisfaction and would ask for water to drink. He would collect the water in his pitcher and drink it to his hearts content. In the night he would sometimes take shelter in a temple and if the village people seemed to be antagonistic, then he would go and sleep some where under a tree outside the village limits.

The Padyatra (to use the modern term) of Shri Gadgemaharaj continued in this manner. In course of time his hair grew, his beard also grew. He had started from his house only with one dhoti and one shirt. Because of continuous wear the clothes on his body were torn. His outward appearance was therefore quite ugly and strange. It was because of this, that whenever he would enter into a new village, he would be welcomed by the stray dogs of the village, by barking and running after him. Of course Maharaj would remain quite composed and he would not get disturbed. He would move in the village without fear or fright. In the village he would ask for food. If somebody would give it, he would take it or otherwise he would go to the next village without arguing with anybody.

Was Gaegemaharaj wasting the precious days of his life? Yes. It may appear like that to some people; but it was really not so. During this time he was all along engrossed completely in thought. The age of Maharaj was twentynine now. During the last twenty years or so, he was closely observing the condition and the ways of living of the society round about him; but he did not still consider himself to be fully conversant with the woes and sorrows of the people. He wanted to know the ill treatment that was

being given to a penniless man born in a so called low caste of the society. It was therefore that he went out of the house without any money. If anyone ever asked him about his caste, he would normally not give a reply, but whenever he mentioned it, he did not tell his real caste, but always said that he was a Mahar (now known as Harijan). By telling this he knew the reactions of the people against the Harijans and could experience the ill treatment that the Harijans got at the hands of the so called higher castes. Because of this deep thinking that was behind the incident of leaving the house by Shri Gadgemaharaj, that he never repented for having abandoned his life of ease at home and having undertaken this hard life.

Shri Gadgemaharaj does not seem to have taken this step because of some earlier examples of this type. He had no doubt listened to the biographies of old saints; but it does not seem that he was prompted to undertake to this sort of life because of that. It however appears that there were examples of earlier saints who travelled in similar way in order to know the mental and physical condition of the people. In ancient times there was a practice among the people to go on a pilgrimage of holy places in the country. Apart from the religious aspect of this practice, it had at its base the idea of having a first hand knowledge of the condition of the people at large. A person who wants to work for the uplift of the people must know the wants of the people. He must know what the people do not have. Similarly he must know how far the people are receptive. All this can be done only by mass contact with the people. It may be recalled that Saint Ramdas, who had decided to dedicate his whole life for the uplift of the people, travelled throughout the length and breadth of this country for nearly twelve years under the garb of the pilgrimage to holy places. In modern democratic countries also mass contact is supposed to be a very good tool for knowing the mind of the public. Thus the Padyatra of Saint Gadgemaharaj was not a wastage of time. It was his preparation for the future.

Though apparently Gadgemaharaj was moving aimlessly without having a definite destination, still on his way he would work with the people. This was also another way of entering the heart of the people. Sometimes he would find on his way, in some field that people were reaping a crop of Jowar. Looking at that sight, he would be immediately reminded of his own work in the field. So he would immediately take up the scythe in his hand and start reaping the corn. He was a very good and fast worker. So wherever he went, he outwitted the others and did more work than them. Thus after working for three or four hours, the workers would stop the work for their lunch. Maharaj would then take a chance and run away from the place, so that nobody should force him to accept the bread to eat. Similarly he would help the people in binding the bundles of the corn or even in ploughing the field.

Nearly six months passed away in this manner. As the days rolled on, the seasons also went on changing. The cold season gave its place to the hot season and the clouds appearing in the sky suggested the approach of monsoon. Thus though the days passed by, still the determination of Gadgemaharaj did not wane away. He continued his travel with the same vigour and enthusiasm. On his way he came to a village. The Chawdi in every village is like a public place. Hence when he came near the chawdi, he stepped in and sat silently there looking at the beauty of the changed season. He was looking interestedly at the gathering clouds and the lightening that was spreading light in the sky. In the villages, it was a common experience that an incoming visitor was always a center of curiosity. Gadgemaharaj similarly provoked the people of the village. They then sent for the Patil, and requested him to enquire about the stranger and send him out of the village. The Patil came and enquired with Gadgemaharaj, who only said that he was a human being like other people in the village. Even on further enquiries he refused to give any further details about himself. This as usual gave cause for suspicion and even though the showers appeared to be imminent from the dark

clouds gathered in the sky, the Patil asked the Mahars of the village to accompany Maharaj and drive him out of the village, considering him to be an impostor!

Non-violence was the sheet anchor of Maharaj. He never argued with anybody or staged opposition. He quietly accompanied the Mahars and started walking towards the next village. When they all had come at a sufficiently long distance from the village, the Mahars returned and Maharaj continued his onwards drive. As expected the downpour started in right earnest and it was also accompanied by a strong breeze; but Maharaj had no fear from anything. In spite of kneedeep water on the road, he continued to walk on the road. He had no umbrella or anything else to protect him from rain. He was fully drenched. While he was thus wading through the muddy road, he chanced to see a neem tree by the roadside and thought of resting a while below it. Maharaj wanted to wait under the tree for some time and continue his journey further after the rain subsided, but there was no sign of the stopping of the rain. On the other hand, the rain and breeze increased immensely and unexpectedly the neem tree was uprooted and fell down on the ground. Maharaj was looking on. Anything was expected to happen at that time; but lo! He was quite safe! The neem tree fell in the direction opposite to the one in which he was stationed. When the shelter of the neem tree was thus snatched away from his hands, Maharaj had no other go but to move further. He accordingly moved further and came across a big stone lying by the roadside. He thought that this roadside stone would be a good place for resting for the night and with his clothes fully drenched in water he slept on that stone, in the open, for the whole night!

Due to the suspicious nature of the village people, they seldom allowed Maharaj to stay in the village. In some villages he got a piece of bread and water to drink; but he could seldom stay in the village by night. He had therefore usually to stay in the jungle or in the fields where Jowar or cotton were planted.

These places were fully infested with boars, wolves, jackals, serpents and scorpions; but it was a wonder how during his long stay in the jungle and fields in this manner, he was never troubled by anyone of these creatures. It might be because the view of Maharaj had become static and hence he was looking upon all objects in the same light. It has been recorded that some times Maharaj had even come across tigers; but even a very cruel animal like the tiger connived at him and went his own way.

In the Bhagwadgeeta while describing the characteristics of a Yogi and a devotee, Lord Krishna has often laid stress on viewing equally all objects and beings. As this equality of vision was achieved by Shri Gadgemaharaj, he did not have fear from any living being. One incident, which is narrated in his life is specially noteworthy in this context. Once during the monsoon season, at nightfall he came to an old temple of god Shankar. This temple was in a dilapidated condition and was therefore not frequented by the people. As it was raining and it was pitch dark, as per his usual practice, Shri Gadgemaharaj drank good quantity of water to fill his stomach, in the absence of food, and slept in one corner of the temple. Next morning when he got up, he saw a big cobra in the other corner of the temple just opposite to the place where he lay! If by chance the cobra were to come to the corner where Maharaj was sleeping, what would have happened? But Maharaj had no time for such doubts and fears. His mind was completely free from fear. The cobra very soon left the place and Maharaj also started for the next village.

(to be continued)





## Shri Sadguru Sainath Mandir

Shiwaji Nagar, Pune-5

[ Original article written in Marathi by Shri S. M. Garje and published in Shri Sai Leela magazine for the month of Jan. 76 ]

At present there are three Sai temples in Pune. One of them is at Swar Gate, one is at Khadkee and the third one is at Shiwaji Nagar. Out of these temples, the one at Shiwaji Nagar



is the oldest and many people are devoted to it. Its history also is strange, curious and thrilling. This temple stands on the bank of the Mutha river in the Shiwaji Nagar area in the vicinity of Rasane chawl. Recently one road has been constructed in the rear side of this temple and because of a big retaining wall constructed by the side of the river, the flood water of the river does not come near the temple, otherwise in olden days the flood water of the river, used to come as far as the temple, every year during the monsoon. If we turn left from the new road, we first come to the Rasane chawl. If we move a little ahead and turn our face to the right then we at once get the Darshan of Shri Sai Baba. This darshan gives us

the satisfaction of having taken the trouble of coming to the temple.

Shri Damodarpant Rasane was a Sai devotee, who had the good fortune to have lived with Shri Sai Baba during the latter's

life time. The Rasane chawl belongs to Shri Damodar pant. Round about 1945 Shri Nanasaheb Rasane, the son of Damodar pant converted two of the rooms in the Rasane chawl into a temple and started there the worship of Shri Sai Baba. Since that time the worship of Shri Baba is going on at this place regularly. The morning and evening aarati became a regular feature and hence devotees started flocking at the site. Sessions Judge of Pune, Shri Patil, Shri Chougule, a judge from Belgaum, Shri V. Shankar Mudliar, Shri P. S Rao, Shri Ranganathan, Shri Bendre, Shri Gaikwad, Shri Takawane guruji can be mentioned as the illustrious devotees, attending the temple. Shri Nikam, from Khed was a Jamadar in the Police Deptt. He was known to be a sincere Sai devotee and hence he was called by Shri Nanasaheb Rasane to join the activities of the temple. Shri Nikam accordingly responded to the call of Shri Nanasaheb Rasane and resigning his job in the Police Deptt, he dedicated his entire life to this temple.

Shri Nikam is closely connected with this temple. He has presented to this temple one Talisman obtained from Shri Sai Baba due to Shri Nikam's good fortune. The story of how Shri Nikam came to get this Talisman is also very interesting and noteworthy for all Sai devotees and hence it would not be out of place to narrate it here.

One girl from Shirdi, named Kashibai, was married to a gentleman staying at Niphad. Due to her ill-luck Kashibai's husband died within a few years from her marriage. She was pregnant at the time of her husband's death. She confined at the proper time and gave birth to a son, who was named as Madhav. When her son completed one year, Kashibai returned to Shirdi from Niphad and started staying with her father. As Kashibai had no means of livelihood, she used to work on somebody's field for the whole day and used to earn some money. Kashibai's son was more or less a problem for her. There was nobody at her house, who could look after him. Hence she found out a solution for that. She used to leave her son, in the morning,

in the Masjid and go away to the field for work. In the evening when she would return from the work, she used to pick up her son from the Masjid and then she used to go home. In the evening, she used to bow down to Shri Sai Baba before going home. As Kashibai used to leave Madhav in the Masjid for the whole day, she never had any worry about him. She used to work in the field whole day and return in the evening. This became a sort of a routine for Kashibai for four or five years. After Madhav attained the age of five, Shri Baba started giving him a rupee every day. In his turn, Madhav also used to attend to Shri Baba's petty jobs.

Smt. Kashibai knew that Baba used to give some money to many people. Once she came to the Masjid and said to Shri Baba, "Baba, you are daily giving Rupees fifty to some people, to some others you are daily giving Rs. 30. Some people are in daily receipt of Rs. 25 and Rupees fifteen respectively. My son Madhav is doing so many of your sundry jobs; but you are giving only one rupee to him everyday. Why is it so?"

Baba replied, "Kashibai, I know I am giving more money to some people than what I am giving to your son, but remember that I am going to stop giving this prasad to others; but your son's donation will not be stopped. It will continue for ever. I am the master of widows like you, who have no protector".

Kashibai did not understand the words of Shri Baba properly and said, "My Master (पति) died some five years before and I am a widow since that time".

On listening to these words, Shri Baba got enraged and started speaking to her in loud tone. Looking at the wrath of Shri Sai Baba, Kashibai quietly slipped out of the Masjid and went home. She then stopped going to the Masjid for some time. After two or three days, however, Shri Baba remembered about her and He sent for her. Kashibai came to the Masjid along with

Madhav. She was quite afraid to speak to Shri Baba; but Baba spoke to her in mild tone. One tooth of Shri Baba had become loose. Hence he pulled it out and after tying it in a small rag alongwith some Udi, he gave it to Kashibai informing her to keep that Talisman with her. Baba told Kashibai further that it would do her good.

In course of time, Madhav grew up to be a man. He was now known as Madhavrao. After the death of his mother Kashibai, he left Shirdi and settled at Niphad. Once he fell seriously ill. During that sickness, he saw a dream, in which Shri Sai Baba ordered him, "Very soon a person will come to you and you should give him the Talisman tied round your arm". Shri Nikam came on the same day to Shri Madhavrao's house at Niphad. Shri Madhavrao and Shri Nikam had met each other many times at Shirdi; but just as Madhavrao got a dream, similar dream was seen by Shri Nikam and hence for fulfilment of the dream he met Madhavrao. As both the devotees confirmed their dreams, the Talisman was handed over by Shri Madhavrao to Shri Nikam. This Talisman was with Shri Nikam for many years and now he has handed it over to this Mandir, for safe custody. It is now kept below the Padukas of Shri Sai Baba in this mandir. It is said that the tooth of Shri Buddha is kept at some places of worship of the Bauddhas, especially the stupas. It appears that this temple will have corresponding importance to the Sai devotees because of this Talisman as the buddhist have for their temples, containing the tooth of Shri Gautam Buddha.

In 1950, Saidas Mandal was established to take care of this mandir and it was also registered. Shri Kanganathan was the secretary of the mandal for many years. After his death Shri S. Ramakrishnan, who is a petty contractor, took over the secretaryship and he still continues to hold that post. Shri Ramkrishnan has taken lot of pains for the construction of this mandir and today even at the age of seventyfive, he is not backward in doing any job for the mandir. His enthusiasm is really wonderful

and some young people even cannot show as much energy as this old man has. Dasara, Ramanavmi, Guru Pournima, these three festivals are celebrated at this temple every year with great devotion and discipline. Shri Ramkrishnan is paying personal attention to every small or big job concerning the temple and because of this keen interest shown by him in the affairs of the temple, it has been possible to show good progress. Because of this able guidance of Shri Ramkrishnan, the young generation is always volunteering their services to the temple and are willingly yoking themselves to work.

Shri Nanasaheb Awasthi, a veteran Sai devotee of Pune, who was more than eighty years old was also another source of inspiration of the mandal. He being one of the lucky persons, who had the good fortune to see Shri Baba while he was alive, his blessings were considered to be very valuable for the project and it was hoped that with his guidance, the work of the mandir would progress swiftly. Shri Awasthikaka used to visit the mandir on every Thursday, in the evening, for the aarati. Due to his death, this mandal has lost a very strong supporter and guide, but the enthusiasm of the members of the mandal has not become less in any way. They have collected donations to the tune of about Rupees 40,000 and have reconstructed the old temple and the hall in front of the temple. This hall is about 800 Sq. feet in area and it will be inaugurated very soon.

One miracle about the old temple is worth narrating here. On 12 July 1961, the Panshet dam gave way and the whole of Pune city was under flood water. A large part of the city was devastated and many houses crumbled down like bungalows of playing cards. This Sai Mandir at Shiwaji Nagar was at that time actually on the bank of the river. It was therefore no wonder if this temple was caught in the flood-water. Because of the breaking of the Panshet dam, the level of water rose to about twenty to twenty five feet above the dome of this temple.

The small structures of mud in the compound of Rasane chawl were drowned in the flood-water and therefore the members of the mandal were much worried about the temple. No sooner than the flood-water subsided, the members of the mandal ran to the site for salvage of the temple. It was really a job to clear the thick deposit of mud on the temple and its vicinity. The work went on continuously for two or three days and then to the wonder of everybody, the old temple was found to be quite intact. The Audumbar tree by the side of the temple stood as before and was not even bent down a little. The coloured photograph of Shri Sai Baba in the temple was also intact. Even after remaining buried in the thick mud for so long a time it did not get soiled at all. It is really a wonder how this has happened. Now one marble statue of Shri Sai Baba, which was ordered from Jaipur, is installed in the temple; but the aforesaid photograph, which survived the flood, is still hung in the temple on the wall behind the statue and is worshipped daily. Every Sai devotee who visits the temple comes to know of the spiritual power of Shri Sai Baba, because of this miracle and at once bows down his head before Shri Sai Baba for getting his blessings. The Sai devotees in the Shiwaji Nagar area have great regards for the temple and it is hoped that other Sai devotees also will make it a point to visit this temple at the time of their visit to Pune. ★



# SAI - ISM

## NATIONAL INTEGRATION PERSONIFIED IN SHIRDI SAI BABA

If one man can make a million people to follow him, then that man cannot but be considered as a great soul.

One among such saint is Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi. Still it is a mystery wherefrom He came, who He was, to what religion He belonged and what His real name was. All that is said about Him, is that He was called Sai Baba and that by His dress and food habits he resembled a Muslim. Because He always uttered "Allah Malik", it was presumed that He belonged or have had the association at early stages with the Muslim community.

On the other hand, the way in which He allowed Himself to be worshipped with "Arathi" during His lifetime and adopted other Hindu rituals, one can take Him to be a Hindu also.

### PREACHED PURPOSE OF BIRTH

In practice, during his life-time, as per records officially available from the government end, indicate that He gave only 'Vibhuti' to the people as "Prasad". Generally speaking, 'Vibhuti' and keeping all the time burning fire (akhanda jyothi) before Him go to prove His habits emanating from Hindu heritage. He left us still guessing as to which sect He belonged to, because He practised what was practised by the Muslims as well as by the Hindus, both in the worshipping methods and observation of rituals.

One thing that He has achieved during his lifetime is that He was able to personify Himself as a symbol of unity, bringing together the two warring classes of the society, the Muslims and Hindus. He had made every attempt to find unity in diversity in that He allowed Himself to be a party to celebrate all the Hindu festivals as well as those of the Muslims.

The Urus and the Rama Navami, two fairs and festivals were held on the same day to unify the Hindus and the Mohamedans.

The principle of national integration, which we preach today, was practised by Him then. He not only, at every stage of His life, brought both the sections together but also made them mingle together on the same platform and at the same place. This is something unique in His life. Sri Rama Navami, Moharram Ramzan, Krishna Jayanti, all these festivals of Hindus and Muslims used to be held in the place where Sri Sai Baba lived and He was the only presiding diety for both of them at Shirdi.

He ate meat with Muslims and vegetarian food with the Hindus. It is surprising to find from the records as maintained by the government that He allowed even goat to be sacrificed although on the other hand He celebrated the birth of Krishna and Sri Rama with great splendour and pomp. The biggest question-mark now is, if a man can make two warring groups to follow him and have faith in Him and make believe as the son of the God, then we cannot but call Him as one possessing Godliness.

### THE MIRACLE OF VIBHUTI

'Vibhuti' was used as a 'Prasad' and as a medicine for curing the diseases, by Sri Sai Baba. This reminds us one of the most important things in life and tickles our sentiments to the fact that those who are born with life and blood will have to return to the earth - the dead finding their body being reduced to ashes. May be, He wanted to tell the mankind that you are made of earth and you will have to go back to earth. Shri Sai Baba possibly wanted the mankind to understand the dictum:

"I shall pass this way but once. Any good, therefore, which I can do, let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again".

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## चिन्तन

पचपन के वर्ष पार कर आज जब जीवनके ५६ वें वर्ष में प्रवेश कर रहा हूँ तब मेरी दृष्टि एकाएक अतीत की ओर मुड़ गयी है, तथा मन अतीत के अन्तराल में गोते लगा कुछ खोजने के प्रयास में सचेष्ट है। जबसे होश सम्हाला, वातावरण आस्तिकतामय हो पाया। माता-पिता ईश्वर की सत्ता वा शक्तिपर श्रद्धापूर्वक विश्वास करते थे। लेकिन जैसे जैसे आयु बढ़ी, आस्तिकता का प्रभाव क्रमशः कम होता गया, भौतिक आकर्षण बढ़ता गया। पूजन मात्र पूजन ही रह गई। हमारे लिये उसका कोई अर्थ नहीं रह गया था।

पन्द्रह वर्ष की आयु में पिता का साया सिर से उठ गया, तथा एक वर्ष पश्चात् चाचा भी पल्लोकवासी हुए। सांसारिक भाषा में हम अनाथ हो गये थे। लेकिन आज कह सकता है कि उस समय ऐसा सोचना या कहना निरर्थक था, गलत था, अनुचित था। यदि इस कथन में किंचित मात्र भी सत्यता होती तो आज मैं आयु के पचपन वर्ष पार कर चिन्तन की इन पंक्तियों को लिखने के लिये इस संसार में जीवित न रहता। अनुभव के आधार पर इस सत्य को आज दावे के साथ कह सकता हूँ कि सांसारिक नाते-रिश्ते संसार तक ही सीमित रहते हैं; किन्तु आत्मिक रिश्ते जन्म-जन्मांतर तक चलते हैं, चलते भी रहेंगे। आत्म-स्थित परमात्मा की तो बात ही और है। भौतिक साया उठते ही उनका अपना कार्य आरम्भ होता है जिसकी अनुभूति हमें उस समय तो नहीं हुई, आज स्पष्ट रूप से आँखों के आगे उसकी झलक देखने को मिल रही है।

आवश्यक शिक्षण भी हुआ, जीवन-यापन के साधन भी जुटे, पत्नी भी आई और हम भी बच्चों के माता-पिता बन गये। उसकी असीम सृष्टि में जिसका यह पृथ्वी जिसे हम संसार कहते हैं, एक अंश है हमारा अपना एक छोटासा संसार बस गया। किसकी कृपा से? किसकी शक्ति से? उसी आत्म-स्थित परमात्मा की दया से।

हमारे इस छोटेसे संसार में भी क्या कुछ नहीं हुआ? उस सबकी दृष्टिगत रखते हुए मुझे यही कहना पड़ता है कि “मो मम कौन कुटिल खल कामो”। परन्तु फिर भी धन्य हूँ उस परमात्मा की हृदयविशालता की, कि मुझे श्री साईं बाबा शिर्डी जैसे समर्थ सद्गुरु को अध्यात्म ‘गुरु’ बना, उनकी शरण में लाकर स्वयं को देखने और परखने का सुअवसर प्रदान किया।

लेकिन अफसोस, कि परम पूज्य सद्गुरु श्री साईनाथ महाराज की महान अनुकम्पा एवं मार्ग-दर्शन के उपलब्ध होते हुए भी मैं उस आत्म-स्थित परमात्मा की प्राप्ति हेतु एक पग भी आगे न बढ़ सका। जीवन का बहुमूल्य समय आज लगता है व्यर्थ ही निकल गया। न तो संसार को गुरुमय देख सका, न खुद राम-मय हो सका, न संसार के प्राणियों को ही राम-मय बना सका। गुरुदेव के शब्दों में मंत्रोच्चारण निरर्थक ही करता रहा।

ऐसा क्यों? शायद अपना भार गुरुदेव के कंधों पर डाल निश्चिन्त ही सांसारिक प्रलोभनों में ही सुखानुभूति करना चाहता था। कर्म किये बिना फल की आशा लगा बैठा था। आज स्पष्ट हुआ कि यह भ्रामक स्थिति है। बिना गुरु-कृपा के प्राप्ति संभव नहीं है और यदि गुरु-कृपा पाना है तो गुरु मंत्र को आचरण में उतारना ही पड़ेगा। लेकिन जीवन के पचपन वर्ष व्यतीत कर क्या अवशेष में अब यह संभव हो सकेगा? गुरुदेव का आश्वासन है “मैं तुम्हारे साथ हूँ जन्म-जन्मान्तर से जन्म-जन्मान्तर तक। मैं अपने भक्त को भटकने नहीं दूँगा। हूँ नहीं दूँगा।

मैं ईश्वर के समक्ष उन सबके प्रति उत्तरदायी हूँ, उत्तरदायी रहूँगा जो मेरी शरण में आते हैं। यह सम्बल क्या कम है। इस जीवन के जितने क्षण मिलें, आचरण में उतार लिये जायें शेष अगले जन्मों में पूर्ण करने की आशा और प्राण लेकर तो जा ही सकता हूँ। पर यह क्या? स्वयं कर्ता बन बैठा। यदि इतनी ही सामर्थ्य होती तो इतना समय क्यों व्यर्थ जाता। नहीं नहीं, गुरुदेव से ही प्रार्थना करूँ कि हे गुरुदेव यह आपको ही सामर्थ्य है, कि खुद मुझे अपने में लीन कर लें (मुझ में वह सामर्थ्य कहाँ जो आप में लीन हो सकूँ)। जानता हूँ मेरी आध्यात्मिक पृष्ठ-भूमि बहुत कमजोर है। उसे मजबूत बनाना आपके हाथ में है। जितना भी समय लग जाये उसको चिन्ता नहीं। केवल इतनी ही दया करें कि आपके चरण-कमल हृदय-पटल पर अंकित रहते हुए आँखों से ओझल न होने पावें। हे दीनबन्धु इतनी ही भीख इस भिखारी को देने की कृपा करें, शरणागत हूँ आपका प्रभु।”

श्री बी. पी. श्रीवास्तव  
रेल्वे क्वार्टर नं. २७७/२, रेल्वे स्टेशनके सामने  
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