

SHRI

SAI LEELA



Shri Baba Cooks the Prasad in Handi



May

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1976

SHRI SAI LEELA

MAY 1976

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SHRI SAI LEELA

(Official Organ of Shirdi Sansthan)



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No. 2

The Supreme Lesson of Life

Teach me, Lord, to grow in silence and learn in silence the supreme lesson of life,—prayer and service. Prayer or *kirtan* is communion with God and His holy ones. Service is communion with the poor and forsaken ones.

In silence, too, may I learn to free myself from *moha* or attachment and grow in sacred detachment!

God is silent. Let me learn to be silent. Therefore, let me renounce ambition and pride.

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EDITORIAL

What is Happiness ?

If we tap any human mind, we will find in one of its nook or corner at least a faint craving for happiness; but what exactly is happiness ? Can any one give an exact definition or description of happiness ? Some people like good food. They are happy if they get good food to eat. They are not worried about the clothes they wear or about the place where they live. There are others who have a flare for good and costly clothes. They will tolerate a little substandard food. They will not worry if they will not get books to read; but they will see that they always wear tip-top clothes. They will see that they always purchase quality clothes and also that their clothes are properly ironed. Their anxiety would always be to see that they are conspicuous among a group because of their neat, clean and costly clothes. There are a number of other people, belonging to the intelligent class, who value their books more than their life. They must always have nourishing food for their brain and mind in the form of books. Such people are often careless about what they eat or how they dress or in which house they live. From the above examples of people of various types we see that the idea about happiness differs from person to person. By getting the same things it may not be said that all people will be happy.

Take for example wealth. The poor people feel that the rich people must be happy, because they have wealth which the poor people do not possess; but this is not true. The rich may have wealth but they are usually affected by some ailment or the other. They have therefore to eat restricted food. Many of them are suffering from insomnia because of their anxieties. The poor people have good appetite and they are able to digest any food; but they do not get food to eat. The poor people have less anxieties and hence they get a sound sleep; but many of them have

no bed to sleep. A good number of them have no house of their own. Some of them have to stay in some hutment and many of them have to take shelter on footpaths and open spaces in sun and rain. Mere wealth does not therefore, solve the problem of happiness.

As a nation we feel that in India there is shortage of all day-to-day requirements, while in America and in most of the European countries, there is plenty of wealth and there is no shortage of the daily necessities hence we feel that the people of America and Europe must be perfectly happy ; but it is not so. The deluge of prosperity there, has created some problems before their society. Too much of pleasure has also its own evils. People in those countries can afford to have two or more T. V. Sets in each family. Hence in many families there are separate T. V. sets for the elderly people and the children. This has resulted in the children constantly witnessing crime pictures, which have cultivated a revolting tendency among the children and thus this extra wealth has posed a problem before the parents.

It will thus be seen that the happiness of individuals is relative. The same thing will not be able to give happiness to any two persons. The happiness of every person will therefore depend on the achievement of the thing that he likes. Now achievement of the object or thing which is coveted by a person depends on the means under his control. If for example a person wishes very much to eat sweetmeat, he will derive the necessary happiness from consuming the sweetmeat, provided he has the means i. e. The money to purchase the sweets. If he would not have enough money in his pocket, he would not be able to get the sweets and thus he would not derive the expected happiness. The pleasure or happiness thus depends on the means that are at your disposal. This fact was mathematically put up in an equation by a Scientist in the following way :

$$\frac{\text{You Means}}{\text{Your Desires}} = \text{Happiness}$$

It will be seen from the above equation that if you have enough means to satisfy all your desires, then the left hand side of the above equation will be equal to one, that means you will be a perfectly happy person, but the desires of a person, except perhaps those of the sages are constantly on the increase. They always go on increasing and are more, at least by one degree, than the means that a person has. Thus the left hand side never becomes equal to one and nobody is fully happy.

In this connection we may take into consideration the reply given to a king by a sage, which throws light on the different ideas of happiness and correct estimate of a rich and a poor person. Once it so happened that a king went to see a sage or a Rishi, in his Ashram, in the forest. This story is of very old days when wisdom and knowledge were valued by all. Hence the saying "स्वदेश पूज्यते राजा विद्वान सर्वत्र पूज्यते" (A king is honoured only in his own country; but a learned person is honoured everywhere.) had real meaning in those days, as learning was held in high esteem. After the king enquired about the health etc. of the Rishi, the king started enquiring about the living conditions in the forest. He further asked about the availability of luxurious articles in the forest, when the Rishi replied :

वयमिह परितुष्टा बल्कलैस्त्वं दुकूलैः ।
 सम इव परितोषां निर्विशेषो विशेषः ॥
 स च भवति दरिद्रो यस्य तृष्णा विशाला ।
 मनसि च परितुष्टे कोऽर्थवान् को दरिद्रः ॥

The meaning of the reply given by the Rishi is, "We are happy here by using the barks of the trees as our garments, while you get that happiness by the use of silk garments, but the feeling of happiness in both the case is the same. There is no difference in its kind. He is poor whose desires are vast. When there is mental satisfaction, who can be called as a rich person and who can be called a poor person ?"

The reply given by the Rishi lays down a sound principle of life. The happiness of a person does not depend on the things that are available to him, but it depends on the mental satisfaction that he gets because of his environments. The people staying in hutments and on footpaths in a city like Bombay, are in many cases happier than the persons staying in lofty buildings; because their wants are few and their means are able to satisfy those wants. If therefore we again turn to the mathematical equation of happiness quoted before, we will see that the left hand side of the equation is a fraction. The resources or the means of a persons are always limited. The means of a rich person may be a little more than those of a poor person; but still they cannot be without limit. As against those means, the desires of both are proportionately varying. The ratio of the means and the desires therefore, more or less, remains the same in the case of the rich and poor. The happiness therefore, never becomes an integer and no man therefore, feels that he is fully happy; because all his desires are never satisfied. In order therefore, to approach towards happiness we must try to curb our desires and make them equal to our means or resources. Then the fraction will tend more and more towards the figure "one". All the Rishis of ancient India and the saints and sages of modern times have also advised the people in this fashion to reduce their wants and needs to the minimum so that they will progress on the path of happiness.

This principle of reducing your wants and needs and curbing your desires, can be told in other words by saying that one should be contented with whatever he gets by his honest efforts. Contentment is happiness is the popularly known saying, which supports the above statement fully. The shloka, quoted above, which forms a part of the conversation between the king and the Rishi, says very clearly "मनसि च परितुष्टे कोऽर्थवान् को दरिद्रः ।" (When there is satisfaction of the mind, who is rich and who is poor?)—The happiness of a person therefore, ultimately depends on his state of mind and if a person is determined to achieve that

particular state of mind, it is always possible for him to do so and attain happiness.

We the Sai devotees, have nothing new to learn in this connection. If we look closely at the life of Shri Sai Baba, what do we see? Shri Sai Baba was happy throughout his life. In what did the secret of his happiness lie? The obvious reply to this question would be contentment. If we put a further question as to how he achieved that contentment, we will perhaps have to refer to his deep study of Yoga, but leaving aside the reasons of his contentment, we find that his desires and wants were very few. He lived by begging alms. He never worried as to what food was offered to him. If he had shown attachment or liking only for a particular item of food, he would have been unhappy, when he would not have been able to get that type of food. Not only he tolerated any sort of food, but he was also not worried about his bed, about his clothes and about his abode. In the beginning we find that his clothes used to be tattered and he used to live in the dilapidated Masjid. Later on the Masjid was repaired and people used to give him good clothes to wear, but we do not find any change in his attitude towards life and consequently his contentment was never lessened in any way. It appears that herein lay the secret of his happiness. He appeared to be a living example of the saying "contentment is happiness"

It will thus be seen that happiness does not depend on any outward object and a reply to the question posed at the beginning of this article is that happiness is within the mind of a person and it depends on the extent to which a person remains contented. We all common people want to be happy and if we are able to adjust our desires according to our means or resources, then the way to happiness is not far from us. Let us then follow Shri Sai Baba in cultivating contentment in our minds and achieve the most coveted happiness, which is the main object of all the activities of the human beings. ★



Honourable Minister Shri B. J. Khatal was felicitated, on behalf of the Shirdi Sansthan of Shri Sai Baba, by Shri Parikhsaheb, the Judge of the City Civil Court on the inclusion of the former in the new Ministry of the Maharashtra State as the Law Minister. Shri Parikhsaheb is seen above offering the Shawl to Honourable Shri Khatalsaheb.

THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

By · Swami Chinmayananda

The Egoless Attitude

The picture of the egoless personality appears to us to be but a zero-personality, with no self-assertion, no ambition, no dynamic living at all. It may only be a life of impotent sleep-walking, and a generation of such individuals would certainly upset all plans for growth, progress and happy-living. This will be the impression that will strike us, at the very outset, when we try to grasp and conceive the attitude of the egoless person in the community.

If such an individual would be impotent to achieve, ineffectual in action, and dangerous for the community, in the midst of the Mahabharatha-war, to a shattered warrior, Krishna would not have prescribed to maintain this psychological mood. In fact in these verses Krishna tries to explain this egoless attitude in such a direct and subjective style that any sincere student can easily comprehend the gushing content of inspirations that it opens up in our individual bosoms.

Ego is the sense of "doership" in all actions springing forth from us. This "I-do-mentality" asserts our individual responsibility for bringing about certain outer and inner conditions in the world and its people. Unnecessarily, thereafter, the ego, comes to carry a heavy load of empty responsibilities.

A river moves on : by its own nature it is moving on. But if you were to sit on a rock and paddle your feet in its water, it is for the sheer joy of it. But to feel and then to assert that your paddling is the cause for the entire river movement - - - is

the play of the ego : and the exhaustions, anxiety, strains, etc. to maintain the river are the hollow rewards of your false attitude.

One sitting in a train need not push the train and cry that "I am the one who is making the train move." Let us learn to live and serve as best as we can, without ego, and ego-centric desires. Then alone life can become an inspiration - - - a joyous march through success and peace, full and overflowing with cheer, goodness and goodwill.

Ordinarily we act with ego, and such selfish actions bring psychological bondages, provided by the **Vasanas**, which are generated during the actions. Krishna's thesis is that we can bring about personality release through actions. The question is how can we do so ? What are the adjustments and subtle training necessary so that each of us can, by living rightly, earn the inner freedom from our present psychological encumbrances ?

Exhaustively enumerates the Lord, (V-7) "**With an intellect purified by dedicated actions, mind conquered, and senses subdued, one also realises his Self as the Self-in-all, though acting, is not tainted.**"

By pursuing our daily duties in a spirit of selfless dedication **Vasanas** exhaust and consequently the intellect becomes purified of its disturbing desires eruptions, (yogayuktho visudhhatma). When the intellect is quietened, mind automatically becomes calmer and so conquered (vijithatma). One in whom the desire gurglings are dried up, and one whose mind has discovered a salubrious climate of joyous peace in itself, in him the sense-organs are subdued. They no longer rush out seeking sense gratifications (Jithendriya).

When the intellect, mind and body become thus tamed, quietened and subdued, a strange joy, a holy sense of well being, an all-full contentment and an unearthly satisfaction come to

dance in the heart. Life becomes extremely enriched, well rewarded and unbelievably enlarged. The individual discovers in himself, all by himself, independent of everything else, a new kingdom of meaningful happiness - - - the State of Selfhood.

Once the ego-precipitating body-mind-intellect identifications have ended, the seeker is opened to the experience of the Self - - and he discovers the shattering truth that the Self in him is the Self-of-all. The entire world now stands, without its bewildering clamour of names and forms, likes and dislikes, naked as the Self-of-all (sarvabhutatma bhutatma). This is a different plane of Consciousness altogether and so the actions in the familiar planes of waking-dream-and-sleep can no longer taint him (kurvannapi nalipyathe).

When one has woken up from one's dream, the dreamer's actions cannot affect the waker any longer. So too one who has awakened to the Higher Consciousness can no longer be affected by his actions in the lower planes. He has no more the "I-dominance" in him, as his sense of separate individuality - - - the ego - - - has been sublimated on his new Enlightenment.

Such a self-realised person will have no ego-sense even in his personal physical activities. The one who has realised the essential Truth, centred in the Self, comes to consider, "I do nothing at all" (niva kinchithkaromithi yuktho manytha taboviti). Everywhere he is hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, winking etc - - - and in none of his physical activities even has he any sense of "doership". From this state of inner awareness he watches and experiences that "it is the senses that move among the sense-objects (indriy-anindriyarthshu varthanth iti dharayan).

In his new state of Self he is able to watch his own body functioning among the sense-objects. He becomes a mere "witness" even to his own physical responses and reactions to the world around him. Just as the destinies of your own shadow

do not ever affect you, the ego-less one when awakened to the Higher Plane comes to feel such a complete detachment from his own physical, mental and intellectual personalities that he is able to be ever a creative observer of himself.

The Ego-less Mood

It is at such egoless moments that the higher abilities flood through us, and we serve the world in our full inspiration divine. There are in such activities an enchanting divine glow, a serene godly meaning and an amorous unearthly grace.

Thus ego-less person is a dynamic servant of the community, undertaking all activities in life, with an extra dash and a divine purpose, and his performance will always have the added charm of inspired efficiency, the brilliancy of a perfect act masterly executed.

It is the selfish ego in us that always chains our abilities and shackles our performances. To release ourselves from our limited ego is to explode ourselves into our larger ambit of a diviner personality. The attitude of egolessness is the secret of unveiling the nobler and the dynamic in us. Thereby the person easily crosses over his own imperfections and walks into an ampler field of beauty in all his walks of life.

When we are in deep-sleep, or under chloroform, we are unconscious and at such moments we experience a total absence of ego in us. From this common experience in us, we are tempted to feel that egoless state is a state of utter negation -- a state of actionless zero, with no awareness of anything.

Krishna considers an egoless attitude to be the most productive in the dynamic field of action. Therefore, the state of egolessness mentioned by the Sastra cannot be the negative state of "absence of ego", or "absence of consciousness of things within and without". In the previous verses the Lord had explained to

us the attitude of egolessness, in a complete elimination of the "I-do-mentality" in all actions, the renunciation of doership" even our own physical and mental functions.

Such a total cessation of "doership" is possible only when we get transcended into the higher plane of Consciousness. The dreamer when awakened can renounce his "doership" in the dream-doings. Similarly, the sense of "doership" cannot disappear completely from us until our ego-consciousness awakes to the Self --- the Brahmic Consciousness. The way and the goal are one --- by surrendering ego we strive to "awake" to the Higher --- and when fully awakened to the Higher, the ego gets totally surrendered.

Hence the Lord said, (V-10) **"He who does actions forsaking attachments, resigning them to Brahman, is not soiled by evil like the lotus-leaf by water."** "RESIGNING to Brahman" (brahmanyaadhyaya) "he who does all his actions, without attachment" (karmaani sangam tyaktvaa karoti yah) he is the one who has surrendered his sense-of-agency --- the ego. How do we move into the state of sleep? We all daily move from the waking - state to the sleep-state of consciousness. Let us note the ways of resigning ourselves to this sleep-state-of-consciousness. Having worked hard through the day, exhausted and fatigued, a man returns home --- a wash, a good dinner : a little relaxation. Then comes the irresistible "call of sleep" --- when he comes to feel a total detachment from everything of the waking-conditions and an eager and burning aspiration to reach the Sleep-state. He goes to bed --- lo! He steps into sleep then readily, easily, effortlessly.

The Science of Consciousness also explains a similar simple Path. Resigning the ego to the higher-Consciousness (brahmanyaadhyaya karmaani), "forsaking all attachments to the ego-plane of consciousness, he who pursues his duties", (sangam tyaktvaa karoti yah) such an individual gets no more shackled by new

Vasanas - - - "not tainted by evil" (lipyate na sa paapena) - - - even in the midst of his actions - - - "just as a lotus leaf is not affected by the waters in which it lives". (padmapatramivaambhasaa).

In such an egoless attitude how does a man work? If he works, will not the newly generated **Vasanas** fetter his personality with newly forged chains? No. Can he then come to liberate himself through work? Yes. How is this possible? "Because", points out Krishna, (V-11) "**The Karma-Yogins perform actions, only with their organs-of-actions, mind, organs-of perceptions and intellect, forsaking attachment, for the purification of their heart.**"

Those who perform all their actions in the **Yagana**-spirit, total dedication - - - "**Karma Yogins**" (Yoginah) - - - they "allow merely their mind, intellect, and organs of actions-and-perceptions to act as a service of the Lord", (kaayena manasaa buddhyaa kevalairindriyairapi) without themselves getting selfishly involved in the actions and their fruits (samgam tyaktwaa). "**Karma Yogins** serve the world for their own individual inner purification" (yoginah karma kurvanti samgam tyaktwaatmasuddhaye).

The ego and ego-centric attachments together constitute "attachment" (samgam). This term attachment is used in Geeta very often and everywhere it indicates the ego and ego-centric-desires in us that come to play in all our activities. Renouncing this pair within (samgam tyaktwaa) when we act, the existing **Vasanas** exhaust themselves, and our intellect-mind-equipment becomes calm, peaceful, steady - - - and this psychological state of meditative poise within is called "purity of Heart". ★

(Courtesy : Geeta Office, Powai)

BABA LIMAYE'S SAI MANDIR

[Orinally published in Shri Sai Leela (Marathi), June 1974]

In the area known as Mahim, in Greater Bombay, there is an old temple known as Sitaladevi Temple. This temple is over hundred years old and the goddess Sitala is known to be favouring her devotees. Sitaladevi Temple Road near this temple cuts Lady Jamshedji Road at right angles. If we move towards the east of Lady Jamshedji Road; on the Sitaladevi Temple Road, we come accross a sign-board 'Rangodyan Amar Dye Co' Opposite to this company is situated the Yashodhan Co-operative Housing Society, where on the third floor a Sai devotee named Shri Limaye is staying. He is popularly known as Baba Limaye among his friends and acquaintances In his block Baba Limaye has installed a beautiful marble statue of Shri Sai Baba. Sai devotees flock in large numbers to take darshan of this great saint of Shirdi.



Baba Limaye is originally from Pen, District Kulaba. His date of birth is 17th November 1922 and his full name is Madhav Raghunath Limaye. His father was a well-to-do person. He was a devotee and follower of saint Ramdas. He always used the proverbial 'kafani' as his dress. He knew herbal medicines and was in the habit of going to the jungle to get the roots and leaves etc. of the herbs required for preparing medicines. His speciality was this that he used to give these medicines free to the needy people. The father of Baba Limaye expired in 1945. Gopikabai was the name of his mother. She had in all three sons and two daughters.

Baba Limaye stands third among his bretheren. Gopikabai left this world in 1953.

Baba Limaye had his primary and secondary education at Pen itself. He got matriculated in the year 1941 from the Private High School, Pen and started serving in the Reserve Bank of India from June in the same year. He has completed by now 34 years of service in the Reserve Bank. He holds a high post in the Issue Section of the Bank. The work of receiving and issuing currency notes is carried out in the Issue Section of the Resesve Bank.

Baba Limaye happened to meet one Shri Namdeo Apte, who was interested in foretelling the future by reading horoscope. Baba Limaye took keen interest in reading a number of books on the science of reading the horoscope and used to hold discussions with his friend Shri Apte in this behalf. He also purchased a few books on this subject and kept them with him for ready reference. When the people came to know about this study of Shri Limaye, they started asking him questions about their future and the study of this science by Shri Limaye was so perfect that many of the persons, who asked the questions, got satisfactory replies.

Baba Limaye, who is a very keen Sai devotee today, was once upon a time almost an atheist. He hardly visited a temple or worshipped any deity. It may be because during his earlier life, Shri Limaye was an amateur stage director and had no time to think about religion or worship of god. Once upon a time he made a name as a director of Marathi dramas and a number of Marathi dramas, directed by him during the period from 1949 to 1962, won for him a good name in the world of amateur Marathi drama. During this period, he was fully engrossed in thinking about drama and he lived in an altogether different environment. Though Shri Limaye could not get college education in his early life, it goes to his credit that after leaving a gap of five years in his studies, Shri Limaye joined the morning session in the Khalsa College and graduated from that college in 1949 with Marathi

literature and history as his subjects. He further obtained his M. A. degree with Marathi literature in 1951.

The story of how such a man became a Sai devotee is really strange. Once it so happened that some one sent an idol of Shri Sai Baba as a present to one Shri Ramakrishnan, who was Shri Limaye's colleague in the Bank. As Shri Ramakrishnan was on leave on that day, Shri Limaye received the idol on his behalf and took it home with the idea of delivering it to Shri Ramakrishnan on the next day. He accordingly brought it on the next day to his office; but Shri Ramakrishnan did not attend the office on that day also and Shri Limaye had to take the idol home. Later on it so happened that whenever Shri Limaye took the idol to his office for delivering it to Shri Ramakrishnan, he would not be able to attend the office on that day due to some reason or the other. When this performance was repeated many times, Shri Limaye decided one day, while going to office, that if Shri Ramakrishnan would not attend office on that day, then he would not deliver the idol to him and he would keep it for himself and as Shri Sai Baba willed it, Shri Ramakrishnan did not attend the office on that day. Shri Limaye therefore thought it was the prasad of Shri Sai Baba and it was His wish that he should worship Him. He therefore, retained the idol with him and started worshipping it in the morning and evening. Shri Sai Baba thus brought about metamorphosis in Baba Limaye and brought him in His herd of devotees. Baba Limaye since that time became a confirmed Sai devotee and will surely remain so for the rest of his life.

Baba Limaye was not satisfied with the installation of the portrait in his house. He wanted to instal an idol of Shri Sai Baba in his hall. The Ramnavmi, which is the favourite festival of Shri Sai Baba happend to fall on the 18th April 1974. So on that day Baba Limaye had decided to instal an idol of Shri Sai Baba in his house. He therefore ordered an idol to be carved out of the famous 'Makrana' marble which is available near

Jaipur in the Rajasthan state. Shri Harish Talim, the present owner of the Talim Studio carved the idol for Baba Limaye. This beautiful idol cost Rupees fifteen thousand and it was installed on the first April 1974 at the auspicious hands of Dr. Khakkar Baba, who is a keen Sai devotee and a person living at a high philosophical level. Just by the side of this idol we can see the Pudakas along with the ornaments, in a closed box. It is said that Khakkar Baba produced them with his supernatural powers. Oil lamp, which was liked by Shri Sai Baba very much, is kept burning in front of the portrait and the idol all the twentyfour hours of the day. There is a constant flow of devotees, who come for darshan and their number cannot be counted. In the hall, dedicated to Shri Baba at Shri Limaye's residence there is accommodation for about a hundred persons. Shri Limaye makes every effort to decorate this hall more and more. The money offered by the devotees before the idol is distributed every year to the poor and needy students.

Shri Limaye married Miss Pramilabai Paradkar in 1951. She is M.A., B.Ed. and comes from Jalgaon. She is at present working as a teacher in the G.E. Institutes High School at Mahim. In November 1964, Shri Limaye got a son who has been named Gurudas. This son also, according to his name, is a servant (das) of the Guru (Shri Sai Baba). Shri Limaye's entire family has thus become fully devoted to Shri Sai Baba.

Shri Limaye, who had once upon a time such keen interest in the Marathi drama, has now withdrawn it from there and is busy only in the service of Shri Sai Baba. He has several incidents to tell about Shri Sai Baba's divine favours on him and his family. He visits Shirdi as often as possible. His only passtime now is devotion and service of Shri Sai Baba. He seldom goes anywhere else except to his office. In fact it may be said that he does not leave his house except for the service as he has to utilize the rest of the time in meditation of Shri Baba. Every Thursday in the evening and on Sundays in the morning, people

throng at his house for solution of their difficulties and Shri Limaye advises them according to the inspiration that he gets from time to time from Shri Sai Baba. In modern days well-placed people with plenty of wealth often cultivate only a materialistic view point in their life and try to create facilities for more and more sensuous pleasures by the use of their wealth. It is therefore a real wonder that such a man like Baba Limaye, who has enough means for enjoying sensuous pleasures, should have turned away from the materialistic world and diverted his energy towards a Sai temple! Such thoughts come into the mind of a person, only when the divine favour showers on him. ★

Akhanda Japa Yagna of Om Sri Sai Ram

To: The Editor, Shri Sai Leela,

I am extremely glad to inform you that 2nd Akhanda Japa Yagna of 'OM SRI SAI RAM' was performed in the Sai Mandir on Sunday 14-12-1975 continuously for 12 hours.

It was organised and conducted by Sri Sai Bhakta Adipudi Mohana Rao. It started at 6.00 a. m. with the morning Arati by 5 couples and other devotees. It was concluded with nearly 400 devotees. Arati was given to Shri Sai Baba at 8.00 p. m. after performing poojas, stotra parayanas, etc. The special feature of this function is Akupooja, which was performed by all the members from 9.00 to 10.30 a. m. The sound of OM SRI SAI RAM in one voice echoed in all the corners and every devotee who participated, was absorbed and immersed in meditation. It was counted that more than 22 lakhs of japa of Om Sri Sai Ram was done. I feel and state that it is the best way of propagation of Sai devotion and also sowing the seeds of Bhakti in the hearts of devotees without any teaching, as it got so much impact on the participants.

Yours Cordially
Secretary,

Sri Sai Baba Bhajan Mandali, R. Agraharam, GUNTUR - 3

THE GURU OF SHRI SAI BABA

(Continued from April 1976 issue)

[In the article, published under the above caption in the last issue, two theories about Sai Baba's Guru were cited by the writer. In this article he examines them dispassionately and concludes that "while the first theory has its origin in the poet's fancy, the second is not supported by any reliable evidence. The problem still awaits a definite solution," Our readers are requested to communicate their reactions in this matter — Editor]

Having stated both the theories about Sai Baba's *guru* they can now be examined. First we will take up Das Ganu's theory.

EXAMINATION OF DAS GANU'S THEORY

Das Ganu is one of the contributors to the statements of devotees of Sai Baba collected and published by the late Shri B. V. Narasimhaswami. The relevant extracts from his statements are given below.

"Some facts i. e. autobiographical reminiscences came from Baba's own mouth. But they were few. Besides, I had not spent much time with Baba. I rarely saw him. When I was at Shirdi, Baba did not allow me to stay long at the *masjid*. He made me go away to Vithal temple where I stayed to write lives of saints, or to spend my time in repetition of Vishnu Sahasranam etc. I made some enquires about Baba also before writing these works. Some facts were within my knowledge"£

"Baba had talked of his Sailu antecedents and I made enquiries at Sailu about Baba's antecedents.

£ B. V. Narasimhaswami, Devotees' Experiences of Shri Sai Baba
Part II, p. 43

"The account given in Chapter 28 of Bhakti Saramrita about Baba's antecedents at Sailu is based partly on Baba's statements and partly on what the villagers of Sailu told me. The only thing Baba said of Sailu and the Sailu period was that he came from Sailu. So I started while I was in service and went to Sailu to make enquiries. I cannot specify any villager as having told me anything in particular. My inquiry was 35 years back. The villagers said that there was an old saint, that a young Fakir boy was being trained by him, that some got vexed with the saint and threw stones at him and killed him, and that the boy escaped and that all this took place 100 years previously. Sai Baba told me, in the presence of Chandorkar, that the brick he used as a pillow at Shirdi and which is still retained as a relic of Baba at Shirdi was given by his guru to him, that his guru was Venkusa."¶

"About his guru, Baba has several times said that Venkusa (Bhaktalilamrita, Chapter 31) was his guru and that by the grace of Venkusa, Baba had attained to his position"*

It is also reported that in examination on commission by a Court, Sai Baba had stated in reply to one of the questions that "Venkusa" was his guru.§

In the Gazateer of India, Maharashtra state, Parabhani District, 1967, Sailu (Taluka Pathri, Urban Area 13923) is described as a big town in Parbhani District where a town municipality was established in 1941 which covers an area of 3.77 kms. Sailu is a Railway Station on Manmad-Secunderabad Line. It is one station before Manwat Road and only nine miles away from it. The distance between Manmad and Sailu is 155 miles. Pathri and Sailu are separated by a distance of 15 miles and a motorable

¶B. V. Narasimhaswami, Devotees' Experiences of Shri Sai Baba, Part II, pp 59-60

*Ibid, 47-48

§Ibid, pp. 45-46

road connects the two. Half a mile away from Sailu Station is Venkatesh Mandir with a tall *goupuram* over the sanctum sanctorum. The *samadhi* of Gopalrao Keshavrao Deshmukh alias Babasaheb Subhedar stands just behind the temple which has an idol of Vishnu carved in black stone. The idol which is 0.91 m. (3 feet) high is mounted on a platform with the dimensions of 1.82 m x 0.76 m x 0.76 m. (6 ft. x 2½ ft. x 2½ ft.) The temple was constructed in or about 1808. The *punyatithi* of Gopalrao is celebrated annually for a week in the month of *Margashirsh* मार्गशीर्ष when about 10,000 people from far off places gather to pay their homage to the saint.£

One of the places said to have been visited in his pilgrimages by Shri Gopalrao Deshmukh is the mausoleum of Suvagshah at Ahmedabad. To the west of the Ahmedabad City on the other side of the river Sabarmati, about a mile and a half away from the Ellis Bridge is the area of Usmanpura where a stone mosque and a Roza (mausoleum) of Hazrat Musa Suhag, also known as Saiyad Usman Shams-e-Burhani may be seen. The mosque is a grand structure of the 15th century and built in an attractive style.* Hazrat Musa Suhag "was a fakir, generally known as *Aulia*, or the saint, Musa Suhag. The story is, that once, in answer to his prayers, rain was sent and a famine stayed. Then people pressed after him so much that, to escape their notice, he dressed like a woman. At this mosque there are five tombs, four of them inside and one outside of the mosque enclosure. The story of these tombs is, that once the rains were too heavy and the king went to the holy man to ask him to pray to have the rains stopped. But he, fearing a fresh attack of popularity prayed that the

£Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State, Parbhani District, 1967, p. 592, Prof. P. V. Kate, *Sailu Shaharache Aitihasic Darshan* (A Historical Review of Sailu), Prerana. Sailu Visheshank (Sailu Special Issue), Nutan Mahavidyalaya, Sailu, 1969-70, p. 3.

*R. B. Jhote, *Ahmedabad & Other places of Interest in Gujarat*, Gujarat Vidya Sabha, Ahmedabad.

ground might cover him. His prayer was granted, and when the king tried to dig him out, his head rose in another place, and again disappeared. Digging at this place the head appeared in a new spot. And it so happened four times. Then the king said, "Let us offer flowers at his tomb." But the saint again appeared, this time outside of the mosque enclosure, and said he wanted no offerings. The five tombs mark the five places thus consecrated. In the mosque enclosure is a very old and large *Champa* tree with many of its twigs and branches hung with glass bracelets. Those anxious to have children, come and offer the saint bangles 7, 11, 13, 21, 29 or 126 according to their means and importunity. If the saint favours their wish, *Champa* tree snatches up the bracelets and wears them on its arms. From Musa Suhag, sprang an order of beggars who like their master dress in women's clothes and wear rings.+

The theory propagated by Das Ganu and championed by Shri B. V. Narasimhaswamy has even found a place in the official record namely, the gazetteer of India, Maharashtra, State, Parbhani District; which, while describing the *Samadhi* of Gopalrao Keshavrao Deshmukh alias Baba Saheb Subhedar states that the people believe him to be the of *guru* Sai Baba. Is this really so? To test the authenticity and veracity of this theory let us scrutinise it closely.

The question naturally arises whether Das Ganu can be trusted as a researcher to narrate historical truth. It must be remembered that Das Ganu was a gifted poet and *Kirtankar* and naturally, he is apt to be carried away by his imagination and fancy in his compositions. Das Ganu has stated that he had not spent much time with Baba. He rarely saw him. And even when he was in Shirdi, Baba did not allow him to stay long with him but sent him away to Vithal temple where he stayed to follow his literary pursuits or to repeat the name of God, On his own

+Gazetteer of Bombay Presidency, Volume I, Ahmedabad, 1879, Chapter XIV, p. 249 at p. 281.

admission, he got from Baba very few autobiographical details, if at all, and no clue or guidance as to the place of his guru. The only thing Baba said was that he came from Sailu. And putting two and two together, Das Ganu, wove with his poetic fancy, a delicate web around Sailu and Gopalrao Deshmukh and fastened Gopalrao-Sai Baba into guru-disciple relationship. But this cob-web is naturally flimsy and at the first touch melts away into thin air.

Das Ganu visited Sailu in about 1901 when he was a havildar in the Police Department to make enquiries. He does not name the persons he contacted in Sailu and how he gathered the details. He cannot specify any villager as having told him anything in particular. Das Ganu could have made an attempt to contact descendants of Gopalrao Deshmukh and their friends. No such effort appears to have been made. Perhaps his lowly status as a havildar may have come in his way in the feudalistic times and set-up. Whatever the truth may be, it is a fact that Das Ganu did not establish contact with any person who could have thrown some light on the life and times of Gopalrao Deshmukh.

Consistency is not one of the strong points of the poet Das Ganu. Look at, for instance, the two contradictions in his statement recorded by Shri B. V. Narasimhaswami. Speaking about his works, he affirms at page 48, "Chapter 31, 32 and 33 of *Bhaktalilamrit* were read as *pothi* at the mosque before Baba." However, he contradicts this testimony at page 59 where he observes that none of his books were read to Baba. Witness again the assertions at page 49, "Baba has several times talked *Advaitic* philosophy in my presence", which is opposed to his own words at page 63 where he avers, "Baba's treatment of *Advaitism* is not easy to make out. He never expressly dealt with it. It was implied in a stray or sporadic remark."

The propensity of Das Ganu to be lost in his poet's dream has evoked the following comments from Rao Bahadur H.V. Sathe,

who is one of the prominent characters mentioned in Das Ganu's concerned works.

"The account in the Santkathamrit that in the presence of myself and some others Baba went into a long disquisition on the nature of God and *Sadhana Chatushtaya*, defining *Viveka-Vairagya*, *Samadhishtaka* and *Mumukshutwa*, *Brahma*, *Satchidanand* etc. is not correct. Baba never talked of such subjects in my presence.

"The account given in *Bhaktalilamrit*, Chapter 31, verses 219-236 regarding my marriage etc are very inaccurate. Those were not written after consulting me and they were not shown to me even after being written." ϕ

To unravel the tangled skein, my wife and I paid a visit to Sailu in June 1975 in company of our host at Pathri, Shri Dinkarrao Chaudhuri. He took us to a number of people who could throw light on Das Ganu's theory including the descendents of Gopalrao Keshavrao Deshmukh alias Babasaheb Subhedar. We spent the best part of the day with Shri Malharrao Subhedar and his son Shri Laxmikant Malharrao Subhedar, Advocate who are the fifth and sixth generation descendents of Gopalrao Bapaji, the family priest of Subhedars who had known Das Ganu personally was also present. Shri Laxmikant Subhedar told us from the family records that Gopalrao was born in 1715 and passed away in 1802. This information is also confirmed by Prof P. V. Kate in the Special Sailu issue of *Prerana*, Sailu, -1969-70. It appears that Gopalrao originally belonged to Jamb from where he emigrated to Sailu in 1730 at the age of fifteen. He constructed a fortress at Sailu in 1734 and raised a corps for its defence. He obtained *jahagir* of 33 villages from the Nizam because of which people began referring to him as Subhedar. In course of time Sailu came to be known as Gopalrao's Sailu.

ϕ B. V. Narasimhaswami, *Devotees' Experiences of Shri Sai Baba*, Part II, p 22 at p. 25

Both Shri Malharrao Subhedar and his advocate son Shri Laxmikant Subhedar stated that Das Ganu had not met them any time to make enquiries about Gopalrao personally and/or his life and times. Bapaji told us that he had learnt from Das Ganu that when he had visited Sailu to collect information about Gopalrao, he had met an old woman who had given him some information on the basis of which he had developed his theory. According to the estimate of the author of Saisatcharita, Sai Baba was born in about 1838. Assuming without admitting the truth of this, it will be observed that there is a clear gap of 36 years between the year of *Samadhi* of Gopalrao and the year of Baba's birth. Das Ganu himself states that the villagers of Sailu whom he had met in 1901 or so had told him that the incident of stone-throwing at the *Fakir* boy had occurred nearly 100 years ago i. e. around 1801. All this clearly shows that Das Ganu has no sense of time and that in his enthusiasm to find the *guru* of Sai Baba he had somehow connected Gopalrao with Sai Baba, and woven the woof and weft of the fabric of their relationship. I find no basis whatsoever for the claim that Gopalrao was the *guru* of Sai Baba. It is a fiction propagated by Das Ganu and cannot stand the scrutiny of facts. Swami Sai Sharananand also states at page 43 of the biography of Sai Baba in Gajarati that Das Ganu's aforesaid account is only guess-work. This much about the theory of Das Ganu. Now let us turn to Swami Sai Sharananand's theory.

EXAMINATION OF SWAMI SAI SHARANAND'S THEORY

We may straightaway accept the word of Swamiji of having directly known from Baba that he parted from his parents when he was eight years old and came to the banks of Godavari. It may be recalled here that Swami Ramdas the famous saint of Maharashtra had also left his household at Jamb which is about 45 miles away from Pathri, the birth-place of Sai Baba, when he was 12 and gone to Takli near Nasik on the banks of Godavari.

The abode of the *guru* of Sai Baba is said to have been

the tunnel under the *Nrem* tree where there was his tomb. Rao Bahadur H. V. Sathe says about this tomb: "Near Baba's favourite Margosa tree there were the remnants of the old village wall. Baba told me, 'Pull down the village wall and build'. Baba's suggestion was for building residential quarters there for including the village wall in the construction. So I bought the land there and using the remnants of the village wall built up a *wada* enclosing or surrounding the Margosa tree. Baba told me that the tomb, close to that tree over which now a part of the building has been erected, (leaving only a small niche for worshipping it) was that of his *guru*. He gave me his *guru*'s name. It ended with 'Shah' or Sa. I have forgotten the rest of the name. It might be 'Venkusa.*' Rao Bahadur Sathe whose testimony is material does mention that Baba told him that there was his *guru*'s tomb under the *Nrem* tree; but Sathe does not remember his name except that it ended with 'Shah' or 'Sa' and that it may be Venkusa. In short, he cannot say anything definite and his statement does not help us to resolve the controversy whether his *guru*'s name was Venkusa or Roshan Sa Mian. I feel that Baba's utterances on this point are not to be construed literally but metaphysically for they are pregnant with mystic or symbolic meaning. Mr. M. B. Rege, one time Judge of the Indore High Court, has observed that 'Sai Baba occasionally talked in mystic language and used parables freely—which however, were construed in widely different ways by different listeners.£ Mr G. G. Narke, Professor of Geology at the College of Engineering, Poona for a number of years has also stated as follows —

"Remarks made by him (Baba) openly would be treated as meaningless ranting by those who did not know him. His language was highly cryptic—full of symbology, parable, allegory and metaphor. Literal interpretations of them would be made by superficial

*B. V. Narasimhaswami, Devotees' Experiences of Shri Sai Baba, Part II, p 22 at p. 24
 £Ibid, Part I, p. 1

people - who would then conclude that Baba was a worldly man amongst worldly men and a very avaricious man at that. For instance, a man came to Baba and watched him for a time; and I asked him what impression he formed of Baba. His answer was 'I never saw any saint talking of money all the hours of the day' and he felt disappointed. This man did not know that 'Paisa' - money was used by Baba to denote *Punya* : or merit, very often. But on a careful observation and analysis of his talks, one must conclude that his nature, power and functions were very great and that the way in which people could benefit by his guidance and help would also be peculiar.*

Narke also states that 'of his (Sai Baba's) *guru*, hardly anything is known. I have heard him say "माझा गुरु ब्राम्हण आहे."† Now if Sai Baba's *guru* was a Brahmin, a doubt arises how his name can be Roshan Sa Mian. 'Mian' connotes a term of respect among Muslims. Therefore, the name of Roshan Sa Mian cannot be reconciled with the fact of Baba's *guru* being a Brahmin. Nobody has seen in person either Roshan Sa Mian or Venkusa. It is even doubtful whether a person by the name of Roshan Sa Mian existed—and even Swami Sai Sharananand concedes that possibility. It is recorded in Sai Satcharita that when Baba arrived in Shirdi two young ascetics, Devidas and Janakidas, had already made their abode in Shirdi for a number of years. According to Sai Satcharita, Baba settled down in Shirdi in 1858—while Shri. M. W. Pradhan and Shri. B. V. Narasimhaswamy opine that Baba arrived in Shirdi in about 1872. I am inclined to accept the opinion of the latter for reasons which I need not dwell on here. If the *guru* of Sai Baba was really living in the cellar and the *chavdi* as contended, he would surely have been sighted by some of the villagers of Shirdi and his identity could not have remained concealed. Baba has stated that he himself dwelt in the cellar

*B. V. Narasimhaswami, Devotees' Experiences of Shri Sai Baba, Part I, p. 18 at p. 25

†Ibid, p. 18 at pp. 33 & 30.

for a number of years and that he came out of it occasionally to receive holy or virtuous men. One of his earliest visitors of this time was the well-known Bidkar Maharaj, disciple of Akkalkot Swami, who is said to have met Sai Baba in 1873.* Another visitor was Shri Keshavrao Naik who was directed to go to Shirdi in 1878 by Akkalkot Swami himself when the former asked the Swami, who was about to give up his mortal coil, to whom he should look for guidance after he was no more. Shri Keshavrao's son Shri Ramachandra Naik, who had accompanied his father to Akkalkot and thence to Shirdi, wrote a long letter to the Editor of Sai Leela in 1925 giving an account of these visits.† In this interesting letter Shri R. K. Naik refers to a photograph of Sai Baba of these times, bare bodied and with matted hair and beard. This photograph was discovered in Shri Balakram Mankar's records by his son after the former's death, of which copies were taken by Shri Atmaram Balaji, a stamp-vendor by profession. The same has been made available for publication through the courtesy of Shri G. R. alias Baburao Naik, the son of Shri Ramachandra Naik. Shri G. R. Dabholkar, author of Sai Satcharita in Chapter IV thereof dismisses the whole story of the tunnel being the abode of Baba's guru as a practical joke on the part of Baba and says it must have been his own abode.

म्हणे हे माझ्या गुरुचे स्थान । अति पवित्र हे माझे वतन । आहे तैसेचि करा हे जतन । माना मद्रचन एवढे ॥ १३१ ॥ बाबा झाले ऐसे चोलते । कथिते झाले श्रवण करिते । बाबा बदले ते बदले भलते । ऐसी ही वळते जिह्वा कां ॥ १३२ ॥ आश्चर्य वाटे माझेचि मजा बाबाविषयी हा कां समज । परी तो आतां पडला उमज । असेल सहज विनोद हा ॥ १३३ ॥ बाबा मूळचेचि विनोद प्रिय । असेल ही भुया त्याचेच आलय । परी गुरुचे म्हणतां काय जाय । महत्त्व काय वेंचे कीं ॥ १३४ ॥

On an over-all view, I am inclined to agree with the author of Shri Saisatcharita on this point.

*B. V. Narasimhaswami, Devotees' Experiences of Shri Sai Baba, Part II. p. 15

†Shri Sai Leela, 1925, Issue No. 5. p. 363

CONCLUSIONS

My conclusions on a consideration of the circumstantial evidence, therefore, are:

1. Shri Gopalrao Keshavro Deshmukh alias Babasaheb Subhedar (1715-1802) whom Das Ganu refers as Venkusa was not and could not have been the *guru* of Sai Baba.

2. Roshan Sha Mian was also not the *guru* of Sai Baba. It is not known whether a person by such name existed and no body had ever seen him. The term Roshan Sha Mian as used by Sai Baba must refer to the Sun.

3. Just as Tukaram had a glimpse of his *guru* Babaji (Raghavchaitanya Keshavchaitanya)* in his dream or as Ramdas had revelation of Rama, similarly, Sai Baba may have, for all we know, got direct perception of the Divine, Venkatesh, Roshan or whatever other name by which you call it.

V. B. Kher

Alka, 14th Road, Khar, Bombay-52

*Tukaramachi Gatha (Marathi), Nirnayasagar Press, Bombay, 1927, p. 787

To The Editor, Shri Sai Leela.

I had read in the January 1976 issue the article written by Shri V. B. Kher wherein he has indicated the birthplace of our Shirdi Sai Baba. It is not a mere inference but seems to be an honest effort to search the birthplace of Baba. Not only does it deserve commendation but it also requires to popularise the place and be given a little more publicity.

I extend my congratulations to Mr. Kher for bringing to light in this era the birthplace of Baba by his honest research.

Manek A. Gagrati
Advocate

March 8, 1976

SAINT RAMDAS

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

(Continued from April 1976 issue)

Another interesting legend that is told about Saint Ramdas relates to his visit to Sangam Mahuli near Satara. It was a practice in those days to go for a bath at the confluence of rivers on auspicious occasions. On one such auspicious occasion Saint Ramdas happened to go to Mahuli, where there is confluence of two rivers. On such occasion, the priest, who recites the Mantra in praise of the river and the god, is given some Dakshina by the person, who wants to acquire merit by means of the bath in the holy waters of the river. As Saint Ramdas was now known to be the guru of Shiwaji Maharaj, the brahmins attending the confluence of the rivers at Mahuli, thought that Ramdas would be able to give them much more Dakshina than the ordinary people. Hence when they saw Ramdas going to Mahuli for bath, they followed him closely and started muttering the Mantras when Saint Ramdas started his bath. When the brahmins asked for the Dakshina, Saint Ramdas plunged into the water and brought out a few stones of various sizes from the riverbed. He gave those stones to the brahmins indiscriminately. Some of the brahmins thought that Ramdas played a joke on them and they threw away the stones. Some others, who were aware of the greatness and powers of Ramdas, kept them as a prasad from him, as they were handled by a great Saint like Ramdas. The next day all those stones turned into pure gold! When others, who had thrown away their stones, came to know about this miracle, they ran at the topmost speed to the riverside where they had thrown away the stones; but to their disappointment they found no lumps of gold there. On enquiries they came to know that the cowherds had picked up the stones which had turned into gold! The brahmins

then repented for their hasty action, which they took because of their distrust in Saint Ramdas, and went to him at Sajjangad. On hearing them Saint Ramdas, said, "The auspicious occasion is over. Hence nothing can now be done in the matter." However on coming to know that the brahmins have really repented for their action, Saint Ramdas was moved and he sent them away after giving them one gold coin each by way of dakshina.

Shri Shiwaji Maharaj some times used to come and stay at Satara. As Saint Ramdas was staying very near Satara, Shri Shiwaji Maharaj would often request Saint Ramdas to come to Satara and stay with him for a short time. After having expressed his inability to come to Satara three or four times, Saint Ramdas once thereafter agreed to pay a visit to Satara and requested Shiwaji Maharaj to go ahead, as he was to follow him after four days.

As decided, Shri Ramdas started on the appointed day. Saint Ramdas had only one Dattubuva with him. On their way to Satara, at Dehegaon, they came across a field, where the crop of 'Hurda' was in full bloom. Dattubuva could not resist the temptation of plucking the Hurda from the field. Saint Ramdas just sat by the side of the field and Dattubuva started roasting the ears of corn on a fire lighted out of cowdung cakes, collected from the vicinity. The smoke emanating from the field attracted the attention of the owner of the field, who happened to be the Patil of the village. He came running to the field. He first started abusing and finding Saint Ramdas sitting undisturbed in the field said, "Oh! you mendicant, don't you feel ashamed to steal the corn from my field in this way? You have the appearance of a sadhu, but your behaviour is otherwise." Finding that there was no reaction from Saint Ramdas even after this, the Patil started beating him with a stick. Dattubuva wanted to intervene, but he had to keep quiet because Saint Ramdas beckoned to him accordingly. The Patil got tired after some time and left the place. Saint Ramdas did not utter a word. Dattubuva and Saint

Ramdas then started for Satara very soon and reached there in the evening.

After reaching Satara, Saint Ramdas stopped in the garden on the outskirts of the city. Shri Shiwaji Maharaj came in person upto the garden and Saint Ramdas was taken in a procession to the palace. The pomp, show and splendour of the procession simply astonished the public and they came to know that a great saint had an occasion to visit their town. On the next day, when Saint Ramdas was taking a bath the marks on his back were noticed by Shri Shiwaji Maharaj, who started enquiring in the matter. As per the orders of Saint Ramdas, Dattubuva had to keep quiet. However, Saint Ramdas requested Shri Shiwaji Maharaj to call the Patil of Dehegaon to the Darbar in the afternoon.

After Saint Ramdas left Dehegaon, the Patil had come to know that he had offended the guru of Shri Shiwaji Maharaj, not knowing who Saint Ramdas was. He was therefore afraid that some day or the other, he would be taken to task by Shri Shiwaji Maharaj, and only on the next day itself, messengers from Satara came with order to attend the Darbar. On seeing the messengers the Patil was terrified. The members of his family were all upset. They simply started crying, as they expected that a very heavy punishment would be inflicted on the Patil for his act.

The two messengers came to the Darbar of Shri Shiwaji Maharaj in time along with the Patil, who was simply trembling and begging Shri Shiwaji Maharaj to be excused. In the meanwhile Saint Ramdas had narrated the whole story to Shri Shiwaji Maharaj & hence the offence of the Patil was known to the Darbar. All were now watching as to what would be the punishment that would be inflicted on the Patil. While narrating the whole incident, Saint Ramdas was given an assurance that Shri Shiwaji Maharaj would inflict any punishment that would be recommended by Saint Ramdas. In reply to the solicitations of the Patil, Shri Shiwaji Maharaj told him that he was at fault in as much as he thrashed

Saint Ramdas and that he had left the verdict to be given by Saint Ramdas himself.

The Patil now awaited a very severe punishment at the hands of Saint Ramdas when he started speaking as follows: "Only yesterday we plucked a few ears of corn from the field of Chilaji Jadhav, who is the Patil of Dehegaon village. The Patil rushed to the field and thrashed me on the back; but I do not consider him guilty. We should have taken the 'Hurda' from his field with his permission. I do not think that he has done anything out of the way. He has behaved in the same manner in which any other man would have behaved. He has, however, challenged my determination to remain composed even after provocation. This was a unique challenge that I got in my life and I do not think that anyone in future would throw such a challenge on me. I would therefore request you to send back this Patil to his house with honour. He may be given the usual clothes, etc. as a reward and I would further request that the field from which we plucked the ears may be given to the Patil as Inam."

On hearing the above verdict of Saint Ramdas, all the persons in the Darbar applauded the uprightness of Saint Ramdas and said. "This is a real saint. To err is human, but to forgive is divine." Chilaji Jadhav had no words to beg pardon of Saint Ramdas. He fell at the feet of Saint Ramdas again and again & begged to be excused for what he had done. He went home with great joy and the members of his family were overjoyed to find him to have come home safe along with a present from Shri Shiwaji Maharaj. This incident is reported to have taken place in Shaka 1580. The descendents of Chilaji Jadhav are still staying at Dehegaon and are enjoying the benefit of the property given to him as Inam by Shri Shiwaji Maharaj.

Saint Ramdas went on spreading the devotion to god and continued his preaching for the uplift and revival of the Hindu religion. The work of Shri Shiwaji Maharaj and Saint Ramdas that was running parallel in the Maharashtra of those days for

nearly thirty long years, had its effect on the political condition of the country. Shri Shiwaji Maharaj started his activities by capturing the fort of Torana, which was under the muslim domination. His first success gave him encouragement for further action. Sometimes by negotiations, sometimes by force and sometimes even by intrigue, he went on capturing the hill forts round about his Jahagir in the Pune district. Though his father could not openly support him against the Muslim Sultans, as he was serving either the one or the other of them, still he inwardly gave his full support to Shri Shiwaji Maharaj. The onward march of Shri Shiwaji Maharaj continued and when he had a clash with Chandrarao More of Javli, a fight ensued in which the latter was killed and thus Javli, came under the control of Shiwaji Maharaj. In this affair of the conquest of Javli, Saint Ramdas played a prominent role behind the curtain.

The Sultan of Bijapur, who was closely watching all these activities of Shri Shiwaji Maharaj, sent his Sardar Afazalkhan to capture the Mountain rat (Shiwaji Maharaj). As Afazalkhan was approaching Javli with his big army, Saint Ramdas wrote a letter to Shri Shiwaji Maharaj to, be watchful, as the khan was known to be a very treacherous person. The obvious danger to the life of Shiwaji Maharaj was foreseen by Saint Ramdas and a timely warning given by him to Shiwaji Maharaj, was very valuable. When Shiwaji Maharaj assassinated Afazalkhan and came out successful, he expressed his gratitude to Devi Bhavani and Saint Ramdas.

After this incident, the difficulties in the path of Shiwaji Maharaj went on stepping in constantly. The seige of Panhalgad Fort by Siddi Johar, imprisonment of Shahaji by the Sultan of Bijapur, the invasion of the Deccan by the Mogal forces under the leadership of Mirza Raja Jaysing and Dilerkhan and the trip of Shri Shiwaji Maharaj to Agra were all very prominent incidents from the life of Shri Shiwaji Maharaj, where his life and honour were at stake. All these incidents however helped to brighten the image of Shri Shiwaji Maharaj in the eyes of his followers and the people of Maharashtra. Throughout this critical

period Shri Shiwaji Maharaj was constantly seeking advice from Saint Ramdas and he, on his part, also gave him whatever help he could, through his disciples and followers. Though Shri Shiwaji Maharaj was facing such difficulties, his confidence and belief in Saint Ramdas was never shaken and the disciples of Saint Ramdas got a good protection from the Maratha Army.

By going through thick and thin in this way, Shri Shiwaji Maharaj acquired a sizable territory by 1674 (A.D) and he thought of getting himself crowned as a king. Saint Ramdas was overjoyed at the idea and he was satisfied that his dream of bringing on this earth the "Ramrajya", for which he had prayed god Shreeram at Nasik and Panchwati from the bottom of his heart, years ago, was now partially taking shape. The very defeatist mentality of the Hindu population would now come to an end, as they would now have a king of their own. The spread of the Mohamedan power and kingdom was curbed to a great extent and the Hindu religion got "a defender of the faith." The temples were out of danger of being razed to the ground and the idols therein of being broken. The brahmins got protection to observe their religious rites and the forced conversion to the Muslim religion was stopped to a great extent. Shri Shiwaji Maharaj, who now came to be known as Chhatrapati (Master of an umbrella), did not stop at this. He went a step further and started readmitting the Hindus, who were converted to Islam forcibly, back to the Hindu religion. Such religious reforms and the set back given to the Mohamedan rule were welcomed very much by Saint Ramdas, who has composed a number of poems expressing his joy over the changed conditions, which were brought about by Chhatrapati Shiwaji Maharaj to establish an independent Maratha kingdom.

After his crowning, Chhatrapati Shiwaji Maharaj got a little peace. He went to the South to meet his younger brother Yankoji in the Karnatak. The Bahamani Sultans were all powerless. They were afraid of picking up a quarrel with

Shiwaji Maharaj. The Mogal Emperor Aurangzeb wanted to curb the Maratha power; but he was busy with his own affairs in the North and he was also not ready to face a soldier like Shiwaji in the field of battle. Hence though he was watching the affairs of the Deccan very vigilantly, he was not interfering directly in the affairs in Maharashtra. Because of this absence of interference from outside agency, Shiwaji Maharaj got a little ease and he could often have contacts with Saint Ramdas. During these last days of Shiwaji Maharaj, Saint Ramdas also had the faint idea of his imminent departure from this world and hence both of these great personalities met each other as often as possible and had exchange of ideas quite freely. However, because of the very busy life that Shiwaji Maharaj had to lead and because of the hazards he had to face, Chhatrapati Shiwaji Maharaj left this world at a comparatively early age of fifty years in 1680 (A.D.) Saint Ramdas and Chhatrapati Shiwaji Maharaj were as if having one life living in two different bodies. They had great affinity for each other and their thoughts co-ordinated in the same direction. Their ideals in life were the uplift of the Hindu religion and throwing away the yoke of the Muslim rule over Maharashtra and they both toiled and moiled throughout their lives for fulfilling their aforesaid objectives; but with the death of Shiwaji Maharaj, Saint Ramdas felt that his body has been paralysed and he also started thinking seriously about taking leave of this world.

(to be continued)



SHRI GURUCHARITRA

By :- Shri S. N. Huddar

(Continued from April 1976 issue)

CHAPTER 35 – Contd

CHANDRANGAD – SIMANTINI

The young wife then requested Shri Guru to suggest some vrat.

Shri Guru : “I will tell you a vrat by which your ‘soubhagya’ will be perpetual and your husband will get prosperity. This vrat was told by Soot to Rishis in former days. In this vrat you have to worship Shri Shiva every Monday, observe fast on that day and keep control over your senses. This vrat can be observed by the married women (having husband), Kumaries (unmarried girls), widows, young and old persons of both sexes.

“Chitravarma was a pious king in former times. He had a daughter named Simantini, who was beautiful and good-natured. One astrologer had said that all the stars in her horoscope were good, but she would be a widow at the age of 14. The king and others were extremely pained to hear this.

“Once Maitrayani, wife of Yadnyavalkya, came to the king. Simantini requested her ‘kindly tell me a means, by which my soubhagya will be perpetual.’ Maitrayani then told her to observe Monday vrat and said, ‘by observance of this vrat, your desires will be fulfilled and you will get all prosperity.’ Simantini therefore began to observe this vrat devotedly.

“Simantini was married to Chandrangad, son of Indrasen of the famous ‘Nal’ family, with due festivities. Chandrangad stayed at Chitravarma for some days. Once he went to Kalindi (Yamuna) river with some friends. They were travelling in a ferry-boat. All

of a sudden the boat sank in the river. Even after diligent search no trace of Chandrangad was found.

Simantini and her parents were greatly shocked to know this. Indrasen and his wife were deeply grieved. He lost interest in the affairs of his kingdom. Taking this opportunity, his enemies usurped the throne and put Indrasen and his wife in jail.

Simantini resolved to observe 'sati' as per the religious rule of a devoted wife. But as the dead body of her husband was not found, she could not observe the sati-rite as per Shastras. So she was prevented from the observance of sati.

Simantini continued her Monday fast and worship of Shri Shiva.

When Chandrangad was drowned, he was taken by the Nag-Kanyas to Vazuki in Patal, in a beautiful city with buildings glittering with precious stones. The gate of the city was golden and all persons in it were like serpents. Takshak, the king with 1000 hoods, was sitting on a bright throne. Chandrangad was brought before him. Takshak enquired about him with affection and assured him about his safety and asked him to live there happily.

After some days Chandrangad requested Takshak, "I am the only son of my parents. I am recently married and my wife Simantini is only 14 years of age. My parents, wife and mother and father-in-law must be mourning deeply for me. So kindly arrange to send me to them very soon."

Takshak gave him nectar to drink and offered him costly clothes, ornaments and precious stones. He also gave him a swift horse and a Nagkumar to accompany him. They instantly appear on the bank of Kalindi, where accidentally, it being Monday, Simantini also had come with her female attendants for bath. It was the very place where Chandrangad had drowned.

Looking at him, Simantini said to her attendents, "Who is this celestial person coming out the water? I remember to have seen him before. Please enquire."

Chandragad looked at Simantini and began to think, 'she appears like my dear wife. But how is it that she has no mangalsutra around her neck and kumkum on her forehead'?

He descended from the horse, came near Simantini and inquired about her with affection.

Simantini was ashamed to see him come near. She told her attendents to narrate her account. The attendants told him, 'Three years before, her husband was drowned here in this river. She is continuing her Monday vrat in grief and today being Monday, she has come here for bath. Her husband's kingdom has been usurped by his enemies and they have put her mother and father-in-law in jail.'

Simantini then asked, 'May I know who you are? God or Gandharva? Why are you enquiring about me?' She recollected the face of her husband and began to mourn. Seeing her dejected, Chandragad held her hand in affection and told in her ears in a low voice, 'you need not mourn. Your husband will meet you on the third day. But do not disclose this to anybody.'

He rode the horse and went away with the Nagkumar to see his parents. When he reached the outskirts of the city, the Nagkumar entered the city and told the then ruler, 'Chandragad has returned from Patal with an assurance of assistance from Takshak. Re-install Indrasen on the throne with honour, otherwise you are doomed.'

The ruler was alarmed. He released Indrasen from jail and seated him on the throne with honour.

Indrasen embraced Chandragad with affection. A message
(Continued on page 42)

सुखदुख व पापपुण्य

[गतांक से आगे]

पापपुण्य के प्रभाव से जीव परलोक में कहाँ जाता है ? इस जगत में मनुष्य के किये हुये कर्मों को दूसरा कोई नहीं भोगता । उसने जो कुछ कर्म किया है, उसे स्वयं ही भोगेगा । किये हुये कर्म का कर्मों नाश नहीं होता । पवित्रात्मा मनुष्य शुभ या पुण्य कर्मों का आचरण करते हैं और नीच पुरुष पापकर्मों में प्रवृत्त होते हैं । वे कर्म मनुष्य का अनुकरण करते हैं । जीव कर्म बीजों (संस्कार) का संग्रह करता है और उनसे प्रभावित होकर वह दूसरा जन्म लेता है । केवल शुभ कर्मों का संयोग होने से जीव को देवत्व की प्राप्ति होती है । शुभ और अशुभ दोनों का मिश्रण होने पर वह मनुष्य योनि में जन्म लेता है । मोह में डालनेवाले तामसकर्मों के आचरण से पशु पक्षी आदि योनियों में जाना पड़ता है और पापी मनुष्य (सतत पाप कर्मों में लिप्त । नरक में पड़ता है । (म. भा. वनपर्व) । परमेश्वर श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं के जब यह जीवात्मा सत्त्वगुण की वृद्धि में मृत्यु को प्राप्त होता है तब तो उत्तम कर्म करनेवाले के मलरहित अर्थात् दिव्य स्वर्गादि लोकों को प्राप्त होता है । रजोगुण के बढ़ने पर मृत्यु को प्राप्त होकर कर्मों की भासत्तित्वाले मनुष्यों में उत्पन्न होता है तथा तमोगुण के बढ़ने पर मरा हुआ पुरुष कीट, पशु, पक्षी आदि मूढ योनियों में उत्पन्न होता है ।

“यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान्प्रतिपद्यते ॥ १४।१४
रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसंगिषु जायते ।
तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥१४।१५”

पापपुण्य क्षीण होने पर उपरोक्त नियमानुसार जीव फिर जन्म लेता है । यदि वह अपने कल्याण का आचरण करता है तो उसका मनुष्य जन्म सफल हो सकता है परंतु त्रिगुणमयी प्रकृति के बश होने के कारण वह पाप करता ही है ।

वह पार क्यों करता है ? प्राणी किसी प्रकार का दुख नहीं चाहते । उनकी चेष्टायें अपने सुख वृद्धि के लिये ही रहती हैं । इन क्रियायों में वे अन्य जीवों

के कल्याण या सुख का ध्यान नहीं रखते और उनको कष्ट पहुँचाकर भी अपना सुख बनाये रखते हैं। उदाहरणार्थ, कोई धनवान व प्रभावशाली व्यक्ति को अन्न की आवश्यकता पडती है। वह गरीब अन्न उत्पादकों से कम मूल्य या विना मूल्य दिये अन्न ले आता है जिसके कारण उन गरीब लोगों को दुःख होता है परन्तु उस धनवान व्यक्तिने यह अशुभ कर्म या पाप किया है। वह रजोगुण में स्थित है और इस रजोगुण से उत्पन्न काम क्रोध के बशीभूत है जिससे उसका ज्ञान ढका हुआ है। अज्ञानता के फलस्वरूप वह पाप करता है। भगवान श्रीकृष्ण का वचन है —

“काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुण समुद्भवः ।

महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥३।३७॥

इस तरह संसार में पाप होते रहते हैं जिसके परिणाम स्वरूप जीव दुःख भोगते रहते हैं और सुख के लिये तरसते रहते हैं।

संसार में सुख वासना की कभी तृप्ति नहीं होती। वह निरंतर बढ़ती रहती है। जिस प्रकार हवन करते समय हवन कुंड में धृत डालते रहने से अग्नि और अधिक प्रज्वलित होती है, उसी प्रकार अभिकाधिक भोगों का सेवन करने सुख वासना और अधिक तीव्र होती जाती है। महाराज ययाति को शुक्राचार्य के शाप के कारण वृद्धावस्था प्राप्त हुई परन्तु उनकी विषय वासना अतृप्त थी। शुक्राचार्यने उनको यह सहूलियत दी कि वे अपनी वृद्धावस्था दूसरे को देकर उनसे युवावस्था प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। उन्होंने अपने पुत्र पुरु से युवावस्था प्राप्त कर एक हजार वर्षों तक समान विषय सुख भोग किया परन्तु उनकी सुखवासना तृप्त न हुई। उन्होंने कहा कि इस पृथ्वी के समस्त पदार्थ एक ही मनुष्य की सुखवासना को तृप्त करने में असमर्थ हैं। उनके वचन हैं --

न जातु काम : कामानां उपभोगेन शाम्यति ।

हविषा कृष्णवत्सर्वे भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥

सुखवासना की तृप्ति न होने पर अन्त में दुःख ही मिलता है। इस जगत में सभी प्राणियों की सभी इच्छायें या वासनायें कभी पूरी नहीं होती। अपूर्ण वासनायें दुःख ही देती हैं। अतः संसार में सुख की अपेक्षा दुःख ही अधिक है। महाभारत में कहा है --

सुखान्दुःखतर दुःखं जीविते नास्ति संशयः ॥ (शां २०५,६; ३३०.१६)

इसी तरह तुकाराम महाराज ने भी कहा है—

सुख पाहतां जवापाड । दुःख पर्वताएवढें ॥ (तुकाराम २९८६) ।
गीता में मनुष्य जन्म अशाश्वत व दुखों का घर तथा संसार अनित्य व असुख का
सुखरहित है (८.१५ व ९.३३) ऐसा कहा है ।

[अपूर्ण]

दीनानाथ टी. गुप्ता
रेल्वे क्वार्टर्स, नं. अ.र. बी. २/२५७/५ रेल्वे स्टेशनके सामने जबलपुर (म. प्र.)

(Continued from page 39)

of joy was sent to Chitravarma, who with Simantini and others, was greatly rejoiced to hear the news. Indrasen started with his paraphernalia to meet Chitravarma ceremoniously. Again a ceremony like wedding was celebrated and Chandrangad and Simantini met each other.

Chandrangad offered the ornaments, precious stones, fruits of Kalpataru, etc brought from Takshak to Simantini. She attained all this glory due to observing the Monday vrat with great devotion.

As advised by Shri Guru the young couple started observing Monday vrat. Their parents also came there, bowed to Shri Guru and were glad to see the good health of the couple by the grace of Shri Guru. They gave much in charity. Then all returned to their place. The couple later on had some issues. They used to come to see Shri Guru every year and had all prosperity.

(To be continued)





Shri B. J. Khatal, Honourable Minister of Maharashtra State, laid the foundation stone of the Staff Quarters No. 2 at Shirdi on the 18th April 1976. Hon. Shri Annasaheb Shinde and Shri Parikhsaheb, the Judge of the City Civil Court, are also seen in the photo.

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