

SHRI
SAI LEELA

Official Organ of Shirdi Sansthan



श्री साईनाथ वाचनालय
भा साईबाबा संस्थान, शिर्डी.

August 1981

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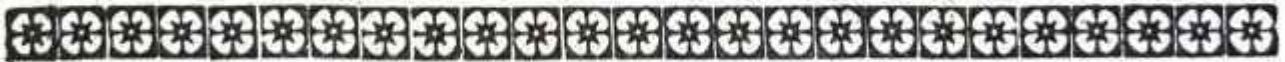
**Official Organ of
Shirdi Sansthan**

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

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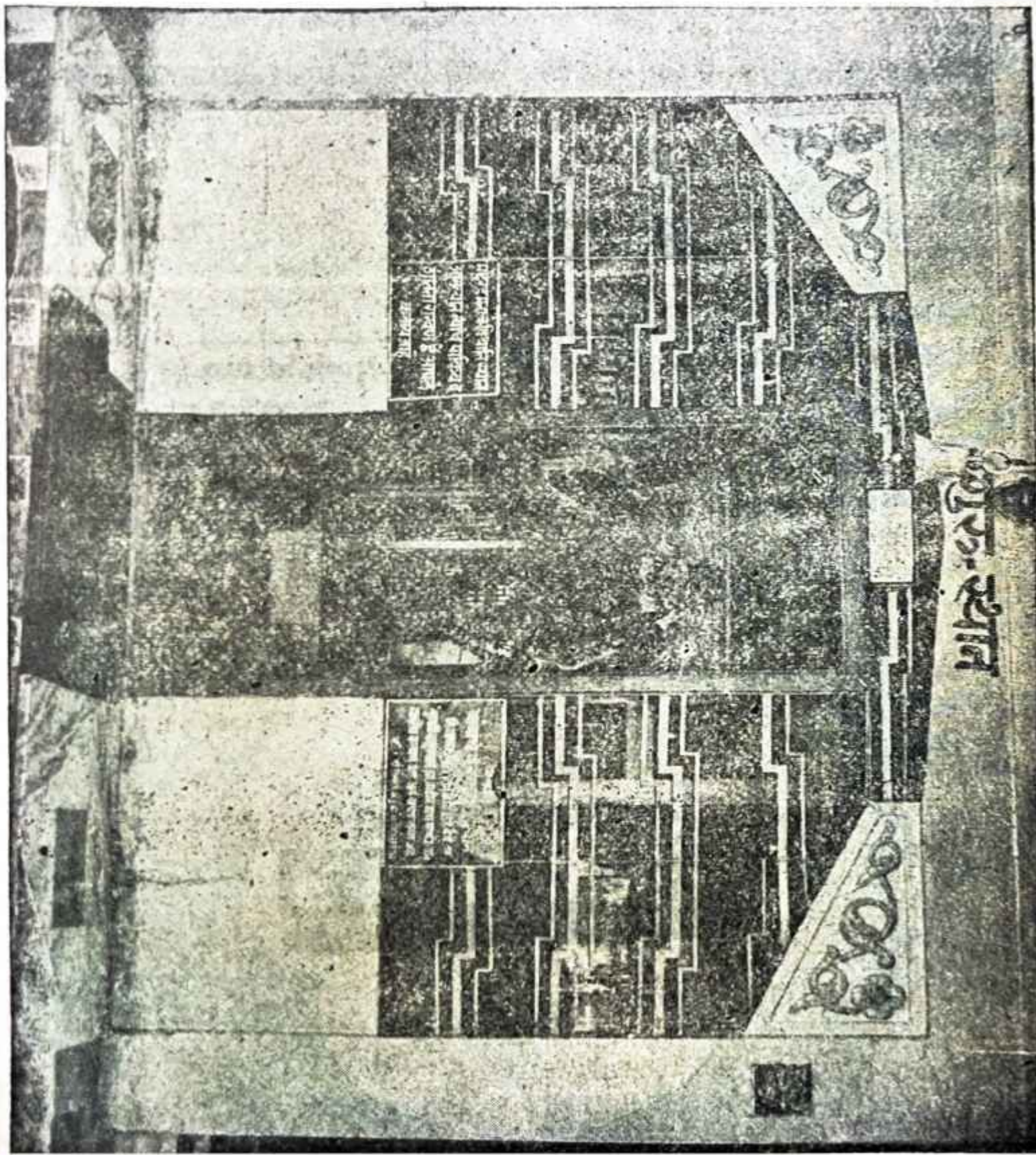
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श्री १०८ अक्षर



GURUSTHAN

After getting down at the S. T. Stand at Shirdi, a devotee has to pass through a row of shops before he comes to the premises of the Shirdi Sansthan. After he starts walking towards the Samadhi Mandir, he sees to his right a small temple under a Neem tree. This is the Gurusthan of Shri Sai Baba and it is also a very important holy place during the pilgrimage of Shirdi.

At His first advent in Shirdi, Shri Sai Baba was found to be sitting under this same Neem tree. A graphic description of how He was noticed by the mother of Nana Chopdar of Shirdi and how the people discovered the underground cellar after digging the ground, is given in Shri Sai Satcharit in Chapter IV which reads as follows:-

He (Shri Sai Baba) first manifested Himself as a young lad of sixteen under a Neem tree in Shirdi for the sake of Bhaktas. Even then He seemed to be full with the knowledge of Brahman. He had no desire for worldly objects even in dream. He kicked out Maya and Mukti (deliverance) was serving at His feet. One old woman of Shirdi, the mother of Nana Chopdar, described him thus. This young lad, fair, smart and very handsome, was first seen under the Neem tree seated in an Asan. The people of the village were wonder-struck to see such a young lad practising hard penance, not minding heat and cold. By day he associated with none, by night he was afraid of nobody. People were wondering and asking whence that young chap turned up. His form and features were so handsome that a mere look endeared

him to all. He went to nobody's door, always sat near the Neem tree. Outwardly he looked very young; but by his action He was really a Great Soul. He was the embodiment of dispassion and was an enigma to all. One day it so happened that God Khandoba possessed the body of some devotee and people began to ask him, "Deva (God), you please enquire what blessed father's son is this lad and whence did he come." God Khandoba ask them to bring a pick-axe and dig in a particular place. When it was dug, bricks were found and underneath, a flat stone. When the stone was removed, a corridor was seen, in which four samayis (lights) were burning. The corridor led to a celler where cow-mouth-shaped structures, wooden boards, neclaces were seen. Khandoba said—"This lad practised penance here for 12 years." Then the people began to question the lad about the same. He put them off the scent by telling them that it was his Guru's place, his holy Watan and requested them to guard it well. The people then closed the corridor as before. As Ashwattha and Audumber trees are held sacred, Baba regarded this Neem tree equally scared and loved it most. Mhalasapati and other Shirdi devotees regard this site as the resting place (Samadhi Sthana) of Baba's Guru and prostrate before it. (Sai Satcharita, Chapter IV Page 20,9th Edition 1980).

As when questioned, Shri Sai Baba, told the people that, it was "His Guru's place, His holy Watan," the people started calling it "Gurustan" and hence it is known in Shirdi by that same name.

The Wada of Shri Hari Vinayak Sathe, Dy. Collector Ahmednagar, is just by the side of this Neem tree, Shri Baba said that whosoever burns incense near this place on Thursdays and Fridays, will prosper. After the Mahasamadhi of Shri Sai Baba, the Sansthan Committee built a small temple here. Shri Sai Baba Himself reverred this place very much and on his way to Lendibag, he came to Gurusthan and paid his respects to his

Guru. As it is well known, Shri Sai Baba never gave any information about his family, his parents or the place of his birth. Hence we are fully in dark about these things. From some casual references in His talk the people conjecture that he came from some place in the present Marathwada. Once however, He had to appear in a criminal case of the Dhulia Magistrate's Court when Shri Baba is reported to have told that His Guru was Venkusa, his creed or religion was Kabir, and his caste or race was parvardigar (God). Shri Das Ganu Maharaj, the sincere devotee of Shri Sai Baba has stated in his book Santkathamrit that Shri Gopalrao Keshavraaj Babasaheb Maharaj, the saint of Selu, was the Guru of Shri Sai Baba; but he has not been able to establish this with unchallengable proofs. Hence we have to accept the statement of Shri Sai Baba, which he made in the Court of Law and have to remain satisfied only with this information that the name of his Guru was Venkusa. Anyway as the devotees of Shri Sai Baba, we have to accept His statement that it was the place of his Guru and believe in His words and pay our respects to the Guru of our Guru (viz Shri Sai Baba.)

Gurusthan temple is just behind the Samadhi Mandir and it is built on an altar just one foot high. There is only one step which you have to climb before getting into the temple. The place, round about this temple, is paved nicely and it is always swept and kept clean. The Samadhi Mandir faces the east while the Gurusthan temple faces the west. Three walls of this temple are partly built with masonry and the upper part has iron grills. There is a wooden door to the temple some portion of which is fitted with grill so that even when the door is closed, the devotees can have darshan. One brass bell is hung outside the door of the temple. This temple was repaired on the 10th day of the bright half of the month of Ashwin in shaka 1863 (30-9-1941 A. D.) and the present temple was built recently.

On an altar in this small temple, the photo of Shri Sai Baba is placed. The silver frame of this photo is donated by a

devotee, named Shri Chandubhai Shah (Patel), from Bombay. In front of this photo, there is the usual 'Pindi' of Shri Shankar. This Pindi was installed here by Shri Baba Himself, and so it is of special importance. An idol of Nandi, is usually placed in front of the Pindi of God Shankar. Similarly we find one small Nandi in front of this "Pindi". Just outside this small temple, we see one small marble statue of Shri Sai Baba which was donated to the Shirdi Sansthan by a devotee, named Shri Yeshwantraai Dave, from Bombay and it was installed at that place in 1974 after due religious rites. At that time rice, equal in weight of the statue, was distributed as prasad to the devotees. One iron box is placed in this temple for depositing the donations of the devotees. The trunk of the Neem tree is seen just by the side of the temple. The tree spreads all over the temple and gives a cool shade to the devotees sitting on the open otla of the temple. Because of Shri Baba's boon, given to this tree, we find that, unlike the other Neem trees, the leaves of this tree are not bitter. In one corner of the temple, two brass oil lamps have been kept burning for all the time.

Just in front of this Neem tree, the Padukas have been installed on a marble altar, three feet in height. The story of these Padukas is very interesting and it is described in detail in Chapter V of the Sai Charita at pages 24 to 26 as follows:-

The Story of Padukas (foot-prints) under the Neem tree

A devotee of Akkalkotkar Maharaj by name Bhai Krishnaji Alibagkar worshipped the photo of Akkalkotkar Maharaj. He once thought of going to Akkalkot (Solapur District), for taking the darshan of the Padukas (foot prints) of the Maharaj and offering his sincere worship there; but before he could go there, he got a vision in his dream. Akkalkotkar Maharaj appeared in the vision and said to him, "Now Shirdi is my resting place, go there and offer your worship". So Bhai changed his plan and came to Shirdi, worshipped Baba, stayed there for six months and was happy. As a reminiscence of this vision, etc., he prepared

the Padukas and installed them on an auspicious day of Shravan, Shaka 1834 (1912 A. D.) under the Neem tree with due ceremonies and formalities, conducted by Dada Kelkar and Upasani. One Dixit Brahmin was appointed for whorship and the management was entrusted to devotee Sagun.

Complete Version of this Story

Mr. B. V. Deo of Thane, Retired Mamlatdar, and a great devotee of Sai Baba made enquiries about this matter of Sagun Meru Naik and Govind Kamalakar Dixit, has published a full version of the Padukas in Sai Leela Vol. II, No. 1, page 25. It runs as follows:-

In 1834 Shaka (1912 A.D.) one Doctor Ramrao Kothare of Bombay came to Shirdi for Baba's Darshan. His compounder and his friend Bhai Krishnaji Alibagkar accompanied him. The compounder and Bhai became intimate with Sagun Meru Naik and G. K. Dixit. While discussing things, these persons thought that there must be some memorial of the fact of Sai Baba's first coming to Shirdi and sitting under the holy Neem tree. They thought of installing Baba's Padukas there and were going to make them of some rough stone. Then Bhai's friend, the compounder, suggested that if the matter be made known to his master Dr. Ramrao Kothare, he would prepare nice padukas for that purpose. All liked the proposal and Dr. Kothare was informed. He came to Shirdi and drew a plan of the Padukas. He went to Upasani Maharaj in Khandoba's temple and showed him his plan. The latter made many improvements, drew lotuses, flowers, conch, disc, etc and suggested that the following Shloka (verse) regarding Neem tree's greatness and Baba's Yogic powers be inscribed. The verse was as follows.-

सदा निवृक्षस्य मूलाधिवासात् ।
 मुधाल्नाविणं तिक्तमप्यप्रियं तम् ।
 तहं कल्पवृक्षाधिकं साधयन्तम् ।
 नमामीश्वरं सद्गुरुं साईनाथम् ॥

I bow to the Lord Sai Nath, who by His constant stay at the foot of the Neem tree, made it— which though bitter and unpleasant was yet oozing nectar (the oozing of this tree is called Amrit, i. e. nectar, on account of its healing properties) better than the Kalpa-vriksha (wish-fulfilling tree).

Upasani's suggestions were accepted and carried out. The Padukas were made in Bombay and sent to Shirdi with the compounder. Baba said that they should be installed on the Pournima (15th) of Shravan. On that day at 11 a. m., G. K. Dixit brought them on his head from Khandoba's temple to the Dwarkamai (Masjid) in a procession. Baba touched the Padukas, saying that those were the feet of the Lord and asked the people to instal them at the foot of the Neem tree.

A day before, one Parsi devotee of Bombay, named PASTHA SHET, sent Rs 25/- by money order. Baba gave that sum for the installation of the Padukas. The total expense of installation came up to Rs. 100/-, out of which Rs 75 were collected by subscriptions. For the first 5 years, G. K. Dixit worshipped the Padukas daily and then this was done by Laxman Kacheshwar Jakhadi. In the first five years, Dr. Kothare sent Rs. 2/- per month for lighting and he also sent the railing round the Padukas. The expenses of bringing the railing from the station to Shirdi (Rs. 7-80) and roofing was paid by Sagun Meru Naik. Now Jakhadi (Nana Pujari) does the worship and Sagun Meru Naik offers the Naivedya and lights the evening lamps.

Bhai Krishnaji was originally a devotee of Akkalkotkar Maharaj. He had come to Shirdi at the installation of the Padukas in Shaka 1834 on his way to Akkalkot. He wanted to go to Akkalkot after taking the darshan of Baba. He asked Baba's permission for that. Baba said, "Oh, what is there in Akkalkot? Why do you go there? The incumbent Maharaj of the place is here myself." Hearing this, Bhai did not go to Akkal-

kot. He came to Shirdi off and on after the installation of the Padukas.

Mr. B. V. Dev concluded that Hemadpant did not know these details. Had he known them, he would not have failed to depict them in his Sai Satcharita. (9th edition 1980)"

As the above description is quite self-explanatory, no further comments are required to be made thereon.

It is possible to go round the temple and the Neem tree. The devotees therefore take rounds of the temple and Neem tree after taking darshan of the photo in the temple at Gurusthan.

Pictures of the twelve Jyotirlingas have been hung on the four sides of this temple. In the paved open space by the side of this temple, five concrete benches have been kept where the devotees come and take rest. During night time also this place is nicely lighted and it is easy to spend time there after sunset.

For coming to Gurusthan there are gates both on the north and south sides. Near the south gate, there is a small garden of flower trees. The history of one garden planted and watered by Shri Sai Baba is given at page 24 of the Sai Satcharita as follows:-

‘Baba’s Dress and Daily Routine

In his young days, Sai Baba grew hair on his head; never had his head shaved. He dressed like an athlete. When he went to Rahata (3 miles from Shirdi), he brought with him small plants of Zendu, Jai and Jui, and cleaning and scoring dry land, planted and watered them. A devotee, by name Vaman Tatyia, supplied him daily with two earthen pitchers. With these Baba himself used to water the plants. He drew water from the well and carried the pitchers on his shoulders. In the evening the pitchers were kept at the foot of the Neem tree. As soon as they were placed there, they were broken as they were made of raw earth

and not baked. Next day Tatyā supplied two fresh pitchers. This course went on for 3 years and with Sai Baba's toil and labour, there grew a flower-garden. On this site at present stands the big mansion-Samadhi Mandir of Baba, which is now frequented and used by so many devotees. (Page 24, Chapter V, Sai Satcharita, 9th edition, 1980)

Though it is stated at the end of the above extract that, "On the site of the above garden, the Samadhi Mandir is now built", still it appears that this garden near the Gurusthan also must have been a part of the big garden planted by Shri Sai Baba with his own hands and where he watered the trees by the water carried through earthen pitchers. This garden, though small, has been consecrated by Shri Sai Baba and hence it is very holy to all Sai devotees. This garden is fenced with iron bars.

The wada just behind the Gurusthan, is known as Sathē Wada and it consists of only a ground floor structure having four specious rooms. In front of the Gurusthan there is a multi-storied building, which is known as Nulkar Wada. Most of the rooms in both these Wada are given to the devotees during their stay at Shirdi for residential purposes. Before the construction of Shanti Niwas, some two rooms on the ground floor of Nulkar Wada were being used as Accommodation Office. After it was shifted to Shanti Niwas, those rooms are now being used as store.

In the Indian culture, the Guru holds a very high position and he is revered much. Hence though the Samadhi Mandir naturally gets a first place in Shirdi, still the Gurusthan also gets its dues. At the time of all the three festivals, the procession of the Pothi from the Samadhi Mandir to Dwarkamai and back is always routed through the Gurusthan, in order to show respect to this place. Similarly at the time of every festival, Rudrabhishek is done on the Pindi of Lord Shankar on the day next to the main day of the festival.

There is only one servant, who looks after the Gurusthan. He sees that the open space round about Gurusthan is always kept clean and is free from the nuisance of the beggars. As this open space and the benches are seen by the devotees immediately after entering the Shirdi Sansthan limits, the devotees wait here or in the varandahs of the Nulkar wada, upto the time one of them goes to the Accommodation Office and secures the room for all of them. If we sit here for a short while, we are amused by the passing crowd and the tranquility of the place. Many devotees have forgotten their sorrows and worries after taking darshan of the Gurusthan and waiting here for a while. Similarly many have been inspired to undertake different projects while sitting here and musing. The whole atmosphere here is thus serene and holy. Shri Vithalrao Bagwe, who looks after the management of the Samadhi Mandir, also takes care of the upkeep and maintenance of Gurusthan. The Mandir proper is opened at 4.30 a. m. and it is closed at 9.30 p. m. However, as stated before, because of the facility of the grill, fixed in the door of Gurusthan, the devotees can take darshan even after the door of the Mandir is closed. May Shri Baba and His Guru bless all devotees, who visit Gurusthan and remember about it for the rest of their life!

Request to Subscribers

It is noticed that while remitting their subscription, the subscribers are forwarding cheques drawn in the personal name of the Editor or the Executive Editors. As such cheques cannot be accepted and are therefore required to be returned. the subscribers are requested to always draw their cheques only in the name of "The Shirdi Sansthan of Shri Sai Baba" in order to avoid unnecessary correspondence.

—Editor

Sai Baba's Silent Grace

Salutations to Shri Shirdi Sai Baba, who always helps his devotees and even the future devotees. Sai Baba is full of love, mercy and kindness, which is even seen today after lapse of more than 60 years when he took 'mahasamadhi' Sai Baba blesses through saints and fakirs as well. So much so, Sai Baba takes care of devotees even before one comes to his fold and draws his devotees at an appropriate time to His lotus feet.

I now write some of my Sai experiences to share with my Sai brothers and sisters through the pages of 'Saileela' magazine reading of which every month is as good as a holy satsanga.

In the year 1972, I procured from the market a small photograph of Shri Shirdi Baba without knowing much about Him and placed the same in my 'Pujaroom'. Slowly my spiritual interests started developing. In August, 1972, I had the good fortune of darshan and satsanga of a 'Shiva Bhakta' Swami Premandaji of Kanshi for a few days. Shri Swamiji very lovingly blessed and instantaneously I started getting realisation and developed 'BHAKTI' and love for all. I took Swamiji as my Guru in my heart of hearts, but, before it could have his concurrence, Swamiji left for visits to other places without much information to his devotees and I could not meet him thereafter, inspite of various efforts. However, my wish to visit Kanshi had also been fulfilled during the same year alongwith my family while I had to go on official visit to that side even without any financial expenses to my pocket. Indeed this was the grace of Baba through Swamiji.

In the year 1973, I had been blessed again by Baba unseen, when I had the fortune to attend a religious conference under the auspices of Shri Shivanand Ashram, Rishikesh. I had darshan and blessing of various well-known saints of different religions

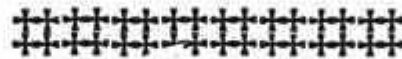
and had satsanga for a few days. I had been specially asked by president Swamiji, through one of his ardent devotees, to participate in the 'Bhoj' given to saints and selected devotees at the conclusion of the conference. Above all, I had been privileged with three other devotees to partake left over 'Parshad' of President Swamiji Shri Chidananda Maharaj as we were allotted the seats where earlier Shri Swamiji had taken 'Parshad' with other swamis. This honour was indeed unique for me, as I am a person of moderate means and this indeed was the greatest favour of Shri Baba. I shall ever be grateful to Baba which I cannot express in words and repay in any way.

In the last quarter of 1975, I had been engrossed in professional problems. Life had been tense. I came across an advertisement by the devotees of his Holiness Ganapathi Sachchidananda Ji Maharaj of Mysore inviting to have darshan of His Holiness and satsanga. I attended the satsanga and had darshan of Shri Swamiji, who talked to me in the language of silence and graciously blessed me with divine love. Unexpectedly my professional problems got solved within 15 days. I developed a lot of reverence and devotion for Shri Swamiji. Virtually, I considered Shri Swamiji as my predestined Guru and attached to Him, though we had no contact whatsoever, in spite of various efforts. Shri Swamiji had been however enshrined in my heart and I always thought of Him whenever free. I prayed to Shirdi Sai Baba for help very intensely in establishment of contact with Shri Swamiji whom I adored so much. Sai Baba, at this juncture, appeared before me in the form of a book 'Sai Baba - The master' which I read a number of times with devotion. Thereafter by Baba's grace, I effortlessly got Shri Swamiji's address in Bhavan's Journal in the month of March, 1979. I contacted Shri Swamiji by correspondence, who lovingly responded to me and at Swamiji's instance His devotees of Delhi presented me with pictures and various books of Shri Swamiji. I was also chosen to offer 'Pada Puja' to Shri Swamiji on His birthday that year on behalf of Delhi devotees. By Baba's grace, I am constantly enjoying divine

bliss under the lotus feet of my Gurudeva and I am developing bit by bit in my path of 'Bhakti'. Shri Swamiji very recently, while blessing me with Holy Parshad greeted me with 'Jai Sai Ram' to prove His identity - that He & Sai Baba are one and the same. I pray to Sai Baba, who is Swamiji now for me to bless and enlighten all other devotees in the spiritual quest as well as provide temporal benefits for the satisfaction of their wordly needs; so that when satisfied of common wordly needs; they are indeed better devotees. ★

P. K. Kapoor

1121, Chah Rahat, Delhi - 110006



Books on SAI BABA are coming one after the other, yet —

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have no parallel. Mr. Anant Pai Kane of Goa has rightly said in his letter, "...I have read many books on Sai Baba. 'Sai Satcharit' I have perused at least four or five times. But the way you have unrolled the life-story of Sai Baba in a well conjoined manner has no parallel, You have very consistently, beautifully and easily linked the events which imprint a deep impression on the reader's mind who at its end becomes conscious of the SELF within himself.'

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Activities of Shirdi Sai Samaj

Shirdi Sai Samaj was formed in June, 1980 with the aim of spreading message of Lord Sai Nath i. e. love and brotherhood among all the castes, creed and religions and secondly to have a Lord Sai Nath Temple at Chandigarh.

Shirdi Sai Samaj is performing two bhajans and discourses on the life of Sai Baba at different places on Thursdays and Sunday, and its programme is published in two leading Newspapers i. e. the Indian Express and The Tribune.

The Samaj has also started poor feeding on every Thursday in Sector 17, Chandigarh where the poor are fed sumptuously. The Samaj has made good progress under the presidentship of Shri I. P. Mehta as Samaj has performed bhajans and discourses on the life of Sai Baba at Ambala, Dehradun, Jullundur and other places. Now everyone, in north and especially in Chandigarh, worships Lord Sai Nath at his home. Free photos are also being distributed among the devotees.

The Samaj has also an aim to open a dispensary in Chandigarh for the poor. ★

Jugal Kishore Puri

General Secretary, Shirdi Sai Samaj, 78/15A, Chandigarh.

KABIR

Kabir was a seer and a singer of 'Nama'—the Holy Name. Kabir was a saint and a singer of the Holy Spirit. Kabir's songs are a rich synthesis of Hindu thought and Muslim mysticism. Into his life flowed, as Ganga and Jamuna, the inspiration alike of Rama and Allah. ★

Sai Baba, the Saint of Shirdi

By : Shri M. M. Amingad

(Continued from July 1981 issue)

CHAPTER VIII

So entered not he Thy Masjidmai
And felt much disconsolate to try
But someone advised him not to lose heart
And to approach Baba through Shama his heart.

Through Nandi the devotee of Shiva
People try to approach the God Shiva
So to approach Thee, the almighty
People seek the help of Shama, Thy devotee.

This idea to Falke Siddik liking
Went in search of Shama seeking
And implored Shama finding to plead
With Baba, for him to fulfil his need.

Shama willing, for opportunity waited
And finding Thou in favourable mood stated
The long felt wish of Falke the fakir
And entreated Thou to appease his fakir.

He asked Thee why not Thou allowed him
When many came and went on seeing Thee
And he wished Thee on him to shower
Thy favours as he had then come lower.

But Thou in reply to Shama said
He was very young to know the things laid
If Allah Malik did not allow him
What 'He' the Banda could do for him.

None could climb the steps of Dwarkamai
 Without the grace of the Fakir Masjidmai
 But still Thou asked Shama the favourite
 To go and give his message to the devotee

Shama then went and gave the fakir
 The news sent by Thee, the Masjid Fakir
 To come to the narrow path near Bari well
 And Shama returned with say yes well.

But Thou sent him again
 To make Rs. 4000/- bargain
 With Falke in instalments four
 And Shama returned message core.

On learning from Shama, Falke's will
 To part with seven lacs forty fill
 Thou asked Shama to ask the turn coat
 If willing to eat mutton hounch of cut goat

When Thou heard from Shama, Thy favourite
 Haji was happy to have a crumb from the pot discrete
 Thou got excited and threw away the pot inanimate
 And went forth with Thy kafani upto the animate.

Thus Thou proved Haji the proud, who Thou wernt
 Asking him not to brag fancy and pose himself great
 And not to be proud of his pilgrimage to Mecca
 Thus to know the Koran to know Thee pakka

Being confounded by the sudden danger
 Haji kept silent to appease Thy anger
 Then Thou went back to Masjidmai
 To send few baskets of mangoes to Hajibhai

Then Thou again went back to Haji
 To shower Thy favours on him like Maji

Taking out from thy pocket everful
Rupees fiftyfive to fill him full.

Thenceforth Thou loved him the most
And invited him for lunch to taste
Thereafter Haji frequented the Masjidmai
At his sweet will to curry favour of Dwarkamai.

Thus Thou at last showed mercy on him
forgetting all the pitfalls of him
And favoured him sometimes with money
And enlisted him in Thy Darbar by Thy honey.

There lived in Shirdi a quaint and queer
A fellow by name Nanavali a peer
Who ever looked to Thy work and affairs
And did his duty to Thy will fair.

Once he came to Thee seated on a gadi
And asked Thee to vacate and he to sit on Thy gadi
So Thou vacated it for him to sit on it
But sitting for a while he vacated for Thee to sit on it.

When Thou sat on Thy usual seat
Then Nanavali fell at Thy feet to greet
And went away from Thee for good
But still Thou proved him always good.

Though he dictated and ousted Thee
Thou never showed any displeasure to he
So he loved Thee so much to the last
And on 13th day of Samadhi he breathed his last.

Once Damuanna wished to participate
With a friend in cotton speculation
And wrote to Shama to request Thee
To which Thou gave a positive nay

On knowing Thy positive nay
Anna instantly rushed to Thee
And sat before Thee musing on thee
Or sanctioned half the share of cotton fee.

But Thou totally refused to share
The bargain, wishing the child's welfare
And Thou asked him to drop the thought
He accepted Thy words and freed from caught.

Then he thought of a deal in grain
To that also Thou suggested a drain
Thus Thou saved him by giving bitter pills
As a mother and saved him from the ills.

Once a parcel of mangoes three hundred
Sent by a Mamlatdar from Goa, miles hundred
To Thee at Dwarkamai through Shama
Out of which Thou kept aside only four for Damya.

Damuanna had two wives but no issue
Astrologers also doubted his issues
But Anna came to Shirdi to worship Thee
And Thou told all the mangoes in the pot are his.

And further Thou foretold to all
He, whose they are, should eat and fall
And this Anna was shocked to hear
But Mhalsapati freed him from fear.

Then Mhalsapati, a devotee prominent
Told Damuanna Thy predicament
And asked him to eat the mangoes
As Thou hast blessed him through mangoes.

Then Thou prohibited Anna to eat
And directed him to give the treat

To his junior wife, who will conceive
Four sons and four daughters to perceive.

Thus Damuanna from his wife second
Got four sons and four daughters descend
And thus Thou made Thy words come true
And the words of the astrologer came untrue.

(To be continued)

M. M. Amingad
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The Merciful Baba

My wife and I have been regular readers of Shri Sai Leela magazine for the last few years. It gives us the greatest of delight when our copy arrives each month. We read the magazine from cover to cover viz., both the English and the Hindi sections. While reading the magazine we feel as if we are sitting in the very presence of Sai Baba at his lotus feet.

All through our lives, we have experienced that Baba has been kind to us and has helped us when we were in difficulty and had lost all hopes. I would narrate one experience here.

Our son passed his technical degree course in the year 1971 in the first class with distinction. He wanted to go to U. S. A. for higher education. Accordingly, he applied for admission to several universities in the States. We let him apply; but we did not know how we would be able to support him for his

education in that country, which is exceedingly costly. An average Indian cannot afford to pay for the education of his ward in U. S. A.

In due course the universities started sending replies. Many of them offered admissions; but we were put off when we read about the high tuition fees and the boarding and lodging expenses. However, the gloomy picture was short lived when one morning we got a letter from a renowned university in U. S. A., informing that not only the boy would be admitted but he would also be granted exemption from the payment of tuition fee. Further, a handsome monthly stipend would be paid to him. I keep a picture of Shri Baba in my office also. The letter was received by me in the office and immediately I placed it at Shri Baba's feet and thanked him for his timely help. Now yet another leela was in store. Earlier we had been receiving 3 to 4 communications per week from various institutions; but after the receipt of the letter from this particular university no more such letters from any quarter whatsoever were subsequently received.

The boy flew to U. S. A. in early 1972, where he entered the university for higher education and by the grace and blessings of our Lord and protector Sadguru Sai Nath Maharaj he is now very well settled.

Sai Baba always gives what His devotees ask. He is all love and merciful. ★

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My Awakening

Since early youth, the Gita teaching has been deeply rooted in my mind. Being a Sanskrit student, my study of some Upanishads and Shri Sankaracharya's teaching only deepened my faith and conviction in the permeating divinity. This has had a sustaining influence on my career since 1935 in the Reserve Bank, from which I retired as a senior officer in March 1970. The days of struggle in the early years of my career and the death of my wife at early age in 1948, had fortified my faculty of Vivek and Vairagya. The later rise in status and the marriage of my only daughter added to my conviction that only divine grace was working subtly in my life.

I was since long searching for a Guru. In 1964 I came into contact with Shri Sathya Sai Baba of Puttaparthi. I had the benefit of his grace and blessing for the sadhana, which I had been pursuing. Swami Vivekananda's teaching had also great impact on my mind and action. Shri Satya Sai Baba could not be contacted due to progressive increase in His followers and the distance of my location from Puttaparthi or Bombay during the years. It seems that my feet were led to Shirdi in 1970 and I visited the teertha thrice. But the real awakening was to come later. I was pursuing my practice of meditation, Nama-Smarana and writing on Vedantic subjects.

The problem arose in respect of the flat (61, Konkan Nagar, Mahim, Bombay 400 016), which is in my daughter's name. My daughter and son-in-law live in the quarters of the Paper Mill in Erode (South India). There was a sudden development in 1980 requiring my son-in-law to seek service in Bombay area and I had to hold the flat free in case of need. With me lives my cook-cum-driver and then taxi-driver-owner, with his wife and daughter since 1954. He was my caretaker of the flat in my absence due to transfers, but the rent was paid

in my daughter's name. However, the problem was to find alternate accommodation in Bombay for him, which was formidable due to scarcity and practice of pagadi. So, I was unequal to this task.

There was a calendar with a bust picture of Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi hanging on the wall opposite me since 1978; but somehow I had the picture cut out in 1980 and I stuck it to the wall. I was silently praying to Baba during meditation etc. But, when the problem, as stated above, arose in October 1980, I felt helpless and surrendered myself to Shri Sai Baba completely without any reservations. I prayed to him to solve the problem. When I did this, I felt relief coursing through my veins. On the third day, an unknown person called on me and referring to my caretaker suggested booking a flat in a Co-operative Housing Society at Malad by paying Rs.10,000/-. I arranged for the money and gave it to my caretaker in the sense of provident fund benefit in view of his long service to me. The flat was booked. Further payments are phased over the years, but payment of further Rs. 10,000/- was necessary before occupation. As my caretaker had nearly Rs. 5,000/- with him and needed further Rs. 5000/- to satisfy the requirement, there was some problem. Knowing my difficulty, he had arranged for funds from another source. The Malad Flat will be ready only by March 1982. I had contacted my old colleague (Mr. P. Rama Menon), a real devotee of Baba. He made Sankalpa to Baba on my behalf and told me that Baba assured that there was no need for any monetary assistance from me to enable my caretaker to get the flat in Malad. He has been loyal to me over the last 25 years. He has his wife and small daughter to look after. His earnings from taxi trade are adequate. Anyhow, I have resigned myself at the feet of Baba and I rely absolutely on His grace. My son-in-law's need for the Bombay flat has receded meanwhile till 1985.

In this context, my contact with my old colleague (Mr. P. Rama Menon, living in flat B-36, Maitri Park Co-operative

Housing Society, Chembur) has enhanced and deepened my devotion to Baba since 1978. Over the years, many persons in distress have sought Mr. Menon's advice and help in seeking Baba's Grace. He is doing Nishkama service and his shrine room with the beautiful marble "moorthi" of Baba, inspires confidence. He is a humble and simple person deeply dedicated to Baba since 1938 and has powers of communication with Him. It is evident that the grace of Baba expresses itself from his Turbat at Shirdi, as He had foretold before His Samadhi. I believe Mr. Menon is one of the genuine instruments of that grace. I am always in contact with Mr. Menon and have taken a few friends in distress to him. The benefit derived by them is concrete. My own personal experience is a testimony to the reality of that grace. I do "parayan" of Shri Sai Satcharita by Hemadpant and realise that Baba is a Sadguru, perennial in His Grace. ★

K. B. Shankar rao

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I Have Not Forgotten My 'Self'

Who am I? I am 'SELF'

From the very lustrous energetic light, I was sprinkled out in the velocity of its movement "Chaitanya". While tumbling down to earth to meet "Prarabdha", I was bagged for 9 months. During this period, I lost all my lustrous lamenting claims and the feeder cultivated in me motivated methods of 'Paripaka'.

I was born. I have forgotten SELF.

Every one around me is laughing. I was afraid and cried to see many, as I was once all alone in the past. Some aspiring

pretty touch made me feel comfortable, I have mumbled. I was put to the breast of my mother and left on. Thus I am quite used to have the comfort for every time and for all the time .

I am growing my habits arranged to routine. I was loved by one and all. I also felt to see happiness with all. But days pass when I find differences to understand that all are not one towards me. So I was also not even towards all. This has become a common cult, which was under practice in this birth. I see my neighbours fight each other to win over the rest. There was appreciation for those who won in competition. So I too made a practice to win over others. I understood that jealousy was occupying my mind. The fairness is corrupted. Ambition was rampant to deal. I used to be angry with others. I used to envy others. Fatally the mission in this birth as a human being with a mind to think and grasp, was only to betray others. I always try to take advantage over others and hurt others. The dealings with others made me never think of SELF, and the ego caused every thing for mine.

This is the figure now stood before me for nothing and whatever I admire happens only to be mine. So to fill this, I dislike to see a gap with misery or sorrow. At the same time I try to hurt others and keep them always in miseries. Thereby I feel happiness as others suffer. In this method of practice I heard scoldings and bad addressing about me. I feel that was all due to the envy carried by others against me. Mine, the supreme, I like and live with dislike for others. This is my growth.

I do not say that I am only the reason for all this. The environments and the habits in vogue, during my existence are the reason.

Once I heard about Shirdi Sai Baba, who also looked like me; but his performance was something else and different from mine. I want to justify the issue. This all I would like to do to win Him over. As I approached Him, he led me in my

thoughts, causing a search for Him. First I tried to see only bad in Him; but very soon I found that what I thought bad in Him was not seen in Him. He was not jealous. He never envies. He never wants. He never tried to win over others. He simply looked at me. I was not able to know His looks. They are SELF. They spoke about sacrifice, eternity, loyalty and faith. While practising these, I lost all mine. I have stopped at all places in search of eternity. There I tried to establish loyalty and jumped in for faith towards Sai Baba. Now I have turned back to my goal from where I have started my journey. What I have to sacrifice is all that I feel mine. Why do I sacrifice? Because I have attained all this by robbing others' facility. In fairness I have to be loyal and faithful to my Guru Shri Sai Sai Baba. I have to put the same in practice. Here I was not interrupted by others or thoughts and feelings as I am loyal to my Guru, who had opened my eyes. The faith I have showered has kept my Guru always at my disposal. Thus mine is now occupied by Guru and His drive is only towards SELF. With the habit of sacrifice I am forced to reach eternal wave and to show loyalty. I keep faith. The faith will never lead me to fear. The faith will ever keep me away from all miseries. Unhappiness will never come to my sight. All that is blissful and everlasting is now around to merge mine to it. I lost all interest about mine. I read about Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi and I am with Him always to keep me with the SELF. Now I feel that I have not forgotten SELF.

J. Bhaskara Rao

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Shri Sai Baba's Divine Grace

It is not possible for a human being to comprehend the way by which Shri Sai smilingly showers His Grace and grants him his cherished desires. Though I have been worshipping Baba for nearly three decades, yet only once did I challenge His power and omnipotence. For this, I crave His pardon.

Here are the details. In the year 1962 myself and my wife visited Prayag and Varanasi on a pilgrimage. At Varanasi, I purchased a sphatika Shivalingam for doing puja daily along with our family deity, Shri Venkatachalapathi of Tirupati. The puja was going on well for sometime until a relative of mine, who is a learned Pundit and a Shrotria brahmin, visited our house. He raised objection stating that because our family deity was Shri Venkatachalapathi (Maha Vishnu) Shivalingam should not be kept and worshipped in the house. He even predicted dire consequences for this act of mine. My wife and I were not convinced of his objection; but still it was working in our minds because a doubt had been implanted by a respected person.

I was doing daily, puja after removing the nirmalyam (previous days dried up flowers). We had a brahmin boy cook, named Krishna. His duty was to throw the nirmalyam outside and bring in fresh flowers everyday in the morning. His habit was to keep the nirmalyam till next day morning and throw it out and then bring fresh flowers.

My brother's house is not far off. In their house there is a big tree of nagalinga pushpa. The flower has a fine aroma and it is so shaped as if it is a hood of a serpent covering from the top, a small Shivalinga in the centre of the flower. My sister-in-law was kind enough to send me some flowers everyday for my puja. One day, a pious aged relation of mine came to our house for a few days' stay. Everyday he was observing my

puja, which pleased him very much. One day he offered to do puja and I gladly permitted him to do so and left for college as usual. Next day he left Madras, leaving me to resume my daily worship. When I removed nirmalyam as usual the sphatika lingam was not found in its usual place. I searched everywhere; but there was no trace of it. The only possibility was that the sphatika lingam could have been caught in the folds of the dried Nagalinga pushpa and thus thrown out in the nirmalyam. I immediately called Krishna and enquired about previous day's nirmalyam. He surprised me by saying that he had thrown the nirmalyam on the previous day itself (very unusual) and that too into the Corporation dust bin across the road. On hearing that myself and my wife immediately ran to the dust-bin on the roadside for searching the article. Unfortunately, the dust-bin had been emptied and the rubbish completely taken away in a lorry on that morning itself. We felt very disappointed and almost cried before the idol of Shri Sai. I had brought the sphatika lingam with great devotion from Varanasi for performing puja and it had gone out of our house. We felt very depressed, dejected and thought for a second that probably the learned pundit was right and we were at fault for keeping the lingam in our house for worship.

Then I called out to Shri Sai, "You are here as our guardian angel looking after our welfare every second and yet you allowed the Shivalingam to be lost in the corporation dust-bin. If you are really as omnipotent as we think you are, you must get me back the same Shivalingam within a week. I will not worship you as a God any more".

From that day onwards, I resumed my daily puja; but both myself and my wife were feeling a sense of depression and an unexplainable feeling of mental agony as if we had lost a precious possession. Five days passed thus. On the sixth day morning our gardener was cleaning the flower plant beds as usual. There was a beautiful jasmine plant just by our door-

step. It was giving fine flowers everyday for our puja. While cleaning round the roots of this plant, he suddenly got the sparkling sphatika lingam into his hands. He did not know what it was and as such thought that it was a piece of glass. He called me, gave it to me and asked me innocently what it was. I felt so happy to get back our sacred Shivalingam. I hugged the gardener at once and thanked him profusely with a liberal present. I called my wife and showed her the precious article. She went into ecstasy after seeing the Shivalingam in my hands. We knelt before Baba and offered our sincere and heartfelt gratitude. I also apologised profusely for having thrown out a challenge to our guardian Angel and doubted His divinity even once.

Who else other than Shri Sai could have brought back the same Shivalingam that was taken away in the rubbish lorry and placed it at the root of a beautiful jasmine plant in our garden. Baba, your leelas are beyond our comprehension! At present the sacred Shivalingam is put into a silver samputam after Panchamrita Abhishekam and worshipped daily.

People, who have implicit faith in your greatness, O' Baba, only could realise your omnipotence.

With sashtanga namaskarams to divine Baba. ★

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If You Look To Me I Look To You

Shri Baba's famous philosophy is condensed in this single sentence "If You Look To Me, I Look To You". Shri Baba proved the potency of this philosophy through one incident.

It so happened, that in my previous office, Shri Baba's grace gave me a little fame and this resulted in some of my office colleagues getting jealous of me. Some of these colleagues tried to bring positive harm to me by spoiling good opinion of my superiors. I was in the habit of taking a cup of coffee in the Officer's Canteen as it enabled me to look at Shri Baba's Aashirvad photo, which was prominently placed in the canteen during one of my visits to the canteen my officer sent for me and the officer was told by my jealous colleague that I had gone to canteen. This was deliberately done to spoil his good opinion about me. I sincerely prayed to Shri Baba to help me in the matter. For, to remove the misunderstanding about some one, it is always better that some third person should do the job rather than the person concerned.

After a few days, I was introduced to one Shri Ranapise by my office colleague, Shri Bhole. Shri Ranapise had just resigned from the post of a tally clerk and had come to our office in connection with settlement of his dues. Shri Ranapise once again paid a visit to our office during Shri Bhole's absence to collect his Provident Fund dues. The procedure of payment to ex-employee makes it obligatory that they are identified by the serving employees. Shri Ranapise approached me to identify him by appending my signature to an identification memo. I did so. However, our Provident Fund Section raised the objection that as Shri Ranapise was serving in our outdoor establishment, my identification i.e. an indoor clerk's identification was not proper. Shri Ranapise could not obtain the identification from the outdoor clerk as he would have to spend full day to obtain Dock Entry Permit to enter Docks and visit Time Keeper's Office. He

however, could not get a single day's leave from the Bank as he was newly appointed there and was on probation when he was not entitled to a single day's leave. He therefore, abruptly left our office in a hurry and shortly came back with one gentleman. Both these persons came to me and the stranger introduced himself to me as one Mr. Bhosale, under whom Shri Ranapise was serving in the bank. Shri Bhosale told me that he was quite eager to see me as he had heard much about me from Shri Ranapise, Being convinced about my bonafides, continued Shri Bhosale, he had gone to see our Officer and asked him strongly, 'what more proof is required by you about Shri Ranapise, when a gentleman like Shri Rasal had identified him?' The Officer was so much impressed by the aggressive tone of sincerity in Shri Bhosale's talk with him that he overruled the Provident Fund Section's objection about identification and signed the payment slip in favour of Shri Ranapise. Thus Shri Baba so arranged the event that any bad impression created about me by mischiefmakers was immediately removed and He also showed the mischiefmaker in his true colours.

It is my conviction, nay, it is my sheet anchor that given the implicit faith in Shri Baba, He would reduce mountain of difficulties to a mere mole and make impossible things look ridiculously possible. What one has to do, is to just look at Him and He in turn looks at us with an unfailing kindness in all situations.

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Faith In Baba

Bhagavadgeeta, the message of which is universal, is not sectarian or addressed to only Arjuna, who was depressed and whose conscience revolted at the thought of war and the massacre that it involves, on the Kurukshetra battle field—the killing of friends, brothers, sons and all relatives near and dear. It is not addressed to any particular school of thought. It is universal in its approach. Even though it is a personal conversation between Krishna and Kireeti, it has been taken up step by step to higher and more impersonal religious and individual duty and social behaviour of application of ethics to human life, of the spiritual outlook based on dharma, that should be given to all. Lord Shrikrishna told, "All are in me and I am in all". There is something in Geeta, which seems to be capable of being constantly renewed, which does not become outdated with the passing of time - - an inner quality of earnest inquiry and search of contemplation of action, of balance and equilibrium inspite of conflict and contradiction.

There is unity in the midst of diversity and its temper is one of supremacy over the changing environment, not by seeking escape from it, but fitting in with it. Eventhough it was written 2500 years ago, humanity has gone repeatedly through the processes of evaluation and development and decay; experience has succeeded experience, thought has followed thought, but it has always found some miracle living in the Geeta, something that fitted into the developing thought and had a freshness to the spiritual and human problems that afflict the mind of a man constantly.

Lord Krishna also emphatically told, "All PATHS LEED TO ME. All people are rotating with my orders. The earth is running, wtih me and I am running with the earth. I am the sun (लोकेश्वर) In fact, I never set at all. You are thinking to yourselves that I am setting."

In Chhandogya Upanishad the ancient scriptures narrate that the sun never sets nor rises. When we think that the sun is setting, it only means that the planet has gone in a different direction to give rise but not to disappear altogether, thus making days and nights alternately by rotation, because the earth is rotating like a ball.

As the sun is round like the earth, we are thinking that the sun is rising in the morning; he only shifts himself about after reaching the end of the night and makes day below and night at the place, which is on the other side.

Moreover, Krishna also stressed that without foundation of dharma and without leaving Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha and without developing truth, self control, asceticism and generosity, there is no true happiness. Yet dharma itself is relative and depends on the time and conditions prevailing, apart from some basic principles, which are based on adherence to truth.

Bhagvan Shri Sai Maharaj also stressed the same and showered His blessings on one and all.

In this context, I also submit that Baba is the beacon light to guide us in our day to day life. His worship too gives us peace and tranquility. So long as Baba moves about in this world, there would be peace and happiness in the world. So long as the name of Baba is in our minds and the holy Shrine of Shri Sai Baba is respected by us, there will be no shortage of food and clothes to every devotee.

It is very rare that one comes across a saint like Shri Sai Baba. Such saints or enlighteners or illuminaries will give peace and solace to thirsty hearts, in a world of toil and turmoil, struggle for power and for existence, propensity towards wickedness and cruelty, social injustice and gradual decadance of religious faith and practices. Shri Sai Baba has come to our rescue to give a ray of hope that we badly need and therefore depose faith in Him.

We generally believe that what is apparent is real; but we never for a moment believe, that all this is illusary and we live in a world of make-believe. Consequently all evils spring from this belief. Only, when we get rid of this illusion, that we can have a glimpse of truth. There is only one thing that is true that is Baba, that is immutable, everlasting, that has no beginning or end. To realise this truth many a seeker have devoted, nay sacrificed their life, with or without success.

He is a source of divine light and will continue to be so, in an increasing measure, to His rapidly increasing number of devotees

Strange are the ways adopted by our great Sai Baba, who guides his devotees in getting the things done. As Shrikrishna guided Arjuna, our great Baba is guiding each and everyone. Baba also showed three ways for human advancement to God, which are, the way of knowledge, the way of action and the way of faith, out of which more emphasis is laid on faith.

It is a well-known fact that Shri Baba had no particular religion or faith. He believed alike in all religions and faiths. His teachings and preachings are meant for one and all. The people from all religions in India, as well as abroad, rich or poor, respect the soul in Him, with regard and high esteem. They have faith in Him as the greatest Kaliyug Awatar and divine source. He has always been merciful to each and everybody. He extends joy to his devotees by pulverising their ever-growing difficulties.

God is greatest, oldest and dearest. Baba said with asheervad that "If you look to me, I look to you" "If you love me I love you" "If you faithfully worship me I will faithfully give you what you need. What you want and what you required, I give grace and peace". Baba is author, affectioner, awakener, auditor and advisor. He is a biographer and benefactor. He is controller, creator. He is a doctor, driver and a dweller. He is ether. He is father, follower, freegiver and forgiver. He is a

helper, informer, integrator and listener and leader. He is a messenger and mother. He is philosopher, preacher, purifier and proprietor. He is observer, ruler, sacrificer, thinker, treasurer, wonderer, saviour and victor. He is a builder, scripture and rewarder.

Further, I humbly pray Baba, who is guiding me all the way with good hope and good faith. So the faith is ahead in me with Baba's graceful eyes.

At every stage he is guiding me and helping me. Like Shrikrishna, Baba is showing the correct path like Arjuna at my troubled sequences.

Very recently the following things occurred and see how Baba helped me in keeping my personal belongings.

On 27. 1. 81, when I was on leave in connection with my sister's marriage which was to be held on 8.2.81, myself and my family went to Rajahmundry along with my brother-in-law to purchase clothes for the bridegroom. After the purchase was made we returned by bus from Rajahmundry to Kakaraparru. While getting down from the bus at Kakaraparru, we forgot one packet containing a saree costing Rs. 88/- in the shelf of R.T.C. bus as we thought that it was not ours. In the meanwhile, the bus had gone. Then what to do? We prayed Baba to save the situation. Luckily a lorry was plying on the way. I followed the bus in the lorry. The bus was going towards Tanuku side. Again I caught another lorry and at last the bus was caught on the way, at the bus stop of Tanuku. Luckily the saree was found there.

On 22. 2. 81, I went to Amalapuram, which is a nearby town to my native place, for the registration of the land which was sold to perform my sister's marriage. On that occasion, I forgot my bag with money in a hotel at Amalapuram bus stand. The same was got back by His grace.

After returning to Hyderabad, Shri Baba appeared before me in a dream as an old man. In that dream my ulser trouble was repeated. I asked the old man what can I do as I was suffering from severe pain. Then He told me, "Operation has to be done and I will do it". The dream was over. After I woke up, there was nothing.

In all the above instances, I feel that Shri Baba's unseen hand is at work. I could have lost the saree, purchased for the bride, which would be a bad omen and also the money bag, which was left at the hotel; but the hotel keeper kept it safely and handed it over to me on my enquiry. By whose grace did this happen? It is purely Shri Baba's grace. ★

B. S. Tatapudi

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Directory of Sai Temples in India and Abroad

It is proposed to prepare a Directory of Sai Temples in India and abroad. The managers, trustees, etc. of Sai Temples are therefore requested to furnish the following information as early as possible :

1. LOCATION (complete postal address)
2. Date of foundation
3. Brief description of the Temple
4. Management of the Temple (i. e. person or body in charge of the Temple.)

Shri Baba's Grace

Much has been said and written on Sai Baba; but some of my feelings I cannot help expressing, which I want to share with the readers of "Shri Sai Leela". With Bhagwan Sai Baba's grace, I am penning these lines.

Shri Baba's doctrines as stated in Sai Satcharita, teach us how to live a good and modest life full of humility. While going through the pages of Sai Satcharita, one can see Shri Baba in living form, as a living Lord, through His teachings and enjoy His bliss.

Baba has commanded "Cast your burden on me. I shall surely carry it". So, why worry? Take refuge in Him, surrender yourself completely at His lotus feet.

Complete surrender to Baba in every case has the desired result. Baba's grace will reduce the extent of one's agonies and at the same time increase the extent of His bliss. Thereal urge, the true devotion and sincere innermost desire to have His guidance in all cases have the desired result. All His devotees are benefitted by His grace, love and affection.

I have been a humble devotee of Sai Baba for a little over four years and during this short span, I have had varied experiences and have been graced by Him profusely. Our entire family has been His devotees and whenever we really wanted His help, His grace has come forth automatically. There is no end of our experiences.

Here is a miracle by which He saved us from being killed by a rogue elephant on the 5th August 1979 in Bandipur forest of Karnataka. I had my second son in the womb and my husband had come to purchase a car and take me, my mother and son from Mysore back to the estate, where he was working

as a doctor. The estate is just 145 km from Mysore on Mysore-Calicut highway, but we had to pass through a 30 km stretch of Bandipur forest full of tigers and elephants. We did not anticipate any trouble as we were travelling in day time and the condition of the car was satisfactory.

Unfortunately, as we were passing through forest, some defect was observed in our car. The driver stopped the car and my husband also got down to help him. The jack was applied but it was not in a working condition. In the meantime they noticed a solitary elephant grazing just nearby. Without losing the presence of his mind, my husband informed me the grave situation we were in. He unsuccessfully tried to stop a passing car.

All of us remembered the only man from whom we could seek refuge. In our minds, we chanted 'Sai Ram' in full confidence. True to His words, Baba was there. A lorry coming from Calicut side just stopped near us. When my husband requested for the jack and sought his help, the lorry driver warned us about the elephant which stood grazing, still unaware of our presence. He arranged for me, my mother and my son to be seated in the lorry cabin in case of an emergency. He took out the jack and even before he could do anything, the elephant came charging towards the car and in a fraction of a second, the lorry driver along with my husband and our driver jumped on to the lorry and drove fast from that dangerous spot. My husband has never been an athlete nor an acrobat; but the way in which he jumped on the lorry could only be due to the grace of Sai Baba. Even the least delay would have killed all of us.

The lorry driver took us safe to Gundlepet - a town nearby. He left us at the S.T. Bus stand. A good samaritan he was, he flatly refused the money we gave him. We had left our luggage and the lorry's jack near the car and made arrangements

with a shopkeeper to hand over the jack to the lorry driver on his return trip. After sending me, my mother and my son to Mysore by a S.T. Bus and with a few people and a mechanic my husband hired a taxi and returned to the forest to bring back the car. All along we were all quite tense; but definite of Baba's everflowing grace.

My husband returned to Mysore late in the night with the elephant-damaged car towed by a taxi. It seems the elephant had given a kick to the car, which was lying on a bush. It required great efforts to be pulled on the road to be tied to the taxi. Since it was a Herald car, readers could imagine the damage caused by the elephant's kick to the body of the car!

Suppose the lorry had not taken us at the right moment, all of us would have been killed en masse. Later we heard that it was the same rogue elephant, who had damaged a tractor and killed its driver just two days before. What a mishap we escaped! I am very definite that the lorry driver was none other than Bhagwan Sai Baba Himself, who came to save our lives.

Twenty days later our second son was born and aptly we named him 'Sai Prabhu', as He was the one who gave us the rebirth. Just as I am writing these lines, my son Saiprabhu is playfully calling 'Baba' 'Baba' and in his own sweet way bowing to the Bhagwan.

Dear Sai Brothers, there is no end of Baba's grace. Before I conclude let us all chant 'Sai Ram' with full confidence and love. Let Sai Ram be on our lips always in good or bad days, in fair or foul weather. Remember Him, think about Him every day and He will always be with us as He is always there to show us the light and path and guard us from all evils.

Mrs. Seetha Vijayakumar

w/o Dr. G. R. Vijayakumar, Mundakayam Estate
Mundakayam P. O. 686513, Kottayam Dist. Kerala State

Baba the Saviour

Shri Baba is always with us. He helps His devotees whenever they are in hardship. He comes running to help the devotee if he remembers Shri Baba with love, from the bottom of his heart. Whenever a devotee is in trouble or something is going to happen to a devotee Shri Baba himself takes it upon Him and saves the devotee. I am narrating an experience in my life, which occurred in October 1980.

Every day I used to pray to Baba in the morning and light a jyoti before Him. One day as usual I prayed to Baba. After ten fifteen, minutes there was a fire in my small temple. I was shocked very much and many bad omens came in my mind. I thought that I have not performed my duties to Baba properly or some mistake was committed by me.

This incident happened on Tuesday so I was thinking that something bad is going to happen. On Thursday, as I was crossing between two trains, I could not balance myself and I fell down between the two trains, where there was a fencing; but due to Baba's grace I did not suffer any injury. I was very much nervous. Two persons helped me and I got into the the train. The other people who were observing were surprised and they asked me, "Are you safe? Did you not have any injury?" I replied, "No" Then I thought this is Baba, who has saved me and had given me a new life. Whatever was going to happen to me Baba had borne the trouble and saved His devotee. I have now greater faith in Baba.

By fire on Tuesday, Shri Baba thus forewarned me about the coming bad event. But as no damage to the statue of Baba was caused, though it was slightly blackened, so also I received no injuries in the accident. Baba thus increased my faith in Him.

G. N. Chanchlani,

Blk No. 75/B, Room No. 11, Ulhasnagar-1. (Dist - Thane)

O SAINATH --

Need you not take me to Shirdi
May you not rush to save me
Confer your blessings merely
To realize the TRUTH -- ONE ARE ALL !

I am not a Hindu
He is not a Muslim
Sure none is untouchable
But 'HARI-Jans' we are all !

HARI is the LORD
His fractions we are all
Why then have frictions
Breaking the uniting CORD ?

You run to respond
Every devotee's call
Pray, do not do it for me
Since in me YOU are !

R. S. Junnarker
5, Vasant Apartments, 47, Kastur Park, Shimpoli Rd.
Borivali (W), Bombay 400 092



Omnipresent Baba

There is a very trite saying in spirituality that all the roads lead to God. In the similar way it can be said that all the roads lead to Shirdi, where God-incarnate Shri Sai Baba lived in mortal coil for about sixty years. Shri Sai Baba all of a sudden appeared in a very remote village named Shirdi as a sixteen year old boy in the year 1858, lived there in a dilapidated mosque as a Fakir and took Maha-Samadhi on 15th October, 1918, the Vijayadashami day, at Shirdi in the mosque itself. His life history resembles that of Saint-poet Kabir, who was born in a Brahmin family and was brought up by a Mohammadan fakir. He then came under the benign wings of a Hindu Guru and finally realised Godhood by his grace.

Baba had pledged himself and declared that this Bramhin would lead lacs of people towards salvation and He redeemed His pledge. The kindly light led mankind towards salvation not only in his life-time, but continues to do so even today, when sixty two years have passed since He took Mahasamadhi. While in the physical form, Baba assured his devotees on numerous occasions that He was not confined to that body of three and a half cubits, but He was omnipresent. He manifests himself in every human being as well as in all other beings like the cows, dogs, cats, rats, snakes, bugs and what not! Thousands of his devotees have experienced this type of omnipresence of Shri Baba and are experiencing it even to this date.

A very hair-raising incident which occurred recently, deserves to be mentioned here. On the last day of October, 1980 a fatal collision of an Express train with the Goods train took place within the precincts of the Itarsi Junction and hundreds of people aboard the Express train lost their lives, whose number has not been ascertained correctly as yet. Numerous travellers were badly hurt and admitted to the hospitals of Itarsi, Hoshangabad, Bhopal etc. to undergo necessary treatment.

We should just remember here the words of Baba "Even if I leave this mortal coil, I will remain as active and vigorous as

at present". The following miracle illustrates it. A traveller named Shri Santosh Vyas, a Govt. servant in Hoshangabad had boarded the third bogie of that ill-fated Express train. The train started leaving the platform of Itarsi Junction. While the train was moving slowly an urgent voice was heard by Santosh Vyas asking him to get down at once from that compartment and to go and sit into the posterior compartment. In obedience to this pressing invisible command Shri Vyas got down and ran to the posterior compartment. While the train was gaining speed he succeeded in entering a rear compartment the 14th from the engine. Within two minutes of it, death swallowed most of the occupants of the third bogie adjacent to the engine. Had that command not been obeyed by Shri Vyas, he also would have met the same fate which those 21 travellers of that wretched compartment had met.

Shri Santosh Vyas alighted from the train and dispatched a telegram to his family members at Hoshangabad informing them about his miraculous escape and continued his journey to Shirdi for which he had entered the compartment No. 3 adjacent to the engine. Later on when he was approached by the press reporters, he disclosed to them that Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi had saved him and bestowed a new lease of life by asking him to get down from the compartment destined to meet with the tragedy and to sit in a posterior compartment at once, while the train was gaining speed. He obeyed the command and was thus saved. His narration to the press reporters was published in a largely circulated newspaper the Dainik Bhaskar (Hindi) of the 1st November, 1980 head-lined as "Shirdi Ke Sai Baba ne Mujhe Jeevandaan Diya". (Sai Baba of Shirdi saved my life) The readers of Madhya Pradesh may easily find out the said newspaper and get the above mentioned fact verified and confirmed.

Another incident, which bears testimony to Baba's omnipresence, is concerned with the last Loksabha election following the fall of Charansingh Ministry in the Centre. Shri Rameshwar

Neekhra contested the election from the Itarsi Loksabha constituency. One day before the casting of votes, a Fakir appeared before Shri Neekhra and enquired if his name was Rameshwar Neekhra. Shri Neekhra replied in the affirmative and asked the Fakir how could he know his name? The Fakir claimed that he knew the names of everybody. He told Shri Neekhra that **Sai Baba's grace was on him and also that he would win the election.** The Fakir gave him the Udi (Vibhooti), moved a few steps and then disappeared. He was not to be found any more in the city of Itarsi. This incident was published in the Dainik Bhaskar of 6th January 1980 and my eyes had lighted on this story. I have not the least interest in political activities, but being a Sai devotee when election was conducted and counting started, I very curiously awaited the result of Shri Rameshwar Neekhra and to my great delight, I heard the radio news that Rameshwar Neekhra had been declared elected to Loksabha from Itarsi parliamentary constituency and thus Baba's words proved to be quite true.

These are only two recent instances; but such miracles are happening every day to every devotee of Sai Baba in this country and abroad.

I would like to suggest the readers to go through the pages 101-102 of the **Incredible Sai Baba** by **Arthur Osborne** in this connection. To put it in a nut-shell, **every Sai devotee is an unpublished book on Sai leelas** and those interested in profiting by them, are advised to read **Sai Leela Magazine** of Shirdi Sai Sansthan published every month in Marathi, English and Hindi languages, which would lead them to the conviction that **though Baba has left the world, He is still alive in this world. He is no more in the physical form and yet he is ever present.** The need is to develop the sense of recognising Him, which will be beneficial to all those, who have a craving to walk the royal road of Salvation. ★

A. P. Tripathi

Asstt. Professor J. H. Govt. College, Betul (M. P.)

Gurupournima Festival at Sai Niketan, Bombay

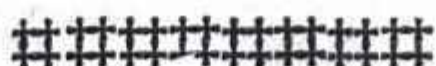
On 17-7-81, Gurupournima Festival was celebrated at Sai Niketan, Dadar. The office was opened at about 8 a. m. from which time, the devotees started coming for darshan. At 12 Noon Aarti was sung, when more than two hundred devotees were present. Kumari Jayashri Belsare, who had given a programme of her vocal music at Shirdi during the Ramanavami festival, was present for the Aarti. She, therefore, sang a few devotional songs in praise of Shri Sai Baba, after the Aarti was over.

A staunch devotee of Shri Sai Baba, Shri Vijay Hazare, is bringing out a Diwali number in Marahi under the caption "Shri Sai Kripa" on behalf of the Krupashu Prakashan by the middle of October 1981. The manuscript of a few articles, which are proposed to be included in the publication, was consecrated by presenting it at the feet of Shri Sai Baba at the auspicious hands of Dr. S. D. Parchure, Executive Editor of Shri Sai Leela, who attended the Aarti. Shri Hazare requests that suitable articles, poems, bhajans etc. may be sent at his address given below and the copies of the issue may also be booked at the following address :-

SHRI VIJAY HAZARE

Krupashu Prakashan, C/6 Gumphadarshan 1st Carter Rd.
Borivali East Bombay 400066

The office was kept open upto 7-30 p. m. and on a moderate estimate it may be stated that more than 1500 devotees came for darshan, inspite of the fact that the festival came on a working day.



OBITUARY

Shri Diwakar Purushottam Bhalerao, who was working in the Samadhi Mandir as Abhishek Brahmin, expired at Pune on 7-6-81 after a brief illness. He was known for his knowledge of the scriptures and his courteous behaviour with the devotees. When the news of his death reached Shirdi, all the employees of the Sansthan, held a condolence meeting and moaned his death by passing a resolution. We pray at the feet of Shri Sai Baba that the departed soul may rest in peace.

Shri Ramnath Khanderao Samel, founder of Eagle Auto Repairs and Motor Driving School, the father of Shri Somnath Samel, expired at Bombay on 10-7-81 at the age of 79 years. Shri Ramnath Khanderao Samel was a sincere devotee of Shri Sai Baba and was known for his honesty in the business world. We extend our heartfelt condolence to the family of Shri Samel in their sad bereavement and pray at the feet of Shri Sai Baba that the departed soul may rest in peace.

— Editor



June 1981

The rush of devotees was much during the first half of this month. However on the opening of the schools and colleges during the second half of this month, the rush of the devotees receded and the staff of the Sanstan had some relief. The following artists gave their programmes during the month.

Keertan - Sansthan singer Shri G. V. Joshishastri and Ramrao G. Dukremaharaj, from Buldhana, performed Keertans during the month.

Pravachan:- Shri Pandharinath Korhalebaba, from Newasa and Shri Laxmanbuva Wakchoure, from Shirdi, delivered pravachans on some religious topics in this month.

Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, Bhajan etc:- The following artists gave their various programmes during this month 1 Yogi-kripa Bhajani Mandal, Modasa, Gujrat 2 Shri Tilakraj S. Puta karna, Borivali 3 Shri Jayendra Kalyani, Bombay 4 Shri Hasmukh Onkar Patil, Nawapur 5 Shri P. Sumitra Acharya, Karnataka 6 Shri Chandan C. Reddi, Nagpur 7 Shri Madhukar Bhave, New Delhi 8 Mrs. Sunita G. Kelkar, Sangli 9 Smt. Vimalabai B, Shirke, Jalgaon 10 Shri Naresh L., Soman, Nagpur 11 Mrs. Uma Mokashi, Bombay 12 Shri Vithal V. Manjrekar, Shirdi 13 Smt. Premalata Gupta, Chandigad 14 Shri Gajanan Tade, Khairegad (M. P.) 15 Shri Brahmachaitanya Mahila Bhajani Mandal, Ahmednagar.

Weather:- The weather at Shirdi was quite healthy and free from disease. Occasional rains have started which bring down the temperature temporarily.

श्रीसाईलीला

हिंदी विभाग

अनुक्रमणिका

अगस्त १९८१

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श्री शिर्डी के साईं बाबा

आते हैं, द्रुतगतिसे, गुणीजन, साईं के, दर्शन करने ।

साईं वाणी, सुनकर, अपना, निर्मल मन दर्पण करने ॥
'नवजीवन' की अभिलाषा ले, इस उपवन में जो आते ।

वे, बढभागी, साईं पथ के, अनुगामी, जन कहलाते ॥
उत्फुल्ल हृदय के भावों पर, उत्तम व्यवहार निभाके ।

विश्वासी, आधारों से, निज, आस्था के फल, पाके ॥
अन्तर श्रद्धा से अपरिमित, उपहार सबुरी का पाके ।

छल छन्द रहित, स्वच्छन्द मधुर, उर का विश्वास जगादे ॥
सद्बृत्ति की सही साधना, सिद्ध करे, साईं की भक्ति, ।

सत्यं शिवं सुन्दरम् की नित, उरमें उपजाकर अनुरक्ति ॥
अगणित महामनों की हुई है, जीवन विकसित हरियाली ।

ईर्ष्या, बैर, कपट छुडवाती, कृपा साईं की सुमन निराली ॥
साईं राम ने, "शिर्डी खेडा", काशी कावा बना दिया, ।

जैन, बौद्ध, ईसाई, सनातन, मुस्लिम का मन मिला दिया ॥
भारत भू पर, साईं राम का क्रीडास्थल साईं खेडा ।

लोभ, मोह, माया ममता का जहां न थल आडाटेडा ॥
सहज, सरल सद्भाव सुमन श्री साईं चरणों पर कर भेंट ।

जीवन की हलचल में मंगल, नवजागृत अनुराग समेट ॥
सिद्ध, मनोरथ, कर पाते है, जन्म के पुण्य फलों से, पूर्व ।

जगबन, पुरजन, परिजन, सज्जन, ले जाते आलोक अपूर्व ॥

उत्सवलाल तिवारी "सुमन"

२५।१ सुमन कुटीर तिवारी मार्ग

सावीपुरा उजैन म. प्र.



॥ ' गीत गजानन ' ॥

(जुलै १९८१ के अंक से आगे)

गीत क्र. २२

अध्याय १८

“संतों की महिमा अपरम्पार”

संसार में संतों की महिमा का कोई पार नहीं है। इस पृथ्वी पर वे चलते फिरते परमेश्वर हैं। सदैव वे पतितों, पापी जनों का उद्धार करते हैं। अकोला के पास मुंडगांव में बायजाबाई नाम की महाराज की परम भक्त स्त्री रहती थी। बायजाबाई पर महाराजकी कृपा थी। महाराज ने कहा कि पुंडलिक और बायजाबाई पूर्व जन्म के बहन भाई हैं। वे सदा सच्चिदानंद हरि की भक्ति में मग्न रहते थे। जैसे नामदेव की जनाबाई पंढरपुर में थी; वैसे गजानन की जनाबाई शेगांव में हैं। यहाँ बायजाबाई को जनाबाई का सम्मान मिला।

संतों की महिमा का अंत नहीं है। भक्तों को वे सदा सहायता करते हैं! भाऊ कव्हर की पीडा के कारण महाराज खामगांव आये। ब्राह्मणवेष में उन्होंने भाऊ कव्हर का कष्ट दूर किया। एक बार स्वामीजी विठ्ठलदर्शन के लिये पंढरपुर आये। आषाढ शुद्ध ९ के दिन सभी पंढरपुर पहुँचे। वारी के परिक्रमा के मार्ग पर बड़ी भीड थी। 'रामकृष्ण हरी' 'जय जय विठ्ठल' आदि घोषों से सारा वातावरण गून्ज उठा। स्नानादि करके सभी लोग विठ्ठलदर्शन करने चले गये। परंतु बापूना काले पीछे रह जाने के कारण उसे विठ्ठल दर्शन नहीं हो सके। भीड इतनी थी कि चीटीं को भी पांव रखने के लिये जगह नहीं थी। निराश होकर बापू काले वापस बाड़े में आ गये। वे मन में सोचने लगे कि "हे प्रभु तू मुझपर क्यों रुठ गया है। कृपाकर मुझे दर्शन दे।" महाराज अपने स्थान से यह सब देख रहे थे। उन्होंने बापूना काले को कहा-"अरे ! तू दुख न कर; रुक्मिणीपति के दर्शन मैं तुझे कराऊंगा। ऐसा कहकर महाराज कमर पर हाथ रखकर तथा पांव जोडकर सामने खड़े हो गये। बापूना देखने लगा कि तुलसीमाला पहनी हुई विठ्ठलमूर्ति साक्षात् साकार हो गई। बापूनाने मूर्ति के चरणों पर माथा रखा, और फिर देखा तो उसे गजानन महाराज दिखाई दिये। बापूना को भारी आनंद हुआ।

संतो की महिमा अपरम्पार

संतों की महिमा अपरम्पार पतितों का वे करे उद्धार	॥ टेक ॥
मुंडगांव की चायजावाड़े शेगांव की वह जनावाड़े संतकृपा का है आधार	॥ १ ॥
भक्त पुण्डलिक चायजावाड़े पूर्व जन्म के बहन भाई हरि भक्ति में रमते अपार	॥ २ ॥
कन्हर की यों पीडा कारण आए खामगांव श्री गजानन मुक्त किया प्रभु ने कष्टभार	॥ ३ ॥
'चन्द्रभागा' पावन तट पर हाथ धरे यों विठ्ठल कटिपर परब्रह्म ये जगदाधार	॥ ४ ॥
दीन गरीब वह भक्त थापू क्यों रुठा है पंढरी विठू ? कैसा यह माया बाजार ?	॥ ५ ॥
'गुरु' रूप में विठ्ठल दर्शन सार्थक हुआ सारा जीवन श्री समर्थ का जयजयकार	॥ ६ ॥

गीत क्र. २३

अध्याय १८

“प्रिय क्षेत्र पंढरपूर”

भुलोक की वैकुण्ठनगरी अर्थात् पंढरपूर । ईश्वर का निवासस्थान । महाराष्ट्र की भावुकता व संस्कृति का मानबिंदु; भक्तों का श्रद्धास्थान । भक्तों की और धर्म की रक्षा के लिये अष्टावीस युगों से कटि पर हाथ रखकर पांडुरंग

ईट पर खड़े है । महाराष्ट्र के कोने कोने से हजारों वारकरी आषाढी एकादशी को इस तीर्थक्षेत्र में आते हैं; चन्द्रभागा में स्नान करके पांडुरंग के दर्शन कर पावन होते हैं ।

आषाढी और कार्तिकी एकादशी को पंढरपुर में प्रतिवर्ष पंढरीनाथ की यात्रा प्रचंड प्रमाण में भरती है । चन्द्रभागा के मठ में विठ्ठलभजन में तल्लीन होकर भक्त समुदाय नाम घोषों के संकीर्तन के साथ साथ ताल मृदंग के ताललयों पर आनंद से नाचते हैं । विठ्ठल नामका सुख समारोह पृथ्वी पर पंढरपुर में ही देखने को मिलता है । इसी लिये पंढरपुर परमपावन क्षेत्र को 'मोक्षनगरी' भी कहते हैं । ऐसी मोक्ष नगरी की यात्रा संत गजानन महाराज ने अपने भक्तों सहित की । आज भी चन्द्रभागा का तट भक्तों को बुलाता है और पांडुरंग भक्तों की रक्षा हित युगों युगों से पंढरपुर में बाध कर रहे हैं ।

“प्रिय क्षेत्र पंढरपुर”

कलकल कर संदेश सुनाये
चन्द्रभागा बहती बाये
आषाढ-कार्तिक एकादशी को, उमडे यों भक्ति पूर
प्रिय क्षेत्र पंढरपुर ॥ टेक ॥

युग-युग से हैं खड़े ईट पर
हाथ धरे यों विठ्ठल कटि पर
सगुण रूप का दर्शन मन में, जाये चिन्ता दूर
प्रिय क्षेत्र पंढरपुर ॥ १ ॥

धन्य धन्य वह भक्त पुन्डलिक
सेवा कीन्ही बडी अमोलिक
प्रगट भये परब्रह्म भू पर, नाचे यह मन मयूर
प्रिय क्षेत्र पंढरपुर ॥ २ ॥

ज्ञान, नाम की रस मय वाणी
तुकाराम की अभंग वाणी
जनसागर में लगी उमडने, भक्ति लहरे सुदूर
प्रिय क्षेत्र पंढरपुर ॥ ३ ॥

“जय जय रामकृष्ण हरी”

“जय जय विठ्ठल, जय हरि विठ्ठल”

“पांडुरंग ध्यानी, पांडुरंग ध्यानी”

ताल मृदंगसह दिंडी बढतीं

विठ्ठल नाम का घोष करतीं

विठ्ठल मय ये सारी धरती, छन छन बजते नुपूर

प्रिय क्षेत्र पंढरपूर

॥ ४ ॥

परम भाग्य की चन्द्रकोर

खींचे पंढरी मन की डोर

विठ्ठल-दर्शन अति सुखदाई, शुद्धभाव भरपूर

प्रिय क्षेत्र पंढरपूर

॥ ५ ॥

राधाकृष्ण गुप्ता ‘चेतन’

घाटकर वाडा, भगतसिंग पथ, डोंविवली (पूर्व), जिल्हा थाने ४२१२०१

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“साईं खेवन हार”

साईं जी बस हमें केवल तुम्हारा ही सहारा है ।

नाथ मुक्ति का दाता पिता तू-प्राण प्यारा है ।

तुम्हारे तेज की ज्योति जगत मे जगमगाती है ।

जगत में बज रहा तेरी विजय का ही नगारा है ।

दयामय आपकी महिमा नहीं हम जान सकते हैं ।

जहां देखो वहीं पर आपका ही रूप प्यारा है ।

न तुम सा और कोई है जगत सब दून्ड मारा है ।

शरण में आ दुःखी होकर यहां जिसने पुकारा है ।

वहीं उसके दुःखों को आपने आकर सँभारा है ।

डी. एल. चौपडा

द्वारा फेअरडील एन्टरप्राइजेस, ५, एक्सचेंज रोड जम्मू-तावी (जम्मू और कश्मीर)

गृहस्थजीवन की सफलता

ब्रह्मचर्य जीवन बिताने वाले मनुष्य बहुत ही कम हैं। अधिकतर मनुष्य गृहस्थजीवन बिताते हैं। सफल गृहस्थजीवन को भवसागर पार करने का माध्यम माना गया है। स्वतः और स्वाभाविक तौर पर गृहस्थजीवन सफल हो जायगा ऐसी कोई खात्री तो है नहीं। देखा जाय तो वास्तव में अधिकतर गृहस्थजीवन बड़े दुखी होते हैं। नर्क की सी पीडा भोगते हैं और जन्म मरण के चक्कर में पड़े ही रहते हैं।

इन पीडाओं का आभास हम सभी को है। अतः इस पर विशेष चर्चा न करके गृहस्थजीवन की सफलता की ओर विशेष ध्यान देना अधिक लाभदायक होगा।

एक ऐसे परिवार का चित्रण करें जो सुखी हों, जिसमें गृहस्थजीवन की सफलता स्पष्ट दिखती हो। परिवार के मुखिया दादा दादी हैं। वे वृद्ध हैं। मृदुभाषी सरलस्वभाव वाले हैं। पास पड़ोसवाले व इष्ट मित्र इनके मार्गदर्शन को आते हैं। दूसरे के मतभेदों को ये मिटाते हैं, बिगड़े घरों को बसाते हैं। नई पीढी की नई जीवनशैली के प्रति कड़ुता नहीं रखते। अपने समय की बातों पर लम्बे लेक्चर नहीं देते। समय के साथ बदलते रीतिरिवाज रहनसहन आदि पर समझौता कर लेते हैं। प्रभूभक्ति में लीन रहते हैं।

इनके पुत्र प्रौढ हैं। सम्माननीय व्यवसाय या नौकरी करते हैं। इन्हें अपने वृद्ध मातापिता पर गर्व है। वे खुद और उनकी सुशील पत्नि सदैव ध्यान रखती हैं कि वृद्ध मातापिता की सेवा, आदर आदि में कहीं गल्ती न हो उनकी भावनाओं को ठेस नहीं पहुंचे। घरगृहस्थी के काम में मातापिता की आज्ञा का पालन होता है आशीर्वाद प्राप्त होता है।

तीसरी पीढी में छोटे बड़े बच्चे हैं, लडके हैं लडकियां हैं। कालेज स्कूल में पढते हैं। इनके भविष्य की, कामधंधे की, शादीब्याह की बातें होती रहती हैं। वंश की परम्परा का सत्रों को ख्याल है। खाने पीने पहनने आदि के तोरतरीके तीसरी पीढी में काफी बदले बदले नजर आ रहे हैं। पर संस्कार सबों के ऐसे मजबूत हैं कि मानों एक ही संस्कृति के धागे में बंधे हो। इस श्रेष्ठ परिवार की कुछ विशेष बातें ध्यान देने योग्य हैं।

नित्य सभी सूर्योदय के पहले उठ जाते हैं। घूमना, फिरना, व्यायाम, अध्ययन, पूजापाठ, मंदिरदर्शन आदि अपने अपने काम में सभी लग जाते हैं। समय पर चाय दूध नाश्ता भोजन प्राप्त होता है। अक्सर पूजा और भोजन सभी साथ ही करते हैं। बड़ा ही आनन्दमय वातावरण बना रहता है।

शिष्टाचार का सभी ख्याल रखते हैं। घर को स्वच्छ व सुसज्जित रखा जाता है। सब वस्तु अपने स्थान पर ही मिलती है। घर के छोटे बड़े कामों की जिम्मेवारी बड़ों ने व बच्चों ने ले ली है जिसे वे निभाते हैं। त्याग और सेवा के आधार पर आपसी प्रेम बढ़ रहा है। दूसरों से आशा रखने के बजाए सभी का ध्यान अपने अपने योगदान पर है।

आमदनी के अनुसार रहनसहन का स्तर ऊंचा होता है। भौतिक सुखों से ये वंचित नहीं रहना चाहते। ऐसा भी नहीं है कि इन सुखों के लिए तरसते हों, उधार लेकर सुखों का साधन जुटाते हों या अपना बडप्पन दिखाने की कोशिश करते हों। बुनियादी तोर पर इनका जीवन सरल जीवन है।

इनको अपने जीवन को कृत्रिम रूप से सुखी बनाने के लिए किसी व्यसन की आवश्यकता नहीं। धूम्रपान, मदिरापान, तामसी भोजन, गंदी फिल्में, गंदा साहित्य या कुसंगति से ये बचे रहते हैं क्योंकि इन्हें तो नैर्बर्गिक सुख वैसे ही प्राप्त है। प्रसन्न चित्त रहते हैं। स्वास्थ्य सबों का अच्छा है। इनके यहां बीमारी,

दवा, इलाज, टानिक आदिके तूफान नहीं आते जो अन्य प्रगतिशील लोगों के उच्च स्तर के प्रतीक माने जाते हैं।

इनके यहां मेहमानों का, अतिथियों का हृदय से स्वागत होता है। भोजन के समय आने वाला इनके साथ भोजन अवश्य करता है। मेहमान खुला वातावरण पाते हैं। रहने के तोर तरीकों में बनावट नहीं। जीवन की सरलता व सादगी से सभी प्रभावित होते हैं।

आमदनी का एक हिस्सा दान, दक्षिणा, पूजा, पाठ, तीर्थयात्रा, शिक्षा, उपचार आदि परमार्थ कार्यों में लगाया जाता है। इस बारे में चर्चा नहीं की जाती क्योंकि यश कीर्ति का प्रलोभन नहीं है।

आमदनी का एक हिस्सा बचा कर रखा जाता है ताकि अचानक आए खर्चों में, दुख मुसीबत में काम आए। वृद्धावस्था में परिवार का बोझ न बने।

जीवन की जटिलताओं, विषमताओं को देखकर संयुक्त परिवार की परिपाटी पर दृढ़ता से नहीं चलते। वृद्ध मातापिता अपने जीवन काल में ही बच्चों को गृहस्थी बनाकर उनके अपने अपने घर बसा देते हैं। सभी सदस्य इस बात को स्वीकार कर लेते हैं कि शारीरिक, मानसिक, आर्थिक व आध्यात्मिक स्तर, ध्येय, प्रगति व सफलता हर सदस्य की अलग अलग होती है। इस तथ्य को मान लेने पर इर्ष्या द्वेष खत्म हो जाता है। सब अपना अपना जीवन जीते हैं और अपने भविष्य को ज्ञान कर्म व भक्ति के आधार पर उचित दिशा देते हैं। न तो वे खुद को हीन समझते हैं और न ही अपने से कम भाग्यशाली पर किसी प्रकार का प्रभाव बताते हैं। इस प्रकार के रहन सहन का ऐसा असर होता है कि उसका हंसना रोना समाप्त हो जाता है। जो भवसागर में डूबता नहीं वह पार तो अवश्य कर जायगा।

शिवदत्त रामपाल जोशी

७ अर्चना, महात्मा गांधी रोड, घाटकोपर (पूर्व), बम्बई ४०० ०७७



भक्ति

भक्ति स्वतः ही पूर्ण है। वह कर्म, ज्ञान अथवा अन्य किसी प्रकारकी साधनकी अपेक्षा नहीं रखती। कर्मका उद्देश्य वैयक्तिक सुख है और ज्ञानका लक्ष्य है उस निर्विशेष ब्रह्मकी प्राप्ति, जो द्वैत-भावनासे रहित है, अर्थात् जहाँ उपास्य-उपासकका भेद ही नहीं है। अतः भक्ति मूलतः उन दोनोंसे भिन्न है। सम्पूर्ण गौडीय वैष्णव-साहित्यमें कर्म और ज्ञानका अत्यन्त ही तीव्र विरोध किया गया है। श्रीरूपगोस्वामीने इस विषयपर अपने विचार बड़ी ही दृढ़तासे व्यक्त किये हैं। उन्होंने स्पष्ट कहा है कि जबतक साधकके हृदयमें कर्मसे प्राप्य भोगोंके प्रति और ज्ञानसे प्राप्य मोक्षके प्रति अंशतः भी रुचि बनी रहेगी, तबतक उसमें भक्तिका प्रादुर्भाव नहीं हो सकेगा।

शिव लीला

इनके पहले साईनाथ एवम् भोलेनाथकी भिन्न भिन्न भूमिकाएँ होते हुये भी दोनो एक ही रूप-रक समान है असा विश्वास प्रगट हुआ था। शिवजीकी महानताका परिचय पार्वती द्वारा हमें हुआ था। एक और कथा यहाँ प्रस्तुत है।

एक बार शिवजी और सती बैठे थे जभी अचानक उपर अंबरमें देखा तो एकके बाद एक विमान जा रहे थे। सब देवगण, ऋषीलोग, मुनीजन कहाँ जा रहे थे ? तलाश करनेके बाद खबर मिली कि सतीके पिताजी दक्ष प्रजापतीने बड़ा यज्ञ शुरू किया है और यज्ञमें शामिल होने के लिये ही देवों और ऋषीयोंका प्रयाण था। उस जमानेमें यज्ञ आदीमें देवलोग साक्षात् उपस्थित रहते थे और यज्ञभागका आहुतीका स्वयम् स्वीकार करते थे।

सतीदेवीको बहोत ही संताप हुआ। अपने पिताके घर इतना बड़ा यज्ञ और लडकी और दामादको ही निमंत्रण नहीं। अगर आमंत्रित नहीं किया तो मैं तो दक्षपुत्री हूँ। बापके घर जानेमें मुझे संकोच नहीं होना चाहीये। शिवजी न आये तो न सही लेकिन मेरे भैकेमें इतना बड़ा यज्ञ और मैं न जाऊँ ये कितनी बुरी बात होगी। शिवजीको ये बात तो पसंद नहीं थी क्योंकि निमंत्रण के बिना जाना उचित नहीं था। लेकिन सतीके दुराग्रहसे आधीन होकर स्वयम् न जाते सतीको जानेकी अनुमति दी। आखिर, नारी के आगे भला किसका चल सकता है ?

जैसी धारणा थी वैसा ही हुआ। सती बिना निमंत्रण पहुँची ! लेकिन उनका उचित सत्कार नहीं किया गया। शिवजीके प्रति दक्ष प्रजापतिको पहले से ही रोष एवम् घृणा थी इसि लिये सतीकी गंभीर उपेक्षा यज्ञमें की गई। अपने पिताके घर जब प्रेम और उचित आदर न पहुँचा तो सतीको बहोत ही मानसिक सदमा पहुँचा। यज्ञमें शिवजीका आसन नहीं था तथा यज्ञभाग भी रखा नहीं गया था। ये कोई बेखबरी या भूल नहीं थी। लेकिन जान बुझकर उनकी और उनके पतिकी थोर अवज्ञा की गई थी।

सज्जन व्यक्तिको अपमान मरणसे ही बुरा लगता है। सतीसे ये अपमान बरदाश्त नहीं हुआ। और अन्तमे स्वयम् यज्ञकुंडमें कुदकर शरीरको अग्निमें समर्पित कर दिया !

समाधीमें जब शिवजीको पता चला तो क्रोधाग्निसे वे अपने गणोंके साथ यज्ञमें आकर दक्षयज्ञका विध्वंस किया। शिवजीके त्रीनेत्रोंसे प्रज्वलित हुए तीन अग्निमें यज्ञके तीन अग्निको बुझा दिया। शिवजीका भयंकर रौद्ररूप देखकर भयभीत हुए ऋषीजन, देवलोग आदि सब नौ दों ग्यारह ही गये।

दक्षप्रजापति प्रार्थना करने लगे। दाक्षायणी रोने लगी। देव सब भाग गये और इस तरह दक्षयज्ञका बहोत ही करुण अंजाम आया।

दूसरे जन्ममें सती नगाधीराज हिमालयके यहाँ पुत्रोंके रूपमें अवतरित हुई। माताका नाम मेना था। पर्वतकी पुत्री होनेके नाते सती पार्वतीके नामसे जानने लगी। हमारी हिन्दु संस्कृतिमें एक बात पर जोर दिया गया है जिसमें पुर्वजन्मके संस्कारका बहोत ही गहरा रिश्ता वर्तमान जन्म के साथ जोड़ दिया गया है। और ये ही वजह थी कि पिछले जन्मके प्रबल संस्कारके कारण पार्वती जब उम्मरमें आयी तब पतिके लिये शिवजीको प्राप्त करनेकी प्रबल इच्छा हुई। अपनी मनोकामना परिपूर्ण करनेके लिये पार्वतीने कठोर तपका आरंभ किया। पुत्रीकी कठोर तपश्चर्या देखकर मेना माताको बड़ा आश्चर्य हुआ और उनसे उद्गार निकले “ओ ... माँ ... कहां ऐसा कठोर तप और कहां तेरी सुकोमल काया ? !” ऐसा कहा जाता है कि पार्वती बादमें उमा के नामसे भी जाने पहचाने लगी।

सच्ची लगनसे भगवानकी प्रार्थना करनेवाले भक्तोंकी भगवान हमेशा चुनौति लेते हैं। उमाका इगदा और भक्ति कितने सच्चे हैं ये महसुस करनेके लिये स्वयम् शंकर ब्रह्मचारी बटूका रूप धारण करके उमा जहाँ तप करती थी वहाँ प्रगट हुए। उमार्जने बटूको उचित खातरबरदाश्त करके उन्हें आदरसे आसनपर बैठनेकी प्रार्थना की। क्योंकि आदरणीय व्यक्तिकी उपेक्षा करनेसे हमारे भयमें बाधा आती है।

अर्ध्र्य प्रदान, आदर बगैरा: होनेके पश्चात ब्रह्मचारीने उमासे पूछा “जटाधारी शंकरको तो सब कोई अच्छी तरह पहचानते हैं और वे क्या एवम कैसे हैं ये सब जानते हैं फिरभी उनके लिये आप इतनी मनोकामना क्यों रखती हैं ये बात मेरी समझमें नहीं आती। जिन्होंने शरीर पर ऐसी अमंगल चीजोंको अंगीकार किया है कि ये बात पर मैं तो तुम्हें तुम्हारी इच्छापूर्ती के लिये अनुमोदन नहीं

दे सकता। पाणीग्रणहके वक्त शिवजीके हाथमें सर्पोंकी माला होगी और दो हाथो आपके कोमल हाथसे स्पर्श करके आपको भयभीत नहीं करेगा ? आपने कभी येभी सोचा कि लग्नकी विधी जब होगी तब आपने तो अति मनोरम्य साडी पहनी होगी। शिवजीने पहना हुआ रुधिर याने की रक्तले भरा हुआ गजचर्म और आपका सुहागका जोडा दोनोंका मेल-कैसे बैठेगा ? शिवजी तो स्मशान भूमिमें रहते है जहाँ प्रेतोंकी चिता जलती रहती है। औसी विरान जगहमें आप शिवजीके साथ सैर करोगी तो लोग क्या कहेंगे ? आपके नाजुक पैरोंसे ये भूमि पर चलना बरदाश्त होगा ? आपकी कोमल काया पर आज तो चंदनका लेप है लेकिन शिव तो चिताभस्म, जले हुए मुदडोंकी राखको शरीर पर लगाते है। क्या औसी रुख कायासे आपको कांटे नहीं चुभेंगे ? दूसरी भी एक महत्वपूर्ण बात है। आज तो आप गजराज पर बैठके सैर करती हो। लेकिन कल जब आप शिवजीके साथ नंदी पर बैठके घूमोगी तब लोग हसेंगे। मजाकमें कहेंगे "बाह क्या बेमिसाल पतिपत्निका जोडा है" ? उमा खुद चांदनी जैसी और शंकरके भालमें विराजीत चंद्र-दोनोंकी बे कैसी दशा ? दोनोंने शिवजीमें क्या अजनबी देखा कि दोनों उनके हो गये ? उमा, आखिर-आप तो बड़ी प्रज्ञा और व्यवहारीकतासे भरपूर हो फिर आदमीकी पहचान आप नहीं कर सकती ? आपने शिवजीको कैसे प्रमाणपत्र दे दिया ?।

देखनेमें जो कुछ भी नहीं है वैसे जटाधारी शिव तीन लोचन होनेके कारण कितने भद्दे लगते है। कुल था गोत्र ? तो कहते है उनके कुलके बारेमें कोई जानता ही नहीं। पैसा, धनदौलत कैसी दूर है। दिग्म्बर अवस्थामें घूमते है। घरमें खानेका कुछ ठिकाना नहीं है। भिक्षा मांगकर खानेका। हिरण जैसी आंखोवाली आप तो मृगनयनी है तो दूसरी तरफ शिव त्रिलोचन है।

मेरी तो आपसे बड़ी नंक परामर्श है कि आप शिवजीका खयाल ही छोड दी।

द्विजवर्यकी औसी प्रतिकूल भाषा सुनकर उमाकी आंखे क्रोधसे लाल हो गई और उंचे स्वरोमें कहा "शिवजीको आप ठीक तरहसे पहचानते नहीं हो इसीलिये औसी गंदी बातें बोलते हो।

सचमुच जो लोग अल्पबुद्धिवाले और इर्षालु होते है वे ही औसे अलौकिक, चरित्रशील एवम असामान्य महानुभावोंके बारेमें निंदा करते है। मंगल चीजोंको

वो ही अपनाते है जिनको कुछ प्राप्त करना है। संपत्ति पाने के लिये और आपत्तिको दूर करनेके लिये वह मंगल चीजोंको अपनाते है लेकिन शिव तो पूर्णकाम है इच्छापूर्तिकी जरूरत नहीं है। सच बात तो ये है कि लोग अपनी इच्छाये प्राप्त के लिये शिवर्जको शरण जाते है। जैसे देवाधिदेव महादेवको अच्छी चीजोंका अंगीकार करनेकी क्या आवश्यकता रहेगी ?!"

“अतिथी बड़क, आप दूसरी बात भी सुनीए। अगर शिवजी अकिंचन है फिर भी जगतकी तमाम् समृद्धीकी जड है। वे स्वयम् ही धनदौलत, जीवन, शांति आदिके दाता है। तीन लोगोंके वे स्वामी है। रूपमें अच्छे नहीं फिर भी लोग उन्हें कल्याणकारी कहते है। उनकी पूजा करते है। शिवजीका भीतरका रूप कितना महान और पवित्र है उसका अंदाज तुम्हें कैसे मिल सकेगा ? शिवजीको देखना हैं तो मेरी नज़रोंसे देखो। शिवजी जो भस्म लगाते है वह शिवजी के स्पर्शसे पावन बन जाती है। ऐसी पाक भस्मको देवलोक अपने सर पर लगाते है।

“आपके बयान अनुसार शिवजी नंदी पर बैठते है। लेकिन कभी देवराज इंद्र भी औरावत पर सवार होते है और रास्तेमें आमने सामने हो जाते है तब फौरन औरावतसे उतरकर इंद्र भी शिवजीको साष्टांग नमस्कार करते है। हाँ ... आपकी एक बात सही है कि शिवजीका कुल या गोत्रकी कुछ जानकारी नहीं है। शिवजी स्वयम् ही आदी-अनादी पुरुष है। ब्रह्माके उत्पत्तिके कारणरूप माने जाते है। जो स्वयम् विश्वके पहले पुरुष है उनके पहले या पश्चात के मूल या गोत्रकी कैसे जानकारी हो सकती है। सूरजको आप पूछेंगे कि प्रकाश कहाँसे आया तो ये ही जवाब हो सकता है कि सूरज स्वयम् प्रकाशका जन्मदाता और भंडार है। विस तरह, शिवजी भी अनादी-अनंत थे, है, और रहेंगे।

“आपके लिये वे कुछ भी हो लिहाजा मेरे लीये तो शिवजी अधिकसे अधिक प्रिय है। कोई भी कहे लेकिन मेरा उनका नाता अटूट है। आपकी निंदा से मेरा मन विचलित होनेवाला नहीं है।

“पसंद अपनी-अपनी-खयाल अपने अपने।” पार्वतीका कहना खतम भी नहीं हुआ था और ब्रह्मचारीके अधर कुछ बोलनेके लिये उंचेनीचे होने लगे। ये

देखकर पार्वतीने अपनी सखीसे कहा "सखी-देख ब्रह्मचारी कुठ और भी बोलना चाहते है । उन्हे आगे बोलनेसे अब रोक दो" ।

महात्मा, महापुरुषोंके बारेमें जो बुरा बोलते है उनकी बातें सुननेवाले भी पापके भागीदार होते है ।

"भलाई इसमें है कि मैं ही यहाँसे चली जाऊं" । इतना कहकर उमा चलने लगी । इतनेमें ती स्वयम शिवजीने प्रगट होकर असली रूप धारण कर उमाका हात धाम लिया ।

शिवजीको देखकर उमा भाबविभोर हो गई, पसीनेसे भिगी हो गई । रास्तेमें रुकावट आनेसे नदीकी तेज धारा जैसे रुक जाती है वैसे ही उमाका अेक पांव जो चलने के लिये रखा था-आगे चलाना या स्थिर खडा रहना-कुछ अनिश्चित मनोदशामें वैसी ही खडी रही ।

उमाकी भक्ति, श्रद्धा, सबूरी, प्रेम और निष्ठा देखकर शिवजीने उमाका स्वीकार किया । उमाकी तपश्चर्या सार्य हुअी और पार्वती-शिव शक्ति के मीलनसे कुमार कार्तिकेय का जन्म हुआ जिन्होंने देवोंके सरदार बनकर सुरासुर संग्राममें विजयका झंडा लहराया । दुराचार पर सदाचारका, बनिष्ट तत्वों पर इष्ट तत्वोंका और मृत पर सञ्चाईने विजय प्राप्त किया ।

'शिवलीला' की एक छोटी सी श्रांकी के साथ शिवजी जैसे दुःखहरता, सुखकरता, कल्याणकारी, कैलासवासी देवाधीदेव भगवान शंकरको हम सबका कोटि कोटि नमस्कार .. "

शिपील कपीलराय स्वादीया

३०१, बी. कमल कुंज दत्त मंदिर रोड, संगीता सिनेमाके सामने
मालाड (पूर्व), बम्बई ४०० ०६४



“भजन”

रहम नजर करो अब मोरे साईं, तुम बिन नही मां बाप भाई ।
तुम्ही हो पालनकर्ता मोरे, जगत मे भगवान ही मोरे लिखे ॥ ४ ॥

तुम बिन देगा कोन सहारा, कोई नही है समर्थ दूजा ।
यही दुआ मांगता हूं सदा सुखी रहे यह संसार सारा ।
बालबच्चों की रक्षा करना, बाबा मुझको भूल न जाना ।
तुम ही हो कुलदैवत मोरे, ध्यान लो चरणों मे तेरे ।
मुर्ती बस जावे नयनों मे, लगन लगे सदा ही मन मे ।
उठते, बैठते, सोते जागते, नाम रहे सदा ही मुख में ॥ १ ॥

पवित्र बन जावे आंखें मोरे, बस जावे साईं बाबा उसमें ।
मन का होवे शुद्धीकरण, चलता रहे साईं का भजन ।
गाता रहूं मैं लीला साईं की, आडी तेडी जैसी भी बनी ।
योग्यता नही है मुझमे इतनी, मन मे नही है श्रद्धा भक्ती ।
प्रार्थना करता हूं मैं बाबा से, ज्ञान प्राप्ती कर दो मुझमे ।
लिखवालो तुम ही भजनावली, मन मे पैदा कर दो भक्ती ॥ २ ॥

अर्पण करता हूं संसार सारा, चरणों मे तेरे साईं बाबा ।
मेरा नही है कोई भरोसा, छोड जाऊंगा सारा पसारा ।
तुम ही देना बच्चों को बुद्धी, हो जावे उनकी सारी उन्नती ।
नातू पोतू हैं वह तुम्हारे, सच है ना यह बाबा मोरे ।
साईंदास लक्ष्मण हाथ जोडे, पडा रहने दो चरणोमें तेरे ।
कहेगा फिर तो दुनिया सारी, भक्ती थी मोरे मन मे साईं की ॥ ३ ॥

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