

Know More About
Shirdi Sai

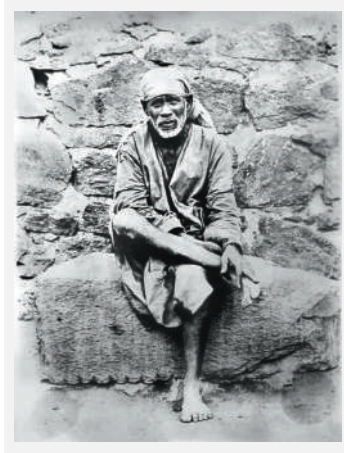


Abhishek Verma

KNOW MORE ABOUT
SHIRDI SAI

ABHISHEK VERMA

DEDICATED TO



“The one and only Sri Shirdi Sai Baba”

INTRODUCTION



I have been regularly reading “Sai Satcharitra” for quite a few years now. I have read it completely many times in one week (Saptah Parayan), but now, I read only one chapter daily.

The fascinating thing is that even after reading its chapters daily for a few years, now when I read any chapter again, I always come across something new. Occasionally, it would be something I missed earlier or sometimes verification of other aspects described elsewhere in the book, but mostly a better explanation of doubts during previous readings.

During these readings, numerous interesting thoughts/ observations kept on springing up in my mind. While these observations ironed out some of the doubts, new questions also arose simultaneously,

inspiring me to keep digging deeper for better explanations. These thoughts/ interpretations have increased my faith in Baba immensely and brought me ever closer to His lotus feet.

I believe these observations/interpretations were inspired by Sri Sai Baba only and therefore, I resolved to record them with the following thoughts in my mind:

1. It is proven that if you want to improve your concentration on anything, you should keep finding interesting things about it. Everything that I have read so far about Baba has been immensely enlightening. It not only gave more background information on what has been mentioned only briefly in Satcharitra, but also inspired observations/ interpretations that have increased my faith in Baba a lot. I believe this compilation will help other devotees discover more (or better) explanations/ interpretations of their own thereby increasing faith in Sri Sai's lotus feet.
2. I remember the first time I read Satcharitra – faith in Baba had just begun

- and I had my ifs and buts about a few things. Starters on Baba may face a similar dilemma. So, learning more and more facts about Baba will help them deal with these situations better by Baba's blessings.
3. For each Satcharitra chapter, there are many aspects highlighted through questions that non-believers may want to ponder about. I believe these aspects will eventually increase their faith in Sri Sai Baba.
 4. This is certainly NOT a commentary on Satcharitra as I am in no way capable of doing that. This work is inspired just out of love and gratitude of an otherwise a very insignificant Sri Sai Baba follower like me. For me, Baba's stories are like the rain full of blessings. One sure way of getting closer to Baba is to read and sing about Him as much as one can.

The information presented here is available in numerous places in public domain and I believe if collating it chapter-wise in one place could serve just one person, the purpose of this effort will be considered achieved.

It is my humble request to the readers is to read at least one chapter of Sai Satcharitra every day along with observations & background information covered in this work and if possible, add your own for the benefit of others*.

*You may read Satcharitra and add your observations online at <https://knowmoreaboutshirdisai.wordpress.com>

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!
May Sri Sai keeps blessing all of us.



CHAPTER 1



Wheat Grinding: not the original photo

*R*eaders will learn in later chapter (38) that Baba used to cook and feed people on His own occasionally, but that was when the

festival of Ramnavmi (celebrated as Uruz earlier) and Sandal procession had not started. Baba stopped cooking as the number of visitors increased in due course and the Naivedya offered to Baba used to be in large amount and therefore, when Baba started grinding the wheat, it came as a surprise to the villagers and the ladies helping out Baba in grinding thought that Baba would distribute the flour among them eventually.

Late Sri Swami Sharan Anand ji (writer of Sai Superman), writes that this incident happened sometime in 1910-11, and he was present in the mosque at the time; some devotees asked Baba, why did He ask to throw the flour at village border, He emphatically stated it was to stop Cholera and as stated by Him, Shirdi people were freed from the ravages of Cholera since that day. Several educated devotees of Baba attempted to find out from scientists without success the connection, the spread of wheat flour had with Cholera epidemic.

Hemadpant's analogy of this incident with Kabir's predicament is so appropriate in that if someone starts concentrating inward towards the centre (the abode of our beloved Sai), he is surely to escape the continuous grinding in this temporary world, i.e. when a wheat particle reaches the centre

(hole) of the grinding mill, it escapes from being ground.

Couple of incidents related to "Cholera raging in Shirdi," at different times are also recorded elsewhere, which are reproduced for readers' benefit below:

Source: 101 stories of Sai Baba

Baba once told to Appa Kulkarni that thieves would come and fight with you as they were very clever in selecting persons and would take away only what they wanted. Beware of it.

Kulkarni thought that Baba told about thieves and planned for safeguarding all his properties. But Baba's dictum was otherwise. At that time cholera was raging in Shirdi. Kulkarni himself suffered from Cholera. His wife came to Baba for Udi. Baba did not give Udi to her and told, "*that he would change his shirt before Me. Let him do,*" Afterwards Appa Kulkarni died of Cholera.

Later people went to Baba for remedy. Baba gave the udi to people of Shirdi and asked them to put the UDI across Shirdi and people got rid of the deadliest

disease with the blessings of Baba. Baba told them not to fear for Cholera, saying that only seven will die of Cholera.

Accordingly, only seven died and the Cholera ceased by Baba's grace.

Source: Sai Baba's Charters and Sayings

1. In May, June 1917, a Mumbai lady and her younger son sat before Baba at noon Aarti.

Baba: *You must come here exactly at 2 p.m.*

Boy: Yes. Accordingly, the boy was there at 2 p.m. at the Dwarkamayee (mosque).

Baba: *Boy, come here. Sit at My feet on this mat. Keep massaging My feet and do not let go My feet until I tell you.*

Accordingly, the boy went on massaging. At 3 p.m. a terrible female figure with wild dishevelled hair, begrimed face and head and a protruding long tongue shot out and moving like a dog jumped over the compound wall and coming near the boy, said: "I want this person."

Baba: *I will not give him.*

She: This exactly is the person I want.

(She then approached the boy and pulled him. Baba got up enraged and holding the boy with one hand, kicked on her breast. She roared with pain and ran away)

Baba: *Boy, are you not attending? Do you know the woman who came; Hello! that woman was wanting you to be given up. But how can I give? I refused.*

Boy: when this was going on, I sat benumbed like a picture. I saw everything, but my body was inert or stone-like.

(Baba declared that the female form was the goddess cholera. And the very next morning, Baba permitted the boy and his mother to go back to Mumbai. Cholera then began to rage at Shirdi).

The boy whom Baba rescued from Cholera Goddess was Master Jyotindra Tarkhad (Son of Baba Saheb Tarkhad mentioned in chapter 9 of Satcharitra); a detail account of what had happened then is recorded in a wonderful book "Experiences of Tarkhad," written by Jyotindra's son Sri Virendra Jyotindra Tarkhad as below:

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

Dear Sai devotee readers, we are passing through the 21st Century and hence I have a humble request to make to all of you to believe in this experience of Jyotindra which I will be narrating to you shortly. Those who have read Shri Sai Satcharitra would

know that once there was an epidemic of Cholera in Shirdi. Village people believed that you have to pray to Goddess 'MariAai' when such an epidemic is widespread, in order to keep the deaths under control. Of course, in those days the medical aids were not forthcoming and advanced like today and epidemics were a common phenomenon in Indian villages. Also, the communication system was not that developed and as a result of which when my father reached Shirdi he was not aware that there was Cholera epidemic in Shirdi. Of course, he had by then developed great faith in Baba and he knew that Baba will take care of him and as such if it is too dangerous to stay then Baba would instantly direct him to return to Mumbai. He therefore was unafraid and performed his rituals as usual. In the next two to three days he experienced that the death toll was on the increase and Cholera was increasing into menacing proportion in the villages around Shirdi. He was internally frightened. One evening, as per his ritual, he lit the Petromax lamps and was placing them in Dwarkamai. No sooner had he climbed the steps where Baba used to normally sit in front of the Dhuni than Baba got angry on him. He started abusing him. This was a new experience for Jyotindra. Baba's anger was reaching high peak. In rage He

told my father that He will cut him into seven pieces and burry him in the Masjid. Jyotindra was very scared. He fell at Baba's feet and started pleading to be pardoned because he thought he might have inadvertently made some mistake, which aroused anger in Baba. Then in the same mood Baba ordered him to sit there and press His legs. My father instantly obeyed His orders and was seated at His feet pressing His legs. He noticed that Baba was still murmuring something and continued to be in the angry mood He was in. After a little while Jyotindra started perspiring because he was seeing in front of him the Goddess Kali in that terrifying pose. Her menacing posture and blood-soaked tongue. On seeing this sight my father lost his senses completely. Automatically he held on to Baba's legs with all his might and strength in his body. He was trying to convey to Baba to save him from this, but the fright was so deep that words could not come out and he became speechless. His face was only turning in two directions from Baba to Kali and vice-versa. He was seeing Baba uttering something but was unable to hear and comprehend. In no time he felt unconscious. When he woke up he realized that Baba was shaking him and asking him to wake up. He regained his consciousness and was drenched in

sweat. Baba was telling him that, *“Hey Bhau I told you to press my legs, but you are holding them so tight that your nails are hurting Me.”* My father was very thirsty and he asked for some water. Baba gave him some water from the earthen pot (Kolamba) which used to be there in Dwarkamai. My father drank the water and he reached the NTP (Normal Temperature and Pressure) condition. He instantly told Baba not to show him such dreadful sights because he did not have the strength to withstand them. He told him that for the next four days he may not be able to gulp food and he would have to rethink whether he should come to Shirdi or not. Then Baba asked him, *“Hey Bhau please tell me what exactly did you see?”* Then my father narrated the whole incident which was still a fresh in his memory. He asked Baba that, *“You were murmuring something with that dreadful person but I could not hear anything as I fell unconscious.”* Baba replied, *“Hey Bhau that dreadful person you are referring to was none but Aai. She was asking for your soul and I was declining. She was refusing to go away, then I told her you may take five more people but I will not part with My Bhau. Finally, she gave up and left Dwarkamai.”* Baba went on to say, *“Bhau please remember I do not bring you to Shirdi to die and when you are at My feet nobody can snatch*

you away from Me." For my father it was like he had taken rebirth. He fell at Baba's feet and once again pleaded not to show such dreadful sights as it is beyond his ability to withstand. Whenever my father used to narrate this incident he used to say that very remembrance of that sight would give him a sleepless night.

Dear Sai devotee readers after going through this episode I am sure many of you may have some doubts and would like to seek some clarification but as said in the beginning please believe it. Shirdi SaiBaba was nothing but Lord Incarnation and therefore He possessed those supernatural powers which when required He utilized to save His devotee. I am sure there must be ample number of people who must have undergone such life-saving experiences. Baba used to declare that it is His ardent duty to protect His devotee from evil effect. He told my father, *"Bhau after My bodily departure from Shirdi people will come like ants to Shirdi and please remember I do not utter lies while speaking from this Dwarkamai."*

Dear readers in this 21st century we all are seeing and experiencing what has transpired in Shirdi and I am sure this will go on till the end of this world.

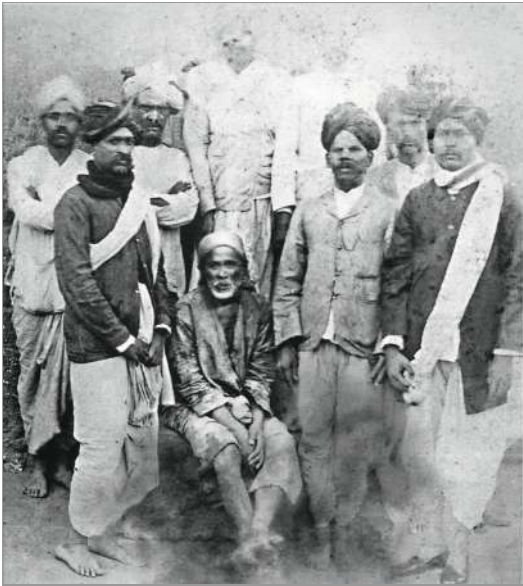
**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

1. How come after this Leela, Cholera really stopped raging in Shirdi?
2. How come Baba was aware of the timing when the Cholera would get over by?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 2



Baba with devotees: original photo

I fully agree with Hemadpant Ji that while describing Baba's Leela, one feels immense pleasure as I too derive pleasure in reading about Baba and believe me, if you write about it, the pleasure increases manifolds.

I am not claiming to be another Hemadpant here, but just want to highlight the importance of reading and writing about Baba. Baba's blessings to Hemadpant made Satcharitra possible. Countless people like us are taking advantage of this Holy Book, which covers everything that happens in our life. Let us all be indebted to Baba and Hemadpant for devising out a way through Satcharitra, blessing poor souls like us who did not have the fortune to be physically with Baba.

The beautiful point Hemadpant made about a debate being possible only because of ego, is so true. It overshadows our senses as it is obvious from Hemadpant's own example in this chapter, in that, at one end he felt immense pleasure in seeing Baba first time at Masjid's corner, but then he also argued against the need for a Guru with Balasaheb Bhathe the same day. Why go that far, you only have to look at the debates around you and immediately you can feel the level of pride in debater's voice – full of

shouting, not listening to others and everyone seemingly having a convincing argument. On the other hand, a person who is close to Brahma can see through any lies in this world and beyond, because he is aware of the truth (Brahma), which doesn't need any proof.

Trivia - Hemadpant seemed to stay in Shirdi for only one day in his first visit.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How come Baba was aware of the discussion happening in Sathe Wada? people might think that someone might have told Him already; it'd be possible, but judging from Baba's other Leelas mentioned in later chapters, Hemadpant's version appears to be credible.

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 3



*Baba standing:
Original Photo*

The humility Hemadpant shows while giving credit to Baba for writing Satcharitra Himself is exemplary and is the true indication of a pure devotee. Just remember only sometime back this gentleman was full of arguments that there is no need for Guru and all, and now he is the exact opposite - without any special efforts, Baba just followed His daily routine of interacting with devotees like Hemadpant and people kept getting onto their path of spiritual progress.

In this chapter Baba permitted Hemadpant for writing Baba's biography but only after he got rid of his ego; these were not just empty words and Baba Himself did not have any ego and this fact was demonstrated through His behaviour recorded in various texts. One such example that can quickly be mentioned here is as follows:

One mad man Nanavalli once approached Baba, who was then seated on His Gaddi, and asked Him to get up as he wanted to sit there, Baba at once got up and left the seat. After sitting a while Nanavalli got up, fell at Baba's feet and went away. Baba did not show slightest of displeasure in being dictated to and removed from His seat.

Just imagine doing this to Babas' of these days.

There is more information available on Rohilla mentioned in this chapter, which I would like to share with you all now.

Source: Statements given by Devotee, M.B. Rege:

There were two "Rohillas" in about 1916 that came to Shirdi and became devoted to Sai Baba. The elder one was constantly with Baba and used to read the Koran, at night especially, sitting by Baba's feet. He declared that Baba was Paigambar (i.e. God) and

showed Him great reverence. At times he said that Baba (though He was Paigambar) was still teaching heterodox doctrine. Baba's allowing the din of noon-day Aarti with its music in the mosque, allowing Himself to be worshipped as God there, and partaking of food offered to idols were heterodox and this Rohilla mentioned his objections to Baba. But Baba only smiled and said, "*All that (i.e. other Gods) is Allah.*" This was one of Baba's moods. In some moods, He would say, "*We are all the creations of God, 'Allah!'*" In other moods, He would say, "*I am God.*" This, of course, was extreme heterodoxy in this Rohilla's view. So, this Rohilla one day declared that, although Sai Baba was Paigambar, yet His doctrine was wrong and so he (the Rohilla) would make short work of Him and His doctrine. One day, as Sai Baba was going out walking, the Rohilla came up from behind, with a stout club in his right hand and reached in striking distance. Baba turned towards him and touching or seizing his left wrist cast a glance at him, beneath which the poor Rohilla cowered and sank like a lump of lead, powerless to lift his club or even to lift himself. Baba left him there and went away. Later the man had to be raised up with some one's help. In a few days the man took

leave of Baba and left Shirdi for good, never to return.

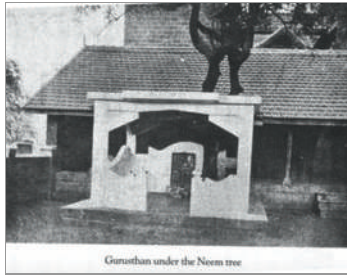
**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because -**

Baba was about 78 years old when this would have happened, so, unless He was endowed with special powers, how could the above have happened?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 4



There is another version of Gurusthan mentioned by Sri Swami Sharan Anand Ji (writer – Sai Superman) as follows:

When B.S. Sathe (owner Sathe Wada) wanted to put up a story and terrace, at the time of putting a staircase he unearthed a tomb and underground cellar or a cave under the tree, Baba was asked as to what should be done about the tomb and the cave?

Baba said that, "*that place belonged to His elders and it should neither be disturbed nor opened but it should be covered up with a stone as before.*" Persons and some boys playing a hide and seek game removed the stone and found under it several steps leading further down. They said that the cave was dark but rather long; Baba once told the writer (Swami Sharan Anand Ji) pointing to a pillar near His Dhuni (the sacred fire) in the Dwarkamai that, "*there was a cave there; He always confined Himself to that cave; that once His beard had grown so long that it reached the ground and swept; that He never came out of the cave unless to meet some holy and religious man.*" It seems this cellar or cave referred to by Baba started from under the Neem tree and extended up to and even beyond the Chavdi. This cave was in fact Baba's place of penance. After years of such penance in the cave, people caught sight of Him one day when He had come out for water. It seems He had finished His term of penance then, for thereafter He did not return to the cave, but made the Neem tree His abode.

Baba stayed uncared for and unnoticed by the people of the village for about a year or two. With only a Kafni on the body and rag covering the head He lived on. Digging a pit, He slept in it. How He fed

Himself no one knows but from the admonition He had once administered to Sagunrao M. Naik—it appears He had lived only on Margosa leaves for 12 years. He had said to Sagun, *"What! You can't put up with a day or two days' starvation? I myself had lived on Margosa leaves for as many as twelve years."*

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could Baba have known about Bhagwantrao Kshirsagar's not following his father's practice of offering naivedya to Baba?
- How could Vitthal appear just as Baba had predicted?
- How could the Ganga-Jamuna have flowed from Baba's toes?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 5



Shirdi Sai: Original photo

Whenever I think of Baba's wrestling bout with Mohiddin Tamboli, I feel a bit uneasy as to why Baba, who was a great saint, all-powerful, should lose to an ordinary human being. This feeling remained with me for a very long time and suddenly, one day with Baba's inspiration it occurred to me that Baba's wrestling bout was a result of difference of opinion with Mohiddin – which occurs only when someone happens to have a sense of pride or some sort of an ego issue. Baba

demonstrated here that even a great Saint like Himself, loses if they have ego.

Baba was popular as a mad fakir in early days. Shirdi people first came to know of this mad fakir's super natural powers, when shopkeepers refused to give oil for His lamps and yet He kept the lamps in Dwarkamayee burning for the whole night with water instead of oil. The shopkeepers and Shirdi people stood amazed and this news spread like wild-fire in the whole of the Ahmednagar district.

The behaviour of villagers was not unusual; worth of a Saint is realized only after seeing some sort of Miracle.

Thought of installing Padukas' of Baba by Krishan ji Alibagkar seems to be only natural as he had been going to Akkalkot for Maharaj's padukas Darshan only; when he was told by Maharaj that Sai Baba was none other than Himself, then a thought of installing Baba's paduka in Shirdi occurred to him.

Another interesting account of how Baba got His name as "Sai" is given in "Childrens' Sri Sai" - written by Vikas Mehta as below:

When the marriage party of Chand Patil's relative reached Shirdi, it halted near the Khandoba

(Shri Shiva) temple in Mhalsapati's farm. In front of the Khandoba temple all the bullock carts were untied. Members of the marriage party descended one by one. Pandit Mhalsapati also saw the Fakir who wanted to enter the Khandoba temple, but He was not allowed to do that by the Pandit, saying that a Muslim cannot enter a Hindu temple. He asked Him to go to Takiya or The Chavdi. The saint looked at him and answered calmly, *"Being a Baniya, how could you marry a lady of a herdsman community?"* Hearing this Mhalsapati was scared, because very few people knew about this secret. He understood that this Fakir is certainly not an ordinary person. He then requested Baba to enter the temple by addressing Him as "Sai".

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could burning coal and water have come out when Baba dashed His Satka at ground?
- How could Baba repeat to Alibaghkar what he saw in his dream - Akkalkotkar

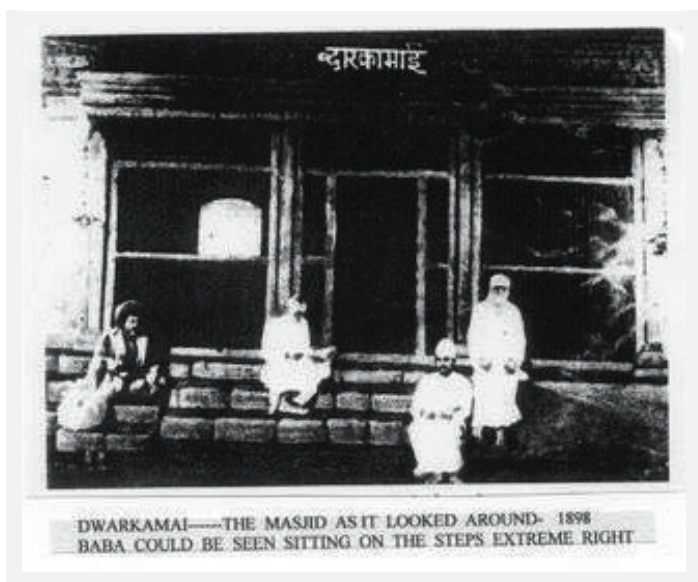
Maharaj saying that He was there in Shirdi, Himself?

- How come the diyas remained lit throughout the night on water? Was it not special?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 6



*I*nteresting thing to note here is that Gopal Rao Gund, a Hindu devotee thought of celebrating a Muslim's festival (Uruz) – This was all Baba's inspiration only.

Swami Sharan Anand Ji (writer of Sai Superman) states:

When Baba gave permission for holding annual Ramnavmi fair, water problem was quiet severe and so when the management committee requested Baba to help them in the matter, He ask them to take away the leaf-dish used by Him for His meals for this purpose. After He finished His meals, the leaf was thrown in the dried-up well; so soon as that was done, water streamed into the well and since that day this well has been serving the needs of the people of Shirdi.

Readers may find the following incident related to Radhakrishna Mai quite interesting:

In the year 1916, Sai Baba did not allow Vamanrao Patel, another devotee to return to his town and he had to stay in Shirdi for 11 long months. During his stay in

Shirdi, one day he woke up early in the morning and saw Radhakrishnamai alone cleaning the roads. She was sweeping the roads, removing small stones from the road and also removing even the dung of animals. She did not have any hesitation in doing such work. Vamanrao thought that the person who was doing such cleaning work was very fortunate. So, he thought that he should also accompany her in such noble task. Next day he woke up early in the morning and got busy in cleaning the roads, of course, without telling Radhakrishnamai. Radhakrishnamai did not like any other person to intervene in her work. When Vamanrao looked back after cleaning, he saw all the stones come back to the same place where they were before cleaning. Vamanrao repeated the process and got tired. But the road was not at all cleaned and the earlier position continued unchanged. Vamanrao could not understand this.

More facts on Radhakrishna Mai are compiled by 'Bondada Janardhana Rao' Ji on:

<http://bonjanrao.blogspot.in/2012/09/radhakrishna-mai.html?view=sidebar>

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- How come Baba was aware of Bhishma's proposal in advance for celebrating Ram Navami fest without being Omniscient?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 7



Sai Baba: original photo

Sai Baba is saviour of all; if you surrender to His feet, He will take care of you and yours' wherever they are. The following interesting account of Baba saving the child of Mr. S.B.Nachne is available in the public domain:

Shri S. B Nachne's younger son of about nine

months, named Harihar alias Sai Nath was playing with his brothers and sisters. Other grown up children had been firing crackers nearby igniting coloured matches. One of these threw a burning match on the child's clothes. Sai Nath's clothes caught fire but the little boy could not understand the risk this involved. The mother was busy doing something outside there but her mind was away from her children. So, Baba appeared at once before her in the form of a Fakir and pointing to the burning child said, "*Look there, see what is going on there.*" Thereupon the mother at once ran up to the Child, removed its burning clothes in proper time. After Harihar was thus saved, the mother looked for the Fakir, but during the confusion that followed on running to the child, He disappeared altogether, no one knew where. The devout parents of Harihar rightly attributed this to Shri Baba's grace and prayed for such anxious care of them whenever so required.

The following story about a leper devotee is recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings:

1. A stinking feeble leper with a packet of

peda (tied up in his dirty cloth) which evidently, he wanted to present to Baba, to take back part of it as prasad, came climbing up the steps and took considerable time to move up to the Dhuni. In his shyness and fear he parted from Baba without presenting the peda. A lady, Mrs. S. Tarkhad who was there with Baba, felt relieved at the stinking man's departure and said within her, "Thank God, this fellow is off."

Baba (darting a piercing glance at her): Hallo, call that man back; the leper came and bowed, keeping the peda parcel in his hand.

Baba, picking up that parcel and opening it: Hallo, what is this? Pedas! Baba took up a piece and giving it to Mrs. S. Tarkhad said, "*Eat this,*" and then Baba put a piece of the peda into His own mouth. Though the lady felt mortified, she swallowed it, noting that Baba was teaching her a lesson on consideration for fellow creatures and trust in the Guru.

Baba (taking up the balance of the pedas and returning it to the leper): Take away this prasad.

Baba thus enabled the poor leper to get prasad of peda though the man did not dare to offer it.

. . .

Manisha Bisht ji has narrated a wonderful episode wherein Baba helped cure Mhalsapati's wife by taking upon her pain on Himself, it is reproduced for other's benefit as below:

Mhalsapati's wife had once gone to visit her brother in Nadur Singota. As usual Mhalsapati was sitting close to Baba, and doing His Seva. Suddenly Baba said, "*Arre one of my Bhaktas has developed an abscess, and is in great deal of distress. I too have developed an abscess on my buttock. Soon I will feel better.*"

Mhalsapati could clearly see that Baba had developed an abscess on His buttock and was having a great deal of pain and discomfort in sitting. Mhalsapati was very concerned about this. But Baba said, "*Bhagat don't worry after two or three days it will heal, and I will feel better.*"

Mhalsapati did not know at that time whose abscess Baba had taken upon Himself. Though he knew that Baba would readily take the illness of His Bhaktas on Himself and relieve them of their pain and suffering. Two days later the abscess did burst and Baba was relieved of the pain.

Three days after the incident Mhalsapati received a letter from his wife. She wrote how she had devel-

oped an abscess on her buttock. As the pain was unbearable, she prayed to Baba for relief. Immediately she got relief and two days later the abscess burst and she felt alright.

It was then that he realized that Baba had taken the abscess upon Himself, when his wife prayed to Him for relief. Overwhelmed by Baba's love and compassion Mhalsapati said, *"Look Marthand (to his son) to give your mother relief Baba took upon Himself the pain and abscess. Hence, your mother became alright and our GOD mother suffered so much."*

It is so very true and we all Sai children at some point of our life have witnessed this how Baba runs for His children and help them overcome their problems, be it of any type, physical, material, spiritual etc. any type, He is always there for us.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could Baba have known about Master Khapade's trouble without being omniscient and how would He have taken it upon Himself?

- How could Baba have been aware of what Kashibai Kanetkar was discussing before coming to Shirdi?
- How could Baba have known about Nanasaheb's transfer to Pandharpur? Would it not have been a thrilling experience for those listening to Baba's bhajan and then getting the confirmation of Nanasaheb's move to Pandharpur?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 8



Baba on his bhiksha round: original photo

The interesting thing mentioned here is that one doesn't necessarily need to read scriptures to attain Moksha, one gets it in the company of a Saint, who has achieved self-realization. Otherwise, how could illiterate people (for example, Bhagoji Shinde etc.) have achieved Mukti?

Baba took the Avatar as human, only to demonstrate how self-realization can be achieved. Imagine how fortunate Hemadpant was as he was chosen by Baba to write Satcharitra, which describes what self-realization is and what all needs to be done to achieve it.

It is very difficult to be selfless, so why not make use of our selfish nature as in why not consistently strive for achieving the self-realization for our own ultimate benefit, mukti, because otherwise there is no hope to get out of the death & birth cycles.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

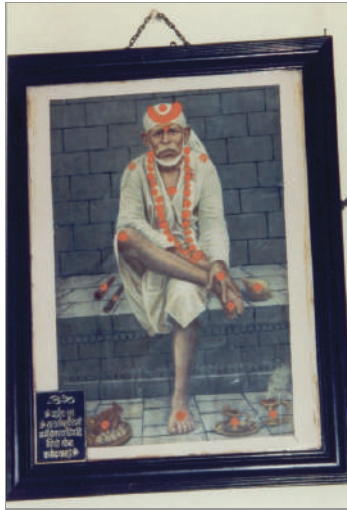
- Why when everyone shared food from the pot in which dogs, birds etc. were also

eating, no one fell sick? Can the same be done in current times without getting ill from infections etc.?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 9



Baba's photo in Purandhare's house

*A*n incident recorded in *Sai Charters & Sayings in reference to Baba's permission to leave Shirdi is as follows:*

In 1911, when leaving Shirdi with an intent to go Nasik, B V Vaidya went to Baba and asked for leave.

Baba: *Going to Nasik! What for should you go to Nasik! There is plague there. Do not go there. Go back home, taking your little one with you.*

Vaidya took Baba's photo and gave it into His hands. Baba touched it and returned it (for worship).

Baba then said, *"You had better go now."*

Vaidya and family got into the tonga and arrived at the station just in time to miss the train. They believed they were unlucky and spent some hours at the station for the next train. They arrived at Manmad by the next train and learnt that the previous train, which they would have boarded at Manmad, had they arrived earlier, had an accident in which one carriage was smashed.

Unique is the way of Baba's teaching. He did not give sermons saying that we should feed the poor first. Devotees will agree that once these are practically demonstrated to us, like in case of Mrs. Tarkhad - we remember them for longer, maybe because we only believe in what we see, as they say - seeing is believing. The application of

Vedantic teachings such as see God in every being among others were dispensed by Baba in the most fantastic manner.

In Sai Charters & Sayings, experience with Mrs Tarkhad is mentioned in a little more detail (that she fed the dog in front of Baba, but not the pig that had come to her before she left for the mosque; see what Baba said) as below:

1. *I am still belching with the heavy feeding you gave the dog this morning. I am also in the mire besmirched pig (that you did not feed, though it came to you). To serve Me, give up differentiation.*
2. *Sometimes I come as dog, sometimes as pig, the devotee who recognises me in each form and treats Me adequately is blessed.*

Various similar incidences supporting the above (recorded elsewhere) are reproduced below:

1.

73-B. Baba as a dog and sickly Sudra:

Kasinath Govind Upasani Maharaj, who lived at Shirdi in 1911- 1914, prepared his food which a black dog was watching. Offering nothing to the dog, K.G.U. went to the masjid and offered it to Baba.

Baba: *Why did you bring it here, I was there.*

K.G.U.: Baba, there was none, except a black dog.

Baba: *I was that black dog. Baba refused to accept food that day.*

Next day K.G.U. prepared his meal at his quarters and found no dog there. But a sickly Sudra was standing leaning on a wall and looking at the food. The orthodox K.G.U. drove him away from that place and brought the food to Baba.

1. Baba: *yesterday you did not offer me food.*

Today also you drove me away. Why bring the food here?

K.G.U.: where were you there, Baba?

S.B.: *I was leaning on the wall.*

K.G.U.: what! could you be in such a person?

S.B.: *yes! I am in all things and beyond.*

(Purusha Sukta i.e. He pervades the earth and transcends it).

. . .

2.

A tea merchant, Hansraj, of Bombay suffering from Asthma went to Shirdi with his wife, hired a house and attended upon Baba twice a day for the cure of his disease. Baba once and again advised him not to take curd and his wife accordingly tried her best to persuade him to refrain from eating curds, but Hansraj found it impossible for him to take his meal without curd, so he ordered his wife to keep curd ready.

Obeying the husband, the wife always kept curd ready. To force him to do without the curd, Baba assuming the form of a cat, always devoured it when the couple was away for attending noon Aarti prayers at the Dwarkamai. When Hansraj saw this, with a view to detect and punish the thief robbing him of his pet food, with a stick in hand instead of attending the noon prayers at the Dwarkamai as usual he sat at home watching. Just when the noon prayers started at the Dwarkamai, Hansraj found a cat going up the loft devouring the curd; he allowed the cat to finish the curd and then as she was leaving the house he gave her a severe stick stroke, leaving on her body a mark of the same. When in the afternoon Hansraj as usual went to Dwarkamai and paid his respects to Baba, Baba

uncovered His back and showed a weal on it to the devotees there inclusive of Hansraj, stating that, that was the reward this perverse Hansraj had awarded Him. Hansraj realised the mistake he had been committing and since that day gave up curd.

3.

1. One day Mhalsapati hit a bitch full of sores with a stick and he went later to Baba.

Baba: *Bhagat, there is in the village a bitch sickly like Myself and everyone is hitting it. Mahlsapati felt that Baba was rebuking him and so repented for his mistake.*

4.

1. Baba: *Nana, I would like Pooran Poli. Prepare it for Naivedya and bring it.*

NGC: It is late. There is no cook.

Baba: *Never mind.*

Then NGC got eight Pooran Polies and side dishes and placed them before Baba.

NGC: Baba. Taste, Baba waited a while. Then ants and flies settled on the poli.

Baba: *Good. Take away the plates.*

NGC: How is it you ask me to take the plates, without touching them? If you were not to eat anything, why ask me to prepare this? Unless you take something, I will not take away the plates nor eat food.

Baba: *I have eaten the poli, take the plates away and have your meal.*

Nana: You took the poli! When? What was brought on the plates remains just as it was. Unless you eat, I will not remove these.

NGC left the Dwaraka Mayi and lay down at the Chawdi with hunger. (Baba unable to endure the sympathetic suffering he underwent, sent for Nana.)

(Baba: *Nana, at some time, I took your poli. Do not be obstinate. Take the plates away and eat.* NGC again went back in a huff to the Chawdi. Baba again sent for him.

Baba: *What, Nana, you have been with me 18 years. Is this all that you have learnt? Is this your appraisal of me? Does Baba mean to you, only this visible body of 3 ½ cubits height? Is that all?*

Hallo! I eat in the form of the ant. I eat in the fly that eats. I take what form I choose and eat in the form. I have taken your poli long ago. Do not continue inexcusably obstinate.

Nana: Though you said, I understand (realise) nothing. What am I to do? If you make me understand it, I will then take the plates away and eat my food.

Then Baba made a gesture revealing His knowledge of some secrets hidden by Nana deep in his heart and unknown to anyone else. Nana was thereby convinced that Baba is innermost soul (Antaryami) and therefore, Sarvantaryami of all, including ants and flies, etc.

NGC: I will take away the plates.

Baba: *Nana, as you see this sign that I make, you will see that I can take food (in those forms).*

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- How could He have known about what was going to befall on devotees leaving against His instructions? Baba used to ask

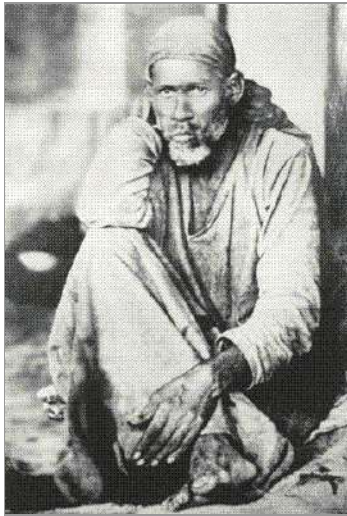
many of them to take Shama with them, so that he could offer some help during any mishap, which was bound to happen.

- How could He have known about Mr. Tarkhad forgetting about offering Naivedya?
- How could He have asked for Kacharya when Mrs. Purandhare herself had forgotte all about it?
- How could He have known about the peda sent by Mrs Tarkhad through Bala Mankar for offering to Baba?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 10



Sai in Dwarkamai: original photo

The humility in Sai Baba's utterances is amazing, showing that the most powerful is so humble, unlike the exact opposite behaviour we see around us.

The fact that you are reading more about Sai, means Sai has graced you already with His presence now, otherwise why would you be attracted to His teachings to this extent – so, believe me, the end of your troubles is in sight.

We should not be down with feeling that things are not happening our way – because that is a sign of a less than firm faith – firm faith is, that whatever happens, Sai will take care of things – all you have to do is to surrender to Sai's lotus feet and keep praying to Him while doing whatever you can to sort the problem at hand.

More detail about Baba's bed-stead is available in Sai's Charters and Sayings as below:

1. Once Baba talked of the plank He used to lie upon. It was only 5 feet long and about 15 inches broad and lamps were loosely placed on it. It was suspended from rafters

of the ceiling of the mosque by weak shreds of cloth. The wonder was how it could support Him, and another wonder was how Baba could swing Himself up onto it (it was hung up 6 or 7 feet high) and jumped down from it, without upsetting the lamps and snapping the shreds.

Das Ganu and others went to see the wonder and Baba, in anger or disgust, broke the plank into pieces.

Another devotee Chandrabai Borkar gave out the following statements:

I have had deep devotion and powerful response to my devotion from Sai Baba. When I went to Him in about 1898, the present masjid had not been built, nor the Wada of Sathe, which came only after rebuilding of the masjid. Baba was then sitting under the neem tree which is now in Sathe's Wada. I saw Baba filling His panatis, (i.e.) lamps with water, instead of oil, after drinking away the little remnant of oil mixed with some water. I saw also Him lying on a plank in the masjid hung up from the ceiling

with strings made of slender shreds of cloth. There were lamps on the plank, whereon He lay. No 'big-wigs' were coming then. Whenever I went there, I put up in the house of some villagers.

See what Shama had to say for Nana Valli (Source: Devotees experience by B.V.Narsimha Swami Ji) -

Nana Wali was 70 years old at the time of his death. He was Guru-bandhu of Yeshwant Rao, the departed Dev Mamlatdar of Nasik.

When our Nana Wali came, he was old. Baba encouraged him and said "Kulup lagadiya killi there paas hai. Mereko daga nai dhena, mai daga nahi dhunga."

Nana Wali was a Sakshatkari Purusha, who had thorough Vairagya. He ate Pig's filth. He kept scorpions in his mouth and also frogs and rats. Once he had spat a rat on Sai Baba.

Sri Virendra Jyotindra Tarkhad (son of Sri Jyotindra Tarkhad mentioned as young Tarkhad in chapter 9 of Satcharitra) has written (in "Tarkhad Family's Experiences") a 1st hand account of "Nanavalli" episode

which was narrated to him by his father, who was present in the mosque at the time as follows:

There was an eccentric devotee of SaiBaba by name Nanavali. I am taking this liberty to term him as cranky, because he used to perform very funny acts (monkey tricks), which used to annoy people and they used to complain to Baba about his misbehavior. Baba would then scold Nana stating that devotees would go away from Shirdi if he continues to misbehave. My father had different kind of admiration for Nanavali. He was suffering from hernia so much so that the grown-up portion used to touch the ground and he used to walk in that fashion only. Sometimes he used to tie the pieces of cloth to his trousers at the back forming a long tail and then he used to jump like a monkey. All the children of the village used to get amused with his monkey tricks and then in that state he used to come running to Baba to save him from the onslaught of the children. My father used to wonder as to how can this man in that state of hernia run so fast. He never thought of him to be a mad person. Nanavali used to call my father by name Gawalya' and used to beg him for food. Then my father used to go to the eating house run by Sagun and request him to feed Nanavali with sufficient food. According to my father Sai Baba and

Nanavali were like a pair of Lord Ram and His ardent devotee Lord Hanuman. Nanavali once commanded Baba to allow him to sit on His seat. Baba responded positively to his call and got up from His seat and allowed Nanavali to occupy the same. Nanavali sat for a while on the seat and then got up saying, "Oh Lord! only You can occupy this seat because it suits You, my right place is near Your Feet only." You can all imagine what great guts Nanavali had to ask Baba to allow him to occupy His seat and also the enormous quantum of love that Baba extended to him and vacated His 'Asan' (seat) for beloved Nanavali. Of course! the reason why my father used to reckon them as an equivalent pair of Lord Ram and Hanuman is different. Once Nanavali told my father. "Hey Gawalya, come with me and I will show you some fun." He then took my father to 'Chavdi' which is a little distance from Dwarkamai. Baba was sitting there in Chavdi. In no time Nanavali reduced his stature and made himself so small that he could fit in a 'Handi' (glass bowls which are tied with small ropes and hung onto the ceiling of the Chavdi) and then literally jumped up and sat up in one of the 'Handis'. Like a monkey he was sitting in the Handi and teasing my father. My father was astonished to see that act. It was unbelievable. It

was nothing short of a miracle. How can Nanavali with that state of his body jump so high and make himself small enough to sit in that Handi? It was simply amazing and unbelievable. He then realized that Sai Baba and Nanavali are Avatar of Lord Ram and Lord Hanuman in Shirdi. He instantly prostrated in front of Baba there and then venerated Him.

Dear Sai Devotee readers Nanavali was deep in sorrow after Baba had taken the Samadhi and on the thirteenth day, he himself renounced this world. Nanavali's Samadhi is situated near the eastern entrance door of Lendi Baug. I always bow before it whenever I visit Shirdi. Millions of bows to Lord Sai and His amazing Leelas.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- How could He jump onto and off a plank 7-8 ft high without disturbing the panatis on all corners of it?
- How could He suspend a plank in air with only rags that couldn't ever bear its own

weight, let alone a full-grown adult sitting
on it, unless of course Baba became
weightless?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 11



*Image worshipped by Sh. B.V.Deo: Source: **Baba's Rinanubandh** by Vinny Chitluri*

Whatever happened with Haji Phalke was programmed by Baba. He made Haji repent until he realized his mistakes and forgot any arrogance he had - only then he was inspired to approach Baba via Shama (only then Baba relented, otherwise Haji would not have been allowed in). Haji's repentance is evident from his humble responses.

From this one can learn that one really has to get rid of any pride/arrogance to approach Baba.

Some instances below provide more proofs for Baba's control over "elements":

1.

Following statements were given by W. Pradhan at Santa Cruz, 19th October, 1936:

At my first visit to Shirdi, there were severe storm and rain for quarter of an hour when I was with Baba at the masjid. I then thought that if rain continued like this, river would swell and getting back to Bombay would be difficult and Baba would not grant me early leave to go away.

Baba then looked at the sky and said: *"Oh God! Enough, stop the rain. My children have to go back home.*

Let them go back without difficulty." As He spoke, the rain became gentler and feeble. I realised that Baba knew my innermost thoughts. Then He gave me leave to go and I took Udhi and Tirtha for my mother and took Punjab Mail. The night after my return my sister-in-law dreamt, that a fakir robed in a Kufni and wearing a towel on His head was in our house. This I realized what Baba said, "*I will accompany you home,*" was proved as Baba came to our house.

The following are from Sai Superman:

2.

Once hay stacks in a Shirdi field caught fire and the crops of Shirdi people, collected in that place, were in danger of being burnt down, at the earnest entreaties of the Shirdi farmers, Baba went there and drew round the burning hay-stack a circle of water, stating, the fire would not then spread beyond that line, the farmers found that Baba's control of fire was unique for the fire stopped so soon as the hay stack marked by Baba was burnt down.

3.

Another instance of His control over elements occurred when one day He was taking His meals at

the Dwarkamayee and some persons were sitting by, He bawled out, "Stop" and when after finishing His meals He had all His belongings removed outside the Dwarkamayee, the ceiling cracked and at once came down with a crash, splinting mortar bricks etc. all over the Dwarkamayee.

Manisha Bisht Ji has described Baba's relationship with Haji Siddiq Phalke in detail as below:

Baba with His divinity, His love and compassion would slowly reveal the truth about their bond and they stayed devoted to Baba for rest of their lives. Out of so many one was Haji Siddique Phalke.

Haji Siddique Phalke was born in Kalyan around 1841. He was an affluent zamindar (Land owner) and had vast acres of farmlands. He was sophisticated, intelligent, well read and spiritual. He had travelled widely – Baghdad, Constantinople, Mecca were some of the places that he had visited.

Dada Sahib Kharpade has recorded one of his visits to Shirdi dated 14-12-1911 to 23-12-1911 in his Shirdi diary.

Dada Sahib Kharpade who was himself extremely learned and spiritual, states that Siddique Phalke was a gentleman of the 'old sort', a Karma-

Margi and very intelligent. He was spiritually developed and learned. The conversations that they had were pleasant and instructive. Baba liked Phalke a great deal and is said to have granted his wish.

During that visit Phalke had a vision and he asked Dada Sahib to ask Baba its meaning. The vision was about the 3 girls and a blind woman who had come to amuse him.

He ordered them to go out or they would be kicked out and began to pray. The 3 girls and that blind women fled upon hearing the prayer. He then blessed everyone in the room, in the house and the whole village. Dada Sahib was barely seated before Baba when Baba said, *"He was beaten last night by something on his private parts and hands. He then applied oil, wandered about, had a stool, sat near the fire and felt better."*

Siddique Phalke was married to Kursheed and had two sons named Gulam Mustafa and Mohamed Mukram. Phalke loved to wear spotlessly white clothes. Whenever the Dwarkamayi was washed with cow dung, Baba would summon Phalke and make him sit on the wet floor, much to Phalke's discontent. But when he would get up his clothes would remain spotless as before.

Baba loved and had great respect for Phalke and

whenever permission was granted for his departure, He would walk 100 paces with him and see him off at the breach in the wall. Phalke lived in a huge building in Kalyan, called Phalkewada and it is still there even today.

The chapter above narrates the story of Siddique Phalke's attempt to obtain Baba's grace. Phalke stays for 9 months in the north facing Chavdi, trying in vain to enter the Sanctum Sanctorum. Then he seeks Shama's help. Shama asks Baba, "Baba, why don't You allow the old Haji to step into the Masjid, while so many persons freely come and go, after taking Your darshan; why not bless him once?" Baba replied, "*Shama, you are too young to understand things. If the Fakir (Allah) does not allow, what can I do? Without His grace, who will climb into the masjid? Well, go to him and ask him whether he will come to the narrow footpath near the Barvi well.*" Shama went and returned with an affirmative answer.

Siddique Phalke answers that whatever difficulty he may encounter he will carefully tread the path.

In fact, there is no well called 'Baravi' in Shirdi or the neighbouring villages. Baba possibly uses the word Barvi to mean 12.

Here Baba asks Siddique Phalke whether he is willing to tread the straight and narrow (spiritual

path) fraught with difficulties. Whether he is willing to do a twelve-year penance (tapasya)? The penance of 12 inner disciplines which are as follows:

1. Viveka (Discrimination)
2. Vairagya (renunciation)
3. Niswartha (Selflessness)
4. Sama (calmness)
5. Dama (Self-control)
6. Uparati (Self withdrawal)
7. Titikshya (forbearance)
8. Samadhana (Self-settled)
9. Shradha (faith)
10. Satsang (Holy Company)
11. Maun (silence of mind)
12. Ekanta-dhyana (solitude and meditation)

Lastly the Guru's grace without which nothing is possible.

Siddique Phalke indeed came to Baba off and on for 12 years.

Then next question was, "*Will you give me 40,000 Rs. in 4 instalments?*" To which Siddique Phalke answers, "I will gladly give 40,00000 (Forty Lakhs) if asked. What then of thousands? Only let me be at His feet." Siddique Phalke was affluent but he was willing to part with his money. The deeper meaning could be given as follows:

The 4 instalments could mean Manas (mind), Buddhi (intelligence), Aham (pride), and Chitta (consciousness).

Through Antharkarnya Chatustaya, the zeros could represent the three bodies – Bhautik or physical, Shukshma or subtle, Kaaran or casual (This is the first zero).

The second zero could be Triputi that is Jnana (knowledge), jneya (experience of knowledge) and jnathru (the person who experiences it).

The 3rd zero could be the panch indriyas that consists of 5 kamindryas, vichar, touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing. And five jnanindriyas that are shabda (ears), sparsha (skin), rupa (eyes), rasa (tongue) and gandha (smell).

The 4th zero implies the six Arishadvargas are kama, krodha, madha, matsaraya, moha, lobha. The Haji replies that he will give 40, 00,000 (forty lakhs) thus implies there are two more zeros.

Therefore, the 5th zero could imply that he is willing to give five 'Pranas' that are prana, apana, udana, vyana and samana. The 6th zero could mean the five koshas. That are annamaya kosha, pranamaya kosha, monomaya kosha, viganamaya kosha and annandmaya kosha. Here the Haji seems

prepared to surrender in toto that is Smapurna Sharanagathi.

Baba then gets angry and throws the vessels when He hears that the Haji is ready to give 40,00,000. Baba knows that the sishya is ready for total surrender. The guru wants the sishya to be purified without having a tinge of Prarabdha so, He burns it by showing anger.

Then He takes 55 Rs. from His pocket, and counting them one by one He places them in Phalke's hands. Money is Shree. The 5+5 symbolically could be the dress code of the sanyasi – 1) Sirvesh or Kaupin signifies total surrender, 2) Pitambar signifies sacrifice, 3) Danda that is Deha Danda or discipline, 4) Kamandalu stands for compassion and 5) Khadau.

Then He bought a basket of mangoes and presented it to him and he was accepted in Baba's darbar. Mangoes represent auspiciousness.

The 3rd question that Baba asks is – *“What part of the sacrificial goat would He like to eat? Does he want to eat the meat covered bones or is his heart sat on sex organ?”* Baba wants to make sure that he has no Ashwath of any kind left. Be it for delectable food or sensual appetite. Siddique Phalke's answer is incredible. He states that if Baba wishes to give him

anything he would cherish a crumb from the Kolambah.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How come the fire and rain subsided on His command?
- How could He have known about the innermost thoughts of Dr. Pandit as to what he was thinking about while drawing a “tripund” on Baba’s forehead?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 12



Baba holding Satka: Painting

In Sai Charters and Sayings, it is mentioned that the doctor mentioned in this chapter was from South Africa and Baba appeared to him as the beautiful dark Rama.

I would request readers (whenever they plan to go to Shirdi) to think that it is Baba who is calling you instead of thinking that you have decided to go there; similarly, before returning, do ask for Baba's permission.

Another example of how Baba used to forewarn devotees about the upcoming difficulties and help them tide over those:

In Sai Superman, Chandrabai Borkar states the following:

Baba's kindness to me was very great (even as she referred to instances, she was overcome repeatedly with emotions, shed tears and had frequent breaks in her narration, being unable to continue it due to her feelings). My husband Mr. Borkar never went and saw Baba, but even to him, Baba showed great kindness. In or about 1909 my husband, who was an engineer, was engaged for the construction or repair of a bridge at Pandharpur. His residence was, there-

fore, at Pandharpur. When he was there, I had gone to Baba at Shirdi and was serving Him. One day Baba told me, '*you had better go to Pandharpur and I will go with you*' and added that there was no difficulty for Him to travel and that I should start expeditiously. So, I started. I did not know what had happened there. When I reached that place, I found that my husband was not there, that he had resigned his work there and gone away to Bombay. That information I got there for the first time and I was in great straits and sorrow. I had just a few rupees with me and had taken two companions with me. I had just money enough to take us back up to Kurdwadi. We went there. I had got thoroughly moody and was brooding over the situation. Suddenly, a Fakir appeared before me, and asked me what I was brooding over. I evaded replying to Him. He told me that my husband was at Dhond and that I should go at once with my two companions to Dhond. But, where was the railway fare to come from, I enquired. Then, He immediately delivered 3 tickets for Dhond and went away. I took the tickets and with my companions boarded the train for Dhond. Meanwhile, my husband was at Dhond drinking tea and sinking into half dozed condition or a reverie. A Fakir appeared before Him and said, "How is it you

are neglecting My Mother? She is coming down by the train in carriage no. such and such and gave him the number of my carriage."

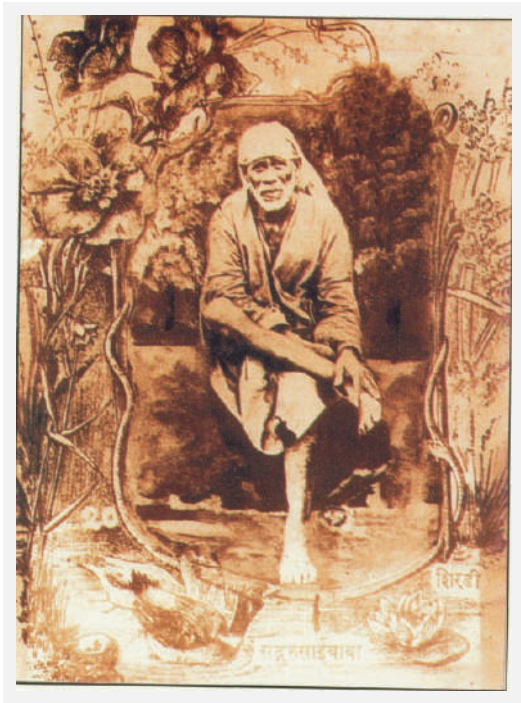
Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How come He knew about the trouble at Mahajani's office, the magistrate's falling ill at Niphad, dilemma of Mrs. Nimonkar, and Moolay Shashtri's Guru?
- How could the Doctor see Sri Ram and Moolay Shashtri his Guru in Baba's place, despite their prejudices about Baba?
- How could Baba have known about Doctor's resolve of not going for Baba's darshan until He called him?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 13



Baba's photo in Pitale's Home: Original photo

A n interesting conversation between Baba and a Bandra lady, mentioned in Sai's Characters and Saying is reproduced as below:

1. Bandra lady came and sat before Baba with chronic (7 years) headache.

Baba (touching and gently stroking her head): *Your head is aching. Is it not?*

BL: It was. Now it has ceased (The chronic headache left her at once and forever).

Baba: *You have been feeding me so well these years.*

BL: I am seeing you only now.

Baba: *But I have been seeing you ever since your infancy.*

BL was greatly puzzled.

Baba: *Who do you worship in your house?*

BL: Ganapathy

Baba: *In your mother's house?*

BL: Ganapathy. I have given all flowers fruits and eatables to Ganapathy.

Baba: *All that has come to me. So, since your girlhood I have been seeing you.*

. . .

You have all read about effect of Baba's words, now read about how Baba gave life to a dead person (Source: 101 Stories on Sai Baba):

The greatest of all great supernatural powers Baba had, was the one of restoring to life a dead person. He exercised this power in case of the late Mrs. Malanbai, the late D. R. Joshi Devgaonkar's daughter and a close relative of V.S. Ratanjanker. She suffered from T.B. but all medicines having failed, she insisted on her being taken to Shirdi. When brought to Shirdi Baba asked her to lie down on a blanket and take nothing but water. She carefully followed these instructions, but after a week or so she died one early morning. Baba was then in the Chawdi and for the first time in Shirdi history, Baba did not leave Chawdi though it was past 8 A.M. The daughter's parents, with heavy hearts were preparing for the funeral when Malanbai appeared to breathe, opened her eyes and looked round about, as if much frightened. Then she said, "A black person had been carrying me away; very much frightened, I cried out to Baba for help; Baba took His staff and gave him good cudgelling, snatched me away from his hand and carried me to Chawdi." Without seeing Chawdi, she gave a correct description of the Chawdi. Just at this time Baba left His Chawdi bed

bawling out, striking His staff against the ground and came shouting to Dixit's wada, where the girl had put up. Seeing Malanbai restored to life there was joy all round.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

How come He cured the deadly TB that Bhima Ji Patil was suffering from in two dreams?

How strange were the remedies advised to -

Bala Shimpi - rice and curd to a black dog and how quickly too he found a black dog at Laxmi temple?

Babusaheb Buty - just Baba's kind words cured Buty Saheb, who was not even able to go to Masjid for Darshana and then concoction of dry fruits with sweet milk!

Alandi Swami - Baba was not a surgeon, yet His advice matched with Bombay Surgeon and without any further treatment Swami's ear pain got cured.

Kaka Mahajani - How could diarrhoea get cured by eating groundnuts?

Dattopant of Harda - just by touching his fore-

head, Baba relieved Dattopant of his stomach ache of 14 years - Amazing was Baba's touch.

Shama - got relieved of Piles when he took Sonmukhi Kadha on Baba's advice, but when the disease relapsed and he tried the same remedy without Baba's advice, it didn't work.

Gangadhar Pant - just by touching his belly, Baba relieved Gandgadhar Pant of his stomach ache - Amazing was Baba's touch.

Nanasaheb Chandorkar - Burfi with Ghee proved to be effective per Baba's advice instead of the modern medicines.

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 14



Baba with Tukaram Gatha: original photo

To draw attention of a devotee to a certain religious principle of truth, Baba would repeatedly demand the same sum from a devotee every time he visited Him, nothing less, nothing more. This would set the devotee thinking and lead him to ask Baba what He meant to convey. Baba would then say what actually He wanted to teach him.

Every time Raghuvir Bhasker Purandare visited Baba, He demanded only two Rupees from him. He could not understand why Baba asked for that fixed sum. One day he requested Baba to explain to him what He meant by the rupees two that He had been ever demanding from him. Baba at once replied, *"I do not want these coins, I want the first rupee of absolute FAITH and a rupee of PATIENCE."* Purandare at once said, *"Baba, I have already given these to you."* *"No, you have not done so; your faith has been wavering. henceforth stick to truth. Be always truthful. If only you act up to this principle in life, rest assured I shall ever be with you."*

Another instance of Bhiksha covered in Sai Charters and Sayings is mentioned below:

1. (I am Krishna) Saibaba (seated in Dwaraka Mayi) to Uddhavesa Bua:

“Give me Rs. 11 dakshina.”

U.B: I have given my ten Indriyas and mind.

S.B: *No. Who are you to give them? They are mine already. Read Pothi, i.e. do parayana.*

U.B: Of which Purana?

S.B: *Of that in which I have spoken to you, and in which I still speak to you?*

U.B: Is it Gita or Jnaneshwari?

SB: *Go and fetch what Bapu Saheb Jog is reading; Uddhavesa brought XI skanda of Srimad Bhagavatha from Jog.*

SB: (slipped his finger into the book suddenly and said) *Read this* [It opened at Krishna Uddhava samvada] *daily read this, and sit at My feet and meditate on it.*

[N.B: That meditation is the gift of 11 Rs. eleventh (Skanda) to Baba, Sai Krishna, seated in the heart.]

A detailed version to how Baba described Shadripus (Sai Charters & Sayings) is covered below:

1. This was in response to a question by N G Chandorkar: Joys and sorrows of samsara disturb one so much. Should we not renounce samsara therefore?

Answer by Baba: Joy and sorrow are mere delusion. Mere appearance of worldly joy is not true happiness. The worldly man is forcibly drawn to it, as he believes it to be true happiness. According to the Prarabdha of each, one gets delicacies (Panchamrita), one stale crumbs, and one mere bran-gruel. The latter fancy them unhappy at that, and the former fancies he lacks nothing. But the result of eating any of these is merely the satisfaction of hunger. Similarly, some cover themselves with laced shawls, others with barks. Both serve only one purpose, covering the body. This joy and sorrow are due to opinion, which is mere illusion and is ruinous. Whenever any idea of joy or sorrow arises in your mind, resist it. Do not give room to it. It is pure delusion.

The 'Shadripus' i.e., Lust, Anger, Covetousness, Delusion, Pride and Jealousy are all delusive. They make the unreal appear as real. If a rich man wears a gold ornament, the poor man gets jealous, and thinks he must have one. This is Lobha. All are like this. So, one must conquer the six enemies; if they are conquered, waves of passion will not arise, else they will enslave you. If they are subor-

minated and reason made the commandant, then the delusive pressures and pains will no longer hold sway over you.

Baba continued the above discussion as per the following:

1. *I will tell you how to conduct yourself in samsara. The wise should be cheerful and contented with their lot in life, as it is the result of Deha Prarabdha. Do not kick against the pricks.*

If wealthy, be humble. Plants bend, when they have fruits. But humility is not towards all. Severity is needed in dealing with the wicked. But towards saints, be humble. Respect them. Spend money in Dana (charity) and Dharma (piety) – but be not extravagant. The world perishes no doubt. But do not get obsessed by the importance of wealth. Do not be entangled in it, or be misery. Be liberal and munificent – but not lavish or extravagant.

Get on cheerfully with your worldly round of activities, but do not forget God. Remember God. “This samsara is not mine but God’s.” Think like this all the time you are awake. Have consideration for the poor and wretched. Do not persecute and tease them. Inquire always, “Who am I?”

. . .

Another interesting meaning of Dakshina:

1. Baba to B.V.Dev: *Bhau, give me dakshina.*

B.V. Dev gave one guinea.

Baba: Give me more. Baba, after getting four said - Though four were given by you, Baba has got only one.

Dev: Baba, I have given four.

Baba: Yes, but I have only one. You will know.

The obvious interpretation is, though the devotee surrenders his fourfold Antahkarana (of Manas, Buddhi, Ahankara, Chitta) Baba receives only the Jiva and all multiplicity, when it reaches God (Baba), it becomes one. So, the mind must surrender multiplicity into the God (Guru) to attain unity.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

How could He have known exactly about the expenses in reception for Moulasaheb, even Rutton

Ji, who had spent the amount, did not notice that at all, so it is not even a case of Baba having read his mind?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 15



*Baba going to Lendi
Garden: Painting*

Das Ganu mentioned that he was not into kirtans etc until he met Baba; Sai Charters & Sayings gives the background on how it happened:

Baba to Das Ganu (then a constable): *Ganu, you had better resign from your police service?*

Das Ganu: I will do so after becoming a sub-inspector (Fouzdar) and retaining the place for one year.

Baba: *But you are not going to get it.*

Ganu went without permission of his superiors

to Nizam's states and when he was about to cross the river Godavari, to get back to his station, he found a number of envious constables on the opposite shore watching his return and reported against him. Then he took up a palmful of Godavari water in hand and swore that if he escaped punishment at this time, he would give up his service. He turned back to the native state and found a robber gang dividing their booty. Arresting them and seizing the property he returned to his station and pleading the seizure as the excuse for leaving the station, not only escaped punishment but also got good grounds for promotion. But he did not resign. As he rode past Shirdi, hoping to avoid Baba, Baba was on the road.

Baba: *Ganu, who is it that took the vow with a palmful of Godavari water in hand?*

Das Ganu: What harm is there? I am really going to resign after all.

Baba: *Wai. You will not listen to Me while things are thus (smooth-running).* Sometime later he got into trouble. A fine which was collected while he was in charge of the station and paid at the station was not sent up to Government, and his conviction and imprisonment seemed to be imminent. He vowed again he would leave the service if he escaped. He

promised to resign at the inquiry. He escaped and left service.

Lizard Episode

It is clear that Baba Himself knew past, present and future, but interesting thing to note here is that Lizard also seemed to know what was going to happen (i.e. her sister was coming from Aurangabad) – are they so sensitive? perhaps, that's the reason why some of the pets are relied upon for advance warning of the forthcoming danger.

Cholkar's Episode

One thing that can be learnt from this episode is that if you want something from Baba, surrender to Him completely (it means to have pure Bhakti Bhav), make a promise for not consuming/ doing something what you love, until your desire is fulfilled and stick to your promise. Cholkar's resolution of not taking any sugar reflects his and Baba eventually showed that He was aware of it and blessed him.

Sai Nava Guruvar Vrat seems to be based on this principle.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- How could He have known about Cholkar's silent vow of not taking sugar until Baba's Darshana, something that only Cholkar was aware of?
- How could He have known about someone coming to Dwarkamayee from Aurangabad and more importantly, a Lizard would also be coming along and also that her sister is happy because of it. This is only possible when Baba resides in everyone's heart, the God Himself, who, thus knows the inner most secrets of everyone!

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTERS 16 & 17



ब्रह्मचर्य के विधान को मूल में ले कर

Baba in Dwarkamayee: Painting

So, how does one control a horse-driven chariot? Of course! by controlling the horses (senses) through reins (mind) held by the Charioteer (intellect), isn't it? So, let your intellect direct your mind to control your senses to drive yourself (Atma) towards your destination (i.e. Self-realization). Beautiful message! isn't it?

Interesting thing in this chapter for me was the fact that Baba knew beforehand what this rich fellow was like, i.e. not capable of understanding the Brahma Gyan to say the least and therefore, He could have just told him to get lost. But Baba did not do that and chose to web a different chain of events for the benefit of this undeserving fellow and others present. First, Baba made him realize what his shortcomings were and only then gave him the Brahma Gyan as per His promise.

Thus, Baba yet again demonstrated that He looks after even the most undeserving ones.

Another similar story about who deserves to receive Brahma Gyan from *Life of Sai Baba - Vol. IV* by Pujya H.H. Narsimha Swamiji is reproduced as follows:

1. A visitor: Baba, what is God like?

Baba: (Not addressing the visitor, but addressing a devotee (X) go to Bagchand Marwadi and tell him Baba wants Rs.100/- and bring the money.

X (returning in a minute): The Marwadi says he has no money and sends his namaskars.

Baba: Go to the next money-lender and ask him for a loan of Rs.100/- for me.

X (returning in a minute): He says he has not got the money. Baba: Fetch Nana Sahab Chandorkar (and when Nana came).

Baba: Nana, I want Rs.100/-.

Then Nana wrote a chit to Bagchand Marwadi for a loan of Rs.100. The money was at once sent by the Marwadi.

Baba: All is like this in the world.

Visitor later asked Das Ganu Maharaj: why did not Baba answer my question?

D.G: He has.

Visitor: How?

D G: When others asked for money, it was not forthcoming. Nana Saheb asked for it and got it at once. Similarly, the man who merely wants to know Brahman does not get it. It is he who is qualified to

know it that gets it. Baba's answer is, "*Deserve, before you desire (Brahma).*"

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could He have known about exactly how many rupees the gentleman had in his pocket?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTERS 18 & 19



Sai Baba: Original photo by C.R.K. Gadre

People often confuse their strong devotion to Baba with complete surrender to Baba and when things don't turn out as per their expectations, they get disillusioned and disheartened - a reason why Hemadpant got disappointed seeing Mr Sathe getting Baba's blessings in only one Parayan of Guru Charitra. But Baba alone is able to gauge devotion level of devotees and blesses them with the best. He blessed Hemadpant in His unique way, i.e. first by creating a doubt and then by firming up Hemadpant's faith by leading him to the solution.

Hemadpant's not completing Nath Bhagwat in morning, Sri Sathe's arrival in Dwarkamai and subsequent events, cannot all be a coincidence, rather they were all programmed by our Sai Baba to benefit all of them in the most effective manner possible.

Another thing to observe from Hemadpant and Shama episode is that Baba did not care a bit for money - Shama being closest to Him knew that and therefore, offered 15 Namaskaras in place of money, which were readily accepted by Baba.

Is it really a co-incident that Shama remembered the story of Khashaba Deshmukh's mother getting an updesha from Baba? No! it was all Baba's inspiration only.

Baba always ensured that His devotees get the real meaning of what He said and which was why He asked Hemadpant to explain as to what he understood from the story.

It's so blissful to observe that if one follows closely whatever Baba used to say or do (although it's said He never gave Updesh per se, unlike many God-men these days), one can easily realize that everything was a practical example of whatever has been conveyed in our scriptures.

There are several recorded instances (Sai Charters & Sayings) of Baba reading devotees mind (like Hemadpant's in this chapter), which will be covered below:

- G.S. Khaparde's son dreamt that Baba came to his house and had His meal. Next day he went to Baba, to verify if really Baba came to his house. Baba anticipated his question.

Baba: Last night you fed me, but gave no Dakshina. Now give me Dakshina.

- Jayakar sat by Baba one day at the mosque and Satyanarayana pothi (puran) was being read at the mandap, which was three feet lower in level than the floor of the mosque. Jayakar's mind was much upset in trying to solve the following conflicting merits and demerits of his sitting near Baba at the mosque:

(1) It is always good and meritorious to be near Baba.

(2) But listening to Satyanarayana Pothi was a special attraction to him, and

(3) Remaining on a higher level when Satyanarayana Pothi was read at a lower level would not be proper.

When his mind was torn and undecided about these issues, Baba read his mind and said: "*Go and attend Pothi.*" This settled his course.

Baba gave special importance to donating food to the hungry, poor & disabled beings and kept reminding His devotees of this on various occasions, one such recorded conversation (in Sai

Charters & Sayings) between Baba and Nana Chandorkar is presented below:

Baba: Nana, if anyone comes and begs for anything, give him as much as you can, and if that person does not get satisfied and asks for more, answer him sauely in the negative. Do not pour your wrath or display all your official authority against that person.

NGC: Good.

But one day at Kalyan Mrs. NGC was greatly provoked by the importunity of a beggar woman who refused to budge unless she was given as charity the whole stock of 'Bhajani' (fried and spiced grains) and Mrs. NGC appealed to her husband; NGC came down and called out to the peon to neck out the beggar unless she quietly accepted the quantity given and left the house. Sometime later NGC visited Shirdi, but Baba was glum and would not talk to him.

NGC: Baba, why do you not talk to me?

Baba: How can I talk to one who does not care for my advice or lesson?

NGC: What lesson have I forgotten? I remember all your lessons.

Baba: That day, when the beggar woman was importuning you for 'Bhajani', how did you happen to call your peon to expel her and to show all your official authority?

What would have happened if she remained sitting at your door, asking for more, while you refused it? What could she do? After a while she would have gone away. Instead of gently replying her, why get angry and call the peon to drive her away?

Since I read this pig analogy, I find it very difficult to speak ill about anyone - a very effective yet so simple solution indeed in my opinion.

The episode about the liquor addict mentioned in this chapter is also covered in 101 Stories on Sai as below:

“Shri D.V. Sambare used to drink liquor very often. On 1-2-1917, Baba appeared in his dream and sat on his chest and asked him, “*what he would do then.*” Sambare got scared and promised Baba that he would not touch the liquor thereafter. After his promise Baba disappeared. From that time, Sambare gave up drinking liquor. After 15 days, there was a party in his office, arranged with drinking liquor. Sambare requested his Manager that he would not touch the liquor as Doctor advised him not to drink liquor, but his Manager compelled him to take it. It was also served in glass with other items. All of a sudden light went off. In darkness, the person in the next chair drank his liquor and kept the empty glass

as it is. The Manager also was pleased and Sambare thanked Baba in handling the situation tactfully.”

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could He immediately read Hemadpant's mind when he felt dejected about him not getting any benefit for his 7 years seva to Baba while Mr. Sathe getting Baba's blessings in only 7 days!
- How could He have known about what happened in Chandorkar's home at Kalyan?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 20



*Sai Baba Painting: Source
- Baba's Rinanubandh by
Vinny Chitluri*

It is so rightly pointed out by Hemadpant Ji that Baba solved Das Ganu's problem in the most appropriate manner through Namya rather than preaching the interpretation Himself. An inherent lesson Baba demonstrated here is that those who remain content about their life, believing it

as God's gift, ultimately get rewarded.

It is interesting to note that Namya's sister clearly was following what has been instructed in Eshop-nishad; she was happy in all circumstances –

although she must have wanted a saree for some time, but she was not cribbing as some people do until they get what they desire. In fact, she was imagining all the finer details of it as if it was right up there in front of her; in a way she had faith in God, who would provide her such a thing one day and therefore, she did not kill her imagination by worrying about how it would happen etc? Whatever she could have done to keep her spirits high, she did – i.e. enjoyed her work, sang songs about such a thing (so faith and patience), this pleased God (Baba) and He designed this whole episode, benefiting not only Das Ganu, but her also. All logics lead to only one conclusion that Baba is Satchit Anand, Omniscient - The God Himself.

A person gets only worried when he thinks about the negative results of his efforts; if it is in your destiny, no one can keep it away from you – and if it is not, then you cannot have it regardless of whatever you do. This certainly does not mean that one should not make any efforts. Keep working for it and if at all you can't help thinking about results, then think about the success; keep thinking, focusing and doing things that would make it a success (which is only what you have in control, before the results). On the contrary, a negative thinking about

results will bring your morale down and stop you from doing things required for success.

In the end, it is said that the person who sees, feels everything/ everyone to be like themselves, will not be jealous or bothered. So true it is, why because while we all appear to be different from each other externally, intrinsically, we all are part of the same element, which is, Brahma and even the most jealous person would not be jealous with himself, isn't it?

See what Baba has said to Nana Chandorkar about Jealousy (Sai Charters & Sayings):

Baba to NGC: *Among the six Viharas, Jealousy is the easiest to conquer.*

In this vihara, there is no question of (actual) gain or loss, to us. Jealousy (Matsara) is the inability to endure another's profit and prosperity. If another gets fortune or power, we cannot put up with it, we scandalise him? When he meets with loss, we rejoice. But is it good? When that man attains prosperity, what loss have we really suffered? But people do not consider this point of view. If he attains good, let us rejoice (with him) (or let us consider ourselves also as lucky or benefited) or let us attain or strive to attain equal good. That should be our desire and

determination. What has he taken away of ours? Nothing! he received the prosperity that is the result of his Karma.

Why we should then feel aggrieved at it? So, Nana, conquer jealousy first.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

Baba could have easily explained the Eshop-nishad to Das Ganu Himself, but He programmed the solution in the most beautiful way - first of all, people who consider Baba just a Saint need to think how Baba could have known about this maid in Kakasaheb's house, on top of it – about the whole episode, how it would play out i.e. Das Ganu would hear a song and get answer to his query.

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 21



Invisible Jai Baba: Original photo

Isn't it amazing how Kanerese Saint, Appa, was able to accurately predict that Mr. Thakur will go North and meet a great Saint (Sai Baba) as if he were viewing it all live? Later on, Baba narrated what all had happened with Mr. Thakur, i.e. crossing the Ghat on Buffalo etc. Such great Saints are rare these days and people who come in contact with them are really fortunate. More than anything, this leela proves the point that such Siddhas were/ are really present and are not some mythical figures and that such Siddhis can be attained, of course, after doing the requisite Sadhnas.

A couple of more instances on how saints work in unison are mentioned below (*Devotees experience by B.V.Narsimha Swami Ji*):

Shama said: When I was still at school (Shama used to teach in a school next to Dwarkamai), Chidambar Keshav Gadgil came to Shirdi and asked me, "It is said a great Sadhu is here. Where is he?" I replied that there was none at Shirdi and from the school I pointed to the mosque and told him, there is only this mad Fakir." Mr. Gadgil went to the

mosque. Sai Baba showered abuse on him. But the abuse was productive of faith and joy. Gadgil had worshipped or paid his respects to a Saint living at Bhima Shankar temple at Poona. That Saint had asked him to go and see the Saint at Shirdi. That was why he had come to Shirdi. Now Sai in His abuse referred to that and Gadgil felt sure that Baba was a Gnani, a great Saint. Thenceforward, he frequently visited Baba and became His staunch devotee. At the first visit of Mr. Gadgil he was a Chitnis, and with him came Vaman, a Special Munsiff, and Sitaram Patwardhan, an Educational Officer, and a Tonga Walla. I went with them up to the steps of the Mosque. Baba forbade us from climbing the steps and began His shower of abuse. Therein He said, "*I am a Muslim. Go and fall at the feet of the sadhu at Bhimashanker temple, etc.*"

In Sai Charters & Sayings, the following is recorded:

1. Narahari Londa of Nivas went with some others to Baba's mosque to take darshan. On the way, he alone was oppressed by the doubt how he, a Brahmin, could bow to Baba, a Muslim. The others bowed and

paid dakshina and were well received by Baba.

When Londa was making up his mind to go near Baba, Baba, darted a fierce glance as much as to say, "*You dare not come near. Mind, if you do.*" Again, and again, he thought of going near but with the same result. Then he went over from the mosque, to the Khandoba temple, where Baba's Brahmin devotee Upasani Maharaj was living, where also he was repulsed.

Upasani Maharaj sat with legs outstretched, but when N.L. repeatedly tried to take darshan, he shifted his leg and prevented darshan, saying, "You are a Brahmin. You cannot take darshan of Sai Baba!! What business you have with me here?"

When once Nanasaheb Chandorkar, who was in Shirdi, went to Kopergaon to have a bath in the holy Godavari on the occasion of an eclipse and paid a four annas to Pariah, Baba at that very time showed to the devotees sitting near Him four annas, stating that He had received that four annas from Nana. When Nanasaheb returned to Shirdi and those devotees inquired of him what he had spent in charity at the time of the eclipse and he corroborated Baba's statement of his having paid four annas

to a pariah, the devotees as well as Nana felt assured that, Baba though present in Shirdi, had actually gone to receive Nana's charity by His supernatural yogic powers.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

How could Baba have known about the Pandharpur pleader reviling Mr. Noolkar? Wasn't His method beautiful as in saying something that only the pleader understood, as if it was a voice from within, rather than ridiculing him in front of others, this way pleader received the lesson in correct perspective and must have mended his ways - he realized his mistake and was not ashamed in admitting the same in front of others later.

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 22



Baba's photo in Hemadpant's house

***A** n instance where Baba restored the eyesight of a devotee (recorded in 101 stories of Sai Baba) is reproduced here:*

The grandfather of Shri Vittal Rao Yashwant Deshpande pressed his son to send him to Baba for His blessings. So, Vittal Rao arranged to send him to Shirdi with his son. Led by the grandson, the grand father went to Dwarakamayee, prostrated himself before Baba and sorrowfully prayed to Baba to return the eyesight. Baba said, "you will be able to see." So soon as Baba uttered these words, the grandfather had his eyesight restored to him. He was able to see everything. Blindness left him entirely. Never was anybody's prayer for relief were granted so soon by Baba. All present wondered at it.

Baba not only forewarned His devotees about the upcoming dangers, but helped so many of them face the danger without fear; few such recorded instances are mentioned below:

1.

Baba had run up to the rescue of one of his devotee's three steamers during the Russo-Japanese War. The devotee Shree Jehangir-

ji Framji Daruwala served as a captain. When he found that his steamers save three were all sunk by the enemy and that the rest of the steamers including his own would soon meet the same fate, he took out Baba's photo from his pocket and with tears in his eyes prayed to Baba to save him and his three steamers. Baba at once appeared on the scene and towed all the sinking steamers to the bank. Just at the time Daruwala offered up his prayers, Baba bawled out, "*Ha,*" and then seated as He was in His usual place in the Dwarkamai, He had His Kafni and head cloth completely drenched, dripping with water for more than half an hour with the result that the Dwarkamai was transformed into a pool of water. The devotees could not understand what all that was; they simply removed water from Dwarkamai and dried Baba's clothes. On the third day after this Baba received a telegram from Jehangirji narrating how Baba had saved him and offering Him a thousand thanks for His marvellous rescue of himself and the three steamers with passengers. Immediately on his return to India he came and paid his respects to Baba. He has retired now from his service, but in appreciation of his services, Government has provided him with some Job. He is taking keen interest in Baba's affairs even today. Lately, he

donated about two thousand two hundred rupees in two instalments and got the 'Mandap' of Dwarkamai repaired to his satisfaction.

2.

Another time when Nanasaheb went on a pilgrimage to Harishchandra mountain and had gone only half-way, his throat was parched by thirst, he felt exhausted and said to his companions, "I can't walk a step further without water; had my Sai Baba been here, He would have given me water," (just at that time Baba in Shirdi said to the devotees near Him, "*Nana is dying of thirst, but would I see him dying that way?*"). His companions tried to persuade Nana to stand up and try moving forward as his Sai Baba was not there to help. Just at the time a Bhil with a bundle of fuel on his head appeared on the scene and on inquiry he informed Nanasaheb that just under the stone Nana was sitting on, there was a stream of pure water; they all quenched their thirst and then reached the mountain top and completed the pilgrimage. Several days thereafter when Nanasaheb went to Shirdi, he was asked by some devotees whether he had to pass through some critical situation some time back, for Baba had so declared here; referring to his diary, he found that Baba had referred to the crisis he had to face on the

Harishchandra mountain and Baba had saved him there by taking up the form of Bhil, carrying a pile of fagots on His head.

In Sai Charters & Sayings, the following conversation between Baba and Kakasaheb Dixit on serpent killing is recorded:

1. H.S.D.: The serpent kills people; so, when one sees a serpent, should he not kill it?

Baba: No. we should never kill it, because it will never kill us unless it is ordered by God to kill us. If God has so ordered, we cannot avoid it.

Interesting thought comes to mind here is that the same Hemadpant who advocated killing of a serpent that came in Dixit Wada, however, did not kill the scorpion. That suggests the serpent episode must have happened before and when Baba instructed them not to kill these creatures, Hemadpant let go of the scorpion during Ramayan Path.

Also, when a snake was found in Chawdi during Amir Shakkar's stay with Baba - Baba let others kill the snake, which probably was done because the snake was going to bite Amir and as Baba said that

sometimes killing can't be avoided, when ordered by God. So, in that situation, it was perhaps God's will, relieving the snake from its animal incarnation.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

1. How could He forewarn Mirikar of the Snake?
2. How could He have known in advance about what was going to happen with Booty and therefore told him not to worry about threat to his life as predicted by Nanasaheb Dengle?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 23



Sai Baba's Charan: Original photo

Getting a cart-full of wood and a goat for sacrifice was all designed by Baba only to show the people around that these are mere superstitions and nothing more. He could have simply ordered people not to follow these instructions from Panchayat, but Baba's ways were different - practical, and always with deep impact on all.

Several other instances are recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings, when Baba spoke against various such ordinances, a couple of them are mentioned below:

Eating Onion:

1. The orthodox Das Ganu Maharaj disliked onions.

Baba (to Das ganu): *Prepare Pitla, sauce of onions. Give me a part and eat the rest of it.*

Das Ganu: Yes.

Next day prepared the onion dish and touched the onion with the tip of a finger and drew the finger near the nether lip as a token of tasting and then washed his fingers and face; then he went to Baba.

Baba: *Have you eaten onions?*

DG: Yes.

Baba: *He pretends he eats, but only touches it with his finger and brings the finger near lip.*

Baba actually showed what DG did.

Baba: *Ganu, you must really eat onion and not pretend.*

DG: Yes. DG was eating onion at Shirdi (as long as Baba was alive) on ordinary days, i.e. except on Ekadasi Day.

1. Dada Kelkar, an overzealous Brahmin, abhorred onion and in his over zeal objected to visitors and Sathe Wada using onion. He fell foul on S.B. Nachne's mother-in-law for using it. Then his grand-child had sore eyes.

DK: Baba, the child has sore eyes. What should I do?

Baba: *Use onion for fomenting the eyes.*

DK: Where can I go for onion?

Baba: Take it from this mother (pointing to S.B. Nachne's mother-in-law).

S.B. Nachne's Mother-in-law: Baba DK abused

me for using onion. So, I would not like to give him anything. If you order it, I will give.

Baba: *Give*. Then the lady gave the onion and Baba, through her, humiliated DK for his intolerant attitude.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

1. How could He read Yogi's mind doubting whether Baba would be able to solve his problem or not?
2. How by just His words Shama was rescued from poisonous snake bite?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 24



Shirdi Samadhi Mandir

Baba's ways of giving instructions/ upadesh were very practical and effective and it is clear from the Chana-Leela. It was full of humour, people enjoyed it and got involved so much like a typical fun making episode of someone in a group and then in the end came the final punch of always remembering Baba (God) prior to taking food (or any activity that we perceive through our senses). It is such a beautiful message and delivered in the most effective manner than compared to plain instructions about what we should do (rather a demonstration of how we should do it).

Just imagine if it had been a simple utterance viz. that we should always remember God while starting on our meals, then how many of us would actually act on it? So, here Baba added His touch to make it more effective. Hemadpant got agitated while others found it entertaining and therefore, listened to the conversation attentively.

Hemadpant narrates Sudama's story and concludes that we should offer food or any sense object to God first. Sudama had Shri Krishna with him, but he was unaware of Krishna being the omniscient - regardless of it he should have offered it to Krishna as God dwells in everyone - so, while taking

our food if someone hungry is present around us, we should first offer to them, if possible or atleast share the food with them.

A similar incident is recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings when Baba taught a lesson to Kusa Bhav for not eating onion on Ekadasi day:

1. On an Ekadasi day Kusa Bhav (i.e. Krishnaji Kasinath Joshi of Mirzgaon) sat by Baba's side.

Baba: *What do you eat today?*

Kusa: Nothing. Today is Ekadasi.

Baba: *What does "Ekadasi" mean?*

Kusa: A day for "Upavasa."

Baba: *What does Upavasa mean?*

Kusa: It is just like "Rojas."

Baba: *What is Rojas?*

Kusa: We fast, i.e. do not eat anything except Kanda Moola. (Meaning sweet potatoes etc)

Baba: *Oh, Kaanda (i.e. onion) you eat. Well, here you have onion. Eat it.*

Kusa: (finding baba forcing on him unorthodox food) Baba if you eat it, I will eat.

Baba ate some and Kusa Bhav ate some, and then visitors arrived. Baba wished to have some fun.

Baba: *Look at this Bamniya (corrupt and contemptuous form of the word Brahmin). He eats onion on Ekadasi.*

Kusa: Baba ate it then I ate it.

Baba: *No. I ate Kanda, i.e., sweet potatoes. See, Baba then vomited out sweet potatoes.*

Kusa Bhav seeing the miracle voraciously swallowed the potato as prasad.

Baba beat him and said: *"Rogue, why do you eat the vomit?"*

But Kusa Bhav did not mind the blows. Baba's heart melted.

Baba: *(placing a palm on Kusa's head) I bless you. Think of Me and hold forth your palms. You will have my prasad.*

Kusa Bhav now holds up his empty palms and WARM UDHI (BABA'S PRASAD) falls from it, and this is given as BABA'S PRASADA UDHI by Kusa Bhav.

In the end, a great lesson Baba gave, is that a devotee's prayer and Sewa to God is a personal matter between the God and devotee - we should not tell anyone what is good and what is bad or how it should be done - the God Himself is the sole

authority to judge that. Presently, there is so much discrimination on the basis of religion widespread everywhere; it should be no business of anyone to comment on anyone else's way of offering prayers.

Through Mausibai episode (when Baba got angry) Baba demonstrated that all we need is Bhakti Bhav and its expression could be different in numerous ways.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

How could the chanas have landed on Hemadpant's arm when he had not gone to the market - of course! Baba got them there, who else?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 25



Shirdi Samadhi Mandir

I imagine, you were among the people serving at Baba's feet, a question flashes across your mind and immediately, Baba answers

that. To others He would come across as a mad man, who keeps blabbering about unconnected things. But for you, who (Damu Anna in this chapter) actually got an answer to their query Baba would come across as Omniscient, giving you eternal joy through this Leela.

This episode of Damu Anna is covered in more detail in Sai Charters & Saying and is reproduced below:

1. Damodar S. Rasane married once, had no issue, so, he married again hoping to get an issue. But still the second marriage also was not fruitful.

In his horoscope there was a Papi in the fifth place from lagna. The stars evidently were against him. But he had great faith in Baba. When he went to Shirdi, Baba was waiting for him and gave him four mango fruits.

Baba: Damia, take these fruits now. Eat and die.

Damia was shocked; failing to see that begetting progeny and continuing in Samsara was Spiritual death (This is a different explanation from that given in Satcharitra).

Baba: *Do not eat the fruits yourself. Give them to your wife.*

Damia: Which wife?

Baba: *Junior wife. Let her eat the fruits. She will have two sons first, the first to be named Daulat Shah, and the second to be named Thana Shah.*

Later Baba told him that he would have eight children in all. This proved to be exactly the case, Damia had two sons first. He took his first son to Baba and said, "What shall I name this child?"

Baba: *Have you forgotten what I told you? You have written it at page 3 of your notebook - Did I not say that he should be named 'Daulat Shah' (How can anyone think of Baba being just an ordinary human, I wonder)?*

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could he have known about the content of Damu Anna's letter even before Shama read the letter?
- How could he read Damu Anna's mind?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 26



Source: Vinny Chitluri

When I read about Baba instructing Pant about adhering to his Pole only, I got reminded of the following story I read on internet about how people started offering prayers to Baba first time:

Once Noolkar came to Baba for Darshan and worship, Baba asked him to worship a pillar pointing to it in Dwarakamayee. Noolkar accepted and enquired Madhav Rao about this. Madhav Rao asked Baba, "Deva why did You ask Noolkar to worship the pillar when You are here in the body?" Baba told Madhav Rao, Nanasahab Chandorkar and Noolkar to worship the pillar only without giving any straight answer. Madhavarao perused the panchangam and found that day was the Guru Poornima day. All requested Baba that as the day was the Guru Poornima day and therefore, we all have to worship You as our Guru. Baba yielded to their request. From that day onwards, and it is on account of this Noolkar, devotees began to worship Baba on Guru Poornima day. I believe all this was not a mere co-incidence, but this was how Baba planned it to happen.

The story about Sri Ambadekar is also very instructive - it emphasises the fact that Baba helps

His devotees at the right time. Just imagine someone visiting Baba for continuously 7 years and still suffering. Normally, we hope to have Baba's grace the moment we get in His care, but apparently it was not so until Ambadekar finished suffering for his bad karmas for 7 years. Baba nevertheless was helping him in the background - I can imagine Baba blessing Ambadekar in some way - it could be that while interacting with others or watching people's lives being transformed by Baba's blessings, Ambadekar learned to remain patient and so he could keep coming back to Baba and only after 7 years, possibly when his bad karmas ended, Baba took away his pain through Sagun Meru Naik. Ambadekar's days changed for the better, he started studying astrology and improved his lot by practicing it. So, Baba helps His devotees at the right time. It might take a little long in some cases, but that would be only because of devotees' past karmas.

Baba starts helping His devotees from the time He draws them to Him. He takes us in under His care, strengthens our faith and inspires us to keep going until our time comes. One should never lose Faith and Patience - the Two Paise that Baba wants from His devotees.

. . .

Another wonderful account of how Baba helped the brother of Shri Vishnu Pitale (brother of Shri Harishchandra Pitale) mentioned by Manisha Bisht ji in her blog, is reproduced below for devotees' benefit:

When Harishchandra Pitale was telling about his trip to Shirdi, all family members had gathered to hear. His brother Vishnu P. Balwant was also there and a keen desire to visit Shirdi arose in him. He was working as Thalati in Ville Parle. In 1917 he decided to go to Shirdi. He went to fruit market and roamed everywhere to get unripe mangoes. Finally, he could get unripe and unblemished mangoes. He made all preparation to go to Shirdi. Thinking in his mind that, "If I carry ripe mangoes, they will spoil by the time I reach Shirdi, but these unripe mangoes will ripen there."

While he reached Kopergaon, in Shirdi, Baba was in Dwarkamayi with His devotee talking. All of a sudden Dwarkamayi was filled with Aroma of sweet mangoes. The aroma was so strong that devotees wondered where the mangoes were kept. Baba did not say anything so they all waited. By that time Vishnu reached Shirdi. He kept mangoes and his belongings and left for Duli darshan.

Seeing him Baba welcomed him saying, "*what have you brought for me? Where are the mangoes?*"

Vishnu Pant was surprised and said, “Baba the mangoes are in the room as they are unripe,” to which Baba replied, “*Go and fetch them, can't you smell them?*”

He rushed to his room bought the mangoes and placed the basket before Baba, when it was opened to his surprise all the mangoes were ripened ready to eat. Pant stayed at Shirdi for three days. While leaving he made sure he had Rs.15/- for expenses for his return journey.

While he was leaving he bought a photo of Baba, hoping that he would touch and return him. So, he carried the photo to Dwarkamayi and waited for his turn. Baba beckoned him saying, “*Bhau give Me Rs 15/- (the amount he wished to keep for his expenses) as dakshina.*” He immediately took out all the money and gave it to Baba. Baba asked him for the photo, took it and held it close to His Heart and returned it, giving him permission to leave, his joy knew no bound on receiving the photo.

All was good but he was perplexed as to how he shall reach kopergaon as he had no money? So, he decided to walk. When he was half a mile, a tonga came by. The tongawala asked him, “What are you doing walking in the heat of the day? You do not look like a villager?” Vishnu Pant replied, “I am

Thalati, so I am going to the next village.” The tonga driver laughed and said, “Come and have a seat I will take you to Kopergaon.” Vishnu Pant was relieved, and he reached Kopergaon. He alighted from the tonga and collected his belongings. He looked up to thank the tonga driver, but, the driver and the tonga had disappeared.

He was in station and was trying to find someone whom he might be familiar already to borrow some money from, but he did not find any acquaintances, train pulled in and what he could do? So, he decided to travel ticket less and bear the consequences.

When the next station came, the ticket-collector looked at him and said “Namaskar, Pithale Saab.” He could not recognize him. He feared since the ticket-collector recognized him he would surely ask for his ticket and would cause a great deal of embarrassment. But no such thing happened, and he reached Bombay without any problem.

The next day a huge automobile pulled up to his doorstep. A well-dressed gentleman came to his home and enquired, “Are you Thalati, Vishnu Pant Pithale?” Vishnu Pant was bewildered and thought, “I must be in trouble now, why is he asking if I am the Thalati?” The gentleman said, “I am J.R.D. Tata, I am in the process of buying land at Sahar (the

present air-port). I have a huge staff on my pay roll but they can't transcribe the Marathi papers into English and vice-versa. I heard you are a capable Thalati and also bilingual."

Vishnu Pant was aghast at what he said and nodded his head. Then the gentleman continued, "As a Thalati you earn only Rs.35/- a month. If you agree to work for me I will give you Rs.150/- per a month." Quickly Vishnu Pant said, "I will do this transcription for you, but give me two days to think about working for you." Tata said, "Alright," and then drove off.

Vishnu pant was in turmoil now. "What if I give up my Government job with pension and benefits and this man does not keep his word? What if he dismisses me after his work is done?" he thought. He spent a restless night. Suddenly, it dawned on him that Baba had emptied his pocket of Rs.15/- and was returning it ten-folds.

Two days later Tata's Secretary came to his home with the job 'appointment letter' and the details of the job benefits etc. and asked him to sign on the dotted line. He bowed to the photograph that Baba had blessed and signed.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

How could He tell about Rs. 2 that were given to Pitale's father by Akkalkot Maharaj (Baba's previous incarnation)?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 27



In the introduction, Hemadpant is reiterating the fact that we really need to have practical experience of Vedanta as you could be a very learned person, but unless you feel emotions of attaining Antergyan, you cannot progress on the path to Salvation. Sai Baba never gave sermons, but there was so much happening around Him that if someone really understood and implemented these pearls of wisdom, he was sure to achieve Salvation in the best and quickest manner. So, contribution of everyone who recorded facts, events, and meanings of subtle messages of Baba around that time is really a great service to the mankind. These practical learnings keep all of us motivated and initiate us onto the path of Salvation.

Another Interesting thing to note here is that why Baba did not simply tell Ramadasi to give Vishnu Sahasranama to Shama; he would have happily given it to him; just imagine the scene - Shama, again would have said no - and perhaps, Ramadasi also would have argued that Shama did not deserve the book and the whole episode would have failed to raise the importance of Vishnu Sahasranama. Now Baba wanted to help not only Shama but Ramadasi also for his further progress on

the spiritual path by showing Ramadasi how crude he still was and how a true Ramadasi should behave. After this altercation, Ramadasi eventually relented and Shama, who was earlier not showing any interest in the book, was so delighted to receive it that he was willing to give 10 copies of Panchratni Gita to Ramadasi.

Many of devotees mentioned in the Satcharitra did not really adhere to Baba's dictum always, but Baba always made them realize where they had gone wrong etc; for example, the following is a very instructive conversation between Mrs Khaparde & Baba recorded in "Sai Charters & Sayings":

1. Mrs. G.S.Khaparde when presenting Naivedya at the mosque was daily inviting Baba to come to her lodgings for a meal. Baba promised, but did not come. One day when she was preparing dishes, a dog came near her and as she viewed it as an unclean and polluting animal, flung burning fuel at the dog and it ran away.

That day at Naivedya time at the Mosque, Mrs. G.S.K.: Baba, please come to my lodgings for a meal.

Baba: Yes, *when I came, you threw burning fuel at me.*

G.S. Khaparde was an associate of Lokmanya Tilak and the following recorded conversation in "Sai Charters & Sayings" reflects that:

1. *"The Governor came with a lance to attack Dada Saheb (i.e. G.S.K.): but I finally conciliated him."*

(Just then G.S. Khaparde was in danger of prosecution at the hands of Govt. as a prominent "extremist"- Lokamanya having been sent to jail just then). G.S.K., assured by Baba's words, "Why should any fear when I am here?" stayed 6 months with Baba and there was no prosecution launched against him.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

How could He have known about Mrs. Khaparde throwing burning fuel on the stray dog, without being there?

. . .

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 28



Shirdi Samadhi Mandir

Baba's desire to eat Khichdi just on the day when lady from Burhanpur resolved to offer khichdi at any cost is again Baba's Leela only – this episode proves that Baba loves pure devotion of His devotees.

In this chapter Baba again corroborated His teachings of sticking to one's Guru by installing a Shivling and getting a Tripund drawn by Megha.

The Pindi in Dixit Wada that we see in Shirdi these days was installed by Sai Baba Himself.

Sri Virendra Jyotindra Tarkhad (son of Sri Jyotindra Tarkhad mentioned in chapter 9 of Satcharitra) has written (in "Experiences of Tarkhad Family") a 1st hand account of account of "Baba's Bathing" episode, which was narrated to him by his Father who was present in the mosque at the time and is as follows:

One staunch Sai devotee who had permanently stationed himself at Shirdi was Mr. Megha. He was a very ardent follower of Lord Shiva and Baba knew about it. Baba had therefore gifted him the Lingam of Lord Shiva so that he could perform his daily pooja of his Lord. Baba also loved Megha intensely, which made Him to attend his funeral procession in

Shirdi. Baba joined the procession and went on showering flowers over his dead body right up to the cemetery and also shed tears like a normal mortal showing His grief and love for His true devotee.

Of course, Megha used to reckon Baba as his Lord Shankar and Baba had therefore allowed him to draw the Trishul on His forehead as was desired by Megha. On one Mahashivratri day Megha developed a fervent desire of giving a bath to Baba with Gangajal i.e. water from river Godavari. He was therefore nagging Baba to allow him to do so well in advance, as he knew that Baba would not permit him to do so easily. Finally, after a lot of persuasion Baba agreed to take a bath from Megha.

On receiving the permission Megha was very happy. One day earlier Megha informed his acquaintances and invited them to witness the ceremony. My father was one of the invitees. Earlier night Megha left Shirdi with a Kalashi (metal vessel) for getting Gangajal from river Godavari that is around 11 km away from Shirdi. But for an ardent devotee like Megha, distance was no bar and he was back in Shirdi before noon with the Gangajal. After the noon Aarti Megha requested Baba to come for the bathing ceremony. Baba told him that He was only joking about taking the Gangajal bath, as such for a

Fakir like Him such acts were not permitted. Baba suggested to him to pour the sacred Gangajal over the Lingam of Lord Shiva in the Shiva Temple in Shirdi. Then Megha told him that he is bathing the Lingam daily and he reckons Baba as his living Lord Shiva and Mahashivratri being the most auspicious day for all Shivabhaktas Baba should not disappoint him. As Megha was very adamant Baba told him that He would allow him to pour the water only on one condition. Baba explained to him that Ganga emanates from Lord Shiva's head and hence Baba will bend forward and then Megha should pour the water over His head only. Megha though reluctant agreed to abide by this condition. Then Baba got up from His seat and then proceeded to Lendi Baug. There was a special stone on which Baba used to take bath, He sat on it, bent His head forward and signaled Megha to proceed. Megha started pouring water over Baba's head very slowly but he was not satisfied with that kind of bath, he decided to act as he had contemplated in his mind all these days. He suddenly emptied the bucket with the remaining water all over Baba's body saying "Hara Hara Mahadev." He was very jubilant and started dancing with Joy, as he thought he had fulfilled his desire completely. But this did not last long. Soon he real-

ized that although he had poured water all over Baba's body, only His head was wet and rest of His body including His Kafani was as dry as ever. Megha was astonished to notice that and he could not believe. Then Baba told him, "*Hey you know Ganga flows out of Lord Shiva's head and does not touch rest of His body.*" My father was watching this fun along with other invitees. He realized that Baba wanted to impress upon Megha that His word was final and no one could dare to disobey Him. Also, Baba wanted to ascertain to Megha that He was his Living Lord Shiva. My father by then had fully understood Baba's various acts. According to him Baba over a period of time had developed typical devotees around Him. Through these mystical acts He used to impress upon people the presence of Lord and His mighty powers which people must learn to respect through their faithful devotion. To name some of them were Megha (Lord Shiva), Nanavali (Lord Hanuman), and Dasganu (Lord Vithoba). In fact, Dasganu Maharaj in one of his aarti says SHIRDI MAZHE PANDHARPUR SAIBABA RAMAVAR (My Pandharpur is Shirdi and my Vithoba is SaiBaba). My father used to say that sometimes in jovial mood Baba would say that "Hey Bhau I am none other than Goddess Laxmi and while sitting in this Dwarkamai

I would never utter a lie.” In His entire life span He called upon Himself as messenger of God and never God himself. Of course, whatever He would utter would take place unfailingly. My father used to recall Baba saying that “Hey Bhau, after I depart from this humanly body, you will see that people will flock to Shirdi like ants to sugar. Today you visit Shirdi any day of the year you will get the proof of Baba’s statement made years ago.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

1. How could He have known about Lakshmichand taking a loan of 15 Rs. from a Marwari for Shirdi Trip?
2. How could He have known about Lakshmichand’s discussion with fellow passengers in train?
3. How could He have known about Lakshmichand’s wish to have Sanza in the prasad, his back pain, and about Lakshmichand’s thought that Baba was suffering because of someone’s evil eye?

4. How could He have known about Burhanpore lady's wish of offering Khichdi in naivedya to Baba?
5. How could He have known about Megha's initial thoughts about Baba being a Muslim?
6. How could He have known that Lord Khandoba's doors were opened again and so sent Megha to offer prayers to Lord Khandoba first?

Also, how it was possible that -

1. Despite Megha's pouring the whole Gangajal on Baba's body, Baba's head only got wet, just as He had requested Megha for.
2. Only Akshats remained in Megha's place while Baba appeared/disappeared without doors being open?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 29



*Baba's picture in Tendulkar household: Vinny
Chitluri*

The story about the Madrasi man's dream defines what is meant by complete surrender. We might think that we believe in Baba by heart and all – but more often than not it is not very different from Madrasi gentleman's view point, i.e. the one laced with selfish interests and negatives, as he admitted to Baba when he found himself behind bars.

But when the situation worsened (policeman died), he gave up all of his ego, prayed sincerely to Baba and only then being in complete surrender did he get free from his troubles.

Lesson here is that Baba tests our faith in trouble times and troubles come because of our bad karmas, selfish attitude or wavering faith in Baba.

Therefore, an earnest request to all is to think of this story often, which will enhance our faith in Baba's Lotus Feet.

Despite of grave concerns about the pension amount, the Tendulkar family was in complete surrender to Baba and therefore had firm faith that Baba will take care of things. Their Son also got through the medical exam despite planets being unfavourable. Baba came in Mrs Tendulkar's dream just 15 days before retirement and settled the matter

to their delight (while others with wavering faith in Baba would have started blaming Him for not doing anything).

Baba fulfilled Captain Hate's wishes in accepting the naivedya. Isn't it amazing that walpapdi, which was not found anywhere, appeared just when Captain's friend started frantically looking of it?

In Ambrosia, 101 Stories on Sai, the following detail is available, written by the Madrasi Lady to whom Baba had appeared as Sita Ram (Lady's husband's name was Bhau Swamy):

"I went to Shirdi with my husband and 2 girls on 23-8-1915 and took darshan of Baba. He went first to Nasik and served Narasingh Bhuva in Kala Ram Temple. He told us to go and see Shri Sai Baba, Shirdi. He found Baba's durbar very grand. A number of dancing girls danced before Him, Kathas were performed. Acrobatics were exhibited. There was thrilling crowd always at the mosque and accompanied Chawdi. We stayed there a month and a half.

"My husband had not much faith in Baba at start. He then had a dream wherein he was bound hands and feet. Baba got him released in the dream. Hence,

he got faith in Baba; from that time, Baba used to give us and others burfi, supplied by a local shop man. Two rupees worth burfi and 2/- in cash; we felt we had no need for it.

“Only once I gave Him Naivedya on 30-8-1915. I myself prepared it with intense devotion (and feared whether He would accept it or not) thinking of Baba and repeating His name all the time. I prepared the dishes (viz.) bhaji and Payasam. When I took and placed them before Him, a Brahmin widow (Durgaba) placed them at the bottom of the row (i. e.) far away from Baba.

“Baba gradually moved up to the dish and began to eat it with Shama etc; He ate up the whole lot. I was delighted at the acceptance of my devotion. Baba knew our hearts and responded to our love. At parting, we were assured our railway fare to Kashi would be given to us, but it was not paid to us. En route we went to Harda Ghat and we got all our pilgrimage expenses (contributed by devotees).”

In Sai Leela Magazine, published in year 1939, July, the details of Madrasi family are given on page 28; with Baba's blessings, I am very happy to share the same with you all –

Following details are reported:

Date of Shirdi visit – 23rd August, 1915

Men's name – Bhavu Swami (Govindaswami); he used to work for Madras Electric Tramways

Lady's name – Adilakshmiamma, aged 50 (no details for 2 girls accompanying the family)

Their address – 95, Annapillai Street, Madras

Govindaswami wrote all his experiences including the dream where Baba taught him a lesson to Dr. Pillai.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

Why did He accept dakshina from captain's friend, but returned (per Captain's wish) the consecrated rupee that Captain's friend offered as dakshina on his behalf?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 30



Baba going to Lendi Garden: Original Photo

*T*his chapter shows the real power of Sri Sai - fulfilling vows taken up by Shama's mother some 30+ years ago and creating a

reason for Kaka G Vaidhya to come and see Baba, was all planned very well by Baba only; otherwise (say for argument sake) Baba could have simply asked Shama to bring Kaka G Vaidhya from Vani. But it was to happen this way only.

Look at the other related events also - Nana Saheb Dengle's predictions turned out to be true, which prompted Bapa ji also to enquire about his family's welfare which in turn led to reminding of his mother's long forgotten vows to Saptashringi Devi.

Presumably, the astrologer mentioned here is Nanasaheb Dengle only, because in chapter 22 it is mentioned that he had correctly predicted about the danger to Bapusaheb Buti's life - which was averted by Baba's blessing i.e. the snake in Buty's toilet could not harm him.

All the events mentioned above fit into the overall scenario too well to be mere coincidences.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

Why did Saptashringi Devi instruct KakaG to go visit Sri Sai Baba?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 31



Baba's photo in Mankar's house: Vinny Chitluri

Baba's ways of instruction were great and effective. He sent Mankar away and appeared before him in person. Imagine, how strong Mankar's belief would have become seeing Baba in person kilometres away from Shirdi.

How beautiful is the depiction of the necessity of Jap, if one wants sadgati, a practical way is to keep practicing Hari Naam as the death can occur any time. When Baba got angry with Vijayanand - it was clear that He did not like his weak determination - Vijayanand cancelled his pilgrimage to Mansarovar when he heard about problems en-route. Even though Baba got angry with him for his weak resolve, He gave him sadgati because he had decided to take Sanyaas. Baba takes care of everyone, even the bad people or those who do not have strong faith or will power.

It is Baba's blessings only that now there is a lot of information and proof about His powers and therefore, devotees get their faith in Baba firmed up quicker than the devotees at the time when Baba was present in human form (of course, prior to Baba taking them under His care).

The second story shows that once Baba has taken you into His care, He will be with you all times,

when Balaram could not get the ticket for Dadar, Baba appeared as a villager with the ticket and helped him in an otherwise unmanageable situation. The fact that He did not sell the ticket to Mankar tells that it was Baba only, who gave him what he needed desperately at the time. Just imagine how lucky he was! He got peace of mind, came back to live close to Baba for the rest of his life and was granted Sadgati.

Even in case of Tatyasaheb Noolkar, Baba's reaction was in proportion to Noolkar's faith in Baba. Baba initially got angry with him but by and by when Noolkar realized that Baba was God incarnate, he got Baba's blessings. Therefore, the sooner we have firm faith in Baba, the sooner our lot will improve.

Following details about Tatyasaheb Noolkar are recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings:

1. Lakshman K. Noolkar, who was a sub-judge at Pandharpur in 1909, while N G Chandorkar was Deputy Collector there, was being induced to go to Shirdi by the latter.

LKN: I cannot go until I get a Brahmin cook and good Nagpur oranges for presentation. I can find neither of these.

NGC: Baba's grace will provide. That night a Brahmin cook came to NGC and wanted service and was referred to Noolkar who engaged him. In the morning, Noolkar found a parcel of excellent Nagpur oranges and no trace could be found as to who the sender was. Anyhow, Noolkar, convinced of Baba's miraculous powers of providing the needful, started with NGC, and went to Baba.

Baba: *Nana, who is this notorious crazy person whom you have brought with you?*

Next day when Noolkar visited Masjid, Baba was in a furious mood and seizing his head, knocked it against pillar saying, "*Your existence or truth will be lost or your unreality will be lost.*" Noolkar was much afraid, but NGC, gave an optimistic interpretation of these occurrences. That night Noolkar suddenly got up and asked Nana for betel, which Noolkar was not ordinarily using. Just at that time, Baba was at Mosque far away.

Baba to someone present: *Take these four bidas i.e. rolled up betel, and go and give them to an old man, at Chandorkar's who needs the betel.* The sudden appearance of that man and the delivery of the bidas con-

vinced Noolkar that Baba was his Antarsakshi and thenceforward Noolkar's faith was greatly strengthened and he stayed on at Shirdi. Noolkar's death suddenly came on rapidly; sacred literature was read to him, as he approached the end. Baba's Pada Theertham also was brought and given to him and he died with his attention centred on Baba.

Baba referring to Noolkar's death: *Tatyā, (Noolkar) has gone in advance (of us). He stayed here as I directed. His life's goal has been reached. He will be born no more.*

In, Sai Baba - The Miracle Maharaj of Shirdi, Shri B. J. Rao has covered the following:

In Shri Sai Satcharita, Tatyasaheb's experiences were not mentioned in detail and this is perhaps because Hemadpant did not have access to more information about Tatyasaheb.

This detailed information came to light when B.V. Narasimhaswami came across Tatyasaheb's grandson, by name Shri Raghunath Vishwanath Noolkar from whom Swami received lot of information based on Raghunath's personal observation

of his father's instances which were published as an article in Sant Kripa magazine and these were not known to earlier devotees.

Once Tatyasaheb had some dangerous eye disease and was unable to see properly and pain was unbearable. He tried all types of treatments from well-known eye-doctors, there was no improvement. He then came to Shirdi. He stayed in Sathewada and was praying to Baba continuously. On the third day, he went to **Baba who placed His hand on Baba's (His) own eyes, and said to Shama, "Today My eyes are paining severely."** As soon as Baba said these words, Tatyasaheb's eye pain started becoming less and less and soon the eyes were cured completely.

In those days, there was no regular worship of Baba except for accepting garlands brought by the devotees. But later on, Baba started allowing devotees to apply sandal-paste to His forehead, and offer Him flowers. **It was Tatyasaheb who introduced the first-time puja of Baba by offering aarti by waving lit lamps around Baba in an arch and this practice started on a Guru Pournima Day and later this became the practice** as narrated by Tatyasaheb in his letter to Nanasaheb. Thus, the regular worship of Baba with aarti and bhajan with

musical instruments started at that time, which has continued ever since.

Sri Virendra Jyotindra Tarkhad (son of Sri Jyotindra Tarkhad mentioned in chapter 9 of Satcharitra) has written (in "Experiences of Tarkhad Family") 1st hand account of Tiger's salvation episode, narrated to him by his Father, who was present in the mosque at the time and is as follows:

This incident took place in the year 1918. My father used to distinctly recollect this because that happened to be his last visit to Shirdi when Baba was alive. After this incident, I think, a week later Baba took Maha Samadhi. On that day, as usual Baba's Darbar in Dwarkamai was on and suddenly, outside Dwarkamai there was a big commotion. All were anxious to know what was happening there. Four Darveshis (fakir) were carrying a full-grown Tiger who was tied up in chains, in a bullock cart. They had brought the bullock cart near the entrance of Dwarkamai and parked it. One of the Darveshis entered the Dwarkamai and pleaded to Mr. Madhavrao Deshpande (close devotee of Baba) stating that the Tiger is their source of income. They carry the Tiger from place to place and exhibit his

show to people and the earnings are spent on their livelihood including that of the Tiger. But the Tiger had taken ill and while passing through Shirdi they had learnt that a great Saint Sai Baba was living there. They also learnt that Sai Baba possessed miraculous powers and was able to cure living beings simply by His divine looks. They therefore, thought of showing the ailing Tiger to Baba, provided the permission was granted to them. On checking with Baba, when He granted the permission to bring the Tiger inside Dwarkamai, Darveshis took all precautions and brought the Tiger, who was walking slowly. He came close to the steps of the platform where Baba would normally be sitting. He looked at Baba and then put both his front paws forward and bent himself as though he was bowing and offering Namaskar to Baba and then suddenly gave a big roar. The sound of the roar was so loud and terrifying that it almost shook entire Dwarkamai. On giving that loud roar the Tiger fell flat on the ground and was motionless. The four Darveshi rushed forward to check the Tiger and they realized that it was dead. They declared to Baba that the Tiger was dead and now what should they do with its dead body. Baba advised them to bury the dead Tiger outside Lord Shiva's Temple near the statue of

Nandi (bull). All the people of Shirdi had gathered to witness the burial ceremony of the dead Tiger. My father who had witnessed the entire episode live and in great detail felt that there was some kind of exchange between Baba and the Tiger and only after that the Tiger had passed away. My father waited for the right opportunity to enquire with Him as to what exactly transpired between Baba and the Tiger. Baba then smiled and told my father, *"Hey Bhau that Tiger was in deep agony and he was requesting Me to relieve him out of that agonizing pain as he could not bear it anymore. I felt pity on his miserable condition and hence I prayed to the Lord to grant him salvation. My Lord is very kind and He responded to My prayers and granted him salvation. That Tiger is free forever from this cycle of birth and rebirth."* My father was totally astonished to hear this explanation from Baba. My father told Baba that till then he had seen Him showering blessings on human beings, but for the first time he witnessed Him showering blessings on a wild animal like the Tiger.

Based on research conducted by Sri M. B. Nimbalkar, it was Noolkar, who was permitted by Baba and who did first Gurupoornima day celebrations in Shirdi with all the sixteen puja items and that happened to be a Saturday, 3rd July 1909 when Dada Kelkar, Jog, Shama were also

present along with others. This information was collected based on the letter written by Noolkar to Nanasaheb Chandorkar who was not present in Shirdi to witness the first Gurupoornima day celebrations to Baba. Though it was not clear about the exact date of first Gurupoornima day celebrations, this date was construed based on certain events.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could He have known about Vijayanand cancelling his trip to Manasarovar after learning difficulties on the way from Somdev Swami and therefore, scolded him saying, “Take him out from here, this useless Sadhu’s company is not worth?”
- How could he have known about Sanyasi Vijayanand’s end approaching and therefore, recommended Bhagawat reading?
- How come He met Balaram Mankar in

Macchindragarh while also being present
in Shirdi?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 32



Baba sitting in front of Dhuni Maa

The thoughts of all four seekers if considered individually are incomplete, but if considered together, they constitute the real nature of Brahma.

Baba being Omniscient knew everything, but He presented a typical human behaviour i.e. being secretive, not sharing and thereby also demonstrated as to what happens to those who behave this way; the whole episode beautifully proves the need of the Guru.

If Baba had no faith in Guru's statements - He would have been cynical as to where His Guru went, leaving Him in upside down (Samadhi) position - instead He believed in His words and therefore, could feel the bliss.

Interesting account of Baba and His Guru, captured by Swami Sri Sharan Anand Ji (Baba Himself mentioned this to Swami ji) in "Sai Superman" is as follows:

Baba said, "I found My master in the Chawdi here. His calm, peaceful, cheerful and meditative face attracted Me, charmed Me, almost bewitched Me so much so that My eyes were ever riveted on his face and that even a moment's separation from him made Me uneasy. In his

company, I used to forget all My hunger and thirst. I served him with all My heart for more than 12 years. The duties I had imposed on Myself for him were very arduous. He never left his seat for any purpose, not even to answer calls of nature. Merged in meditation forever, he entirely forgot that he had a body, mind etc. He ate, passed urine and stool etc. on his seat. I fed him, changed his clothes, swept and kept his seat always clean. As a reward of this he awarded Me his blessings saying, "Wherever you are, here or even beyond the, seven seas, I will be ever with You to guard and protect You."

Baba against Fast (Sai Charters & Sayings):

1. Baba (to S.B. Nachne): *Have you taken your meal?*

Nachne: This is an Ekadasi Day (which Nachne wanted to observe on that occasion, though not observing at home, because two of friends who had accompanied him were very orthodox and were observing it).

Baba: *These two people are mad. You had better go and eat.*

Nachne went to Bala Bhav's hotel, but Bala Bhav

being orthodox, the meal was refused, as it was especially before Aarti. So, Nachne returned with Bala Bhav to Mosque at Aarti time.

Baba: (to Nachne) *have you taken food?*

Nachne: Baba, it is Aarti time and meal can come after Aarti time.

Baba: *No. You go and take the meal. Aarti will wait for you.*

So, Bala Bhav was forced to give Nachne his meal. After meal, Nachne and Bala Bhav returned to Dwarkamayee. Just then Mausī brought and presented to Baba a number of bidas (i.e. rolled betel and nut).

Baba to Nachne: *Chew this.*

Nachne took a bida, but hesitated, as it is customary to not chew bida on Ekadasi Day.

Baba: *Never mind, go on, chew it and Nachne chewed it.*

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

How could He have known what was running in Nachne's mind regarding observing a fast on the

Ekadasi day and therefore, instructed him to go and have his meal first?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 33



Sai Charan: Shirdi Samadhi Mandir

If everything becomes ash, then what would be left of this world except Brahma? Nothing! How true this thought is. Baba assumes various forms, whereas we always try to find Him in His human form only. Many people seem to have the notion that if we get to see Sai's photo somewhere, then it would be a good sign. But if you just close your eyes, Baba comes to you right away, isn't it?

Baba did not return the 1 Rs He got from Appasaheb's wife. I believe because it was given to Him with pure love and devotion. He took only 10 Rs from Appasaheb and returned the rest as he had vowed to offer 10 Rs to the Fakir.

Aatma (the life force, which is common in all of us - God) is not attached with the body and other senses - it's completely independent of what other senses are doing - while we spend all our lives being dictated by our senses - we don't feel the presence of our soul and which is why every single scripture recommends to control our senses and make efforts to concentrate within, where soul, the life force, rests; senses always look/ work outward.

Baba demonstrated by His own life, that how an ordinary human, living a life full of devotion,

surrendering to Guru could achieve not only Aatmanubhav, but could also help others achieve this ultimate objective of life.

It is mentioned in Sai Charters & Sayings that Mainatai's child died very young and she was widowed very early.

Some of the interesting Udhi miracles recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings are reproduced below:

- Chidambar Keshav Gadgil, when transferred and ordered to join his new station, sat in the Railway carriage and regretted he could not go to Baba before joining. Suddenly, a packet of Udhi fell into his lap.

On his return to Shirdi: Baba (to C.K. Gadgil): *You could not come. So, I sent Udhi. Did you get it?*

- Nandaram S. Marwadi at whose house Baba was daily begging bread, wished to leave Shirdi on account of plague epidemic there and because he had fever.

Baba: *Do not go. You are not going to die. I will not let you die till I die.*

Baba gave him udhi and he was cured. He is still alive (1940).

An obvious thing one may ask here is, why Baba sent Bapugir to Jamner, He could have helped Mainatai just when Nanasaheb prayed to Him for help. But this approach firmed up Bapugir's faith in Baba's words (that Allah! will provide), Nanasaheb's faith (that Baba sends for his help when he remembers Him) and our faith in general (so many people were included by Baba, providing credibility through various recorded statements for the sceptics and also helping others who were not so fortunate to see Baba in person).

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How come Baba's Udi cured all of those who accepted it with complete faith?
- How come Baba knew when Balabuva Sutar had first time bowed before His picture?

- How come Narayan Rao got well just in time as Baba had told him in his dream?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 34



Sai Photo in Dwarkamayee

Amazing are the blessings of dear Baba - the boy suffering from TB couldn't get well after operation, but got cured by Udi only. People whom Baba accept, get their wishes fulfilled. So, when the doctor in this chapter pledged that if his patient's fever abated, he would go to Shirdi and lo! the fever came down that night itself.

One thing to note here is that whenever a person is faced with difficulties in life, a positive change becomes imminent; sufferings of Doctor's nephew put all the family members under deep pain, but see ultimately, all these problems led to spiritual progress of everyone involved, with Baba's blessings.

More detail is available about this Doctor in Sai Characters & Sayings as follows:

1. Dr. D.M. Mulky, whose patient recovered from serious illness after vowing to Baba to come to Shirdi, failed to do so. Once going as far as Manmad for that purpose, Dr M. met the Railway booking clerk who talked against Sai Baba and said He was an immoral and dangerous man. Dr. Mulky

ran back to Bombay, but later his sister-in-law induced him to visit Baba.

Baba gave out details of the vow, the incidents at the Manmad Railway Station etc. and Dr. Mulky felt very ashamed of believing the booking clerk.

Dr. Mulky: Baba, give me leave to go to my place.

Baba: *Yes, go, read Jnaneswari and you will find an order on your table that you are transferred to Bijapur on promotion; Doctor went back and found the order on the table exactly as stated by Baba.*

When Dr. Pillay requested Baba to hear his plight - Baba programmed a scene to cure him via Abdul. An important thing Baba mentioned here is that it's good to bear the fruit of our Karma and God also helps us in our bad times.

Baba had mentioned Abdul as a crow, but no one understood what it meant at the time, thinking this to be another parable from Baba - but if one goes back into the following story (covered in B. V. Narsimha Swami Ji's – Devotees' Experiences) of how Abdul was drawn to Shirdi, it will become obvious that Baba meant Abdul only:

I came to Shirdi 45 years ago (1889) from Nanded on the banks of Tapti. I was under the care of

Fakir Amiruddin of Nanded. Sai Baba appeared in the dream of that Fakir and delivering two mangoes to him directed him to give those fruits to me and to send me to Shirdi. Accordingly, the Fakir told me of his dream, gave me the fruits and bade me to go to Sai Baba at Shirdi. I came here in my twentieth year. Even Nana Saheb Chandorkar had not then come to Baba. Baba welcomed me saying, "*My crow has come.*" Baba directed me to devote myself entirely to His service.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could He have known about Dr. Mulky's decision not to visit Shirdi after railway booking clerk's feedback about Baba or about his transfer orders to Bijapur?
- How could He exactly have known that Abdul would come and accidentally press Dr. Pillay leg, relieving him of his malady because of seven guinea worms?
- How the bubos of Bapaji's wife got cured

overnight with application of Udi (as Baba told Shama to visit them only in morning)?

- How Irani Gentleman's daughter's chronic fits got cured in seven days?
- How Harda's old man got relieved of stones in just 5 minutes of taking Udi?
- How the kayastha lady's delivery became painless?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 35



Sai Padukas

A very interesting episode on Dakshina, demonstrating what Baba said to devotees that He returns ten folds (if someone said no, Baba didn't get angry – but one can see what that devotee was losing):

1. P.R. Avaste, a Judicial Officer of Indore

and a devotee of Baba came during summer vacation with his wife and son to Shirdi. He was on his way to perform his son's marriage and kept Rs.400/- with his son and Rs.300/- with his wife. He was to get a good bride (karini) for his son's marriage.

When he came to Baba,

Baba to P.R. Avaste: *Will you give me Dakshina?*

P.R. Avaste: How much?

Baba: Rs. 30/-

Baba to P.R. Avaste's son: *Will you give me Rs.40/-*

Thus, again and again Baba took away the whole fund with Mrs P.R.A. and her son – except Rs.30/-

Baba to P.R. Avaste: *Will you give me Rs.30/-*

P.R. Avaste: Shall I give it, Baba? (Just imagine the predicament here – the more you are put to test the more faith develops after testing, read on!)

Baba: *Yes.*

Then with great pain at heart, Mr. Avaste took the last remaining Rs.30/- from his wife and paid to Baba.

Baba asked for nothing more.

As P.R. Avaste was dolefully returning from Baba, Babu Saheb Jog exultingly patted him on the back.

Jog: I congratulate you because Baba has taken frequent Dakshina from you. You are lucky. Baba never takes except to give back tenfold.

P.R. Avaste: I do not know about that. I know that I have not got a pie remaining for going to the place of marriage.

Jog: How much do you want?

P.R. Avaste: Rs.100/-

Jog: Here it is. Baba has got a present of Rs. 6000/- from a Mumbai merchant who vowed he would pay 25% of his profits, if the news of loss of his goods proved false. Of that 6000, Baba has already spent 3000 in three days. If I tell him I gave you Rs.100/-, He will neither object nor call for the Rs.100/-, but as He has taken Rs.600 odd from you, I assure you that you will have a promotion by Rs.50/- per mensum now.

P.R. Avaste: I have no godfather to get me promotion.

But as stated by Jog, the promotion of Rs.50/- was given to Mr. P.R. Avaste as he learnt after the vacation ended.

Teli's wall mentioned by Baba is in reference to the oil monger that lived next to the mosque.

The episode in which Baba appeared as a snake in Gaushala when Raghu Patil visited Balaji's house refers to another teaching of Baba in which He had said that He is present in all creatures and therefore, we should not kill anybody unnecessarily – Balaji, being a great devotee that He was, treated the snake as Baba and prayed to Him without any fear and Baba blessed him by accepting milk. No harm whatsoever was inflicted on anyone at home.

In Sai Charters & Sayings the following is mentioned about Bala Patil:

1. Damia (i.e. Damodar S. Rasane) went to Baba and requested Him to send Bala Patil, His attendant, who was of a low-caste, to D's house for a meal as Baba's representative.

Baba: *Yes, but do not cry, "Dhut Dhut" (keep away, keep away) at him. Do not give him a place far away from your own place of eating.*

Damia accepted Baba's advice and took Bala Patil as his guest and made him sit near him and not outside the house for the meal.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- How come He welcomed Kaka Mahajani's friend in his father's voice tone?
- How could He have known that Mahajani's friend did not want to offer Dakshina to Him?
- How could He read Thakkar's mind, turned raisins to seedless, restarted distribution from Kaka as Mahajani's friend had wished, and gave Kaka permission to leave the next day?
- How come the food in Balaji's house did not finish and everyone invited ate sumptuously?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 36



Sai Samadhi

A thought that comes to my mind is whenever we are in trouble we observe everything with utmost care, take vows, offer prayers like never before etc, but as soon as our wishes are fulfilled, we start slacking and procrasti-

nating - Baba's way of reminding His devotees of their vows are countless - other than reminders in dreams, one may get some trouble temporarily, prompting one to go back and pray to Baba for help. Shama's vow to fulfil his mother's promise to Kuldevi (Shaptshringi Devi) is yet another example in which 30 years lapsed before it was fulfilled. The beautiful thing to observe is that if you are in Baba's care, He oversees all your affairs and gets all such vows fulfilled. So, don't lose faith in Baba if your troubles are not ending, rather take this to be an opportunity or a signal from Baba reminding you of Him. Many of the close devotees of Baba (when He was in human form) has had their fair share of troubles, but Baba helped them all along.

The Goa man gave Rs 2,000 to Brahmin out of the recovered Rs 30,000 – mentioned on pg. 82 of Sai Baba's Charters and Sayings.

Hansraj, a merchant, mentioned here is the same person who is mentioned in chapter 9 also.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- How could He have known about the vow taken by Goa gentleman?
- How could He have known about the exact amount of money that Goa gentleman lost, in the manner it happened, how it was recovered, and how the gentleman managed to reach Dwarkamayee?
- How come Mrs. Aurangabadkar conceived after 27 years of marriage and delivered a child exactly in the year as Baba had blessed her?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 37



Chawri Procession: Original photo

Swami Sharan Anand ji mentions the following in Sai Superman:

Baba in turn amply rewarded Bayjabai's services by doing everything in His power for her welfare and the welfare of her whole family. In particular, Baba treated her son Tatyapa Patil with tender care and affection, regularly paid him to look after his requirements, and even after the educated, the cultured, the rich and the wealthy, multi-millionaire came to Him, He would not give over His charge to anyone else, nor would He ever leave for Chavdi unless and until this Tatyapa came and accompanied Him, but as if all this was not enough return for the services rendered by Bayjabai, He even cast off His body to save this Tatyapa.

On different occasions Baba made the following statements recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings to different devotees:

58. *I am god (Allah).*

I am Mahalaxmi; I speak the truth-sitting as I do at the Mosque.

(I am Vittoba of Pandari) - Go, I am at Pandhari (to Nana Saheb Chandorkar).

(I am Ganapathi; Mother), all offerings you made to Ganapati have reached Me.

(I am Dattatreya): are you puffed up? Where was male progeny in your destiny? (in answer to the prayer you offered before Datta at Gangapur) I tore up this body and gave you a son.

(I am Laxmi Narain); why go for Ganga elsewhere. Hold your palm at My feet. Here flows Ganga (to Das Ganu).

What matters is whether in your meditation you see this (Sai) figure or the figure of Laxmi Narayana?

The following statement explains why Baba used to make gestures in front of Hanuman Temple during Chavdi Procession:

(I am Maruti): my father dedicated me to Maruti. I make gestures before His temple telling Him I am His brother.

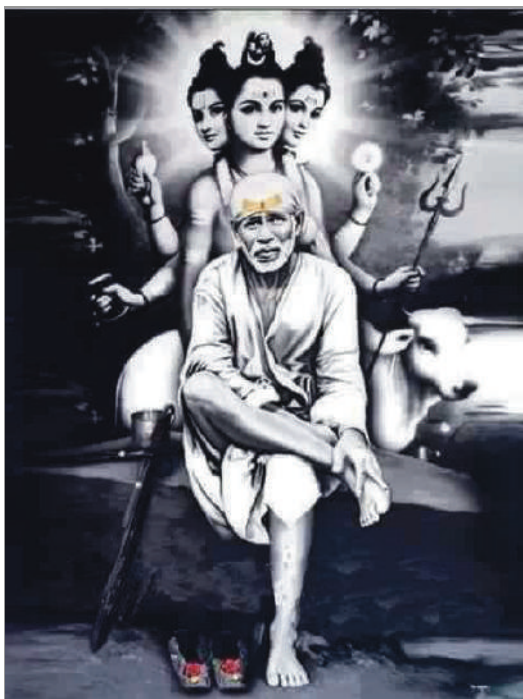
Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could the Ganga have flowed when
Das Ganu bowed down to Baba's feet?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 38



Baba's photo as Dattavatar

W. Pradhan (In devotees' experiences by B.V. Narsimha Swami Ji) saw Baba making food for devotees and narrated the following incident:

On a Thursday, during that period Baba was preparing food in "Handi" (i.e. pot) to feed large numbers. He drove away everyone from the Masjid and was alone with His handi. At that time, to the great surprise and alarm of the spectators, I and two sons of Chandorkar went in. Baba, far from being angry, received us very well, as though He had intended the expulsion of others for the very purpose of granting us a wholly private interview. Then after a little while Baba appeared to be singing out something. At least I thought it to be so. I found that when He repeated the words for the third time, they were, "*Kayre apla kay manave Sri Ram ayaram Jaya Jaya Ram.*" At once, on hearing these words I was overcome with emotion and I placed my head on Baba's feet and tears flowed freely. These words were the guru mantra that I had received from my family guru Haribua (whose grandfather, Atmaram Bua, who has a temple built for his worship in Thakurdwar Bombay, was the guru of my great grandfather). And Baba was so

kindly reviving my interest in and regard for that guru mantra in this fashion for my benefit. Baba was attending to my spiritual benefit without any question from me and His loving interest in me was too deep for me to return and too great to acknowledge except through tears of gratitude and joy. At the "handi," I noticed with wonder that when the contents of the cauldron were boiling, Baba used His own bare palm and not a spoon nor a ladle to stir the contents thoroughly to secure even and uniform consistency in the food or Sira. His hand was not scalded or swollen by such use. Thence suddenly at noon, He took us three to the lendi, a very unusual hour for Him to visit the lendi and there He dug into the earth small hollows, gave me some corn and made me sow it in those hollows. Then after turning up some earth to cover the seeds, He made me water the patches sown and then we returned to the mosque. It is that lendi garden, which 7 or 8 years later (i.e. immediately after he passed away) I have purchased.

Another thing to consider here is the size of the Handi mentioned; A handi big enough to contain food enough for 500 people would be quite big and heavy to handle, but what is impossible for our dear Baba.

. . .

In Sai Charters & Sayings, Nanasaheb's disrespect to shrine is covered in a bit more detail as follows:

1. Baba: *Nana, I will give you one more lesson.*

N.G. Chandorkar: Very good.

Baba: *Nana, if any one begs of you anything, if that be in your hand or power, and if you can grant the request or get it granted, do so. Do not say "No," If you have nothing to give, then, give a suave negative. Do not mock or ridicule the applicant nor get angry with him. If you do not like to part with what you have, do not say falsely that you have nothing. Decline to give it in polite terms and say circumstances or your desire stand in the way. Will you remember this lesson or forget it?*

NGC: What is difficulty in this? I shall remember.

Baba: *This lesson is not quite as easy as it may seem.*

NGC: I will keep it in mind.

Sometime later, Nana, who had promised to pay Rs.300/- for charity to be done at the Kopergaon Datta temple did not bring the money and therefore, avoided a visit to the temple, which was on his way to Shirdi. He, with the approval of his friend, took a detour through a very thorny path, as a result of which he and his friend ran thorns in

their bodies. When they reached Shirdi, baba would not talk to them.

NGC: Why don't you talk with me?

Baba: *Nana, when a man says he will remember the lessons I taught him, but really does not, how can I talk to him?*

NGC: Baba, I remember all your lessons.

Baba: *You gentleman, you evade seeing 'sircar' (God Datta) and take a detour. Why? Because the saint will ask for Rs.300/-, is this the way to remember My lesson? If you did not have the money, if it was not easy to arrange to get it, you had only to tell him that fact. Will the saint eat you? But what device is this, to avoid the temple of God for fear of the saint demanding money? Well then, have not thorns pierced your feet and body and the posterior part of your sapient friend? How can I talk to such a person?*

Baba gave another example of being Bhakta Paradheen (In Sai Charters & Sayings) mentioned as below:

1. In 1914, Ramanavami season, when myriads flocked to Baba, an old woman was shouting.

Old Woman: Hallo! take pity on me, an old woman! Hallo, Baba, give me your Darsan.

Shama went out and elbowed his way back with her into Sai Baba's presence. She melted into tears and held Baba with both her arms round His waist.

Baba: *Mother! how long I have waited for you! Have you brought anything for Me to eat?*

Old Woman: Here is a piece of stale flat bread and an onion. I started my journey with bread and two onions. But tired by journey, I ate at a stream in the morning and ate half the cake with one onion. Here is the remainder. You had better eat it.

Baba: *(crunching the stale bread and eating it with gusto). How sweet, O mother, is your bread!*

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- How could He remain unaffected while putting His bared hands in boiling cauldron, whisking its content?
- How could He have known about how Nanasaheb Chandorkar came to Shirdi

without his usual visit to Sri Datta temple enroute?

- How could He have known about His samadhi in advance when He told Hemadpant to drink the whole Chhas as he would otherwise not get any such opportunity (i.e. getting prasad from Baba's hands) in future?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 39



Baba's painting

Baba, who is the cause of existence for all the species in this world, would have known Sanskrit or for that matter any language in the universe. I mean a person who knows what's going on in someone's mind irrespective of any word uttered in any of the languages, doubting His knowledge of Sanskrit could only mean an oversight even on the most staunch devotees' part – but perhaps that could easily happen to anyone who lived so close to Baba, seeing Him in an ordinary human form.

This conversation between Baba & Nana Saheb Chandorkar is recorded in a bit more detail in Sai Charters & Sayings - part of it is as follows:

Baba: *Then there is no necessity to give a disciple jnana, but only to remove the curtain of ignorance that hides that jnana. Is it not so?*

N.G.C: Yes.

Baba: *That, of course, is not done at one stroke, as the disciple's jiva is immersed deep in age-long ignorance and requires to be instructed repeatedly, birth after birth.*

Baba: *What is the nature of this instruction through speech, about that, which is beyond speech? It is just like*

removing a cover. Ajnana is covering jnana, just like moss covering the water. Then remove the moss and you have the clear water. You have not got to create the water. Water is there. During an eclipse the Sun or Moon is there, but Rahu or Ketu hides the view from us and when Rahu or Ketu passes away, the light of the Sun or Moon, which is continuing right through is seen by us.

Take another example. We are seeing things with the eyes. Then a cataract forms over them and the eyes cannot see. Pull off the cataract, and then the eyes see. Ajnana is the cataract.

The Universe is the efflorescence of the indescribable Maya, which is ignorance. Yet it is the Ajnana that illuminates the Ajnana.

Baba: Jnana is to be realised and is not a matter of direct Upadesa. Salutation, Questioning and Service are Sadhanas for obtaining the Guru's grace. The impression that Phenomena are real is a delusion. This is the screen of darkness that hides Jnana. Tear off that screen. Then Prajnana Brahma will shine forth. Ajnana is the seed of Samsara. If the Guru kripa paint is put on the eye. Maya screen lifts and Jnana survives. Jnana is not an effect. It is ever self-existent. On the other hand, Ajnana has a cause and an end. "God is one. The Devotee is another." This is the root of ignorance. Remove it. Jnana remains. Ignorance finds a snake in the rope. Remove the ignorance and

then the rope is known as it is. As to why Krishna refers Arjuna to other gurus without imparting Jnana Himself, consider this. Did Krishna view Jnanis as different from Himself? Did He not say that Jnanis are identical with Himself? Thus, their teaching is His teaching. Is it not so?

N.G. C.: Yes, Baba. Please teach me the whole of the Gita.

Baba: *Daily read one chapter and come and sit before me.*

N.G.C.: Yes.

Thereafter, Nana went each day after reading one chapter and when he sat at the feet of Baba, he got the gist of it.

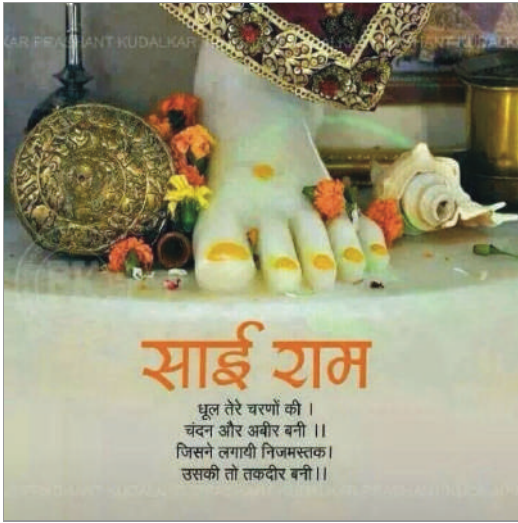
**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- How come Shama and Bapusaheb Buty both had the same dream about instruction to build a Wada, if it was not influenced by Baba Himself?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 40



*B*aba gave a hint to Mr. Dev that He will come with two others. Here the thing to ponder about is the general outlook of people, in

that although Mr. Dev was close enough to Baba to understand that He could go anywhere in any form, but still he was too busy in the worldly affairs to recognize Baba in the Bengali gentleman. This is what happens with us, the divinity is in and around us while we remain occupied in worldly affairs.

I believe after this incident Mr. Dev would have definitely become more cautious and ever so watchful to see Baba in everything around him, which is what Baba's message is. This episode is yet another beautiful example of how Baba used to demonstrate how to put sacred teachings into practice.

An interesting explanation of Dakshina, which Baba gave to B.V. Dev mentioned in this chapter, is recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings and reproduced below:

245. Baba to B.V. Dev: *Bhau, give me Dakshina.*

B.V. Dev gave one guinea.

Baba: *Give me more.*

Baba after getting four said - *though four were given by you, Baba has got only one.*

Dev: Baba, I have given four.

Baba: *Yes, but I have only one. You will know.*

The obvious interpretation is though the devotee surrenders his four-fold Antahkarana (Manas, Buddhi Ahankara, Chitta), Baba receives only the Jiva and all multiplicity, when it reaches God (Baba) becomes one. So, the mind must surrender multiplicity unto the God (Guru) to attain unity.

Baba benefits His devotees in the most beautiful manner, look at how He blessed Ali Mohammed, Ismu Mujavar, and Hemadpant all in one go.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How come things happened exactly how Baba had predicted well in advance of His visit to B.V.Dev's Udyapan ceremony?
- How come Baba appeared at Hemadpant's place exactly how He told him in his dream?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 41



Baba going to Lendi: Original photo

Baba helped Ali Muhammad and supported his spiritual growth, advised him to contact Maulana Ismu Mujavvar to solve his

dilemma and at the same time came in Hemadpant's dream informing him that He would come to his house for lunch - what an interesting setting! isn't it?

Why Ismu Mujavvar thought of Hemadpant, is a no brainer really as it was all inspired Baba only for him to think of Hemadpant as the most deserved candidate for receiving Baba's photo.

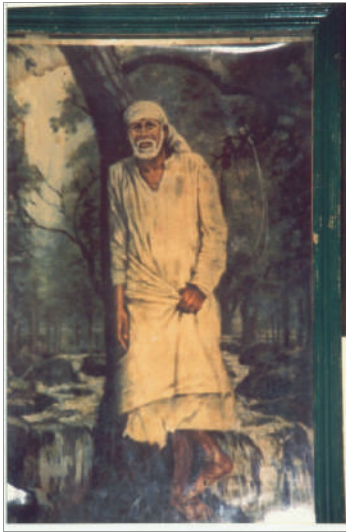
Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

1. How could Baba have known about Mr. Deo's deep desire of starting the reading of Gyaneshwari only after His permission?
2. How could Baba have known about Mr. Deo asking Balakram about how he was blessed by Baba etc.?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 42



Baba's photo in Laxmibai's house; source: Vinny Chitluri

Arn't Baba's way of instructing His bhaktas very effective? Baba could have just given sermons like one should see Self in everyone or Him (Baba) in everyone etc. Then how many would have remembered or practiced them effectively! Baba's asking Laxmibai for food and then feeding the same to a stray dog followed by Baba's explanation for doing so, effectively brought out the meaning of this beautiful message in practice.

Also, Baba must have known that Patil would tell someone about Taty's death to occur on Dussehra in the year 1918; so, I am still looking for an answer why He would have wanted to do so? Perhaps, He did not want to tell His devotees directly about His MahaSamadhi time as that would have for sure caused a lot of chaos among them.

Baba's help to Bala Shimpi, who is mentioned in this chapter is as follows (from Sai Charters & Sayings):

537. Baba found Bala Shimpi on the road side, very ill with no one to attend to him. Baba had begged food in his (B. S's) house and was deeply attached to his family. Baba told Bala Shimpi to go to Nana Saheb Dengle at Nimgoan. Nana Saheb had at

that time a dream and Baba in that dream told him to undertake the care of Bala Shimpi, who would come to him. So, when Bala reached, he was cordially received and looked after by Nana Saheb Dengle.

As per Sai Charters & Saying, Baba gave another hint (not covered in Satcharitra) about His Maha-Samadhi, which is as follows:

Baba to Chotakhan: Put this garland on the fakir Banne Mia and tell him, "Allah is taking away the lamp he placed here." That was mentioned to the Moulana shortly before 15-10-1918. That fakir had shed tears then.

In Sai Charters & Sayings, it's mentioned that Baba had 16 Rs in His pocket after He gave 9 Rs to Lakshmibai.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

1. How could he have known about His (or Tatyā's) death on a specific day two years in advance? And, Tatyā did fell ill around the same time.

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTERS 43 & 44



Baba's idol at Shirdi

Baba had instructed Mhalsapati not to move at all, so it was great devotion and an effort on his part to sit for 3 days without moving, in fact, it was Baba's blessings that gave Mhalsapati the necessary resolve and strength to carry out Baba's instructions to the letter. It was around the time when Baba had not become as popular and many of His prominent devotees were not yet called by Baba to Shirdi. Imagine the kind of stiff opposition and the push Mhalsapati would have had to face - but ulti-

mately, he succeeded with Baba's blessings and for the benefit of whole mankind in general.

It is mentioned in Sai Charters & Sayings, that Madhav Fasle had picked the brick and carelessly dropped it, whereby it broke into two pieces. Baba seeing the broken pieces had expressed His grief as mentioned in the Satcharitra.

Baba told that Chaitanya-ghan is present in everyone on this earth and that it is where He resides and the one who practices to feel it, gets free and attains moksha.

How could we find this ME that's within each of us?

I have found the following useful:

I close my eyes and start concentrating on just my breath. In a minute or so, I am able to start following my in-breathing and out-breathing. The pace of breathing also reduces and short breaths turn into long breaths, drawing more oxygen in; I feel amazingly calm and relaxed.

Now, I start concentrating on my heart beats, feeling the air I am drawing in moving to the innermost parts of my body and in the next minute, I start

feeling my body as a combination of just the body and energy from an unknown source, as if this energy has powered up the tiniest cell in my body (imagine a tyre-tube full of air and you will know what I mean. Once this air is let out, the tube collapses).

To me this energy is what we call as “Prana” or the life-force which is powering up all our body senses and faculties to perform their activities. The moment this force leaves us, the body it chose to be in this life, dies.

To me this life-force is Chaitanya-ghan or Sri Sai who is present in every bit (plants, animals, non-living etc.) around us.

Our outward appearance, joy, sorrow and the way we conduct ourselves in this life, is all due to our past karmas, but the force which powers up each of us for doing things (or how we live), is a common one and actually a part of that infinite force, the God Himself.

Therefore, Sai is present in everything in this world, but we fail to recognize Him as we believe in just the outward appearance.

Manisha Bisht Ji has covered a bit more about Laxman Mama Joshi in this chapter as follows:

Laxmanrao Kulkarni Ratnaparkhi was maternal uncle of Madhavrao Deshpande. He was a resident of Shirdi itself. He was an orthodox Brahmin. He used to follow the laws of touchability and religious rites very rigorously.

As Laxmanrao was the maternal uncle of Madhavrao, he was known as 'Laxman Mama' in the village. He was the Vatandar Kulkarni and Gram Joshi of Shirdi Village.

While the devotees were experiencing Baba's miracles, Laxmanrao maintained a distance from such things. He not only had no faith in Baba, but he was a very staunch opponent of Him.

An unlearned person is likely to fall into prey to bad company and habits. He may listen only to his ego and have belief only in himself. Gradually, he starts thinking that he is bigger than God. To bring such a person to the proper path, Bhagvant gives him certain jolts. The person starts coming back to his senses. Then, the Almighty enters his inner soul and gives him deliverance.

It so happened with Laxmanrao. The great egoist fell ill with an incurable disease. His sufferings knew no limits in spite of the various remedies he tried. Ultimately – as a last resort – he came to Baba's Masjid.

Baba looked at him with tranquil eyes, moved his hand over Laxmanrao's body and said, "Go! Allah will set things right."

There was a miraculous change in Laxmanrao from the time he stepped into the Masjid. On top of it, he had the blessings of Baba. From that moment, he became a devotee of Baba.

On another occasion, Baba took a test of Laxmanrao.

Bappaji was the only son of Laxmanrao. When he was young, he got sick from some incurable disease. But, now Laxmanrao had faith in Baba. Therefore, along with other medial remedies, every day he started bringing Udi from Baba's own hands and giving through water to Bappaji.

However, there came a time, when people felt that the body is going to be lost for ever. Laxmanrao rushed to the Masjid. He prostrated himself at Baba's Feet and cried, "Baba, save my son! Oh, my God, I bow before you."

But, suddenly, Baba shouted at him, "Go away!" He even started showering abuses. Laxmanrao got scared. He was unable to understand Baba's strange behaviour.

In reality, now Laxmanrao had started believing in Baba. However, his old traits had not been

completely eradicated. Some of his ego was still lingering. A few questions and doubts used to crop up in his mind – time and again.

With a heavy heart, Laxmanrao returned home and after some time, Baba got up from His place. He came down the steps of the Masjid and straight away went to Laxmanrao's home. With love and affection, He moved His hand over Bappaji's body and immediately turned back. From that moment, Bappaji got relief.

Now Laxmanrao began believing that Baba is God Incarnate. He decided that in his every deed he will remember Baba.

Early every morning, Laxmanrao used to complete the rituals of Snan-sandhya and then come to the Masjid to avail Baba's Darshan. He used to wash Baba's Feet (Pad-prakshalan), anoint Gandha Akshata, draw a Tilak, place flowers and Tulsi leaves, offer Dhoop – Deep -Naivedya and Dakshina. Thereafter, he used to prostrate himself before Baba and take His blessings. He used to distribute Prasad amongst those present. And then, he used to proceed to perform Pooja of other Gods and Goddesses of the village. This was his daily routine and he adhered to it till the end. With great devotion, he served Baba.

After the demise of Baba's loved devotee Megha, it was Bapusaheb Jog who used to perform Baba's Pooja at all times. In the afternoon of 15th October, 1918 – on the auspicious day of Dassehra – Baba took Maha-nirvan. On the same night, He appeared in the dream of Laxmanrao and told him, "Bapusaab will not come to perform my Kakad Aarati. He thinks, I am dead. But, I am alive. You come and perform my Kakad Aarti."

There was havoc after the Maha-nirvan of Baba. Everyone was moved with deep grief. On that night, Baba's mortal body was placed in Masjid itself. Next day, it was moved to Butti Wada. Therefore, as instructed by Baba in the dream, Laxmanrao arrived at the Masjid with full preparations for performing Pooja. He prostrated before Baba, removed the cloth covering the face and took the last Darshan, and proceeded to perform Pooja. Many – who were present experienced Baba's hands moving at that time.

Time and again, Laxman Mama's eyes were getting filled up with tears. His body was trembling. In that state, he opened Baba's closed fist, placed Vida Dakshina, covered the body and departed from there.

Thereafter, the noon Aarti was performed by

Bapusaheb Jog and in the evening Baba's body was brought to Butti Wada.

This was the way in which Baba showered His blessings upon Laxman Mama. Baba entered Mama's dream and made him perform the Aarti.

After Laxman Mama's demise, his only son Bappaji became Vatandar Kulkarni and Gram Joshi of Shirdi Village. Bappaji was fortunate enough to be around Baba for close to twelve years when Baba was Dehdhari.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

- *How could He have survived without breathing for 3 days?*

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 45



*Baba's photo in Anandrao Pakhade's house
Courtesy: Vinny Chitluri*

Baba's method of proving that taking recourse to Guru's feet is sufficient to achieve Nirvana through Anandrao's dream is amazing. He could have simply come in Shama's dream or even Kakasaheb's dream - but that might not have been as effective; Baba clarified the whole thing

through a third person who was not even involved in the discussion in any capacity whatsoever and therefore, his narrative provided more credibility. In the end, Anandrao also was blessed this way, beautiful isn't it?

Baba used to ask Mhalsapati to keep his hand on Baba's heart to ensure that Baba was always doing the Hari naam Japa; with Him on the plank and Mhalsapati on the floor this would not have been possible.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

How Kakasaheb's confusion and its resolution through Anandrao's dream could have been linked with each other. This way Baba proved that He continues to benefit the mankind even after leaving His mortal coil.

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 46



Sai Darbar at Shirdi

*B*aba always accompanies the one who surrenders to Him. Supporting this fact, the following stories, recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings, are as follows:

1. S.B. Nachne lost his wife in 1929. She had died leaving a three years old child. This almost broke Nachne's heart and so, he became very listless to the necessities of his body that when he left Bombay for Nasik to perform the obsequial ceremonies of his wife, though it was dreary cold, he took neither a blanket nor a shawl to guard himself against it. Though he grew listless about himself, Baba could not be so; like an anxious father that He is, He assumed the form of an office peon and perched Himself just opposite to the seat, which Nachne was to occupy in the train. When Nachne got into that compartment and sat down He started asking, "Well, where are you going? How is it you have no bedding?" Nachne replied, "I am going to Nasik to perform the obsequial ceremony of my wife. I have now grown quite indifferent to my body and care very little for the bedding." Hearing this Patewal-la (Peon) sent a friend of his to get a blanket for Nachne. Seeing that he brought the blanket in no time, Nachne remarked, "Oh it seems you live very

near." The Patewalla replied, *"I am a Patewalla (a peon) in Bombay Arts School and my quarters are very near. My name is Ganpatishanker. My Saheb has gone to Shimla, so, I have seized this opportunity for going to Nasik. If you now want to go to sleep, I will wake you up in proper time, you may do so. However, if you have any cash, beware of pick-pockets; if you have nothing to keep the cash safe, give it to me. I will keep it safe in my trunk."* Nachne thereupon gave over his cash to Ganpatishanker and slept. Ganpati woke him up at Ghoty; they there washed their face and had tea. Ganpati defrayed the expenses of tea. Then they got down on Nasik Railway Station. On the way to Nasik proper in a bus Ganpatishanker said to Nachne, *"Do not go to any of these Brahmin priests, they will charge you exorbitantly; I will make all arrangements for the ceremonies; come with me."* Saying so, he brought to him a priest, explained to the priest what and how these ceremonies had to be performed. He also pointed to Nachne a cavity in the river and asked him to stand there dipping his wife's bones there in water. As Nachne did so the bones melted away like sugar in water. As soon as the ceremonies were over, Ganpatishanker received a telegram from his Master asking him to resume his duties. So, he took Nachne's permission to leave, gave over the

account of Nachne's money spent by him to the very pie, handed over the balance and left Nachne saying, *'I will meet you in Andheri.'* On return to Bombay, Nachne made all efforts to find him out, but he could not succeed. He then made inquiries at the Art School; asked the Patewallas, the Professors and even the Principal, but when all of them gave one uniform reply, "That there is no such peon and there was never in the service of this Art School a peon with the name Ganpatishanker," he realised that the peon was none other than Baba Himself. He Himself had assumed the form of a Patewalla for him to relieve him of the stunning stroke of the misery of his wife's death and to assist him in the performance of the obsequial ceremonies. He felt extremely sorry that he had got Baba to discharge a menial's duty for him- but he was now helpless and could only requite him by his steady and unfailing devotion for Baba.

2. Mhalsapathy went on a pilgrimage to Jejuri with his Palki. Plague was raging there. Mhalsapathy and his companions set down the Palace and in great dejection Mhalsapathy sat leaning against his Palki. He thought there was someone behind. He turned and saw Baba, who at once disappeared. He told his companions that Baba was with them. They

all got bold and stayed on for four days, none of them got affected with plague and they all went back safe.

On their return,

Baba: *Bhagat, you had a fine pilgrimage. You sat leaning against the Palki. At that time, I had come there.*

Thus, Baba assured him that Baba actually was present at Jejuri with His wonderful powers and that Mhalsapathy was not under any hallucination or delusion, when he had the vision of Baba.

Baba's treatment to goats tells us that He takes care of His devotees not only in this life, but in their afterlives as well.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

How could He tell well in advance about Him reaching Gaya before Shama?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 47



Shirdi Sai in a film: not the original photo

*I*nteresting thing is when Baba was speaking to the Snake, the snake understood what Baba said and so, left the frog – wondering if snakes could understand human voice? Probably not, but it was a divine communication that Baba had, which the snake understood.

In Sai Charters & Sayings, the river in this story is mentioned as the "Rahata River".

The lesson to be learned from this story is that one should not be mad after money, because it usually involves doing things because of which one ends up going through cycles of birth.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

How could He have known about details of various births of same persons in His narrative?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 48



Baba distributing Udi in masjid: Original photo

Just as Baba advised Mr. Shevde that he would pass next year, another devotee also asked Baba for his fate in the

exams. That conversation is covered in Sai Charters & Sayings and reproduced as follows:

1. Anant Mahadev Kulkarni Singvekar
asked: Would I pass my examination?
Would my number appear in the list?

Baba: *Your number is 114. It will appear in the pass list.*

His number was 114 and it appeared in the pass list.

Baba's talking about Mrs. Sapatnekar is amazing. To a third person He'd appear as a mad fakir, but to the person whom He was speaking about, He would be Omniscient.

A gentleman, Lt. Col. Nimbalkar, interviewed Smt. Parvatbai Sapatnekar on 13.9.1983. She breathed her last about a month and a half later on 30.10.1983. This account is available in public domain and is as follows:

THE SAPATNEKAR FAMILY'S SHIRDI PILGRIMAGE

A year after that, in 1915, my elder son Muralidhar was born. We took him to Shirdi for Baba's darshan when he was eight months old. Then we had two more sons – Bhaskar and Dinkar. We took

them to Shirdi for Baba's darshan too. I remember one incident of that time very well. When Dinkar was two months old we placed him in front of Baba's feet. Baba picked him up and threw him up into the air. My heart stopped with fear, but nothing happened to Dinkar. Another devotee who was sitting beside Baba caught him and handed him to us. Perhaps, Baba knew in advance that the devotee would catch Dinkar, otherwise he would not have flung the child up and sat quiet, making no attempt to catch him again.

I had a total of eight sons and a daughter. Only then did I realise the full meaning of the boon granted by Baba when I went to Shirdi first time. *"Take! One, two, three, four!"* said Baba at the time. *"Take as many as you want,"* He gave me as many children as I desired.

My husband also became a staunch devotee of Baba in the course of time. His faith and devotion to Baba increased day by day. One incident will suffice to show the extent of his devotion. Our second son, Bhaskar, died when he was ten. My husband did not fall into a depression as he had when his first son had died, but accepted it as Baba's will. He took all the children to the puja room, and lining them up in front of Baba there, said, "Baba you may take all

these too if you wish, but the faith and devotion I have for you will stay firm as a rock.”

Smt. Parvatbai Sapatnekar finished her account of her reminiscences of Sri Sai Baba. Lt. Col. Nimbalkar next interviewed her son, Dinkar Sapatnekar. It seems the Sapatnekars were from a village called Sapatne, hence the name Sapatnekar. They then settled in the taluka headquarter village of Madhegaon. They were a family of lawyers. Their grandfather was a lawyer and so was their father, Mahadev Waman Sapatnekar, who was a prominent, successful and rich lawyer of Akkalkot.

Dinkar disclosed another interesting fact about his father. He said that his father was a devotee of Sri Datta and would frequently go to Gangapur. When his first wife and son both died, Sapatnekar was so disillusioned with life that he wanted to commit suicide by drowning himself in the river there at Gangapur. It seems Datta himself saved him from committing suicide and ordered him to go to Akkalkot. Then Baba drew him to Shirdi in 1913 and made him His devotee. Dinkar Sapatnekar had been employed as a judge in the service of the state of Maharashtra and was retired, being 68 years old at the time of this interview.

**Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or
much more because otherwise -**

How come He was aware of Sapatnekar's wife's pains, and death of his son?

How come Mrs. Sapatnekar's pain disappeared instantly in Baba's presence?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 49



Baba's darbar at Shirdi

*A*mazing and very effective were the ways in which Baba benefited those who came for His darshanas. In case of Hari Kanoba, through

disappearance of his sandals Baba made Hari realize about His Omniscience.

Our physical desires are like sandals of Hari Kanoba - we go to temple, offer prayers etc, but keep talking only about our desires rather than offering selfless prayers/ seva to Baba. We get so much infatuated with ourselves, we forget that we should just ask Baba to be with us, because once He is with us, He will look after us not just in this life but in the after-life as well.

Hari Kanoba was cynical. He would not believe anyone else about Baba's virtues and therefore, Baba removed his doubts in the most satisfying manner. Interesting thing to notice here is that Hari Kanoba did not get his troubles sorted or got Baba's blessing until he ate, which again corroborates Baba's teaching that one should not go with empty stomach in God's quest, beautiful isn't it?

Somdev Swami ji realized that Baba's reaction matched his innermost feelings. We feel agitated if things don't happen in the way we would like and the adverse circumstances remain. People keep saying that Baba is not listening to us, but once you surrender completely (as Swami ji did later), this feeling of agitation disappears for good and love starts flowing all around.

So, a lesson to learn here is that our prayers will get answered quickly if we let go of any doubt, concern and surrender completely to Baba's feet.

Couple of incidences about the way we should approach Baba are recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings and are as follows:

1. Bhikubai Bayyaji Patel returning from Ahmedabad to Shirdi brought with her a garland of flowers, a water melon (Turbuz) and some milk sweets peda. With these, she crossed the Godavari at Kopergaon. Then remembering the wretched death of a friend of hers at that place, she was weeping and blaming Baba mentally for not averting such a wretched death. But she forgot all those thoughts evidently when making the presents to Baba at Shirdi.

Baba: *I do not want this garland of Tulul i.e., mental uneasiness.*

Then she lifted the garland and went near Baba to place it on Him. Strangely, the garland snapped

into three, one bit on each hand and other on floor. Then she offered the water melon and milk sweets.

Baba refused then.

Baba: *This woman was weeping and shedding tears at the Godavari and she has brought this with such a troubled heart. So, I will not accept it.*

520 Mrs. Kanitkar went with her daughters to Baba with a very nice basket of grapes, which she specially and lovingly had brought for Him.

Baba: *(in a kind tone) What have you brought? Grapes!*

Mrs. Kanitkar: Yes, for your sake, I have brought it from Nasik. Then she presented the basket, As Baba was turning over a few grapes, her daughter, Banuthayi thought the fruits were going to be scattered and wasted by Baba.

Baba pushed aside the whole basket to Mrs. Kanitkar and said: *Go, take away yours.*

Mrs. Kanitkar was mortified. Baba eventually feeling for her picked up a few dried and worthless fruits from the basket and returned the rest saying, *“Go now, let your children eat this.”*

As Mrs. Kanitkar and her daughters returned with the basket, Banuthayi said, “Mother, I do not know

what made me to think so, but as you presented the basket I thought, What! She has given him the whole basket of fruits! It will be all scattered in a trice. He will eat nothing and we shall get nothing.”

Baba’s action and works showed that He appreciated the mother’s intention to present her gift, which was vitiated by the daughter’s unwillingness to part with it.

Baba asked Nana Saheb to stay back when the Muslim family came to visit Him, as He knew fully well what was going to happen - Baba's method of instruction was not sermonic, it was practical and demonstrated through what happens in our daily life.

An account of this episode covered in a little more detail in Sai Charters & Sayings is as follows:

Two Moslem ladies wearing veils came to take Darshan of Baba at the mosque and NGC was sitting by him. NGC tried to get up and go away.

Baba: *You had better remain. If they wish to take Darshan, let them come.*

The ladies came. The older removed her veil and took Darshan. Next, as the younger removed her veil, took Darshan and resumed her veil, Nana, smitten with her beauty, thought to himself, "if only he could have one more opportunity to see that angelic face?" but he said nothing. Baba struck him on the thigh. Then the ladies left.

Baba: *Nana, do you know why I struck you?*

Nana: How can I hide anything from the omniscience of my guru? But I do not understand how such low thoughts should sway my mind, when I am in your immediate presence.

Baba: *You are a man after all. Are you not? The body is full of desires, which spring up as soon as a sense object approaches, but are temples with lovely and well coloured exterior scarce in the world? When we go there, is it to admire the exterior or see the God within? When you are seeing the God in the shrine, do you care for the outside beauty of the building or for that of the image or Paramatma within? Does God remain only in temples? Is he not found in every object in the world as in temples? We are not to bother ourselves about the beauty or ugliness of the exterior, but to concentrate solely on the form taken by and revealing God. Of course! There is nothing wrong in looking at the exterior, but as one looks at it, he must think how clever and powerful the God that produced*

such a beautiful abode is, how he resides therein and how nicely ornamented he is. Nana, if you had directed your thoughts to this way, you would not have had the desire to get one more look at the Moslem beauty's face. Keep this always in mind.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could Baba have known about Hari Kanoba and his father's name despite meeting him only first time?
- How could Baba have known about what was going on in Somdev Swami's mind?
- How could Baba have known about what was going on in Nanasaheb's mind?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 50



Shirdi Sai Samadhi Mandir

Sri Virendra Jyotindra Tarkhad, son of Sri Jyotindra Tarkhad, mentioned as young Tarkhad in chapter 9 of Satcharitra, has written a 1st hand account of a leela similar to the one happened with Balaram Dhurandhar (*"Tarkhad Family's Experiences"*). It was narrated to him as follows, by his father, who was present in the mosque at the time:

Moreshwar Pradhan was a close devotee of Sai Baba. He was a judge in Bombay High court. He was suffering from acute Asthama. He used to be a partner of my grandfather whenever they used to play the Bridge (a game of cards). For the cure of his Asthama my grandfather advised him to visit Shirdi and he obliged. On his very first visit to Shirdi when he met Sai Baba he was offered to inhale the 'Chilim' (a clay pipe which Baba used to smoke) which Baba gave him personally. Moreshwar was rather worried but he inhaled the 'Chilim' and it was a miracle. From that moment onwards, he never got any attack of Asthama. What a strange way of curing a person of his ailment. Moreshwar thanked my grandfather and from then on became an ardent devotee of Shri Sai Baba. It was the Vijayadashmi day of the year 1918, and late afternoon suddenly, Moreshwar got an attack of Asthama. The attack was severe and so, he

sent his servant to Bandra and requested my grandfather to come to Santacruz to his residence. Moreshwar's servant told my grandfather that his master had suddenly taken ill and requested him to rush for his help. Then my grandfather along with my father left their house. Of course, they carried along with them the 'Udi', which Baba had given personally to them on their last visit to Shirdi. They saw Moreshwar in utter distress. My grandfather consoled him. He put Baba's 'Udi' in a glass of water and requested Moreshwar to drink the same. Moreshwar obeyed my grandfather as he was reckoning him to be his very close friend. No sooner did he drink the water than the intensity of the attack went on reducing and in a short while he was feeling relieved. Moreshwar asked my grandfather stating that Baba had said that his Asthma has gone forever in which case how come the revival of the attack? My grandfather advised him not to worry and, in the event, it happens again he should consume Baba's Udi as medicine. However, Moreshwar was not required to do so any more. The consumption of Udi had certainly reduced the Asthma attack but there was an altogether different kind of message behind this incident, which they all realized later on. On that very day at about 2 p.m. Sai Baba had taken

Samadhi in Shirdi and while doing so, He had sent in His typical way a wireless messages to all His ardent devotees.

Baba used to remind devotees for offerings sent by other devotees; couple of such incidences among many recorded in Sai Charters & Sayings are as follows:

- One Dhundiraj V. Gurjar alias Babu Saheb was going to Shirdi and Mrs. Kanitkar gave one rupee to him to be offered to Baba. At Shirdi he stayed for two or three days. Baba asked him for dakshina each day. On the last day -

Baba: *These three days I have been noting with amusement that you are each time giving your own dakshina, hiding in your pocket the rupee handed to you by the lady. Will you give it?*

Then Gurjar, thus reminded, gave the rupee.

- Baba *Vakharkar* of Bassein sent a bunch of plantains to Baba. The bearer came and stood before Baba without delivering it.

Baba: Hello! (addressing the bearer) pluck one of the fruits from the bunch. He (Vakharkar) has not yet taken his meal. Send him a wire that Baba has eaten the plantain and then he will take his meal.

The bearer then remembered that V.'s instructions were exactly what Baba said.

Was Saibaba an ordinary human being or much more because otherwise -

- How could He have known about Tembe Swami sending a coconut for Him through Pundalikrao?
- How could He have known about Kakasaheb Dixit's wish to come to Shirdi and thus planned for his trip to Shirdi with Shama?
- How could He have known about Balaram Dhurandhar and his family's arrival in Shirdi in advance?

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!



CHAPTER 51



Sai@OurPlace

*I*n the end, I will reiterate the fact again that because you have read this far, know for sure that Baba has taken you in His care now. All you have to do now is to continue offering

Him two paise, i.e. Faith and Patience and all your bad times will be over at the earliest.

A conversation regarding Baba fulfilling all wishes of His devotees (Sai Charters & Sayings) is reproduced as follows:

A devotee objected to people going to Baba for temporal benefit e.g. employment, money, children, cure of disease.

Baba: *Do not do that, My men first come to Me on account of that only. They get their heart's desire fulfilled and comfortably placed in life. They then follow Me and progress further. I bring My men to Me from long distances under many pleas. I seek them and bring them to Me. They do not come (of their own accord). I bring them to Me. However distant – even thousands of miles away - My people might be, I draw them to Myself, just as we pull a bird to us with a string tied to its foot.*

Sri Satchitanand Satguru Sainath Maharaj ki Jai!!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Abhishek Verma is neither a PhD nor a columnist, nor a motivational speaker of international repute. Instead, he is your average joe, holds a regular job, watches TV, dreams of travelling the world with his wife.

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Abhishek is also a published author of another ebook - *The Monk from Harvard*, available on Amazon.

But his real passion lies in observing and analyzing people, situations, emotions and to distill these observations into simple, doable everyday practices to make life a little bit better. He believes that when life hands you a lemon...make a whisky sour and well, also a lemon cake!



