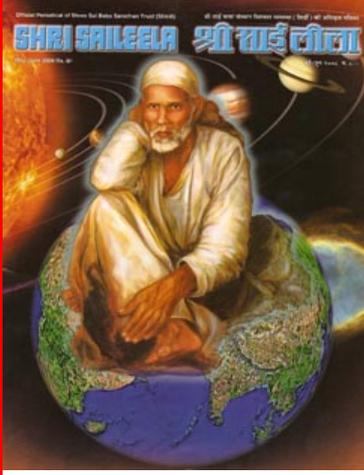


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Back

|| This Universe is my Residence ||

The great tradition of Saints of Maharashtra

The State of Maharashtra has been blessed to be 'the Land of Saints'. Various saints have left their footprints by way of their great tradition and work. They have given several facets to Maharashtra to make it a healthy land – Equality, Brotherhood, Sacrifice, Service, Morality and the like. The various saints have been role models to the Maharashtrian people.

Over the centuries, like rest of India, the Maharashtrian people have got grouped under *Chaturvarna* (four groups). These are *Brahmin* (priest), *Kshatriya* (defense person), *Vaishya* (trader/businessman), *Shoodra* (sweeper etc).

In the initial stages, people chose the profession/work they liked and were good at. The four groups got formed accordingly. However, in the later years, the father passed on his work to the subsequent generations. Thus, a trader's son became trader and a priest's son became priest. Due to this, the forming of groups – which was earlier based on work chosen at one's own free will – became adhered to births in specific families.

Over the centuries, the groups got known as castes. The castes also became so rigid that a *Brahmin's* son was dissuaded from joining say armed forces while a *Shoodra's* son was not allowed to become say a priest.

The great saints of Maharashtra transcended the rigid barriers of casteism. This was staunchly opposed by the so called traditionalists who strongly believed in caste system. However, the saints succeeded in their goal of unifying the society. Thus, we find that the saints of Maharashtra came from all castes – for example Dnyaneshwar and Eknath were *Brahmins*, Tukaram a trader, Namdeo a tailor, Kanhopatra a prostitute, Gora Kumbhar a potter, Rohidas a cobbler, Savata Mali a gardner, Sajan Kasai a butcher and so on.

Re-emergence of the Almighty

Saints outwardly appear to us as mere mortal human beings with flesh and blood. However, in reality, it the Almighty God which has appeared in the guise of saints for the well-being of the society. The God is *Avyakta* (hidden). Though He appears to our eyes in *Sakar Roop* (mortal form), in actuality He is *Nirgun Nirakar*.

Welfare of the society is the sole aim of lives of all saints. With their *Krupa-prasad* (blessings), the common man is able to survive the hardships of his life. The *Satsang* and guidance provided by the saints helps human beings to achieve the ultimate goal of their lives – that is Atma-uddhar.

Vedic PrasthanTrayi (Three paths of Vedas)

The Vedic literature states that, "To gain *Atmadnyan* (knowledge of one self), the man must renounce ill desires and sins. *Sattva Guna* helps a person to purify his mind. Once mind reaches purity, the person sets foot on the path to *Atmadnyan*.

However, the way preached by the Vedas lays importance on *Karmakand* and *Upasana*. The Vedas aver that the route of *Karma*, *Upasana* and *Dnyan* can take one to the Almighty God Himself.

Upanishdas, Brahmasootras and Bhagvad Geeta are the three paths laid down by the Vedas to reach the Almighty.

The Upanishdas contain the gist of Vedas. Brahmasootras depict Upanishadroopi Vedas.

Bhagvad Geeta authored by Maharshi Vyas is the epitome of Vedic literature. It can be said that the Vedas have been reborn in Bhagvad Geeta.

The right to achieve *Moksha* was earlier granted by Vedas only to *Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas* and *Vaishyas*. Bhagvad Geeta and Upanishadas broke this artificial barrier and extended the right also to *Shoodras* and women.

Pauranic Prasthan Trayi (Three paths of Puranas)

After the Vedic *Prasthan Trayi*, there was an emergence of *Pauranic Prasthan Trayi* in the form of Ramayan, Mahabharat and Bhagvat. These advocate *Bhakti Marg* (path of devotion).

Aadhunik Prasthan Trayi (Modern three paths)

In the period after the Puranas, there emerged *Adhunik Prasthan Trayi* from the life, teachings and literature of the saints of the time. These consists of Sant Dnyaneshwar's Dnyaneshwari (also called Bhavartha Deepika), Sant Eknath's Eknathi Bhagvat, Sant Tukaram's *Gatha* and Swami Samartha Ramdas's Dasbodh.

From ancient times, India was subjected to aggressions from the foreigners. The state of Maharashtra was no exception. The invaders took full advantage of the patient and tolerant nature of the local population and tried to corrupt them and their religion.

However, the teachings of these saints guided the society in these difficult times and helped it in protecting their religion.

The Vishvavyapi Shikvan (all encompassing teachings) of the Maharashtrian Saints

The saints mainly stated that :

- * God is Almighty.
- * Destroy whatever that is evil and honor whatever that is pure.
- * Give up all evil desires and devote yourself with your *Kaya -Vacha - Man* (body, speech and soul) in the service of the Almighty.
- * Do your *Kartavya* (duty) without expecting fruits.
- * Incessantly carry on devotion to God. For the purpose, follow the simple way of *Namjap* (continuously reciting the name of God).
- * See God in *Sarvabhoot* (all human beings, animals, mortal and immortal things).
- * Only the God is *Anadi* (from time immemorial), *Anand* (timeless) and *Shashvat* (everlasting). Get introduced to Him, get immersed in Him and realize oneself.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explained the mystery of "how to carry on *Bhakti* (devotion)." He narrated the *Mahima* (importance) of *Namjap*. He considered *Sadguru* as his *Sarvasva* (everything).

Sant Namdeo gave the examples of people from his own household and said that, "Take the name of God – whether you are in good mood or angry. Once He enters your heart, you will not realize when you became His."

Sant Eknath penned tremendous amount of literature – Bhagvat, Bhavartha Ramayan, *Bharud*, *Gaulani*, *Sakal Sant Gatha*, *Abhangawani* and others. He said, "God is the pinnacle of idols."

Several centuries after the above saints, threats were once again faced by the *Sanatan Dharma*. And, in such times, Sant Tukaram emerged. His teachings once again rekindled the flame of *Bhakti* (devotion) in the hearts of the society. His teachings also looked into *Vyavahar* (happenings in daily life).

Sant Ramdas was a contemporary of Sant Tukaram. He spent his life in the service of the society. He penned literature such as *Manache Shloka* and Dasbodh. He was unique in the sense that he was the only saint who touched the political side of the society's life. *Chhatrpati* Shivaji Maharaj consulted Samarth Ramdas Swami on political matters accepting him to be his political *Guru*.

Ramdas Swami observed that there was *Rhas* (decline) in the values followed by the religious society of that time. He rejuvenated the teachings of earlier saints and founded Maharashtra *Dharma*. He was, therefore, known as *Rashtriya Sant* (national saint).

In the fairly recent times, we find that the torch lit by the ancient Maharashtrian saints has been carried into modern times by another great saint – Shri Sai Baba.

The saints of ancient times attempted to unify the various castes into one *Sanatan Dharma*. Sai Baba went one step further. He brought different religions and sects on one path of devotion.

In the *Bhaktimarg* propagated by Sai Baba, He adopted symbols from different religions - worship of fire of the Parsis, tolling of bells of the Christians, blowing of conch shell and worship of *Tulsi* of the Hindus, residing in a Muslim *Masjid*.

He preached about Sarva Dharma Samaveshat Tattva – values which encompass all religions.

He did not reveal the religion in which He was born till He laid down His mortal body. His ears were pierced in Hindu tradition and *Sunta* (circumcization) had not been performed on Him. Therefore, many believed that he was born as a Hindu. But, on the other hand, He wore Kafani, stayed in a *Masjid* like a *Fakir* and performed *Fatiya* while distributing food. Therefore, a group believed that He was a Muslim.

Thus, the long lineage of Maharashtrian saints have kept the torch of devotion burning incessantly.

- Mrs. Mugdha Divadkar

– Translated from original Marathi into

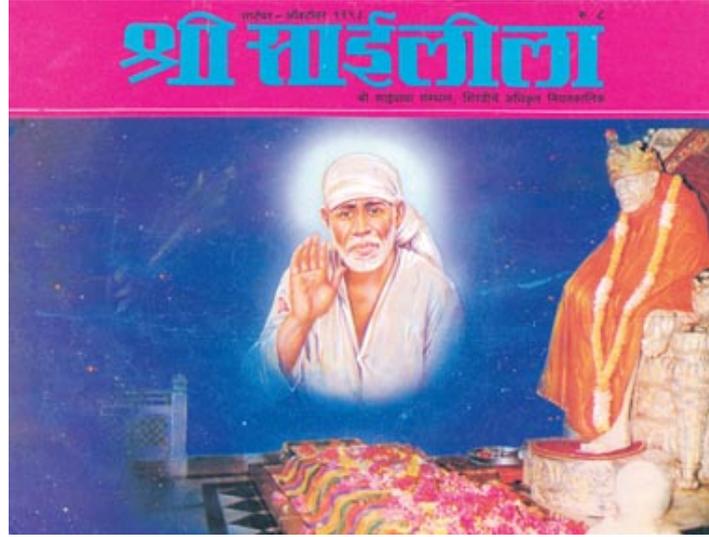
English by **Sudhir**



Back

E x p e r i e n c e s o f

S a i M a h a r a j



An excerpt from a letter written by Hon. Vasudev Sitaram Ratanjankar, Hyderabad Residency, House no.163.

“I first came to know of Sai and His *Leelas* from Kushabhau (*Vedshastra Sampanna* Krishnanathbuva Mirajgaonkar Joshi) in 1908. Many people invited him for *Pooja* and honoured him. This routine went on for many days in the village. Once, there was a *Pooja* at *Vedshastra Sampanna* Sitarambhatji Ghate. Since he was my maternal uncle, I happened to be present at the *Pooja*. Listening to the stories of Sai, it occurred to me that Sai (i.e. His devotee) should visit my house to perform a *Pooja*. Just then Maharaj said, ‘I am coming to your house tomorrow’. Thinking about the *Pooja* arrangements, I went home happily and informed everyone about it.

At dawn, my mother Gangabai dreamt of a sage garbed in saffron clothing coming straight into our house. My mother offered him a place to sit; but he stood in that place and as my mother touched his feet with her head, she woke up. She told everyone about her dream; but no one paid much attention to it.

That very day I went for the *Pooja* again at my uncle’s house. While giving *Tirtha-Prasad*, Maharaj gave me Sai’s photo, which was kept in the *Pooja* and told me to worship it every day. When I came home with the photo, my family members realised the significance of my mother’s dream. Later, I invited Maharaj (Shri Krishnanath Maharaj) for lunch and requested him to perform the *Pooja*. This is how I came to know of Sai.

After listening to people’s experiences of Sai time and again, I felt a desire to take Sai’s *Darshan* and be blessed. However, this could happen only 2-3 years later, in 1912. I was to go to Mumbai to see the arrival of the king of the British empire; but one fine morning Shri Shivdas Dhate gave me a ticket to Shirdi. I took it as an invitation from Baba, cancelled my Mumbai visit and left for Shirdi the very same evening. There I experienced a lot of miracles and signs. Since I felt like writing some poems on Sai I also wrote a ‘*Padyamala*’.

An example of the many miracles is that of Late Smt. Malanbai, daughter of Late Shri Damodar Ranganath Joshi Degaonkar and also my maternal cousin. She was suffering from fever for a long time, which ultimately turned to be TB. Many doctors and medicines were tried; but to no avail. In the end, we started giving her Baba’s *Udi* along with the medicines. Fed up of her illness, Malanbai kept saying, ‘Take me for Baba’s *Darshan*. Only then I will be cured.’ But, she was so weak that she could barely sit. Travelling would have been dangerous. In the end, the doctors relented and gave her permission to go, thinking there could be some psychological benefit. She was taken to Shirdi accompanied by 2-3 other people.

As soon as Baba saw her, He started hurling abuses and said, ‘Let her lie on a blanket. Give her only water from the *Matka* (clay pot) to drink.’ She lay there for 7-8 days surviving only on water; but kept repeating that only Baba would cure her.

7-8 days later, even though it was past Baba’s time to get up, He did not. People who had gone for *Kakad Aarati* waited patiently; but kept wondering, why Baba was not getting up.

On the other hand, Malanbai passed away and some of her relatives started

IS BABA LIVING AND HELPING NOW ?

– Compiled by **Jyoti Ranjan Raut**

“A lady has fallen ! She must be dead !!”

“The lady is safe ! She is alive !!”

Mrs. Sonal Mohan Bhide [302, Om Satyendra Society, Rajaji Path, Street No. 2, Near Patkar School, Dombivli (East), District Thane, Maharashtra State.] :-

6th Dec. 2007 - Thane Railway Station -Platform II - Time 9.30 pm...

While waiting for the train to Dombivli, I was listening to a *Sai-dhun* on my mobile.

Just as the train entered the station, I moved a little forward. All of a sudden someone snatched my mobile, jumped onto the tracks, and ran away. The sudden jolt was tremendous and I fell on to the tracks. I saw death staring me in the face. As the headlights of the train came closer I could see the faces of all my family members. I prayed to Sai, “Now do what you wish.” Somehow, perhaps inspired by Sai I turned to my left and squeezed myself into a tiny bundle.

The motorman braked, but three bogies went over me before the train stopped. People on the platform screamed, “A lady has fallen under the train! She must be dead! Her body must be in pieces!!” But when I crawled out from the space between the two wheels, the people let out a hurrah! “The lady is safe! She is alive!!”

I was carrying a purse and a bag and was dressed in a *salwar kameez* with a *dupatta*, but there was not a scratch anywhere! Isn't this a miracle? All my life I shall never forget that my Sai saved me and gave me a new lease of life.

Om Sai! Sri Sai ! Jai Jai Sai!

Sangmesh Hiremath [Shubhagan I, Sai Niketan Mansion, 87/701, A Wing, Punam Sagar Complex, Mira Road (E), Mumbai]

MIRACLES OF SAI BABA

I have been a devotee of Sai Baba for more than 13 years. When I came to Mumbai in search of a job, I was penniless and had only a few clothes. With the influence of a Sai devotee, I too became one and began to worship Babaji. With his blessings I got employment in reputed companies and now have my own business and am happily married.

My elder brother, Sharanbasava Hiremath has a daughter named Aishwarya who is 10 years old and is suffering from a heart ailment. As per investigations carried out at the renowned Bombay Hospital, a 10 mm hole was found in her heart and it was enlarging. Immediate heart surgery was advised, lest we lose the girl. But she was referred to the Jaidev Institute of Cardiology at Bangalore and Narayana Hridayalaya through a relative. They too concluded that urgent surgery was the only solution. The treatment would cost several lakhs. Since Sharanbasava was not in a position to bear this heavy toll, I advised him to leave the entire responsibility on Baba and start worshipping and praying to him every day.

They strictly followed my instructions and are finding a radical improvement in the health of Aishwarya. One and a half years later the case was referred to the hospital for check-up and it was found that not only had the enlarging of the hole stopped but the hole was now only 5mm and the girl out of danger! The only medicine administered to Aishwarya was the *Teerth* and *Udi* which came at no cost! With complete faith in Baba, they have now turned their house into a temple of Sai and are leading a healthy and prosperous life.

Smt. Shakuntala C. Javali (Nalme Building, Shivagiri IInd Main First Cross, Dharwad - 580 007, Karnataka State.) :-

Miracle of Shri Samartha Sadguru Sai Baba

All of us in our family are staunch Sai devotees. I was suffering from mental strain, depression and bodily ailments. Doctors diagnosed me as a patient with diabetes and blood pressure and put me on a strict diet. This resulted in my dreading the disease and control over sugary substances. Inevitably I begged before God.

Some friends who were devotees of Sai Baba advised me to go to Shirdi with *Shraddha* and *Saburi*.

Some how I procured the *Sai Satcharit* in the Kannada version and read one chapter daily. I longed to visit Shirdi, but as per the 11 sayings of Sai Baba, was called upon only in April 1994. No sooner did I get down from the bus in Shirdi, my heart started thumping with pleasure and I got the first *Mukha darshan*.

The next day after attending *Kakad Aarti* and taking *darshan* of the *Samadhi* and *Dwarkamai* with a humble request to Baba to restore my good health I met an old lady with a plate full of *pedhas* as *Prasad*(which was sugary). I was astonished to see my desire to eat sweets (though forbidden by the doctor) thus fulfilled by the gentle lady. I took one *pedha* and turned to my husband for him to take one himself. But I was surprised when he could not see any old lady nearby. Sai had understood my sorrow and offered me the *pedha* through the guise of an old lady.

Thereafter we have been visiting Shirdi annually and receive regular *Udi* and *Prasad*.

In 2003, there was a dark cloud over my house. My younger son who is an engineer and had his own fabrication unit in Hubli, was facing heavy losses and consequently some court cases regarding loans.

Things were the worst till 2007, despite our regular worship and Thursday visits to the local Sai Baba temple.

I decided to observe Sai Baba *Saptaha* during October 2007 near *kartik amavasya*. The day after I finished the first *saptaha*, a very young, handsome and charming *sadhu* knocked at my door, saying Sai Ram. He spoke in Kannada and requested me to open the front door, which is usually shut when I am alone. He again appealed to me to come out and offer him a coconut and eleven flowers. I hesitated to open the door and told him to accept the coconut and a rupee. He repeatedly requested me to accept this as God's blessing and to light a lamp of cow's ghee at Shirdi, it being a *kartika* day. He blessed me and my house with a bright future for my family and the end of all troubles past, present and future. He then vanished and was never seen again.

I narrated this entire episode to my husband who immediately arranged to send half a kilo of cow's ghee to Shirdi, the next day being the last day of *kartika* and an *amavasya* too. Two days later we were very happy to receive an *Udi* Packet from Shirdi stating it was Baba's *Prasad*. It meant he had accepted me as a disciple. My husband is a *bhakta mandal* member and a contributor to Sai Leela magazine in English.

Ravi Kumar Khoshu (120-T, Poonch House, Govt. Flats, Talab Tilloo, Jammu - 180 002.) :-

My Experiences with Sai Baba

Someone presented a calendar of Sai Baba to my father in 1980, and it was kept in my room as a mark of respect to the saint. However we did not worship it.

In 1989, my two and a half year old son suffered from alopecia. Neither Allopathic nor *Ayurvedic* medicines helped arrest the disease. He became totally bald. All his body hair disappeared. Doctors at PGI Chandigarh asked us to bring him when he was 13 so as to be treated with steroids, since steroid treatment at two and a half years would retard his growth.

While I was discussing this problem with a friend in my office, a fellow officer asked if I knew anything about Sai Baba of Shirdi, and would I be willing to use anything from there for treatment of my child? Since I had a faint idea about the saint and being totally disillusioned due to the sad condition of my son, I agreed to abide by his advice. Later he took me home and gave me a photograph of Sai. He asked me to frame it and worship it with devotion and to remain totally vegetarian on Thursdays. He also gave me *Udi* and oil brought from *Dwarkamai* and told me to apply it on the body of the boy and put some *Udi* in his mouth.

I must mention here that I was a total non-vegetarian and living in a cold place like Kashmir, being vegetarian was unthinkable. But I followed the officer's advice completely. Those days I was posted in the State Road Transport Corporation and non-vegetarian eatables were usually served at all meetings held at the Head Office. That year most meetings were held on Thursdays, but I abstained from eating non-vegetarian food in any form, much to the surprise of my colleagues. Perhaps Baba was testing me.

I left for Shirdi in January 1990, along with my family for our first visit, upon the officer's advice. We stayed there for a week. While listening to a discourse held in Lendi Bagh about the use of Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian foods, both my wife and me resolved not to eat Non-Vegetarian food anymore. Since then we are strict vegetarians.

We met Sivanesan Swamiji , with an introduction letter from the officer, and after seeing the boy, Swamiji gave us *Udi*, *Teerth* from Baba's morning bath and *Sindoor* (used for applying on portraits of Sai Baba in *Dwarkamai*). He also asked Shri Brajrao Dalve (Shri Sia Ramji) to prepare some medicines for the boy and assured us that all our problems would be overcome with the grace of Baba and that we should pray for his blessings. With Sai's grace and all the above things including medicines prepared by Shri Sia Ramji, hair started growing after two years time and all the problems faced by the boy came to an end. Today he is totally free of that problem and is studying Engineering in Mumbai.

Another incident regarding Baba's miracles happened in 1992. My wife and this same boy (who was 4 years old at that time) were returning in the evening after a visit to her uncle's house at Gangyal in Jammu. The house was 1.5 km away from the main road. The sky was overcast and my wife realised that the road was deserted. She got frightened and mentioned to her son her fears of walking alone and doubts about reaching the main road. But the boy told her not to fear as Sai Baba was walking in front of them. When she told him that she could see no one, he repeatedly assured her that Sai Baba had been walking in front of them ever since they left uncle's house. Though it was late, both reached home safely.

Another time, during the rainy season in the same year, my wife along with our daughter and son were returning home during daytime. They had to cross a small *nallah* in the middle of the road, which had to be crossed by balancing on two cement poles. Heavy rains caused the *nallah* to be swollen in full. The water had risen to around 2-3 feet and the cement poles were submerged. My wife was worried and kept praying to Baba for help or else they would be stranded in the heavy rain.

Out of the blue, a Sikh boy around 14-15 years old came towards her and on his own offered to carry the kids across the *nallah*. He lifted both the children on his shoulders and crossed the *nallah*. My wife almost ran after him, fearing he would carry away the two children. But when he went on the other side he put them down on the roadside, and my wife began talking to them. After a few minutes she remembered about the *Sardar* boy but there was no trace of him even though it was a straight road. It then struck her that it was Sai who had come to her rescue and without his help it would have been impossible to reach home as later enquiries revealed that the *nallah* took about 10-12 hours to recede.

We generally visit Shirdi in June-July when there are vacations in schools and colleges. But all these years I have observed that though my leave is sanctioned at the last moment, I have never experienced any difficulty in arranging confirmed reservations to and fro at such short notice. Perhaps Sai Baba keeps a slot of 4-5 tickets for me and my family on the days I wish to undertake the journey!

One day while praying at the *Gurusthan*, when I put my forehead on the feet of Sai Baba, an electric current passed through my forehead and my whole body. This happened again in the evening on the same day. I asked my family members if they had a similar experience, but they replied in the negative. I narrated the experience to Sivanesan Swamiji. He said it was a blessing Baba showered on me. There are many such experiences we have had on our visits to Baba's Temple.

Pramod Krishna Panjri & Sudha Pramod Panjri (Anupam C.H.S. Ltd., B/201, Sector 8, Plot No. 25, Charkop, Kandivli (West), Mumbai - 400 067.) :-

How Baba is Living and Helping Now

My experience shows how Baba is Living and Helping Now.

I was introduced to the worship of Sri Sai Baba by my parents Mrs. Leela Krishna Panjri and Mr. Krishna Vasudev Panjri and am forever thankful to them.

In 1992, I had decided that once I stopped drinking alcohol with the grace of Baba, I would write his stories, but I forgot all about it. I used to be a drunkard 24x7. Yet I used to stand in front of Baba's photo and pray to Sai to help me get rid of this vice. Everyone was fed up of my habit and my friends predicted I would not live long. But by some miracle of Sai, I stopped drinking from April 22, 1992.

Sai has his ways and even if I forget, will get what has to be done anyway. So here is the story:

I was cured but I forgot all about writing Sai's stories. One day I again stood in front of Sai's photo and told Sai I would write his stories once my son Tushar got admission for M.B.A. in U.K. But getting a visa was not an easy task.

Finally, with the blessings of our Kuldevata Raj Braman, Ganeshji, Hanumanji, Swami Samarth and Sri Sai Baba, who came in the form of several well-wishers my son could go to U.K. for further studies. After getting his visa he left the same day for Shirdi and Akkalkot with *Pedhas* for Sai and Swami Samarth. A *Satyanarayana Puja* too was done. On 28 September, 2007 he left for London and with the grace of Sai is doing well there.

I am sure Sai will help him there in his hour of need.

‘Bow to Sri Sai, Peace be to all’.

Forever Sai Baba devotees

K. Venkata Krisnayya, B.A. (Hons.), B.L.

Advocate (H. No. 1-9-18/4/1/1, Market Lane, Ram Nagar, Hyderabad - 5000 020, Andhra Pradesh.) :-

Demand of Age Proof by Sai Baba

I was suffering from fever during nights, when my daughter suggested that we should visit the shrine of Sri Sai Baba at Shirdi. We left by Manmad Express from Secunderabad Railway Station at night. When we were approaching Nagarsol station, the train stopped at the outer signal. I was on a 40 days Sai Baba *Diksha Vratam* and was dressed in green. At that time someone in civil dress entered the sleeper coach in which I was travelling and inquired about my berth no. asking my name. He came to my berth and asked me to show my reservation ticket. I wondered who he was. When he saw that I was travelling on a senior citizen concession, he asked for ‘age–proof’ in a harsh and haughty voice. I was surprised at his tone and immediately showed him my passport. He grinned upon seeing it and left the place.

Something struck me as to the identity of this individual and I went in the direction he went. But he seemed to vanish in thin air. I went to the next passenger coach but everyone was sleeping and there was no sign of any one checking tickets. I then realised that it must be none other than the Saint of Shirdi, Sri Sai Baba. This was the first time I came in contact with Sri Sai Baba.

(Contd. from page 24)

making the funeral arrangements. Her mother and mine sat next to Malanbai in grief. Sathekaka (a devotee) tried to comfort them. Suddenly, Malanbai moved, yawned and opened her eyes. She looked quite terrified and looked all around. A wave of happiness spread among the people around her and they listened as she narrated her story. ‘A black man was taking me with him, when I cried for Baba’s help. Baba came and beat up the man with His baton (‘*Sota*’), saved me from his clutches and took me inside the *Chavdi*.’ She described the *Chavdi* without ever having been there.

While here in the *Chavdi*, people were discussing, why Baba was yet asleep, when suddenly Baba woke up pounding His baton (‘*Sota*’) and ran to the place, where the girl was staying (Dixit’s *Wada*). People followed Him and met those who were coming to report the girl’s miraculous coming to life. Thus Baba proved, how He saved His devotees even from death. There are many more miracles; but lack of space constrains me.”

Shri Sai Leela, Year I, Paush Shaké 1845 / vol. 11 Translated into English by

Jyoti Ranjan Raut

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In Sai's Proximity

– Mrs. Mugdha Divadkar

DNYANNATH JANI

(RANADE)

He was the son of Narayan Motiram Jani (Ranade). As a young boy, he accompanied his mother to the *Pravachans* delivered by greats like Dasganu Maharaj, Sonopant Dandekar, Dhunda Maharaj, Ranganath Swami Parabhanikar.

While listening to them, several profound thoughts started going through his mind - Will I ever be able to meet *Paramatma* ? How did he meet *Bhakta* Pralhad ? If not the God, I must at least be able to meet a *Sadguru*. To achieve that, I am even prepared to live in solitude like *Bhakta* Pralhad.

He developed an inclination to be alone. As soon as his school was over, his feet turned to the solace of Parvati (a hill temple in Pune).

In Pune's Kasba Peth, there is a *Devali* (small temple) of Shri Bhiravnath. A *Vibhuti* by the name Harinath Baba was residing there from a period prior to 1938 till 1947. Harinath Baba granted a *Darshan* to Dnyannath, when one day he was alone on top of Parvati and also assured him to solve his questions about *Paramarth*. The *Vibhuti* became his *Sadguru* and also gave him *Diksha* of Nath *Sampraday*.

Smt. Sumati Mahadevkar writes about this incident :-

“Several *Satvik* and *Antarmukh* disciples like Dnyannath were attracted towards Harinath Baba and so was Dnyannath. He carefully scrutinized Harinath Baba and then only accepted as his *Sadguru*. He took lessons in *Yog – Bhakti – Dnyan – Vairagya* at the feet of his *Sadguru*. A staunch bond developed between the *Guru - Shishya*. Later on, Dnyannath gave the benefit of Harinath Baba's guidance to the various followers of Nath *Panth* and Datta *Upasak* residing in Pune. Amongst the people who benefited prominent were Abasaheb Mujumdar, Jagannath Maharaj Pandit. Hanmantraoji Umarji and others.”

The description narrated by Dnyannath is also amazing. About his *Sadguru*, he writes :-

“My *Sadguru* made me sit for *Dhyan-Dharana* for hours together in front of the statue of Shri Gorakshanath in a dark cave. Because of the blessings of my *Sadguru*, I gained *Adhyatma Dnyan*, *Dnyaneshwari*, *Antarang Sadhana* in that dark cave. From time to time we two met in solitude. During such times, my *Sadguru* imparted in-depth knowledge about the five important facets of Nath *Sampraday* namely *Dhuni*, *Pani*, *Roath*, *Jyot* and *Patra Devada*.”

Harinath Baba laid down his mortal life on the auspicious day of Ram *Navami* on Tuesday the 28th April 1950. Exactly 22 days earlier, Harinath Baba had given an inkling about the future course of events to Dnyannath.

On a foot road leading to Palasdari, near Karjat in Raigad district, there is a *Math* called as *Chochi Math*. Dnyannath performed the last rites of Harinath Baba at this place in the presence of disciples of Harinath Baba.

For about 18 years thereafter, Harinath Baba's death anniversary was observed at this place. Later on, with prior permission of Harinath Baba, it is being performed at Harinath *Kuti* (Plot No 45, *Tulshi Baug* Colony, Near *Dasha Bhuja* Ganpati, Pune – 9).

Thus, the good deeds and good fortune of Narayanrao bore fruits in the life of Dnyan-nath. Such are the blessings of Shri Sai Baba.

Note :-

In *Adhyay* 33 of Shri Sai Satcharita, a reference has been made to Narayan Motiram Jani. However, his correct surname was 'Ranade'.

As is well-known, Shri Sai Satcharita is based on experiences of various devotees mainly as narrated first hand to Shri Hemadpant. However, the book also draws on experiences of devotees as narrated by others – such as seniors like Mhalsapati.

This may be the reason for the minor inaccuracy having crept in the *Pothi*.

(Contd.)

– Translated from original Marathi into

English by **Sudhir**

□□□

“I see myself everywhere. There is no place without me. I fill all space in all the directions. There is nothing else but me. Hold fast to this conviction - and push away the misguidance of *Maya*. Veil your sight and realise that there is nothing save myself. I am omnipresent. There is nothing else besides me in this world. I exist not only in this world but in all the three (the earth, the sky and the nether world). Wherever there is such unparalleled belief, there is no scope for fear. When the being realises that the Pure Consciousness fills all, that person is devoid of ego and pride. Sit wherever you are and ask me. Why do you wander from place to place ? I will satisfy your curiosity. Have this much faith. I fill the space. There is not a place where I am not. I appear anywhere where there is devotees' deep devotion. I am just a witness to the deeds that happen on account of fate. The Eternal Lord is the doer and the mover. He alone is the Compassionate One.”

Sai *Samartha* had the knowledge of everything - the future, the past and the present... Do not have doubts about this. Sainath is really so. I am telling you the essence of my experience for the sake of the good of the devotees. Whoever puts his head truly at His feet with single minded devotion, He is the only saviour, the protector for him, the only one Who gives assurance, the doer, the warder of all difficulties. Whatever good or bad takes place, it is only due to God, Who holds the reins. He is the protector. He is the destroyer. He is the only active force - the doer. Sai *Samartha* was the store of knowledge. He imparts the wealth of knowledge according to the intelligence of the devotee and first decides about his capability and purity. He was intuitive and at the outset itself He knew everybody in their entirety. He decided on the right means of teaching and the right kind of discipline in accordance with the capability. Whatever a person deserves He decides before hand and works according to their capacities. Baba carries their responsibilities on Himself. Similarly, though we look old and respectable, before that *Siddha* Sai we are like children behaving childishly, always keen on enjoying humour. Once there is singular faith, then all the calamities of that devotee are warded off and he is granted all that is desired deeply. All the difficulties are resolved. In short, when we plan we do not know the totality of the situation. The saints know where lies our welfare and where not. There is nothing that they do not know. The past, present and future is all clearly perceived by them, just as one can read the palm of one's own hand. Devotees are benefited if they behave according to their guidance.

- Shri Sai Satcharita

FOLLOWING DEVOTEES ARE HONOURER WITH

SAIBHAKTIPRASARBHUSHAN

Shri Makarand H. Pundalik Kalyan, Dist. Thane, Maharashtra State. 53 Annual Members

Shri Anant Eknath Bagad Devala, Dist. Nashik, Maharashtra State. 54 Annual Members

Shri Dattatraya Narayan Tare Murabe, Dist. Thane, Maharashtra State. 65 Annual Members

Shri Subhash Garg New Delhi. 53 Annual Members

Shri Dilip Shankarrao Lande Barshi Takali, Maharashtra State. 65 Annual Members

Shri Bankatlal Hiralal Lohiya Mangarulnath, Maharashtra State. 55 Annual Members

Shri Bhalchandra Shridhar Gondkar Vadodara, Gujarat State. 71 Annual Members

Smt. Jayashree S. Raorane Umar Khurd, Tal. Athani, Karnataka State. 56 Annual Members

Mrs. Sulakshana S. Shewalkar Manor, Tal. Palghar, Maharashtra State. 55 Annual Members

Prof. Mrs. Madhubala R. Mishra Yeotmal, Maharashtra State. 60 Annual Members

Mrs. Sharada Sunil Bhamere Aurangabad, Maharashtra State. 53 Annual Members
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