



Estd. Year 1923

Year 8 Issue 2

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Kaliyugee Avataara Saguna Parabrahma Saachara

Avateerna Jhaalaase Swami Datta Digambara,

Datta Digambara Aarati Sai Baba

[In this age of Kaliyug (The dark and troublesome age of present), You are true incarnation of Brahma, that has taken form and descended on this earth. You are also Swami Datta Digambar (Three-headed Deity Who is considered as combined incarnation of Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh). Datta Digambar. We do *Aarati* to You Sai Baba.]

O Sai ! One day, one of Your devotees Madhavrao Vamanrao Adkar came to the Dwarkamai *Masjid* and started reciting his self-composed *Madhyana (Noon) Aarati* :

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The musical instruments played their best at that juncture, and Your face beamed with steady and added radiance and beauty, and all the persons drank this lustre to their hearts' content. O Baba ! You blessed this poet-devotee by putting Your Divine Hand on his head and wished his *Madhyana (Noon) Aarati* immortality with Your nectar-like words :-

“Vamanrao ! My devotees will easily cross this ocean of mundane existence if they recite your composition with absolute *Shradha & Saburi*.” O Sai ! Words fail to describe the scene and splendour of that occasion. Indeed, when You spread Your charm, all Your devotees just surrender and heartily dance to Your tune and sing :-

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Avateerna Jhaalaase Swami Datta Digambara, Datta Digambara... Aarati Sai Baba

O *Sadguru* ! May I please take Your leave to describe as to how this *Aarati* imported a change in the plight of one Your devotees' daughter ? Nana Saheb Chandorkar was posted as a *Mamledar* at Jamner, which is nearly 160 km. away from Shirdi. His daughter Maina Tai was in family way with labour pains on; and even the most eloquent words uttered by any of Your devotees would not succeed in giving expression to Maina's travails and convulsions which she was experiencing at those moments. As such Nana and his wife were stressed. Their screams touched Your all-hearing celestial ears in the Dwarkamai *Masjid*. O Sai ! You, without any loss of time, sent Adkar's *Aarati* and *Udi* to Jamner through Ramgir Bua. (**Sai Satcharita, Chapter 33**) Nana Saheb Chandorkar, immediately on receipt of the courier, mixed the *Udi* with some water and gave it to his daughter to drink; and he himself started reciting the *Aarati* :

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Lo ! Now Maina Tai totally had an easy labour, and infant was delivered without difficulty.

O Sai ! You have neither form nor any extension; You always live everywhere. You carry on, as a wirepuller, all the actions of the man who trusts You and merges in You. **(Sai Satcharita, Chapter 28)**

This ocean of mundane existence is very hard to cross. That is an absolute and universal truth, O Baba ! Waves of infatuation beat high there against the bank of bad thoughts and break down trees of fortitude. The breeze of egoism blows forcibly and makes the ocean rough and agitated. *Crocodiles in the form of anger and hatred move there fearlessly.* Eddies in the form of the idea “I and mine” and other doubts whirl there incessantly and innumerable fishes in the form of censure, hate and jealousy play there. O *Sadguru* Sai ! Though this ocean is so fierce and terrible, Thy devotees have not the least to fear of these crocodiles. Thou art the *Rishi* Agastya.

Legend has it that Agastya was a famous sage or *Rishi* of the *Vedic* period, and is considered the greatest of the seven sages or *Saptarishis*. It is believed that he was the first *Rishi* who brought and popularized the *Vedic* religion to the southern part of India. He meditated continuously for a year, living only on water and air. Pleased with his tremendous devotion the Lord came down to earth, blessed him and left leaving behind a stream of Ganga - now known as Pravara River. Pravara River is an important river in the western parts of Maharashtra. It is one of the major tributaries of the River Godavari. Situated not far from the River Godavari, Shirdi is Your abode, O Baba !

O Sai ! Thou art undoubtedly the *Rishi* Agastya who dries up the *Bhava-sagar* (the ocean of worldly existence) by bringing this ocean into Your palm and drinking it up, thereby letting the crocodiles die that move fearlessly there in the middle of this ocean in the form of anger and hatred. Thou art really the

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One story about *Rishi* Agastya goes that Indra ruthlessly killed Vritrasura, a demon who constantly harassed the Gods, with the help of *Kalakeyas* (a group of 60,000 demons working under the leadership of Vritrasura). After the death of their leader, the *Kalakeyas* got into the ocean and hid themselves at the bottom. Every day after sunset they used to come out and used to cause lot of trouble to the great sages and the *Brahmins*. Indra requested Agni and Vayu to chase and destroy them. However, it remained extremely difficult to kill the *Kalakeyas* because of their staying at the bottom of the ocean. With the permission of Lord Vishnu the Gods requested *Rishi* Agastya who brought the ocean into his palm and drank it up, thereby killing the *Kalakeyas*. O Baba ! Using ‘**Gajendra Moksha**’ episode as a case-study, which occurs in **Shrimad Bhagwat Purana’s** *canto* 8, *chapters* 2, 3 & 4, Sage Shukadev narrated it to king Parikshit. In my opinion, the literary value of this text is par excellence as is its power to guide Your devotees towards spiritual evolution and to make them realize that Thou art really the

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There was a beautiful mountain named Trikuta. The waves of the ocean lapped at the foot of Trikuta. There were thick forests on the mountain. And in the forests there lived a king of elephants named Gajendra. He ruled over all the other elephants in the herd.

One hot day, Gajendra proceeded to a lake in the forest with his family and friends to cool off in its fresh waters. Suddenly, a crocodile that lived in the pond caught Gajendra by his leg. Gajendra, in spite of being an elephant could not break free. He then, called out for help. All his friends, the other elephants gathered around him

and tried to help; but in vain. The crocodile was stronger than all the elephants put together. When the family and relatives saw 'death' coming close to Gajendra, and everyone realized that everything was lost, they left Gajendra alone. Gajendra tried for a long time to escape from the crocodile. He trumpeted until he was hoarse. The crocodile simply would not let go.

The elephant and the crocodile struggled for a thousand years. Now the elephant began to tire; but the crocodile's strength was still undiminished. Gajendra lost a lot of blood. His haemoglobin fell gradually, and he became progressively more and more anemic and weak. He finally realized that only God could help him and called out to Lord Narayan.

The elephant started to pray to Lord Vishnu :-

“Please help me O Lord ! Save me from the clutches of death !

How can an ordinary mortal recognize You, when great sages find it hard to achieve You ? You are all merciful.

Take me to a place where there is no fear and death ! I am not asking you to save me from the clutch of the crocodile, or that I should survive this attack ! I am aware that I not only have a body of an elephant but also a fat mind of an elephant ! What is the use of keeping this life ? I want to be liberated from my ignorant mind which hides the resplendent soul ! I can only be saved by Your grace !”

Lord Vishnu heard Gajendra's cries for help and appeared from Vaikuntha on his vehicle, Garuda. He sent the *Sudarshana Chakra* whirling down. The *Chakra* killed the crocodile and set Gajendra free. Gajendra offered Lord Narayan a lotus and thanked Him for saving his life.

Strange as it may seem, Gajendra, in his previous life was a great devotee called Indradyumna who was also a great king. One day, Agastya, a great sage came to visit the king. Indradyumna did not receive the sage with the respect that the latter expected. The enraged Agastya cursed the king that he would be born as an elephant in his next birth, as he sat heavy on his seat and did not rise to greet him.

The crocodile in its last life was a king called HuHu in the Gandharva planet. Once, while enjoying himself in the waters, he pulled the leg of a sage. The enraged sage cursed the king to become a crocodile in his next life. The repentant HuHu asked for pardon. The sage proclaimed that though he could not retrieve the curse, the crocodile would be liberated from the cycle of birth and death when Gajendra would be saved by the God Himself.

O Baba ! You abundantly pour out Your showers of grace upon me, and I hear You explain it to me that '**Gajendra Moksha**' is not just a story of an elephant and a crocodile; it is about the man, his ego and his selfishness. The man (the elephant-symbol) is surrounded by so many illusions '*Maya*' that he becomes egoistic. For him, nothing is stronger than himself. But, when any problem or the dark image of his works (symbol - crocodile) comes face to face, only then he learns about his true position which is no less than hollow and fake one. This is the time he regrets and surrenders himself to the Almighty. O Sai ! In this story, the elephant was fighting for life, with the crocodile. As long as the elephant was struggling on his own, Lord Vishnu did not come to his rescue. When the elephant had no strength left for any further struggle, he screamed to Lord Vishnu, saying - "O Lord ! You and You alone can save me; there is nothing I can do." Then Lord Vishnu rushed with His *Sudarshana Chakra* and saved the elephant.

O Almighty Sai ! The symbols, throughout this presentation, speak the lesson loudly and clearly :-

The symbolism so far :

Man is Gajendra.

The world is the lake where **man** plays the game of life with family and friends.

The crocodile is ‘**this world full of illusions, desires, death and difficulties**’ which attack **man**.

The lesson :-

Neither **family** nor **friends** can liberate **one** from the clutch of **death**.

God answers one’s prayers.

It is said that ‘**Nirbal Key Bal Sai**’, i.e. O Baba ! Thou art the strength of the weak !

O *Sadguru* Sai ! Most of us, like Gajendra, cry out to You when caught in hopeless situation :-

Aum Namo Bhagawate Tasmay Yat Etcchidatmakam

Purushaayaa Dibijaay Pareshaayaabhi Dheemahee

Yasminnidum Yetaschedum Yenedum Eedum Swayam

Yosmaat Parasmaasch Parah Tumprapadye Swayambhoowam.

[‘Gajendra Moksha’ Stuti (Prayer)]

[Salutation to that Lord from whom everything sentient arises. To the *Purusha* the primordial seed, the Lord of all, I bow. I take shelter in Him, in Whom is the entire universe, from Whom it all emanates. Who is Himself its cause and Who is beyond all the utmost beyond.]

O Baba ! You always think of him who remembers You. You require neither conveyance, carriage and *tonga*, nor train and aeroplane. You run and manifest Yourself to him who lovingly calls You for help. (**Sai Satcharita, Chapter 40**) Thou art really the

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O Sai ! Thou art indeed the boat, which will safely ferry us across this ocean. The incident of Chenabasappa and Veerabhadrappa illustrates this point. (**Sai Satcharita, Chapter 47**) They were sworn enemies of each other, and one always quarreled with the other. After their death Chenabasappa was born as a frog and Veerabhadrappa was born as a snake in their next birth. Once, when You were scrolling along a small riverbank, You heard the croaking of a frog. You rushed to the spot and found that a huge black snake was holding a big frog in its mouth. You recognized them as Chenabasappa and Veerabhadrappa, and addressed them thus, “Oh Veerabhadrappa, has not your enemy Chenabasappa yet repented though he has been born as a frog, and you too, though born as a serpent, still maintain bitter enmity against him ? Fie upon you, be ashamed, give up your hatred now and be at rest !”

Hearing these words, the snake left the frog quickly and dived into the river and disappeared. The frog also jumped away and hid itself in the bushes. O Baba ! Thou

art really the

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O Sai ! Legend has it that, once, a *Brahmin* boy named Narendranath who was an ardent devotee of Durga Parameshwari was bathing in the River Yamuna. Suddenly there came a crocodile and caught hold of the boy. The boy began to call the Goddess Parvati...

SARVA MANGALA MAANGALYAE SIVE SARVAARTHA SAADHIKAE !

SHARANYAE TRAYAMBIKAE DEVI NARAAYANI NAMOSTUTE !

[Thou art the all auspicious Shiva (*Shakti* aspect), the bountiful; I prostrate myself at Thy feet.

O Triyambaks (three eyed one), Gauri (the one with a fair complexion, Parvati) Naaraayanee.]

He cried in such a sympathetic tone, that the Goddess who lives on mount Kailash with Lord Shiva was moved. She came rushing to the spot. She showered all Her strength, knowledge and auspicious upon him in order to save the boy. The strength of her austerity was so great that it made the boy shine with effulgence, which the crocodile could not stand. The crocodile left Narendranath and disappeared in the water.

O *Sadguru* Sai ! We are all like Narendranath caught by the crocodile of delusion, while trying to swim the waters of worldly ocean. If we pray to You, Who is Auspicious, Mercy and Bliss, then You bestow upon us such strength that helps us to escape the delusion and to get liberation :-

Sai Shiva Shankari Sai Parameshwari

Ambaa Bhavaani Maa

Jaya Jagat Janani Maa

Jaya Maa Jaya Maa Jaya Maa

(Sai Who is Parvati, Supreme Goddess, Mother and Giver of life, Victory to the mother of the Universe)

O Sai ! Thou art really the

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O Sai Ram ! During Tretayuga, in the war between Lord Ram and Ravan, Meghnath, the son of Ravan, threw a javelin, which was notorious for killing warriors. It struck Lakshman, the younger brother of Lord Ram, in the chest and made him deeply unconscious. Jamvant spoke at that juncture and said, "O Lord Ram ! Let us not lose time; let us not delay treatment of Lakshman. It is best we get Sushen, the physician from Lanka, who knows the remedy." At that moment, Hanuman assumed a microscopic human form and entered the inner city of Lanka. While moving in, he was doubtful if Sushen would comply with his request to come to Lord Ram's camp or not. So, Hanuman, inspired by a plan, lifted the house of *Vaid* Sushen, while he was inside it and brought it intact to Lord Ram's camp. When Sushen emerged, he found himself in the presence of Lord Ram Himself. Sushen fell at the feet of Lord Ram and disclosed the name of the mountain in the Himalayas where the special life-

saving '*Sanjeevani*' herb could be found. Lord Ram deputed Hanuman to do the job; and the Pavan *Putra* flew untiringly to accomplish the assigned task.

Ravan felt that if Lakshman perished, Ram would lose His will to continue battle. So, he promised half of his kingdom to his uncle Kalanemi in return for deceiving Hanuman from his mission to procure the life-saving '*Sanjeevani*' herb.

Kalanemi disguised himself as a mystic sage, and took residence on the Gandhamadhana mountain, in the Himalayas. As soon as Hanuman set foot on the mountain top, a hermit appeared before him and said, "O Son of Vayu, you have blessed this mountain by setting foot on it. I would like you to set foot in my hermitage, so that it too gets blessed."

Hanuman agreed and accompanied the hermit to his cottage. Before entering the hermitage, Hanuman decided to take a dip in the lake nearby. **As soon as he dipped his foot in the lake a crocodile, known for swallowing all living creatures, caught his leg and was about to swallow him up. Hanuman thought for a while and thought of the Name of Lord Ram. He became lost in the 'Ram Naam', forgetting himself completely, and thus became incredibly strong. Now Maruti Nandan Hanuman used all his force, and swiftly killed the crocodile, from whose body emerged a celestial damsel.**

The damsel told Hanuman how she was an *Apsara*, and had been cursed to become a crocodile because of having offended king Daksha. Being grateful for Hanuman's mercy on her, she warned him of Kalanemi's deceitful plot :- "Do not visit the hermitage. The hermit living there is none other than Kalanemi, who wants to kill you. He has disguised himself into a hermit; so beware of him !"

Hanuman thanked her and returned to the hermitage where Kalanemi stood to receive him. Hanuman declared that he knew of his wicked tricks and seizing him by the legs, whirled him around, and threw him in the air forcefully as far as possible. Kalanemi went flying in the air and landed at Ravan's feet, all life drained out of him. He was no longer alive to lay claim to half of Ravan's kingdom as his attempt to win the reward was foiled by Hanuman.

Hanuman, being unable to find the exact herb, and not wanting to take a chance with bringing the wrong herb, grabbed the entire mountain of Dronagiri, and returned to Lanka to rescue Lakshman.

O *Sadguru* ! Even the most intelligent, wise and learned folk fall into the pit of the *Sansar*, but You save them. The best course for the devotees is to surrender their body, speech and mind to Your Feet and always chant Your name for destroying their sins. You fulfil the wishes of Your devotees and to those who are without any desire You give bliss supreme. Chanting Your sweet name is the easiest *Sadhan* (means), for devotees. By this *Sadhan* the sins, *Rajas* and *Tamas* qualities will vanish, the *Sattva* qualities and righteousness will gain predominance, and along with this, discrimination, dispassion and knowledge will follow. The greatness of this surrender, devotion and knowledge is unique; for peace, non-attachment, fame and salvation etc., come in its train.

O Baba ! Thou art the strong pillar of *Advaita Vedanta*. You revealed it to me that the other column of 'non-dualism' *Adi Shri Shankara* felt the call of *Sanyasa* to cross this *Sansar Sagar* (ocean of *Maya*); but his mother *Aryamba* was unprepared to part with her only son, the solace of her widowhood. One day, when *Shri Shankara* was bathing in the River *Poorna* or *Periyar* at *Kaladi*, a crocodile caught his leg and started dragging him in. He appealed to his mother to give him permission to take *Sanyasa* conferring on him a *Punarjanma* (a new birth). *Aryamba* knew that she would have the satisfaction of at least having her son alive, even if it were in the robes of a *Sanyasi*. On the other hand, if the crocodile does not free her son, she

would still be consoled by the fact that her son would abandon his body as an ascetic. Still, trembling with fear, Aryamba consented to Shri Shankara's request. Shri Shankara recited the *Mantras* of renunciation; and lo ! The crocodile released its hold on Shankara. Shankara was now free to embrace *Sanyasa*.

As saint Jnaneshwar elevated Aalandi, and Eknath lifted Paithan, so did You raise Shirdi, O Baba ! Blessed are the grass-leaves and stones of Shirdi, for they could easily kiss Thy Holy Feet, and take their dust on their head. Shirdi became to Your devotees, another Pandharpur, Jagannath Puri, Dwarka, Varanasi (Kashi) and Rameshwaram, Badri Kedar, Nasik, Tryambakeshwar, Ujjain, and Maha Kaleshwar or Mahabaleshwar Gokarn as Thou art really the

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When Your disciple's egoism props up, You press it down with Your hand, and giving him Your own power, make him gain his object, and thus satisfy and bless him. If any one prostrates before You and surrenders heart and soul to You, then unsolicited, all the chief objects of life viz. *Dharma* (righteousness), *Artha* (wealth), *Kama* (desire) and *Moksha* (deliverance), are easily and unsolicitedly attained.

O *Sadguru* ! Here I quote what You had said for the welfare of Your devotees :-
“Those who are fortunate and whose demerits have vanished, take to My worship. If you always say ‘Sai, Sai’, I shall take you over the seven seas; believe in these words, and you will certainly be benefitted. I do not need any paraphernalia of worship - either eight-fold or sixteen-fold. I rest there where there is full devotion”. (Sai Satcharita, Chapter 13)

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I earnestly attempt to perform what You teach; and try to get nearest to You by means of reciting this holy hymn...

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love !

Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.

Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient;

Thou art Satchidananda.

Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,

Equal vision, balanced mind,

Faith, devotion and wisdom.

Grant us inner spiritual strength

To resist temptations and to control the mind.

Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger and jealousy.

Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.

Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.

Let us ever remember Thee.

Let us ever sing Thy glories.

Let Thy name be ever on our lips.

Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

- Dr. Subodh Agarwal

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“If one does not have any other work, one should enjoy wealth and peace, or recite ‘Ramnam’ and be desireless and without worry.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 8, Verse 72)

“God’s Name can break down mountains of sin. The Lord’s Name break the shackles of the body. God’s Name pulls out crores of ill desires from their roots.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 27, Verse 85)

“The Lord’s Name chanted with full intent is very effective; but even an unintentional pronouncement can be beneficial. Its power is manifested even when it is uttered unawares.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 27, Verse 87)

“For the purification of the inner self there is not another simpler means than chanting the Lord’s Name. The Lord’s Name is the adornment of the tongue. The Lord’s Name sustains spirituality.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 27, Verse 88)

“The continuous chanting of My Name itself will ferry you across the ocean of existence. No other means are necessary to achieve salvation.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 27, Verse 90)

“It is not necessary to have a bath to say the Lord’s Name. Taking the Lord’s Name is not regulated by the rules of the *Shastras*. The Lord’s Name destroys all sins. The Lord’s Name is always pure.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 27, Verse 89)

All other religious performances have to be done as per the rules laid down in the *Shastras*. But, the Lord’s Name can be chanted continuously at any time. There is not another simple method to adopt. (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 27, Verse 94)

All the ‘*Sadhanas*’ of a life time would be wasted if one is not alert at the crucial moment and the good company of saints kept during the life would prove futile. (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 31, Verse 9)

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IS BABA LIVING AND HELPING NOW ?

– Compiled by **Jyoti Ranjan Raut**

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“EXPERIENCE PROOF EVERYDAY !”

Manisha Gurudatt Pawar (Flat 8 & 9 Bhatia Edifice I, Kotkar Lane, Bhau Patil Road, Bopodi, Pune 411 020.) :-

How Faith in Sai worked...

One day, my brother called from Kolhapur to inform me about our mother’s hospitalisation. I was grief-stricken. When I reached Kolhapur, she was in the ICU in a semi-comatose state. She was not able to recognise anyone. Sometimes she opened her eyes, smiled, and went back to sleep. Her condition made me cry.

I had taken Baba’s *Udi* and *Prasad* with me. When I could not bear to see her suffering so, I prayed to Baba, “My mother never hurt anybody or behaved unpleasantly. Why is she in such a bad shape ?

I beseech You to make her feel better so that she can recognise her children once again. Let her die when she can walk and talk again, but not in this awful state.”

When my mother became conscious for a while, I told her I was applying Sai’s *Udi* to her and gave her the *Prasad*. Surprisingly, she immediately closed her eyes and joined her palms in prayer, muttering something. She ate some of the castor sugar of the *Prasad* and asked me to leave some for her. When I gave it to her, she put it under her pillow.

Soon my other sisters arrived. I had to return to Pune that night. Early in the morning my sister called to say that my mother’s condition had improved and that she was talking to every one. She also inquired as to why I had not come. I spoke to her on the phone and told her about the *Prasad* under her pillow and that I had to return to work. She understood.

She was discharged after eight days and I thanked Baba a hundred times.

“Baba you are truly great. Your *Leelas* are unfathomable.”



A person is re-born in the form, which he is contemplating at the time of death. The one who is humble at the feet of God is not re-born. (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 31, Verse 7)

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In Sai's Proximity

– Mrs. Mugdha Divadkar



NANASAHEB CHANDORKAR

Nanasaheb went to Baba. After doing *Pranipat*, he placed the *Badams* and *Khadi-sakhar* as *Prasad*. Baba immediately distributed it amongst the people who were present. Nanasaheb was curious to know the reason for Baba's calling him and asked, "Baba, why did You call me ?" Baba replied, "Are, there are many Nanas in the world. When I called you specifically, there must be a reason for it. Isn't it ?"

Nanasaheb was forthright in speaking. He said, "Then, tell me the reason !" Baba replied, "Are, we have relations spanning over four births. You do not know this; but I am aware of it. Therefore, I have been repeatedly calling you ! Whenever you have time, do make it a point to come."

"Ok. I will come." Nanasaheb bowed before Baba and departed. Even after seeing the miracle of *Annapoorna-siddhi*, Nanasaheb had not developed faith in Baba.

Epidemic of Plague

A few days after the above incident, there was an onset of epidemic of Plague in Nagar district. The government had introduced a vaccine to counter the illness. But, in those days, people thought that taking the injection was akin to inviting the decease. No one was willing to come forward. Therefore, the collector asked Nanasaheb to set an example before the masses and take the injection himself. But, Nanasaheb's thinking was no different than the others. He was reluctant to take the vaccine.

Ultimately, he decided to seek Baba's advice. He requested the collector to grant him a week's leave to take decision about the injection and set himself on the path to Shirdi. He posed his dilemma before Baba. Baba replied very casually, "There is nothing to it. Don't be scared. Take the injection. It will not harm you."

The secret of *Bhakti*

After the incident concerning inoculation, Nanasaheb realized that Baba had a different kind of aura around Him. Therefore, Nanasaheb's faith in Baba became more steadfast. He started feeling that he should go more frequently to take Baba's *Darshan*. He intensely desired that he should incessantly have thoughts

about Baba. But, his office and family matters allowed him little time for anything else. And he was sad.

Once, he was sitting near Baba and Baba gave him an excellent way of overcoming the problem. Baba said, "You want that you should have my thoughts through out the day - Isn't it ? Then try to see me in the smallest of the things." Nanasaheb failed to get the point.

Then Baba clarified, "Are, when you see a vegetable, think that it is my creation. This way see me in each and everything that comes before you." How simple was the remedy suggested by Baba !

Baba's method of imparting education

This is an incident which took place some time in the year 1900. Nanasaheb came to Shirdi with some people who included Bapu Nagarkar, Kangaokar and a Ramdasi Haridasi Bua who was a resident of the pilgrimage town of Wai.

The Bua had been invited to Nagar for reciting *Katha Puran* on the auspicious occasion of Hanuman *Jayanti*. He thought of availing Baba's *Darshan* on the way and hence was in a hurry to proceed further. He sought Baba's permission to leave. But, Baba wanted him to first have his meal and then leave. Thinking that it was more important to catch the vehicle rather than having food, the Bua took with him Bapu Nagarkar and said, "We cannot take this mad *Fakir* seriously."

Nanasaheb said to him, "Honour Baba's word ! Let all of us have meals and proceed together." However, the Bua refused to listen to him. Baba said to Nana, "Let him go by his own wishes. Some people are selfish. For the sake of their own interests they are even willing to part ways from their own blood relations. Therefore, one should make friends with only those people who will not leave you even if the heaven may fall upon them."

Bua and Nagarkar went ahead without having food, while Nanasaheb and Kangaonkar had their meals, took Baba's permission and blessings and then proceeded towards the station. On reaching there, they saw Bua and Nagarkar still waiting for the train. Their faces were sullen knowing that they had committed a grave crime. It so happened that the train timings had changed from the very same day. They were now repenting that they should have followed Baba's diktat.

Balasaheb Deo writes in his article :-

I have already written several times in the past that Baba opened His mind to Nanasaheb. He gave a new lesson to Nanasaheb in every meeting. He also closely observed and took several tests to prove, whether Nanasaheb had put His teaching into practice. If He found that Nanasaheb has neglected His words, then Baba purposely ignored Nanasaheb, when he came to Shirdi next. Nanasaheb used to distinctly note this odd behaviour of Baba Who generally kept calling for him "Nana, Nana". He used to realize that something done by him has upset Baba. He used to plead with Baba for forgiveness. Then Baba said "Are, don't do like this." or "If you act like this, then why I should talk to you ?" In this way sometimes acting as if He is angry and sometimes using sweet words, Baba used to reprimand Nana.

Once, Baba posed a question to Nana, "Which is one of the *Shadripu* (six vices of human nature) is easier to conquer ?" Nanasaheb replied, "Very difficult to answer that question." Baba said, "It is jealousy ! It means not being able to digest the progress of others. It is very easy to win over jealousy. Because, by being jealous, we neither gain nor lose. A person earns wealth and well-being because

of his good deeds. Therefore, if someone prospers, it is due to his good deeds and what do we lose ? And so, one must win over the bad quality of being jealous.”

Nanasaheb prostrated before Baba and agreed, “From today, I will try not to be jealous.”

A few months passed after the above incident and Nanasaheb arrived in Shirdi. As he was sitting near Baba’s Feet, Baba said, “Nana, I am going to impart the second lesson. A person may ask you for something. If you are capable of providing it, then never say ‘No’. If you do not wish to give the thing or not capable of giving it, convey your ‘No’ politely and in nice words. Never ever try to make fun of the person or insult him. Don’t also show your superiority. Be true to your words !”

In fact, earlier a misdeed had been committed at the hands of Nanasaheb which prompted Baba to give him the above advice. On the road from Kopargaon to Shirdi there is temple of Shri Gurudev Datta on the banks of the River Godavari. The temple priest - who was very *Sattvik* and pious - stayed nearby. While on the way to or from Shirdi, it was the practice of Nanasaheb to avail *Darshan* of the Almighty and also chitchat with the priest.

After the two were rather close to each other, the priest gently prodded Nana by saying that, “I feel that a *Ghat* should be built on the river. It will beautify the temple and also provide a long needed facility for the local people to wash clothes, take bath etc.”

The priest knew was from a well-to-do family, drew a substantial salary and also very much devout. Further, being the secretary to the collector he wielded sufficient powers in the matter. If he resolves, he could mobilize the necessary funds and add a handsome contribution of his own. So thinking, the priest had diplomatically broached upon the subject. However, Nanasaheb realized that the project would cost thousands of rupees and hence, did not give his concurrence.

The priest would remind Nanasaheb about the matter every time Nana visited the temple. Ultimately, Nanasaheb made his mind clear to the priest and said, “The *Ghat* - that you have in mind - will cost thousands of rupees. And, I will not be able to raise the amount. However, if you insist, I can think of constructing the 10-12 steps which lead to the temple. It will cost about rupees three hundred and I can bear the expenses.”

The priest was satisfied that at least a good beginning had been made.

After a few weeks thereafter, Nanasaheb set on to visit Shirdi by the night train along with husband of his sister-in-law Shri Biniwale. After reaching Kopargaon in the morning, he realized that, “If I go for Datta’s *Darshan*, then the priest will once again ask for money. It will be difficult to say ‘no’ to him. But, I have so far not even started collecting for the amount.”

In fact, Biniwale was keen on having Datta’s *Darshan*. But, Nanasaheb preferred to take a different route just to dodge the priest. The route was full of thorns and thickets. It was early morning and hence, the light was insufficient. En route, they suffered a lot and started bleeding because of the thorns. Ultimately, somehow they managed to reach Shirdi. On reaching, they went for Baba’s *Darshan* and waited to hear His *Amrutvani*.

It was Baba’s usual practice to ask questions like how was your journey, who all have come etc. However, Baba did not ask them anything and on the contrary, He rather completely ignored them.

Nana realized that he must have committed some misdeed; but he was unable to find, what it was. They waited for some time to catch Baba's eye and ultimately returned to the *Wada*. The question "Why Baba did not speak to me even a word?" needed him continuously. He was very much dejected. He felt, "If Baba is not going to talk to me, what is the point in coming to Shirdi?" He once again eagerly went near Baba with great expectations. But, once again he was disappointed. Ultimately, he could not stop himself and asked Baba the reason for His anger. Then Baba clarified, "You promised me to learn your lessons by heart and did not do so. Why should I talk to such a person? Are Nana, just because of the fear that the *Bua* (priest) will ask you for the 300 rupees, you not only chose to take a different route; but you even avoided taking the *Darshan* of *Sarkar* (*Gurudev Datta*). What kind of behaviour is this? If you had not been able to raise the fund, it would have sufficed, if you had told the truth to the priest. The *Bua* would not have swallowed you. Even after taking an unfamiliar route and succeeding in dodging the *Bua*, your feet were pricked by thorns isn't it? After spending so many years with me, is this what you learnt?"

Several days passed after the above incident. One day, Baba said, "Nana, some time back I had imparted a lesson. I am repeating it now. If someone asks you for something, then give whatever you can give as per your own ability and desire. If the person is not satisfied with what he has received, then politely decline to give more. But, don't get angry with him. Don't show off your status or wealth. Will you remember this lesson or forget it once again?" Nana replied, "Baba, I agree that I forgot the lesson once. But, that does not mean I will forget it again." Baba said, "The lesson appears to be simple; but it is difficult to follow in real life." Nana assured, "Even then, I will try to remember it with utmost sincerity." Baba laughed and said, "Let us see!"

It was Baba's practice to keep a close watch on the disciple and observe whether he adheres to the lesson.

At that time, Nanasaheb had come to stay in his *Wada* at Kalyan. His wife *Sou. Aaisaheb* (whom Baba referred as '*Aai*') had prepared a earthen pot full of *Bhajani* (baked mixture of different kinds of pulses). Just then a beggar woman appeared there. Family members gave her some *Bhiksha*. But, she demanded that she be given that *Bhajani*! *Aaisaheb* told the servants, "If she wants *Bhajani*, then give her some." But, the beggar woman would not be satisfied. She demanded more. Some more was served. She wanted further more! *Aaisaheb* got irritated and said, "How much more? There are kids in the house. I must keep something for them also. I have given you so much and even then you want more?"

Even after that, the beggar woman did not budge an inch. *Aaisaheb* went to the first floor of the house. Nanasaheb was engrossed in reading something. She narrated the story and requested him to come down.

Seeing the behaviour and arrogance of the beggar woman, Nanasaheb was livid. He shouted, "Tell her to take what is given to her and go away. If she doesn't listen, call the police and physically drive her out." The beggar woman said, "*Saheb*, if you don't want to give, don't give. But, there is no need to threaten me with police. I will go away myself." And, she went away.

After this incident, Nanasaheb went for his periodical pilgrimage to Shirdi. But, Baba refused to talk to him. Nanasaheb waited for a long time for Baba to talk to him. Ultimately, he was unable to bear Baba's *Moun* (vow of not speaking) and said, "Baba, You have not spoken a single word to me since I came. What is the matter?"

“Someone told me that I will learn the lesson - that I had imparted – by heart and does not do so. Why I should talk to such a person ?” Baba repeated His utterances of the earlier incident. Nana replied, “No Baba. I try my best to adhere to Your teachings. I am unable to recollect any incident, where I have behaved against Your advice.”

“Then, why did you made a show of your high position ? Where was the necessity to threaten that beggar woman that you will ask the police to physically throw her out ? If you had not given her any more *Bhajani*, what could she have done ? She would have at the most sat down, waited a while and then gone away. But, instead of telling her ‘No’ in good polite words, you went to the extent of throwing around your high position and threatening to get her bodily evicted with the help of police.” So saying, Baba further added in His soft voice, “Are, we must consider ourselves to be the servants of this whole world. If you do that, then there is no scope for getting angry at any one. **Further, think that, whatever you are offering, you are offering to me.**”

Initially, Nana could not understand, what Baba was saying; because a period of about 5-6 months had passed after the beggar woman’s incident. Also, he could never imagine that, Baba would come in the guise of a beggar woman and take his test.

After considering all this, Nana realized his mistake. It also dwelt upon him that, Baba was observing all his actions. Not only that, Baba was had complete control over his body and soul.

In short, Baba wanted to impress upon Nana the fact that after one lays down his *Chitta-vrutti* at the Feet of the *Bhagavant*, then there is no *Aasakti* (longing) for any thing.

Even a little ego is harmful to Parmartha

Even after spending substantial time with Baba, Nanasaheb was not aware about Baba’s mastery over the Sanskrit language. He had thought that as Baba was a Muslim and, how He could know Sanskrit. In fact, Baba knew several languages. There was nothing which He did not ‘know’.

In chapters 39 and 50 of *Shri Sai Sat Charita*, its author *Shri Hemadpant* has narrated in detail, how Baba gave *Geeta Upadesh* to Nana and also deflated his ego about being a scholar of Sanskrit.

Some of the devotees have noted down that Baba had taught the entire *Bhagvad Geeta* to Nana.

About this, Nanasaheb’s younger daughter *Sou. Anandibai Pendharkar* writes -

“My father had a good command over Sanskrit language. Therefore, he used to place some of the parts of *Geeta* before Baba and they would discuss the matter for hours. There were parts of *Geeta* which were not understood by the top-notch *Pundits* – but, Baba would clarify them in His own rustic language. His explanations were directly enter the hearts of the listeners. Even the best among the scholars of the subject were stunned by the events.”

Nanasaheb’s elder daughter *Mrs. Mainatai Deshpande* says :-

“My father told me three things about Baba. Firstly, the relations between Baba and my father encompassed four births. Secondly, Baba knew *Geeta* by heart. He used to recite various *Shlokas* from time to time. Thirdly, from this, it mostly appears that Baba was a *Brahmin Sanyasi*.”



A person is re-born according to his thoughts at the time of death. Insects, on account of fear, become bees; while king Jadabharat was born as a deer on account of the deer that he had reared and about whose welfare he remained concerned in his last moments. (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 31, Verse 6)

“Whoever frequently repeats my name his sins will be burnt. I consider him more virtuous than the virtuous, who constantly hums my name.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 27, Verse 91)

“Oh, Shama, I tell you, furthermore, that whoever takes my name with love, I will fulfil his wishes and increase his devotion.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 3, Verse 11)

Abandoning all the million clever and cunning ways, recall always “Sai, Sai”. You will be able to cross the worldly ocean. Have no doubts.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 10, Verse 135)

Those who are inexperienced and innocent, God mercifully caresses them. But, those who turned away from God, their pride sears them from within. (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 12, Verse 13) “Repetition of the Name ‘Sai’ will burn away all the sins of *Kali-yuga*. Once having prostrated, past sins born of speech and hearing will be destroyed.” (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 3, Verse 20)

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