



DIVINE
MIRACLES
OF
SHRI SHIRDI SAI BABA

(A RECORD OF THRILLING EXPERIENCES OF (LATE)
DR.P.S.RAMASWAMI)
(AN ARDENT DEVOTEE OF SHRI SHIRDI SAI BABA)

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PREFACE

It was my long cherished desire to collect and compile my late father's thrilling experiences of Baba's *leelas and miracles* worked in his life which were recorded during his life time and to bring them together in a book form in the order of its sequence and occurrence that materialized to this day by Baba's grace and I place my reverential gratitude for the same at the Lotus feet of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba in the first instance.

I further express my gratitude to my father (Late) Dr. RS.Rama Swami for the interest and the inspiration ignited in me for learning English language and the opportunity given to me by making available some of his memoirs of Baba's miracles worked in his life and to publish the same. Though some of the articles on these memoirs have already been appeared in Sai Lee/a *Magazine* an official organ of Shri Sai Baba Sansthan of Shirdi during 60s and in the book "*Divine Grace of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba*" by Shri S.R Ruhela, but with the intense desire of bringing together all these articles at one place, this collection is brought out with noble intention of spreading Baba's *Leelas* to all over Sai devotees of this universe.

I am extremely thankful to Shri Bhattam Sriramamurthy Garu, former Member of Parliament (L.S.) and who is also a close associate of my father for giving his valuable foreward to this book by sparing his precious time. Furthermore, I heartily extend my grateful thanks :

To Shri Velicheti Satyanarayana Rao Garu BCR, SA Hyderabad Sorting division for all the help rendered by introducing Shri R Prasad Garu Pyramid Graphics, Dilsukhnagar and encouraging all the time in bringing out this book a possible task.

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To Shri V.G. Sai my younger brother and Dr. VS. Sai my youngest brother and Professor, APS University, Rewa (MP) for all the co-operation extended in making available some of the missing articles and photos and made the collection possible to bring out this book to its satisfaction.

To Sri M.R Sainath for his timely and valuable guidance extended in bringing out this compilation with complete satisfaction.

To my wife Smt. K. Sita Maha Lakshmi and Sons V.S.V. Vasudeva Sai, V. Ananda Sai and daughter V. Jaya Lakshmi for all the cooperation and support extended to me in bringing out this book a possible venture.

V. RAMA SAI

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FOREWORD THE SAINT AND THE DIVINE

Dr. P. S. Ramaswami, was an eminent scholar, profound thinker and a multi faceted personality with philosophical outlook and saintly nature. He was a versatile genius and highly evolved spiritual soul who ranks among one of the greatest of devotees of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba. His entire life was a saga of service, devotion and dedication at the feet of this divine *Lord*.

Dr. P S. R. Swami was an outstanding example of the noble maxim "Simple living and high thinking". He never craved for the glare and glory of publicity and propaganda in his life's mission. He did not go about enlisting the services of a band of followers, disciples and devotees to enhance his stature and establish Guru *peetharn*. He is a devotee par excellence and his life may be summarised as a complete and total surrender and dedication to the *divinity on earth in human garb of Shri Shirdi Baba*.

Ever since Shri Shirdi Baba entered into the Matrix of his life, his entire life pattern, in fact, that of his entire family has been totally transformed and attuned to the *divine grace, guidance and worship* of the Avathar who incarnated himself on earth for the benefit of the humanity.

Dr. R S. Ramaswami, in fact, was one of the earliest to introduce to the innocent rural folk in the far off areas and interior villages of Vizag Dist in the early forties, the Bhakti cult of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba disclosing the thrilling experiences of earnest devotees, the manifestation of the divine miracles and glory of Shri Shirdi Avathar. Ever since Dr. Swami descended on the tiny village of Dharmavaram, leaving the shores of Vizag during second world war period when it became vulnerable for areal attack of axes powers particularly after bombardment of Pearl Harbour, some young students who gathered around this eminent scholar and linguist in their quest for knowledge, enlightenment and inspiration, were soon inducted into spirituality while rendering innocent services of gathering flowers in worshipful reverence to

Shri Shirdi Baba unmindful of the long distance traversed by them in search of abundant fragrant flowers with their tutor and teacher Sri Ramaswami who was always engaged in elaborate worship of Baba especially on every Thursday. I vividly recollect the illuminating and inspiring worship at his residence when Dr. Swami was totally immersed and absorbed in the ritual completely oblivious of his surroundings and the world around him. It was in fact an emotional and prayerful surrender to the Lord by establishing direct communion with Him, It was a common sight that heart rendering crystal clear tears rolled down on his cheeks profusely proclaiming the- inner purity and sanctity achieved by him while imploring his *Divine Master*.

Any casual observer could easily discern that Dr. Swami was always engaged in an unending *Namasmaran* which practically has become his second nature. Chanting of the divine name internally and involuntarily and unceasingly as in the case of inhalation and exhalation, it appeared to us that even if his life's breath stops, the vibrations reverberations of his soulful chanting of the divine name of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba will never stop and ever continue. Perhaps his inhalation and exhalation are attuned to the melody and music of the holy name which always inspired and stirred his inner being to the very core. Sri R S. Ramaswami experienced and witnessed countless *Leelas* and *Mahimas* of Sri Shirdi Bahgwan who played a dominant part in the saintly life of the savant of the nation. The present book is an abridged and available collection of reminiscences and recollections of such divine *leelas* and miracles worked in the lifetime of Dr. R S. R. Swami.

After I came into the fold of the global movement of Bhagwan Sri Satya Sai Baba, I had an occasion to interact with Dr. Swami once when I earnestly anticipated to elicit his understanding and views on the contemporary phenomena of Bhagwan Sri Satya Sai Baba, I still remember vividly the ringing words of Dr. Swami "Mr. Rarnu, I am like an orthodox Hindu woman who knows only one husband and no one else. I am wedded to Shri Shirdi Baba and I love and serve Him so intensely and enormously, that I cannot spare myself for any other thought." Obviously, Dr. Swami reached a higher stage of spiritual evolution

leading to self surrender and unity with the Almighty. The Lord of his life is Shri Shirdi Sai Baba and His name was ever on his lips and the inner core of his heart sung the eternal glory of his Lord.

Dr. P. S. Ramaswami, had lived a pure, sacred unsullied saintly life till the ripe old age of 88 years leaving a rich spiritual legacy to the posterity. The worthy son of the worthy parents Sri Rama Sai walking in their footsteps holds aloft the banner of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba. May Bhagavan shower boundless blessings on him and his family.

- *Bhattam Sriramamurthy.*
Former Member of Parliament.(L.S.)
Visakhapatnam - 530 003

OPINIONS

I met Dr. RS. Rama Swami at Rewa only due to the fact that I was looking for someone who could give relief to the skin problem that my wife had. He treated her for more than a year and gave her a lot of relief.

But during these visits to him whenever there was a chance he talked about Sai Baba. It was a fascinating experience to listen to him. He did not usually talk of something that he had heard from others, but about his own personal experiences.

I consider it to be a privilege to have known him. Through these lines I want to express my deep regards for his kindness, humanness and sincerity.

Rana Bahadur Singh Rao Saheb

Ex. M.P

Presently Swamy Prashantanand of Chinmaya Mission

18-02-2003

I have seen several times, articles written by you in 'SAI LEELA' magazine and I am very happy to state, that my happiness knew no bounds. You are, indeed, very lucky, and you are having abundant SAI GRACE.

T. Padmanabha Rao Peda Waltair

Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (12-06-1987)

I have been simply carried away by the splendid language you have at the tip of your fingers and the renderings are so exact that the reader is actually face to face with the incidents narrated. You and your family are indeed blessed by Sri Sai Baba.

N. Krishnamoorthy Dadar,

Bombay - 400 014 (19-05-1987)

"Lives are marked by an interplay of fate and circumstances and that a kind of providence will give the wisdom and opportunity to surmount obstacles in the way."

INTRODUCING (LATE) Dr. P.S. RAMA SWAMI

Dr. Puvanur Swami Ramaswami (popularly known as Dr RS.R- Swami and Dr. Swami), a person with unassuming personality and great intellectual capabilities was an ardent devotee of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba. He was born on 15-07-1905 at Puvanur Village of the then Tamil Nadu State and was the son of Sri Swami Sarma and the grandson of his great grandfather (maternal) Sri Kondala Rao Garu, great in character, devotion, learning and ancestry (especially devotion). His father acquired the honorific prefix of Sivapriya Kondala Rao, (Every day at the time of puja a sacred snake used to come to partake in the worship and drink the '*abhisheka tirtham*', hit the ground with the out spread hood thrice and go.) It is a story by itself. Shri Konda'a Rao Garu was a great official who drew three pensions from two States and the British Government Extraordinary! In a humble way, Dr. Swami was endowed with some of his intellect and reputation having stayed with him due to his good fortune and God's grace. As a village school-boy of 7 or 8 years, left more or less to himself with occasional coaching at home, more punishment than learning which was the rule in those days. He laid the foundation of Dr. Swami's real knowledge on which he could build later on. He owed the foundation of his erudition to his grandfather. Dr. Swami was an apt pupil of his age group -something of an *EkaSanthagrahi*. (still so even when he was in his seventies!) He could still repeat the lessons in *general knowledge*, *pedda Balasiksha*, *Bala Ramayanam*, *Amara Kosam* and so on. After all his grand father taught him hardly about half-an-hour daily. But being with him and deriving the inspiration was the main thing. Stephen Leacock has written humorously that dons at Oxford do little teaching to their students but only sit before them and go on puffing away smoke from their pipes at them. Yet, the wonder is Oxford produces first class men. It is the inspiration and the atmosphere provided. This is really the secret of Guru-sishya relation-ship.

He did his higher studies at St. Joseph's College of Tiruchirapalli and from Presidency College of Madras and evinced keen interest for English language and mastered it so much so that even the Britishers were impressed. Many were thrilled at his memory for beautiful poetry. He claimed to be a miniature Chekov in reverse, being wedded to literature, wife, medicine (Homoeopathy) as his sweet - heart. Closely associated with literary and social activities. Though a valetudinarian in all his life he has been buoyed up by the company of youth all along who were drawn to him presumably by his academic approach and open-heartedness.

Dr. Swami's ancestral background and the environments in which he was born and brought up had cast him into a philosophic mould and conditioned him to believe that "there is a destiny that shapes our ends/Roughhew them how we may."

Lack of robust health was one of the drawbacks in his life that impeded him from reaching the highest peak of renowned fame and glory. Yet, he took the same as blessing in disguise because it prevented him from following "the primrose path of dalliance" and induced him to keep his head above waters and as such he was constitutionally and temperamentally inclined to remain where and what he was. Man's needs are fulfilled by different incarnations that come on this earth in different climes and times, each fulfilling in their own way. Even as obedience to an earthly ruler makes life under it easier, mute and humble submission to the Divine will makes life on earth much easier. Evidently, Baba has established that the divine blessed talent and knowledge should never be allowed to go waste in worldly materialistic matters and got it best utilised by getting a written record by Dr. Swami of all the self experienced leelas and miracles making the quotation "*Full many a flower is born to blush unseen and wastes its sweetness in the desert air.*" (Thomas Gray) not applicable

to blessed souls and enabled to share the joy with other like minded devotees to add ever lasting values to meet its sublimest end.

After the advent of Baba into his life, his experiences with Him amply confirmed and ratified this belief. Rather, it became an axiom in due course proving itself again and again in a remarkably incredible manner whenever in his shortsightedness and impatience he acted like a wayward child. It was the optimism of his wife, Mrs Kamala, who also reached him to heavenly abode on 24-03-1995, derived from her unflickering faith in Baba's never failing grace, that helped him sustain himself. Consequently, he was content to recommend himself to His care and leave himself entirely in His hands, "*Sufficient for the day the evil or good thereof*" came to be his motto and gave no thought for the morrow.

Among the less known apostles of Baba but by no means the least important was Sri R. Narayana Swamy Konar of Shri Sai Baba Darbar, Wright Town, Jabalpur, a Train Examiner in SE Railway, Howbagh, Jabalpur, a blessed devotee of Baba was the Guru of Dr. Swami for all the spiritual pursuits and goals. Some temples have also been known to be constructed on his name by his devotees throughout India like places at Haridwar etc. and abroad like London etc. He attained Samadhi in his 87th year.

Homoeopathy has been a desultory hobby for Dr. Swami for a long time. He kept a small box of medicines always for use occasionally at home and office for a select few who sought help. One day, with invocation of Baba's grace, got message from his Guru to start practice. With Baba as sheet-anchor and Guruji as pilot he boldly ventured into practice and got registered as an RMP and subsequently based on age and proven experience officially launched a career as a Homoeopath successfully that has produced many a miracle cures left uncured by allopathy. From then on he came to be known as Dr. Swami. Among the high dignatories cured

to his credit are the last Maharaja of Rewa (M.R), (Late) Sri Raja Marthanda Singh and late wife of Sri Rana Bahadur Singh Rao Saheb, Ex. M.P of Churhat Semaria District Sidhi (M.R), A practising Gita Philosopher who published some books also on Gita and Upanishads in English and Hindi (Baghel Khandi Dialect) for local public. He is presently known as Swamy Prashantanand of Chinmaya Mission. Dr. Swami left for his heavenly abode on 29-12-1993 leaving behind him his five sons (eldest son Sri V. Rama Prasad expired during 1964 after his rebirth in March 1944 as narrated at miracle-4) and a daughter.

V. RAMA SAI

MEETING H.H. SRI B.V. NARASIMHA SWAMIJI

- (Late) Dr. RS.R. Swami

It was my good fortune that the sacred privilege of meeting His Holiness Sri Narasimha Swamiji was vouchsafed to me. It was in 1942 at the residence of the late Sri Durgaiah Naidu Garu in Waltair. Naidu Garu became a dedicated devotee in the service of Baba when he was cured of his gastric ulcer without surgery through the blessings of His Holiness Swami Kesaviahji, a specially blessed apostle of Baba for curing thousands of persons of their long standing illnesses and saving many (including the writer) from imminent death. It was through the untiring efforts of Naidu Garu that H.H. Narasimha Swamiji came to A.P, and travelled all over the area in a whirl-wind tour and through his inspiring talks enabled the people everywhere to become Baba's devotees. To-day there is hardly a town in A.P, which does not boast of a temple for Baba-worship.

H.H. the Swamiji led a spartan life and used nothing but Baba's Udhi mixed with a little honey to cure himself and others of all ailments. All his

waking time was dedicated to Baba's service. When he was not lecturing, he was writing and publishing through the All India Sai Samaj Mylapore, Madras, (established by him) many pamphlets like "Sai Baba, the Wondrous Saint", "Who is Sai Baba", etc., and books like "Devotees' Experiences", "Baba's Charters and Sayings" and to crown it all, the four-volume biography of Baba, an illuminating work and commentary not only about Baba but all his close disciples on whom Baba shed his personal aura.

In the words of Sri Bharadwaj, the Telugu biographer of Baba, it will be most appropriate to say that H.H. Swamiji continues to be one of the "Kalpatharus" planted and nurtured by Baba.

INTRODUCING SHRI SHIRDI SAI BABA

- (Late) Dr. RS.R. Swami

"I give my children what they want so that they will begin to want what I want to give them."

"People do not come to me of their own accord, but I draw them to me as we draw birds by strings tied to their legs."

"Why fear when I am here? Throw your burdens upon me and I will bear them."

The above are some of the answers given by Baba in reply to questions of devotees when He walked on the earth as a human embodiment. They give us an idea about Him and the manner of His functioning. He was Grace incarnate and the greatest boon He conferred on those who sought Him was *ABHAYA-heedom* from fear. He used His divine powers viz. 'Yathaa Samkalpa Samsiddhih' i.e. realising whatever one wants, and Tasya Cha Aajna Yathaa Mamah' i.e. getting one's command obeyed universally (vide Srimad Bhaaghavata) for the awakening (UDBODHAN) and upliftment of devotees by stages according to each one's capacity depending on 'rinanubandha' (residual after-effects of

previous births) to rise through material advancement of directly on to Spiritual enlightenment.

People came to Him in small numbers at first from the neighbourhood and ere long in ever increasing numbers from far flung places. It might be as a result of a vision or a dream, initiation or prompting provided sub-consciously, or super-consciously, or a message conveyed through a friend or even another divinely at-ONE-ment Saint like the Akalkot Maharaj vibrating in unison directing a person to go to Shirdi, or in rare and blessed instances, Baba Himself appearing as the incarnation at Shirdi or as some fakir or Sadhu to render timely help in ire need and disappear leaving it to the person concerned to realise post facto either when he beheld a photo of Baba or a lucky coincidental visit to Shirdi en route to some place, when to the consternation of the person himself and the assembled devotees, Baba referred to the occasion of His visit with exact details. Not unoften, His visits were simultaneous at widely separated places. At other times He appeared as a dog or cat and later gave proof by exhibiting on His body traces of the injury inflicted on the animals by them. He proved both from His knowledge of past births and objectively how the relationship between Him and some chosen devotees had continued through successive births in some of which the latter were born even as lower mammals, reptiles or amphibians. He modified or completely obviated impending danger from various sources including the elements in respect of His devotees in answer to prayer or as a rule of His own volition as '*Bhaktha Paraadina*'. The frantic gestures He used to make all of a sudden, waving His hands, hitting at imaginary Objects or shouting abuses, used to mystify those present at the old mosque where He stayed till, after calming down; He explained how they symbolised His efforts at putting down a fire, preventing a fateful fall or an attack by robbers or a poisonous bite bound to prove fatal and thus saving a devotee far away. Not till the concerned persons happened to visit Shirdi and

narrated before Baba how they were saved by the appearance of a Good Samaritan at the nick of time or some such unexpected help did the people resident at Shirdi and were witness to those symbolic gestures realise the divine aspect of Baba. How truly did Robert Oppenheimer' aver that 'Symbolism is more *real than fact*'. He demonstrated beyond all doubt that He had nothing to do with the body they identified Him with by leaving the body for three days on one occasion (1886 Dasara) saying He was going to Allah* and if He did not return to the body duly, they were to bury it at certain spot. But He did return to re-animate it and let it house Him for another 32 years.

Baba granted a charter of boons to His devotees. Chief among them are His promises that He will continue to act from the tomb and the bones in it will speak and answer their prayers. To this day they are TRUE and continuing to find fulfilment from day-to-day and place to place. The writer, among thousands, is standing proof to bear testimony to this ETERNAL TRUTH of the incredible coming to pass and be experienced again and again, as the forthcoming chapters will prove beyond the faintest ray of doubt. Miracles continue to be worked as they happened before He shook off the mortal coil on the Vijaya Dasami day in 1918, after He Had announced this well in advance. The dead come back to life, the dumb speak, the blind see, the incurable are healed—in a word the incredible comes to pass in the lives of people among whom the writer claims to be counted as 'twice blest'. He is continuing to manifest Himself now and then to a blessed few as the Incarnate Baba of Shirdi, more often in disguise leaving indirect evidence of His identity and in visions and dreams. As in the blessed days of yore, even now at Shirdi His devotees hail from all races and religions—foreigners, Parsis, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, etc—daily in thousands, swelling into tens of thousands during festival days like Ram Navami, Diwali, Dasara, Guru Poornami, etc.

But why Shirdi and not any other place? Because near the old, dilapidated, mud-walled mosque chosen by Baba as His abode lay buried the tomb of His

Guru¹ in a previous birth. None knew about it till on His advice they dug and found it at the foot of a neem tree. A nice little shrine is built over it and the leaves of the overshadowing branch of the neem tree do not taste bitter. Though sometimes He passed for a mad fakir, He was nobody's fool. He enjoyed discomfiting others with His own humour and practical jokes through which He elucidated a debatable point of philosophy or ethics. Though seemingly unletterd, He startled highly learned scholars with His erudition making them feel small at intellectual acrobatics. He told them they would find not Brahma but brama (illusion) in books. With such purely human qualities streaking through His divine personality, He endeared Himself all the greater to the common people. Infact, as Emerson says, "The human and divine are not separate, but rather various grades of one continuous series." Shri Ramana Maharshi, even as a pure Jnana Yogi, shared these qualities if in a more subtle manner. Valmiki says of Shri Ramachandra:

Mayamanush charitra mahadeuadi pujitaha

Indeed, "the line separating the sublime and the ridiculous is nebulous".

Was Baba a Hindu or Muslim by birth? According to the hints dropped by him now and then, He was born to Brahmin parents, was brought up and given 'Updesh' (spiritual initiation) by a fakir upto the fifth year and blossomed into spiritual perfection under a fully realised Brahmin Guru-indications of His future work of unification.

"The childhood shows the man, as the morning shows the day".

¹ It is to be noted that Baba referred to God as Allah, Ram, Datta etc. and Himself as God's agent, though on occasions He declared, "I am Allah, I am Vital, I am Datta" and He manifested Himself as Rama, Krishna, Siva, Maruti, Vittal etc. to different persons to demonstrate His identity with God in His different aspects.

He was in his teens when he came to Shirdi as a Tejasvin' as all 'Urdhwarethaas' (those whose energy is sublimated in² toto) are, at the beginning of the second half of the 19th Century. He gave equal respect to all religions. He said, 'If you are Christian, be a better Christian; if Muslim, a better Muslim; if a Hindu, a better Hindu,' and so on. He admonished one who had changed his religion saying, "Have you changed your father?" He thus inspired his devotees to have a common denominator we are sorely in need of. Is it not an irony of the times that man finds it easier to reach the moon than the heart of his neighbour? Baba seen -from all angles is veily the Beacon Light for the 21st century to save humanity from threatening selfannihilation. To deserve His grace fully, He advised, "Speak the truth. Be kind to the lowly, you need not become a Sadhu, but observe sexual purity." Needless to say one learns to be all this as a result of the unseen guidance provided by Him. But one must be a seeker.

Baba is a unique example of truth being stranger than fiction. For sheer incredibility and the thrill provided, just a couple of instances are worth narrating. One night, on hearing the peculiar croaking of a frog in the jaws of a snake at the edge of a pond near the mosque, He hastens to the spot and angrily shouts, "*Hallo Veerabhadrappa come on, release Basappa.*" In implicit obedience it is done and the frog jumps into the water and escapes. When questioned, Baba says He is continuing to fulfil the promise given to Basappa in a previous birth when He was a fakir to save former from the wrath of Veerabhadrappa. *Rinanubandha* had brought them all together again.

The other is about how he suddenly complains of pain in the loins and sends 'Udhi' (ash from the 'dhuni' He kindled with His yogic fire and kept burning at the mosque and continues to be so kept) through a

² From both internal and recorded evidence it became clear that Baba's Guru was Ramananda of Kashi and Baba Himself was Sant Kabir in a preceding janma. Thus the Guru and the Chela had come together again due to 'Rinanubandha'.

messenger called Bapu Gir late in the night to be given to a devotee, a Deputy Collector, named Chandorkar about a hundred miles away, to be applied to his daughter Meenutai in the throes of labour. The man traveling by train arrives at Jamner, a way-side station not knowing how to reach the officer miles away in the-interior. Presently, to hi joy and relief, a person in office uniform with a lantern com* on the platform shouting, "Who is Bapu Gir from Shirdi?" Bapu Gir follows him to be seated in a brightly lit coach drawn by white horse with trappings and taken and left in the proximit of Chandorkar's bungalow. The 'Udhi' is received and applied and as if by magic the delivery takes place in a split second! " being told how grateful he is for the timely despachth of the coach to pick him up, the surprised officer says he does not have one It is only then that both realise how Baba has played His 'leele in His own inimitable way.

ON A SINGLE POINTED DEVOTION

- (Late) Dr. P.S.R. Swami

I have often been put the question by well-wishers, why Shiridi Sai Baba and not any other? My only answer is that I had no choice in this even as I had no choice in having been born to my father. Sometimes I am told there is a more recent Baba or there is a more powerful Baba who suits the present needs of the times more effectively. Therefore, a change is called for. My answer is, may be, but even as I cannot change my father now, I cannot change my Eternal father, the Captain of my soul, already steering my life's course.

I shall give another analogy. You see I am feminine in my attitude to life. After we attained Independence John Spender of the *London Spectator* asked Gandhiji, "Now that you have achieved Swaraj the sumum bonum of your life, how do you propose to spend your time?" Gandhiji replied, "Well, as regards swaraj, it is only a two-anna swaraj. Anyway, now I am trying to cultivate some feminine virtues." So you see I am not

ashmed of my feminine attitude, rather proud of it. Hence, Shirdi Sai Baba is to me my Lord and Master indeed my spiritual Husband of whom I think while awake and dream while asleep. If you dare to ask any of our married women (who thank God are not changing their husbands so easily do their clothes, most of them being *Patiuratas*, if you ask any one of them) why not go in for a new model husband you will receive a fitting reply and a lesson to remember all your life. For every married woman of our sacred land, once a husband is always a husband. In the same way, I feel. While may extend my respect and regard for other incarnations however popular or glorified and modern, my devotion and dedication is at the feet of my own Lord and Master who in case fulfils all my needs.

I shall give yet another analogy. I was ship-wrecked and being tossed hither and thither on the dark and dreary bosom of the raging ocean of life with human sharks and shoals waiting to swallow me up. Then in His infinite Mercy, of His own accord due to my Rinanubandha He sends me not only a boat with a pilot to steer me through to safety but also provides an Eternal Anchor for me to hold on to, so that even if the waves may overwhelm me and I may go under I cannot be drowned. I surface every time and keep afloat. Now, if one were to come and tell me, come on let go your Anchor, here there is a new computerised model for you, I only spurn the offer and in the words of Christ, "Get thee behind me, Satan. Thou shalt not tempt me with thy blandishments;" Such is Shirdi Baba whom I adore making me as every one else of His devotees stand four-square to all the storms that blow, who has induced into me, a mere man of straw, the courage of a man of steel to constitute myself an occasion into a majority of one and stare the world in the face even if it has blood-shot eyes, I have my model in no less a saint than Tulsi to draw inspiration from. When once someone suggested to him why not visit Dwaraka and Kashi. He replied, what is Ayodhya for? That is my attitude. Shirdi is my

Kashi and Dwaraka in one and Shirdi Baba is the alpha and omega of my life. I feel no need for any other, whatever the world and his wife may say.

Once a brilliant agnostic friend of mine who nevertheless held me in warm esteem, when I narrated to him my wonderful experiences of Baba, how He has been saving me from perils and dangers time and again and how He solves my day-to-day problems (here I must confess that having come under the personal magnetic influence of Gandhiji, we were inspired to be naked and un-ashamed, so to say, and bare our hearts even to scoffers with impunity) -- so as I was narrating my experiences to my friend, obviously laughing within himself incredulously, he queried sarcastically whether Baba is there only to attend upon my personal needs. Indeed so, I replied with conviction born of actual experience and gave him instances which not only silenced him but thrilled him. It is like asking a *gopi* whether the Lord in her arms is her own monopoly. Indeed so, she would reply. So also will every other *gopi* and every one of us who, so to say, becomes a *gopi* for the time being, a *jeewatma* longing for the bliss of merger with paramatma. Here, permit me to quote a sacred anecdote. It seems when Sri Ramachandra was wandering in Dandakaranya, some 50,000 *Rishis* and *tapasvis* faced him with a request that they wished to embrace Him, Alingan as Tukaram says, Sri Ram was so modest and shy *smitha vakthro mitha bashi poorva basheecha* Raghava, says Valmiki; He told the holy souls, "Not now, you can all embrace Me in my next Avataar as Gopis to your hearts content. That is the continuity and unity underlying the different *avataars* of God or human embodiments of divinity like Sri Ramana Maharshi, Shirdi Baba who said He was kabir in a previous birth, Akalkot Maharaj etc. When a devotee went to the Akalkot Maharaj for *upadesh*, he directed him to go to Shirdi. When Rajen Baba, while taking leave of Sri Ramana Maharshi requested him for a message to Gandhiji, the Bhagawan said (a word so prostituted

now with so many self-anointed Bhagwans) what message is needed he said when the hearts are beating in unison? Such is the oneness that pervades holy souls. They are like so many cosmic tuning forks vibrating to the same pitch and frequency in unison with Sabda Brahma, what Shakespeare calls the music of the spheres. It is the poor half-baked (kachcha) beings who seek to make a dichotomy between them saying your God and my God. Such is the sweet attachment one develops for Baba.

When He casts a pearl in the clear pool of one's heart- one's devotion goes on expanding in ever widening concentric waves of love. As long Fellow says *The tidal wave of deeper souls , Into our inmost being rolls And lifts us unawares Out of all our meaner cares.*

Such love generates faith. Faith which is not a halfway house between doubt and belief. Total faith beyond all question involving complete surrender because He is *saranagatha vatsala*. You are content to recommend yourself to His care and leave yourself entirely in His hands, come what may, even a world shaking holocaust. The most perfect definition of such faith was given nearly 2000 years ago by St. Augustine. He said : Faith is to believe what you do not see. And the reward of that faith is to SEE WHAT YOU I BELIEVE.

Golden words are these. We have got beautiful and thrilling example in Draupadi's *Vastrapaharana*. The Lord does not come to the rescue as long as she relies on her poor hand to hold on to her saree with only one hand raised in; prayer to Him. It is only when her surrender is complete where in utter desperation she lifts both her hands in prayer does the lord appear in a split second to save her nakedness and the saree goes on extending *adinfinitum* till the shame faced Dussasana sinks exhausted.

Once a scoffer asked me, "Is your Shirdi baba alone the only true saviour whom every one must approach?" No, Certainly not. I do not say

so. Nor did Baba Himself. He reiterated the vedic axiom '*Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*' Baba Himself told a questioner who asked Him whether he should cease worshipping his Ishta devta and *kuladevata*,

"You continue to worship whomsoever you are worshipping now If you are a devotee of Ram, Krishna, Shiva, Dutta, Maruti and so on be more and more devoted in your worship. If you are a Christian, be a better Christian; if a Muslim, be a better Muslim. You must try to see me in other incarnations and the other incarnations in me. He did not merely say it. He manifested Himself as Ramachandra, Krishna, Dattatreya, Panduranga, Maruti, etc. to their respective devotees who at first were averse to accept Him as a divine incarnation. "Main *Allah Hum*" He used to say and orthodox Muslims used to worship Him with Namaz and do so even now as you can see at Shirdi. He wanted His devotees to see Him in all, even animals like dogs, cats, pigs, etc. and gave ample proof of it. When some one or the other hit an animal with a stick or a stone, He showed them the injury on His own body to prove His *Sarvantaryamitva*. When Namdev saw Sri Panduranga in the dog snatching away the *roti* from his leaf, he ran after the dog with the ghee 'dhona' in his hand shouting "Panduranga, Panduranga, you have left the ghee behind. Have this also. Dry roti will hurt your stomach." Would any man born of woman dare to say "It is Namdev's Panduranga and not my Panduranga." That is the acid-test of true *bhakti*, culminating in true realisation and At-onement with God. Though during Namdev's days also there were so called devotees who called him mad because they could not rise to his level. St. John, one of the four apostles of Christ who wrote the gospel says some are born eunuchs and some make themselves eunuchs of God. Even so, there are born fools and those who pose as fools for His sake, just as there are mentally sick persons and those who are mad with love of God. You can understand it if you have been madly in love even on the human scale.

Intoxication with divine love is cosmic and transcendental. A mere glance or touch or a thought or a word *satyauak*, *satyn sankalpc* and *kataksha* can not only transform you but transmute persons. As Goldsmith says, "A breath can make them, as a breath has made", Shirdi Baba has proclaimed, "I shall be ever active and vigorous even after leaving this earthly body, My mortal remains will speak from the tomb. I am ever alive to help and guide all who come to me who surrender to me and who seek refuge in me. If you look to me, I look to you". These are not new words. Lord Krishna has said then *ananyas chintayanto mam ye janah paryupasate theshan nityabhiyuktanam yoga-kshemam vahamyaham* (*Gita chap.9 ver.22*). But Baba has time and again demonstrated both before and after His *Mahasamadhi*, rather to a greater extent afterwards than before acting in a split second to bring life back to the dead, to make the blind see, and the dumb speak and fools wise proving that He is a divine incarnation and eternally active. *Netra heenakshi dhayeecha mathi heena matipradah Moo/cam Karoti Vachalam Mritamudhjiua yatyapi*. Friends, these are not glib, academic statements I am mouthing like a parrot. These incredible happenings have taken place in my immediate presence and these eyes have witnessed the miracles leaving me stunned and dumb founded, thrilled and filled with ecstasy by turns. How can I describe Him who is beyond speech and understanding *Daya-Sindu*, *karunamaya*, literally *Aapadhbhandhava* and *Anaadhara/csha/ca*, all forgiving and ever vigilant. *Bhaktha paradeena*, *Bhaktha uatsala*, *Satya-swarupi*. All He wants is faith and patience -*Nista* and *Saboori* - as He has said no ritual, no show and no fanfare is needed. That is Shirdi Baba for you. It matters not whether you call him my Baba or his Baba. Gandhiji said, God to be God must rule over the heart, transform it and express Himself in every act of the votary. Baba does it. I can vouch for it. He holds the reins. You can not swerve from the chalked out course, even if you

want to. Thus you are safe. He has said when once you are my devotee, you need not worry about your vimukthi. He will incarnate again and again with his devotee's rebirths (*Punarapi Jananam* as Shri Shankara says) till the Latter merges in Him. He demonstrated it in the case of some of His apostles like Nana Saheb Chandorkar, Dixit, Dabholkar, Radhabai Deshmukh, Mahlsapathy and a host of others tracing their Janmas in their previous births. In the case of Veerabhadrapa and Basappa give just one example. He demonstrated how He has been keeping up the promise given to the latter in a previous birth. You see one dark night on the bund of a pool near the mosque where Baba as a human incarnation used to reside, there was the croaking of a frog caught in mouth of a snake. At once He rushed to the spot followed by the devotees present and shouted angrily, "Come-on Veerabhadrapa leave Basappa free, you should be ashamed of your conduct", Immediately, the snake opened its mouth and let the frog jump into the water and escape. To the mystified spectator Baba said how in a previous incarnation as a fakir He had given His word to Basappa to save him from the murderous wrath of Veerabhadrapa and now again they are born as enemies and Rinanubandha has brought them here and He is redeeming his pledge. I can give parallel instances from my own life. This is not occasion.

"Why fear when I am here, cast your burden on me and I will bear them." He literally does so. "I give my children what they want so that they will begin to want what I want to give them." He does so. You can put Him to the test and put QED first as in geometry and then look for proof. You will find it. I have done it during my Navy days and as a Homeopath and so vouch for. You can ask for a blank Cheque. He gives it out of a sense of humour and watches the fun to see how you use it.

Suppose Baba appears before a devotee and asks what one wants, what would be or should be the reply? The truth is we know not what we really need,

though we may desire for or want so many things. You see I can talk only for myself. I always had my own value of things in life. While I was in the Navy as an Ammunition Examiner, rather a complicated job for which I was not fit but pitch-forked into it by Baba Himself and enabled me, to my own surprise, to make a mark and attract notice "*Mathi heena mathipradhah*", I was asked to go to England to be trained. I refused, it is a long story, but I was retained. Similarly, every time I was asked to go elsewhere on promotion I turned down the offer. So, once Admiral Kamath at that time commanding the INS Vikrant, our air-craft carrier, asked me bluntly, "Have you no ambition, Mr. Swami?" Even Officers of the rank of commanders were afraid to reply back to him. He was such a fire-eater. I was also famous or notorious for rushing in where angels fear to tread. So I told him "Sir, I can only answer you with a question, if you would permit me" and asked "can you define ambition, Sir?" he was taken aback. I said, "I have been unable to decide what should be my ambition wealth, enjoyment, power, position etc. So, I left it to Baba to give me what He deems fit. What is due to me, no power on earth can take away. So I live from day to day with its good and bad. I am sustained by the belief that the sum total of a man's happiness and misery, whether a prince or a peasant is a constant "K" Only you must evaluate correctly. So why worry?" He was impressed. The fact is even the cultured among us do not know what we want and we want what we can't get. Once I was speaking about the unity of Science and religion and life, that the qualities required to succeed in one are the same as in others viz., adherence to truth, dedication, hard work and so on. The next morning one Maj sahasrabudha rang me up and said "swami saab, I heard you yesterday and spent a sleepless night trying to concile what you said with the actual state of affairs. Now, you must clear my doubts. Shall I come? Or will you come down to my office? I said I would though I had not bargained for such a contingency and drove up. He straight away asked me why is it that a person like him following the principles I held as necessary and devoted to God, doing pothi daily reading *gnaneswari* did not succeed in life whereas a patent black-guard achieved success?" I asked him "whether he was thinking of someone who by foul means had superseded him

and become a Col. or a brigadier while he sticking to principles was left behind and stuck up. He said it was exactly so, Then I said, "let us define success. Does it mean more money, a higher position, a bigger show etc. or does it include the blessings of life like domestic felicity, a devoted wife, dutiful children, a sense of achievement, approval of the conscience without the need to summon defence witnesses, ability to lay down the head on the pillow and fall into innocent sleep etc? How do you know that the other chap has peace at home or has to seek the bottle to drown his unhappiness? Maj" Sahasrabuddha stopped me and said, "Swami saab, you have cleared my doubts, thank you."

My own belief is we want Abhayam freedom from fear-fear of health, wealth, the future, dangers and perils. "There will be no want in the house of -my devotees," said Baba. And He fulfills it. "Think of me wherever you are and whatever you do", He said. To a devotee who was going to answer calls of nature in the dark of night, you see in those days Shirdi was infested with snakes, fear not I am there where you go to ease yourself. Such all-round assurance does infuse Abhayam in the devotee's heart.

So many incarnations have come on this earth in different climes and times each fulfilling in His own way man's needs. But none tried to denigrate another. Krishna did not try to denigrate Ram who preceded Him. Not did Ram claim superiority over the previous Avatars. He had no thought for such silly things. *Mayaa Manusha chaaritra, Mahadevaadhi pujitah* says Valmiki. He was not conscious of anything except that his duty was *Pithru uakya paripalan* in the main and such other duties he had to discharge incidentally. The whole trouble is with the so called devotees who in making a fetish of the object of their worship besmitch the inherent greatness enshrined in it. G.K. Chesterton has described it well. He says how it is a custom among catholics to light a candle before the icon or the image of a saint in a shrine. When thousands do it, the result is not illumination of the Saint's figure but smothering it with smoke so that you only see smoke. This is exactly what some over-enthusiastic and misguided devotees do in order to propagate devotion to an avatar of their choice resulting in smothering the sanctity thereof rather than enhancing it. So much so it would seem it is the

avatar that has to be saved from devotees. Devotion need not be and cannot be canvassed. It comes as an act of grace and depending on Rinanubandha. Man cannot offer arrogantly to himself the role of a superman. That is why christ observed, physician, heal thyself.

Who to God doth late and early pray
More of His Grace than gifts to lend
And entertains the holy day
With a religious book or friend.
Such man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall
Lord of himself, if not of lands
And having nothing, yet hath all.

- Sir Henry Wotton

THE ADVENT OF BABA INTO MY LIFE

- (Late) Dr. P.S.R. Swami

It was March, 1942 I had been sick for some months, practically bedridden without an income except for Rs.25/-p m. *earned* by a nephew as an apprentice on this the family of seven, four adults and three children, had to be maintained. I was almost bereft of hope of recovery, a physical wreck in my thirties.

One afternoon, a well-wisher of about my age named Syed Abdul Aziz, S.M.'s clerk at Waltair, S.E.Rly, who, however, held me in high esteem as his friend, philosopher and guide came to see me after a pretty long interval. He was aghast to find me in such a moribund condition. He wished to know what I was doing to regain my health. I simply said "Nothing, except that we all have taken vows individually in the family to different deities for the sake of my recovery." He was visibly surprised to hear me say so. What a stupid thing to do, he seemed to feel. He, however, wondered how he could venture to advise one whose advice he had always sought. Yet, in that situation he felt it obligatory to-do so. If he were to fall sick, he continued, every one in his family would individually and together pray to "one God" for redress.

Would it not be the right thing to do, he queried. At least now it was high time we did so.

To me, these indeed were words coming "from the depth of truth" relayed through a friendly medium. They had the illuminating effect of a gospel truth.

"Whene'er a noble deed is wrought
whenever is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts in glad surprise
To higher levels rise".

- *H. W. Long Fellow*

*From the poem on Florence Nightingale by H.W. Long Fellow.

Here was I, a drowning man and there comes a pilot, deputed by baba (as I now know in retrospect,) to be my Margadarsi, holding out the anchor of hope-reviving, for me to catch and hold on to save myself.

I replied meekly that no doubt he was right but such was our tradition which perforce we had to follow. Be that as it might, my friend went on to tell me about the miracle cure of a 15-year-old gastric ulcer which had been subjecting another friend of mine to periodical fits of torture which could be alleviated only with injections of morphia, since he was averse to go under a surgeon's knife. I myself had been a witness on one occasion to his suffering which did not respond to the usual dose of morphia, his system having become immune to it by repeated use and the doctor had reluctantly to repeat the injection (saying it might almost prove fatal in a normal case) before there was relief.

This gentleman was the late Sri D. Durgaiyah Naidu, a R.W.I. of the S.E.Rly stationed at Waltair where I too was staying at that time. Having heard of many a miracle cure of chronic and incurable diseases effected through the healing touch of udhi by a blessed devotee of Shirdi Sai Baba then staying at Penukonda in Anantapur district, he had gone there on a Thursday, was accordingly blessed and cured. The long-standing ulcer vanished like magic and not a trace of it could be seen when X-rayed at the K.G. Hospital, Visakhapatnam, "Fools who came to scoff remained to pay".

Foot Note : * He retired as the I.G. of Registration, Madras. Later known as H.H. Swami Kesavaiahji of Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir, Shenoy Nagar, Madras- 30, he was continuing to bless thousands every Thursday till 6.8.1981 when he attained Samadhi.

I was thrilled to hear this account of the incredible coming to pass and "*my heart melted away into secret raptures*".

I immediately sent a note to Sri Naidu requesting for full details and advice. He said that the name of the great devotee was Shri S.B.Kesavaiah* and he was Sub-Registrar at Penukonda, and all that I had heard from Aziz was true. He also sent me Baba's Udhi and three different photos of Baba from which I could choose one and keep. I selected the one, now familiar to millions, showing Baba sitting cross-legged with his serene, beneficent eyes, which I am continuing to worship. Looking at those benevolent eyes, I was overwhelmed and "my cheeks were bedewed with tears of thoughtful gratitude."

"The tidal wave of deeper souls Into our inmost being rolls And lifts us unawares Out of all our meaner cares.

- H. W. Long Fellow : *ibid*

There are moments in a person's life when due to something seen or heard or experienced or all put together, a turning - point is brought about, the beginning of a new phase, a new vista was experiencing it.

I forthwith wrote to Sri Kesavaiahji telling him about my helpless condition and praying for his blessings. I received a prompt reply asking me to be devoted to Baba, to utter His name at least 108 time daily, fast every Thursday night for nine months and give my meal to the first Fakir that might call, and I should become all right by Baba's grace.

I did accordingly and became all right.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 1

"Ask and it shall be given"

- Christ.

It was my habit to worship Baba with Sahasranamarchana every Thursday, for which as well as for the preliminary *Anga Puja* and *Ashtothara Puja*, at least some twelve hundred flowers are required at the rate of one for each name. One Thursday in the winter of '42, I forgot to gather the flowers in the morning and remembered it only late in the evening a little before sunset. No flower could be had at that late hour. However, in lieu of flower *tulsi dhalams* (twig endings with two leaves and a bud), could be used. Fortunately, we had a bed of *tulsi* bushes in the neighbourhood. So, along with some of my student friends³, I set about gathering tulsi till sunset after which tradition forbids it. Each of us kept count of the number plucked and the total came to about seven hundred only. A recount of all put together confirmed it. I decided to make up the deficiency with Akshatha⁴.

However, when once I began the *Puja*, I forgot all about the shortage and went on with one *tulsi dhalam* for each name, reassured and beckoned by the generous heap in the tray before me. Not till the *puja* was over and I relaxed after partaking of *prasadam* was my attention attracted to the substantial quantity of *tulsi* still left in the tray. I checked with those present to make sure that I had continuously used only the tulsi for each 'name' of the *archana*. On counting the quantity left over I found nearly three hundred *dhalams*.

How else could I explain it except as Baba's leela. "Ask and it shall be given."

Glory be to Shri Sirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 2

What can the snake do to Dwarakamayi's children? When Dwarakamayi protects, can it strike? We have no need to fear. Strike, let me see how you can strike and kill!"

- Promises of Baba as Dwarakamayi

³ Sri Bhattam Srirama Murthy, former Minister for Cultural Affairs, A.R Government and Sri M. Suri Babu, Officer (Retd.) of the Central Secretariat, New Delhi were among them.

⁴ Turmeric-coated whole grains of rice used in lieu of flowers.

In fulfilment of the above charter granted for all time to His devotees, Baba twice saved us from imminent danger of fatal poisonous bites.

The first time was in the winter of '42 in an interior village of Visakhapatnam Dt. where we had sought refuge from the Japanese bombing of the city and the threatened overnight invasion by sea in March of that year. It came about like this.

One evening my wife drew my attention to a small snake about 10" long slowly creeping along the foot of the wall of the front *veranda* where I was sitting. In the impulse of the moment, I did the stupidest thing. Taking its small size for granted, I hit it with one of my chappals and automatically stood up. Instantaneously, it jumped up reaching for my face as if it had instinctively anticipated my erect posture. It was so sudden and so totally unexpected that I was startled out of my wits, so to say. Only Baba I am sure must have made me slant my head backwards in the nick of the movement, so that missing its mark narrowly it fell down. In frantic fear and despair, I picked up the other chappal near me and hit it in a frenzy and killed it.

As that time and till long afterwards, I had not known that I was confronted with a reptile called krait more malicious than the other poisonous kinds. For while even the Cobra attacks only on provocation, this one does so on mere sight and its bite is as fatal. It is unusual for it to leave its haunts, away from the inhabited areas. Evidently it was caught and thrown in.

It later dawned upon my mind that some clique in the fairly big village wanted to teach a lesson in such a vengeful manner for my heterodox ways of defying untouchability and employing a low-caste woman for fetching water and cleaning utensils. Such acts pass unnoticed in a city but are not tolerated in the villages dominated by the upper castes who though not brahmins were feeling scandalised that I calling myself a brahmin, should stoop so low. The fact is that having come under the influence of Gandhiji first and accepted whole-heartedly Baba's teachings later, my wife and I had almost completely eschewed observing differences based upon caste or creed. Further, when they saw her serving meal on a Thursday to a mendicant-harijan afflicted with leprosy seated in front

veranda of the house, the sight must have been galling to them. I can now see that I had also grossly though unwittingly trespassed the social bounds and decorum of the local standards of rural society in some other ways. Thus I had incurred the enmity of a group of families by blocking up the channel letting their drainage pass through our yard till then and improvising a lavatory in the adjoining open space. Though all this was done with the pradhan's approval, it must have scandalised them. Add to these my tendency to put my foot in my mouth while talking, liable to be mistaken for imparity and it must have proved the last straw. This is the price one has to pay for not doing in Rome as the Romans do.

The second occasion was in November '49 or '50. It has been said that it is a misfortune in life to fail and the other misfortune equally bad is to succeed. I was employed then as a Leading Examiner of Ammunition in the Navy at Visakhapatnam and by the sheer grace of Baba success came knocking at my door. The immediate result was I succeeded in making enemies too who would not be averse to see the end of me or some one dear to me. This I came to know in retrospect. What actually happened was this. One morning as I entered the lavatory of the old open-air type, contrary to my habit of mechanically squatting on the stones to answer the calls of nature, I instinctively felt impelled, rather Baba provided the impulse to look round. Imagine my shock and horror to find between the stones where I was to have squatted a small Cobra with its hood raised obviously ready to strike. I backed out in fear and summoned my neighbor who found it half crushed in the middle so that it could not move. He killed and disposed it of. The inference was clear. Beyond all doubt, it was placed in that position with the injury inflicted on it to rouse its fury and left to do its fell work. Only, whoever had done it had not taken into account the omnipresence of Baba, that He is even there as He assured where His devotee goes to ease himself even in the dark.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 3

Why fear when I am here? Throw your burdens upon me and I will bear them"

- Baba

My wife was an expectant mother in '43. We were then at Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam Dt., and though I had medical friends, we did not think it necessary to seek advice except for just one visit of the health visitor who said it was all O.K. We felt assured that Baba who is ever watchful and solicitous about the welfare of his devotees would provide the necessary help as and when required.

Towards the end of August, my wife developed labour pains. These continued in an increasing measure from day to day for 4 to 5 days. Yet, it did not strike either of us to seek medical advice. Only when delivery seemed imminent did I call a midwife. It took more than three hours of excruciating labour for a male child to be delivered.

While feeling thankful for the redress at long last, the midwife threw a bomb-shell that there was another child in the womb. This was my wife's fourth confinement, we had not dreamt of the possibility of twins, there being no precedence on either side. We were flabber-gasted. The health visitor had not said anything about twins. My wife who was still crying and feeling exhausted with pain became desperate and said she would not survive another delivery. The midwife after attending to the new-born child was preparing to go saying it would not be for another six or seven hours that the second child would *be* born. I was completely non-Plussed. There was no other help in the house except for the neighbours.

Then my wife called me and asked for Baba's Udhi. What a fool I was, I had not thought of it, though it was I who had narrated to her about Baba's leela, in case of Nana Saheb Chandarkar's daughter, how He had sent Bapu Gir with Udhi to the young woman in the throes of labour quite far away from Shirdi, which enabled her to deliver her child promptly and with ease.

With resurgent hope and courage, I forth with gave a little Udhi to the midwife to be put in my wife's mouth as well as to be applied over the region of

her womb. It was accordingly done, when lo! and behold! almost in a trice, as though gently propelled by unseen hands the second of the twins was born.

What more proof could one need to demonstrate the ever loving care and immanence of Baba?

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 4

" When truth is stranger than fiction"

- The Upanishads

Yes, I saw Him, The re-incarnation of Baba (Twenty-six years after His Mahaa samadhi)-This occurred in March, 1944 at Vizianagaram, A.P, 26 years after Baba attained Mahaa Samadhi in October, 1918.

Mukam karothi uachalam Mrutha mujj'wa yatyapi

- The Upanishads

Behold, it came to pass that the dumb spoke and the dead came back to life.

The Bible

Yes, there He stood at the gate, with His serene indulgent face and benevolent eyes, clothed in 'Kupni' with the cloth over the head falling loosely over the shoulders, the 'Biksha Patra' held in the right hand with the left folded and resting over the right shoulder exactly as in the portrait facing P112 of the Satcharita (Eng.edn. by Sri N.V. Gunaji). I was stunned with amazement. It was INCREDIBLE.

Only a moment before, in my frenzied despair at the passing away of my first-born son aged 10 years, I had denied Him His Divinity and His omnipresence testified again and again by His devotees' experiences both before and after His 'Mahasamaadhi' I had declared Him to be a false deity and beseeched my wife to throw His portrait on the dung hill. But, here He stood to prove the TRUTH OF HIS ETERNAL EXISTENCE.

You see, the medicine I poured into the mouth of my semiconscious son remained there. I shouted to him to swallow it, but the mouth remained open. I became frantic and tried to close it. No, the jaws had become rigid. I checked pulse. It too had stopped. It was then that I called out my wife from the kitchen and

spoke those blasphemous words. She just sat by the bed, head bent and tears trickling down, as much hurt by my profanity, no doubt, as by the bereavement.

I had come to the end of my tether spiritually, I was not myself for the nonce. Thus I had the brutal impudence to ask my grieving wife whether she had cooked, adding, 'He has anyway gone. I don't want to die, too. I shall go and eat.' Imagine the father, however forlorn, to be so devoid of all feelings as to put such an inhuman question to the mother just bereaved. There is no limit to which human nature can sink through, thank God, it can also soar to Elysian heights. Here I must say that my wife's faith, unlike mine, has throughout been unflickering, standing 'four-square to all the winds that blow'. Whenever my mind harks back to that scene, I can not help wondering how I escaped her righteous indignation for my frenzied out-burst. Where else, except, except in this land hallowed by Sita and Savithri, Damayanthi and Mandodhari, Nalaayini and Renuka Devi, can one meet with such phenomenal forbearance and fortitude?

It is not far-fetched to say that it is for such paragons of virtue that the Sun shines, it rains, and Mother Earth continues to yield her bounty. It has been said that 'the greatness of a man does not consist in never falling but rising everytime he falls'. Indeed, it is by the magnetic charm of their devotion that 'homo sapiens' is not completely debased. In her own gentle manner, she said. 'I just finished cooking for the children. Pray, serve yourself for this once', and lapsed into, what I know now in retrospect to have been, prayer to Baba.

You see, there were four younger children, two of them twins hardly six months old. But my mind and heart had become dry, no thought or feeling for any one, not even Baba!

So I betook myself to the kitchen to *eat!* I sat with a Thali' before me and mechanically served myself some rice. Before I could bring myself to eat, while sitting and staring at the rice vacantly, I became schizophrenic, as it were, one part of me questioning the other, "Look, what are you trying to do? there lies your first-born son dead and you are going to gorge yourself". This shocked me into realising how perfectly horrid of me it was. I turned to look in the direction of the bed in the front room which was in line with the kitchen. It was then that my eyes

beheld the wonderful form of Baba. Was it a mere vision, a figment of my imagination? I shouted to my wife with head still bent, "Kamu, look out and see who has come". Reacting to the frantic urgency in my voice, she looked up and glanced at the gate. At once, as if touched by a live wire, she sprang up; and, as if that was the consummation, she was devoutly praying for she exclaimed "Amma Nayana/ Baba *Vachcheru!*" (Oh! at long last Baba has come!).

Actually, neither of us had seen the Satcharita portrait of Baba by then. Our *puja* portrait showed Him sitting crossed. However, in His inscrutable Wisdom, He had led us into buying at a 'me/a' a few months earlier, a wood-cut portraying Him in five different poses, including this one, we were able to recognise Him at once.

Now I felt sure it was He. I was back in my senses. My heart was full of gratitude to Him for coming in the nick of time, and saving the situation. Else, in my forsaken condition, with no thought of Him or for Him, I might have polluted the food before me. In this new found happiness, I reverentially took the *thali* up to Him and put the rice in the lifted 'biksha-paatra', He received it with His beatific face and went away. No word was spoken. Indeed, there was no need for any. My heart was too full for it, too. There was 'peace that passeth understanding'.

As I stepped into the house, my son opened his eyes and said "Father, I am thirsty. Give me some water."

The humanly impossible had come to pass!

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai – Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 5

" When truth is stranger than fiction"

- The Upanishads

Yes, Baba came, dined and conversed with me (Twenty six years after His Maha Samadhi)

It was about noon and Thursday too By force of habit, I looked towards the gate for some *Fakir* or *Sadhu* who might turn up for *biksha*. Ever since the advent of Baba into my life two years previously in '42 through the sacred contact of His Holiness Swami Kesavaiah, I had come to observe Thursday as Baba's day. You see, it was through swamiji's initiation into devotion to Baba and doing His

'*Nnamasmaranam*' that I was reclaimed from imminent death. On further being advised to fast every Thursday night for nine months and gave my meal to the first Fakir that might turn up, (which I accordingly did) I was gradually restored to health. Since then, I had made it a rule to feed a Fakir before taking the noon meal on Thursdays.

But this Thursday was unique, a red-letter day in a long life of sojourns on earth (*punarapi jananam punarapi maranam*) a culmination of persistent '*tapasya*' through recurrent janma of some one in the family, in all probability my wife, or one of the children or may be my own imperfect self for his '*Saakshaatkaara*'. For, to my utter surprise and astonishment, Baba Himself with His beatific smile was entering front enclosure! He was in same *Bikshapathi* pose as He manifested Himself the previous day as '*Mrutyanjaya* to revive my dead son, almost within a split second of my denying His divinity and declaring Him to be a false deity! I eagerly hastened up to Him. After welcoming Him with all my heart, I begged Him to condescend to stay for food. He asked me with a twinkle in His eyes whether there was anything special that day, I said that it being a Thursday, it was our custom to offer food to a Fakir before our noon-meal. With the faintest flicker of a smile at the corners of His lips He wondered whether I would do so on Thursdays only.

Being rather academic and literal in my ways, I replied, rather obtusely, that it was so. I am not ashamed to confess that it took years for me, chewing the cud of it off and on, to sense the gentle admonition enshrined in His benevolent query, as if half in jest and half in earnest, '*Why not daily*', and begin doing so.

Be that as it may, I offered him a seat and ran inside with the glad tidings of Baba's visit and His gracious condescension to have food at our humble adobe. I beseeched my wife to round off the cooking forthwith and start serving the food, since '*Athithi*'s, especially holy ones, should not be made to wait unduly (*Athidhi Devo Bhava*) and, all the more so, because it was BABA HIMSELF How can one describe the signal good fortune so divinely bestowed upon my wife, Kamala, of personally serving food cooked by her to the Master of all CREATION (as described my Meherbaba) except to say that it is the cumulative fulfilment of

all the good deeds of all her previous *'janmas* at ONE STROKE! The whole beauty of it lay in the fact that she did not as a matter of course, characteristic of a *'gruha dharmini'* fulfilling her obligation and to at this day not at all conscious of that greatest good fortune that can ever accrue to her. That is, indeed, as it be for "there is no vanity so damaging to one's character as pride over one's good deeds". 'SUCH are the chosen of God, the humble and the good at heart who it is that "inherit the kingdom of Heaven".

As Baba was graciously taking the meal, I put Him the stupidest of questions! I had the foolish temerity to ask Him where exactly at Vizianagaram (he was staying) This episode took place at Vizianagaram in Visakhapatnam dist. In March, 1944) imagine asking Him who had repeatedly given proof of His EXISTENCE at different places to different persons at one and the same time both during His incarnate stay at Shirdi as well as after His *Mahaa Samdhi*, either in a clearly recognisable manner of incognito, to be recognised, later on, both subjectively as well as by cumulative evidence, as none other than Baba Himself. How puerile and vain can man be that, notwithstanding the show and pomp, penance and ostensible devotion with which he invokes the Lord, when He does appear, he fails to recognise Him! Even tapasvins were occasionally not exempt from such an woeful lapse.

The all-knowing Baba, speaking at my level, gave me an apt and satisfying reply. He said that he was staying at the Sri Subrahmanya Temple near the railway station, which, as will be seen presently, was true in a literal sense as also applicable universally according to His own proven assertion to many a devotee in respect of His identity with any idol or image or worship. I, of course, took His words literally and said, "All right Baba, if so I will surely go and see you". "Do come!", He confirmed and went back letting me accompany Him up to the gate. Indeed it is a misnomer to say he went back, for, how and where can He, the 'Sarvantaryamee', ever go to come back again for that matter? However, such wisdom was yet a long way from me.

Here it should be noted that Baba and I were conversing in Telugu, my mother-tongue, which He spoke with ease and in our dialect. I wonder why and

how I had started talking thus. It seemed the natural thing to do. I now realise the question does not arise at all. I am sure any one in my place would have naturally spoken in his own language and Baba would have answered in it or vice versa. Mahalsapati (the earliest devotee of Baba at Shirdi) has vouched that many a time in the night while all were asleep, Baba used to converse with some unseen agent(s) in some foreign tongue(s)

Soon, I must unblushingly admit, I lapsed into the humdrum routine of existence, and all thought of the incarnate Baba receded to the back of my mind, though my daily worship went on as usual. About a month later, as I was about to take my noon-meal, the thought of my deferred visit to Baba in the temple flashed across my mind. At once, grabbing the hand of my convalescing son, I rushed out like one possessed and trotted along to reach the temple, about a mile away. I had often passed by it and noted it to be a transit camp for the Sadhus to and fro on their pilgrimage. Reaching the portal sweating and panting, I accosted the first person I saw and enquired about Baba's stay there, describing His person and dress in exact detail. To my great disappointment, he curtly replied there was none answering to that description, implying a muslim ascetic. I begged him to recollect and tell me or refer me to others whose sojourn might be longer than a month, insisting that the SADHU I was after had come and received biksha at our house and had averred that this was His abode at Vizianagaram. This rather annoyed him but, seeing my crest-fallen countenance, he softened a bit and assured me that none like the ONE I described had ever stayed at the temple since over a month during which period he himself had been staying there. That was it. It was enough to deflate me completely. I was on the verge of tears.

In this repentant and chastened mood, I decided that we might as well go in and worship Lord Subrahmanya and seek His blessings, for, I had learnt to see Baba in all deities (and vice-versa). As we went round and turned the corner to reach the front again, I came across an improvised minor sanctum common in temple premises. I casually looked inside. I was overwhelmed to behold a life-size portrait of Baba in exactly the same pose as He designed to visit our abode

on two consecutive days first as 'Mrutyunjaya' and the next day as Divine 'Athithi'¹! In a flash, I understood what the 'Dayaa Sindu' had meant, both literally and in a metaphorical sense, when He told me that I could find Him here, as, indeed, anywhere one wants and needs, if only with all one's heart and will. Now, the flood gate burst open and I poured out my heart to him. Tears of joy welled up in my eyes flowing as if in an unending stream, and my heart melted away into secret raptures. I then remembered having heard some year ago while at Waltair that one Sri C. Rangaiah Naidu, under the inspiration of Sri D. Durgaiah Naidu, a pioneer devotee of Baba and well known to the Shirdi Sansthan, had installed a portrait of Baba for worship at Vizianagaram, This was it.

My heart leapt as I felt reassured that Baba was, as He continues to be with me and I was not bereft of His Grace, that He is enshrined in every image and portrait of His, ready to manifest Him self at a split second's notice, or none at all, even as "the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath". It can be as His re-incarnation, or incognito as a person or an animal, or in a vision, or as subjective (or call it sub-conscious, superconscious or subliminal) realisation of His being 'BHAKTHA PARAADINA" ever alert to fulfil Himself according to His charter to give His children whatever they want so that they will be to want what He wants to give them, blessed is he who thus qualifies.

"Such man is free from servile bands of hope to rise or fear to fall, Lord of Himself though not of lands And having nothing, yet hath all."

- Sir Henry Wotton (*A Happy Life*)

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai Baba - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 6

" When truth is stranger than fiction"

The Upanishads

"Behold, it came to pass that the dumb spoke and the dead come back to life"

- The Bible

BABA APPEARING AS BLACK DOG TO BESTOW POWER OF SPEECH TO BOY BORN DUMB

As if to prove paradoxically that the law of compensation works itself out to perfection in nature, the handsomest of my children, a boy, and the most cheerful withal, was born dumb. This was confirmed when he failed to gain the power of speech as he grew up to complete his fifth year. His heroic efforts to make himself understood through gestures and unintelligible blabber only lent poignancy to the situation, Yet, he was the least perturbed. It was an object lesson in philosophic reconciliation. Being feminine in my attitude to life and, thus though endowed with the characteristics resilience to bear "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune", I could not help giving way to tears every time I saw him. It was the optimism of my wife, Kamala, derived from her unflickering faith in Baba's never failing Grace, that helped me sustain myself. She was never tired of iterating and reiterating the incredible miracles worked by Baba in our life: how He had helped me in a hopeless condition to regain health: how His *Vdhi'* (Vipudhi), the sacred ash, from the perennial fire (dhuni) at Shirdi first kindled by His Yogic power, and used as a panacea for all bodily and mental ills, had enabled her without any medical help to deliver her twin child in a matter of seconds, though the seasoned midwife had averred it would not be for another six hours; how He had re-incarnated Himself and came as Bikshapati to revive our dead first-born son, aged ten years; how He had enabled me to obtain employment in the Central Government though I was past 42 years, and retain it in the face of difficulties inherent as well as created by jealous elements; how He was continuing to fulfil Himself according to His Charters granted for all time to His children, by saving us from want and imminent dangers time and again, and so on, and so forth.

All this was, no doubt, true. But I was a doubting Thomas, besides being a vertiable woman at heart, wanting and in need of constant and renewed proof of the Solicitude of my Lord and Master at every stage.

Thus, I felt that in this boy's case something had gone wrong somewhere. Else, why this tantalization in His fulfilling the first half of the Upanishadic Axiom when He had so readily rushed in answer to my challenge to fulfil, the other half? If the dead could be made to come back to life, then what could stand in the way

of the dumb being made to talk? Of course, I was aware of the Biblical Dictum that the sins of the fathers are visited on their children. Thus, it may be that some past bad 'karma' of mine had descended as the curse of dumbness on this innocent boy. Even so, how many a time has He not rescued His devotees by transmuting their accrued sufferings resulting from 'runanubandha' into lightly borne ones, or, not un often, taken them upon Himself and sublimated them? I could not forget the fact that spiritually I am wedded to Him, my Lord and Master, and have taken refuge in Him. In the words of Robert Southey,

*"In Him I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And whenever I understand and feel
How much to Him I owe,
My cheeks are often bedewed
With tears of thoughtful gratitude!"*

(with apologies to Robert Southey for changing 'them' into Him)

In the spiritual sense, there is no alternative to being prepared, to be passive, naked and unashamed! The beauty is the LOVED ONE does not let it come to pass. Is this not the lesson to be learnt from the wonderful manner in which He saved Draupadi's threatened nakedness? "Even as obedience to an earthly ruler makes life under it easier, mute and humble submission to the Divine will makes life on earth easier".

However, all this wisdom was yet a long way off. For the time being, I could not free myself from a nagging doubt that the boy might for ever be condemned to a silent existence. But my wife had no qualms at all about his being able to speak in God's own good time. With a woman's instinct, she knew this in her heart. I now realise that I was like a forward child crying 'mother, mother' while being in her lap all the time! I was yet to be familiarised to Baba's wonderful 'Sutradhaari' ways; yet to learn to be content to remain wherever and in whatever capacity or circumstances He chooses to place me; yet to appreciate that what is, is the best; that, in His infinite Wisdom as the Great mathematician, He sees to it that the sum total of a person's happiness and misery is always 'K'

(a constant) whether a saint or a sinner; a nawab or a fakir; man, woman or child; yea, any living creature for that matter!

Now, to hark back to the scene to see how Baba in inscrutable Wisdom designed to convert the gloom of despair into the bloom of hope-fulfilled. As my son was entering his sixth year, we were shifting to a different house, now he had become like the favourite lamb of the shepherd perched on his shoulder. Holding him by my left and with Baba's portrait in my right, as I was setting my foot on the first step, Baba alone knows from where, a black dog appeared, and, coming close, licked him. It occurred to my mind later that a black dog has been instrumental in one of Baba's Leelas. In my eagerness and anxiety to pacify him I lost sight of the fact that he had spoken! The others were somewhat behind me. Presently, when all of us were in, as is our custom on entering a house for residence for the first time, we offered freshly boiled milk with sugar to Baba and worshipped Him. As soon as we had partaken the '*Prasaadam*', wonder of wonders! The boy began to speak, the words tumbling out of his mouth, vying with one another WORDS! Oh, how they came; brothers and sisters, nephew and nieces, uncles and aunts, even distant cousins, in truth the whole tribe of them came, thus constituting in the course of an hour the full vocabulary of a normal five year old boy, flabbergasting all of us, making us astonished and delighted by turns! Then, all at once, I felt the full impact of Baba's incredible '*Leela*'. It was too great for words. I could only "Let my blood speak in my veins". Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai Baba - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 7

" When truth is stranger than fiction"

The Upanishad

"Ask, it shall be given."

- The Bible

During the Second World War, I was employed as a Civilian Office Supervisor in the " Embarkation Headquarters Vishakapatnam through which all the requirements of war against Japan were being routed. This was the first time I had ever worked for the army or the Government for that matter having been in

private employment till then. Hence, I had often to bungle through to success, 'heart within and God overhead/ We worked under the strictest discipline I had even known. Even minor mistakes attracted immediate and summary punishment. It was in this context that I once found myself in a highly embarrassing position. It came about as under:

A British Military Officer and I were in charge of disbursement of pay to the soldiers and sepoys (as Jawans were then called) According to the rules, soon after the payments are made, the O.C.'s counter signature should be obtained and the ledger posted up. However, on the first of a certain- month, it was so late in the evening by the time payments were made that I postponed the work of getting the pay rolls countersigned and posted to the next day and went home. I had no qualms about the safety of the document, since it was a war-time military establishment, everything under lock and seal with sentries pacing up and down round the clock. However, imagine my shock and surprise the next morning when I opened the almirah, to find the pay-rolls missing.

Hardly a month earlier, I was handpicked as the best available man and given the charge of the office by the new boss, one Maj G. William, a distinguished war-veteran. This was my first major task and I would be found wanting. He was indeed a fire-eater with a penchant for dismissing a person found negligent in any way on the spot. Many including my predecessor in the seat had thus been axed in quick succession. This had created a lit of heart-burning. It was clear that someone bent upon putting me in trouble was behind this mischief. I was completely non-plussed. My heart rose in prayer to Baba, my Sole Refuge, for His unfailing help to a devotee in trouble. Sustained by such faith, I pulled out all the files methodically one by one, in the hope of locating the payrolls among them. It was of no avail. I became frantic and went on repeating the process with each of the twenty odd almirahs in the office hoping against hope to find by chance the missing documents hidden in one of them but with the same negative result. I went and sat in my seat utterly frustrated.

To go and tell the boss would be worse than useless, since the whole thing smacked of negligence and he was bound to pounce upon me. It would

mean only one thing, namely, dismissal. That would be my undoing. Caught in this dilemma, I once again beseeched Baba to my rescue. Now, some impulse led me back again to the same almirah in which I had kept the pay-rolls and which I had thoroughly searched already, and involuntarily opened it, when lo! and behold! There before me exactly where I had kept, were the pay-rolls starting me in the face! I know for certain that all the while none had stirred from his seat. There was no way to explain it. It was another clear example of Baba's '*chamatkar*'.

"Ask, it shall be given."

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 8

Why fear when I am here? Cast your burdens upon me and I will bear them"

- Baba

My ancestral back ground and the environment in which I was born and bred up had cast me into a philosophic mould and conditioned me to believe that "There is a destiny that shapes our ends / Rough - hew them how we may." After the advent of Baba into my life, my experiences with him amply confirmed and ratified this belief. Rather it became an axiom in due course proving itself again and again in a remarkably incredible manner. I gave no thought for the morrow. The unsettled war- years found a large number of us employed willy nilly in some establishment connected with the war-effort. With the ending of the war, however, most of these units were closed down one by one. I was functioning as an Administrative Officer in the Embarkation HQ, Vishakapatnam at that time. Of course, I knew I had to seek a job elsewhere. But then what is Baba for? Does he not provide the impetus to act, leading us into "fresh fields and pastures new?" Has He not assured His devotees that there would be no want in their houses? Is He not ever ready and willing to take over our burdens if only we cast them on Him with full faith? So why worry? Such were my thoughts and I was as unconcerned as I could be. Accordingly, one fine morning my boss, Capt. Boohariwallah, a man of sterling character and independence who had recently

taken over asked me whether I had been recommended for a Permanent position as an administrative Officer in the army. On my replying in the negative, he forthwith put up a letter to the GHQ strongly recommending me for the job. He followed up by phoning the Staff Officer concerned at intervals to make sure the proposal received due consideration. This spontaneous action of the Officer only underlined my belief in Baba's solicitude for the welfare of those who put their faith in Him. On this note of hope I found myself discharged on the closing down of our establishment in July '48.

Months dragged on but nothing was heard from Delhi. I had saved nothing and had to begin selling things to fend for the family. First it was the furniture. Then it was my wife's jewellery one by one till by Dec '48 we came to the end of our resources except for just one gold chain around her neck. I kept in touch with the GHQ through one of the officers still available. I had every reason to be hopeful. However, in retrospect I wonder at my seeming stupidity in my failure to seek an alternative job. But, then it never occurred to me I should try. As luck would have it, reducing my hopes to ashes, came the government's declaration of the 'Hyderabad Action' against the Nizam. The whole army was geared up overnight to achieve success in their effort and chances of my appointment vanished into thin air.

It was a terrible shock. I sat before Baba and cried. My wife who was convalescing after confinement and whose matchless devotion to Baba has always been exemplary told me it was needless for me to cry or lose heart. Baba was actually testing her faith not mine, she exclaimed. "Let this lost piece too go. Let us see what He does afterwards," so saying, she practically tore the chain off her neck and threw it. "Please take and sell this away and let Him take over," she concluded. For a long while I could not bring myself to pick it up. I felt like a heartless robber, having no alternative, I steeled myself to take it and sell it. Within a week after this, I got my first permanent appointment as a higher grade Office Assistant in the Royal Indian Navy through the good offices of Capt. Krishnaswamy who happened to be a former student of mine. I was past 40. I think it was the first as well as the last exemption from such over-age ever

granted. It could happen that way because the Navy was still under British Admiralty manned by Britishers at the top and an Englishman had strongly recommended it in my favour. In the ultimate analysis, it was Baba fulfilling Himself in His own wonderful way.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai Baba - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 9

HOW THE WHEELS OF BABA GRIND SLOWLY BUT SURELY?

It has been narrated in the earlier article, how though past 40 and without a regular job, I was granted exemption and appointed as A Grade office Assistant in the Royal Indian Navy in Dec 1948. It was, no doubt; the first as well as the last such exemption granted by the Government of India as a striking example of Baba's grace.

Hardly had I settled down in my job when, out of sheer jealousy, some of the office-staff petitioned the NHQ against my appointment and the exemption granted. I knew about it only when a letter came retracting the earlier order and allowing me the option to work in a lower category as a clerk. Mr. Brooker, who had originally recommended me, showed me the letter and wished to know my reaction. I was stunned. Apart from the discomfiture of being downgraded, my emoluments would go down too, making it impossible for me to make both ends meet. Above all, I was hit below the belt. I said I was not prepared to be demoted. I requested him to forward my appeal against the patently unjust order. He readily agreed.

All the while what was puzzling me was why Baba was tantalizing me like this. Of course, learn I did, though it took me long years to do so, that MUTE AND HUMBLE SUBMISSION TO HIS WILL IS THE ONLY RULE FOR A PEACEFUL LIFE. But then, still being raw, I became desperate. As much so on reaching home, to the astonishment of my wife kamala, and to my own shame later on, I hit Him with my fist, the glass of the frame fracturing and cutting my fist into the bargain. I gave Him an ultimatum, so to say, to see through my appeal, or else! I sat down before Him and wrote it out in the strongest language possible telling the people at the NHQ about their ineptitude, cussedness, inability to take

a decision in the first instance, and causing untold misery to an appointee to cover up their administrative inefficiency.'

Mr. Brooker's face went red on reading the appeal. He glowered at me and demandd to know whether I called it an appeal and, whether I expected him to forward it to the NHQ. I told him that Britishers were still at the helm and, since they were not playing the game but hitting me below the belt, I expected him, as an Englishman, to come to my rescue. He immediately cooled down and volunteered to send it adding, "The worst that can happen to me is that, they can terminate my contract, according to which I have still a year to go. Well, I can always go back to my job home. So, here goes! "It was a stinker all right. I bided my time keeping my fingers crossed. Before a week had passed came a reply cancelling the adverse letter and regretting the inconvenience caused to me.

No long after, a new technical department called the Directorate of Naval Armament Inspection was formed. As there was no age bar for this, Mr. Brooker, sensing a possible recurrence of trouble for me on this score, put me up as a candidate, and I was selected again as an act of Baba's grace. The emoluments were higher. Baba had steered my course clear of the sharks and shoals of jealous intrigues and administrative objections. Baba, in His Infinite Mercy, wished to spare me further suffering. Hence it was He had created so many obstacles and diverted my course in a totally unexpected manner to perfect safety. IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT MAN IS HIS OWN ENEMY AND OFTEN COMES IN THE WAY OF GOD TO DO GOOD TO HIM. It took me a long time, indeed decades, to sense this fully and cease to be like a wayward and naughty child of an indulgent father, and learn 'to be content to remain where and what you are according to His will. The truth is one can be happy only when one,

"To God doth late and ear/y pray

More of his grace than gifts to lend,

And entertains the harmless day

With a religious book or friend.

Such man is freed from servile bands

Of hope to rise or fear to fall,

*Lord of himself though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all".*
(*"A Happy Warrior"* by Sir Henry Wotton)

Glory be to Shi Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 10
AN INCREDIBLE MIRACLE OF BABA IMPELLING THE
GOVT. OF INDIA
TO MODIFY THEIR DECISION FOR THE SAKE OF HIS
DEVOTEE

This pertains to my totally unexpected selection as an Ammunition Supervisor in the newly-formed Directorate of Naval Armament Inspection of the Royal Indian Navy in 1949 in the face of normally insurmountable obstacles. To begin with, I was already 43, an age, as a rule, a disqualification for fresh entrants to a brand - new Government department. Further, I had not touched ammunition even with a bargepole till then. So, I was pleasantly surprised to find my name topping the list of successful candidates. No doubt, it was in accordance with Baba's "aagna".

Presently, I came to know that we would be required to go to U.K. for training. My immediate reaction was against it for reasons of health. It was quite baffling to me why, in His Inscrutable wisdom, Baba had led me on to this job notwithstanding my inability to go abroad of which, as 'Sarvantaryaami', He must be fully aware.

I was, however, sustained by a blind faith. IS NOT "FAITH TO BELIEVE WHAT YOU DO NOT SEE AND THE REWARD OF THAT FAITH IS TO SEE WHAT YOU BELIEVE", IN THE GOLDEN WORDS OF ST.AUGUSTINE. About two years passed thus. It chanced that the British Technical Assistant, one Mr. Mordy, was invalided and flown to the U.K. Usually, they call for a replacement from the Admiralty. To my surprise, I found myself as the defacto. Tech. Asst. and being tacitly accepted as such by my immediate boss, a dyed-in-the-wool Britisher named Smith.

Yet, I was not out of the Woods At long last, Maj. Priestly; of the Royal Marines, the Director, had managed to obtain the sanction of the Govt. of India to send the first batch of four candidates to the U.K. and one fine day, ere long my passport arrived. As Mr. Smith took and reached it across the table with congratulations, I involuntarily recoiled from it. I somehow managed to blurt out, "I am not touching it, Mr. Smith!" He was stunned. I added, "You see, the fact is I never wanted to go to the U.K. and am not going. I have been guilty of an act of dishonesty in not having confessed it at the beginning. It is high time you wrote and told the Director everything, come what may!" He looked bewildered. He seemed to think I was talking through my hat. So, in a gentle manner he told me, "Listen, don't say anything to me now. Take the car and go home. We shall talk over it tomorrow." "Look here Mr. Smith", I replied "This is not a sudden decision. Only, I am two years late in announcing it." I felt greatly relieved, as if a heavy burden weighing me down had been taken off; but I felt more insecure about my position. Only the undercurrent of my faith in Baba sustained me.

The next day when Mr. Smith saw me reiterating my refusal, he set about much against his will to write and explain the predicament to Maj. Priestly, rather going out of the way to safeguard my position. He wrote that I already knew the ropes and my not going to the U.K. should not be allowed to come in the way of my future prospects. I, no doubt, knew in my heart of hearts that Baba was behind all this, though nothing could yet be said how things would finally turn-out. Maj. Priestly was wild with rage. He wrote a stinker addressed to me saying that "In spite of the uniformly glowing tribute to the brilliant record of your work in the department, I shall most regretfully, be obliged to downgrade you in view of your unwillingness to go to the U.K. for training. If you are not prepared for this, you may seek your future elsewhere." I felt overwhelmed.

After reaching home, as I went in still in a daze and my eyes fell upon Baba, I broke down and began sobbing out my heart to Him. My wife; Kamala, whose single-minded devotion to Him is like a steady flame in the face of all the winds that blow" came near and said, "what has happened that you are crying like this? My woman's instinct tells me that nothing untoward will befall us. Why

fear when Baba is with us?" I read out and explained the letter of Maj. Priestly to her. To my astonishment she stood her ground without being perturbed in the least by the letter nor by my gloomy forebodings of impending doom. Rather, she turned round and poohpoohed the very idea. "Afterall, who is Priestly to make or mar us?" she demanded to know. "It is the prerogative of Baba only and Baba alone. Priestly has only held out a threat. How long will it take for Baba to make him change his mind? We know how the District Magistrate of Ahmednagar, an Englishman, not knowing he was acting under the inspiration of Baba whom he had never seen, scrapped his earlier judgement even without looking at the appeal memo and orally pronounced a fresh order acquitting the appellants falsely implicated at first. What Baba Himself has given, no power on earth can take away." These, indeed, were inspired words now being uttered by one by nature given to just a few mild words of assent and quite foreign to dialectics or harangue. They stirred my blood and revived my dying hope. Here I may add that I have had ample proof, since, as on so many previous occasions (as, for example, when he granted 'Saakshaatkaaraa' and revived my dead son, coming again the next day, being Thursday, conferring unique good fortune on my wife Kamala of serving a full to Him; similarly, upholding her firm faith when He made my dumb son speak in a split second) that He has always been specially gracious to her and, incidentally, to me, a doubting Thomas.

The next morning, I went to the office with a new-found courageous and poise. The moment I stepped in, the attendant told me that there was a telegram received a little while ago on the table. I casually opened it, and was taken aback to find it was from Maj. Priestly. It read, "Withdraw my letter to Mr. Ramaswami-personally coming by the first flight". I was both thrilled and stunned at the way things were happening. How correctly my wife had forecast it; When Mr. Smith arrived, I just handed him the telegram without a word. On reading it he was absolutely floored. However, in an impassioned manner, he told me "I know he is coming in person to persuade you. Do be a good lad and agree to go. Else, I shall be badly let down." Soon Maj. Priestly came. Even as he was stepping in, he was asking with obvious impatience, "where is Mr. Ramaswami?" He was a

tall, hefty, blue-eyed Scot with a noble mien, a truly imposing personality. I could see he was greatly upset. "I am here, sir," I managed to say, though highly tensed

Maj. P. "Do you know why I have come Mr. Ramaswamy?"

I "I don't actually know why you have come. Sir, but, I have my own guess why you must have come, You see, Sir..."

Maj P. No, Mr. Ramaswami! he flared up. "YOU CAN'T. HOW CAN you guess when I myself did not know that I was to come. Something MYSTERIOUS has happened! that is why I have come".

The word "mysterious" made my blood tingle confirming beyond all doubt that BABA HAD TAKEN OVER COMMAND! "You know", he continued, it has taken me two long years to get the 'all clear' to send you chaps to the U.K. for training. But, you upset all my plans. HOWEVER, ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER POSTING MY LETTER, SOME HIGHER-UPS IN THE FINANCE MINISTRY PHONED ME TO SAY THAT THE BUDGET FOR SENDING TRAINEES TO THE U.K. IS CUT DOWN BY 25% SO THAT I CAN SEND ONLY THREE NOW ALTHOUGH THE SANCTION FOR THE FOUR POSTS IS LEFT AS IT IS. THAT MEANS YOU ARE NOT TOUCHED. I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THIS AT ALL.

I could no longer contain myself. I cut in to say, "Sir, I beg you to let me speak. You say something MYSTERIOUS has happened. You know, Sir, it is exactly for some such thing to happen that my heart has been crying out to my God. And if it had not happened, it would be mysterious to me. Sir, may I say without any breach of decorum that you are not the arbiter of my destiny. There is SOMEONE to arbitrate yours as well as mine." The words spontaneously gushed out. I now know that it was Baba prompting me. Striding up to my side of the big table around which we were all standing, Maj. Priestly grabbed my shoulder and, looking me straight in the face, exclaimed with some asperity, "You have the audacity and the courage to say that to my face, Mr. Ramaswami!"

"It is neither, Sir", I replied calmly, returning his look. "For, devotion to Baba enables one to acquire the *freedom from fear to stare the world in the face*

even if it should have blood-shot eyes/ It is a conviction born of faith transmitted to me in the blood from generation to generation and crying for expression."

Still holding my shoulder he said, " **You seem to** challenge my faith in God, too!"

"As a Britisher, you can't understand my faith, sir," I said "You trust God and keep your powder dry!" mine enables me to be unarmed without any rear. It is not a half, way house *but complete surrender with complete protection in return."*

He suddenly softened. Relaxing his hold and patting me gently on my back he remarked, "AH right, all right. I can see you are sincere. Though for the time being your position appears to be safe, let me warn you it may not be so for long. I am going back by the return flight to see the Defence Minister and tell him that I must have four U.K. trained men to being with and the cut must be restored. If I succeed as I hope to, you will have to go down."

"I have no qualms about it now, sir," I said. "If you succeeded. I shall bear no ill-will against you. God bless you".

"For a man in your predicament, it is, indeed, a grand thing to say. Good-bye", the great man concluded, kindling in me warm admiration and regards for his openness and magnanimity.

How wonderfully Baba solved the bristling problem without embarrassment to any one concerned will now be seen. As soon as Maj. Priestly reached Delhi, some mysterious, though not serious, illness overtook him, and he was air-lifted to the U.K. We were happy to know later that it did not take long for him to become all right, though he chose to terminate his contract to settle down in England.

A committee Naval Armament Officers, satisfied with the standard of my performance, recommended to the Naval Headquarters about my competence to continue in the department without any need for further training.

Thus, what threatened as a Himalayan avalanche, vanished in to time through Baba's grace like the morning mist before the rising Sun.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 11
BABA AS BHAKTHA PARAADINA

The facts herein set down clearly demonstrate how one's absolute surrender to Baba blesses one with his infinite and never failing grace which in turn generates all the noble qualities like honesty and courage-honesty to confess one's errors, come what may, and courage to constitute oneself into a majority of one and stare the world in the face, even if it should have, blood-shot eyes! And by no means the least gratifying aspect of the situation is that in the final analysis such a one is seen invariably to come out unscathed, the so-called copy-book maxims incarnating themselves into little giants so to say, and forming an effective bodyguard.

My appointment in the Naval Armament Inspectorate, Khamaria as Examiner-in-charge of the manufacture of various components for a particular defence item involved meticulous planning and provisioning of high-precision gauges to be used at various stages. Since we were embarking upon the job for the first time in India, we had to obtain the blue-prints for the purpose from the British Admiralty. They were in the form of one single schedule catering for the different marks in use including the one being made by us. My boss Lt. Cdr. Rodney Todd by name, trained in England, was quite conversant with the practical aspects of the work. Nevertheless, he left the whole thing to me, both because he felt I could do it and it was the best way for me to learn. The result was I Bungled. Instead of confining my-self to the Particular mark in view, I prepared a demand for gauges for all the marks as given in the schedule. Quite a few of them had to be made in England, Since such sophisticated technology for making the special steel and achieving -the Precision was not then available with us. And so, the list as Prepared by me was forwarded and went through different channels at higher levels without anyone detecting the grievous error.

None of us was wise to the ignominious blunder, least of all myself. It is difficult to imagine what sleepless nights of anxiety and fear of impending doom would otherwise have held me in thrall. For, as will be seen presently, my huge

mistake was to cost to the government quite an unnecessary loss of a few lakhs of rupees. This came to light only during the visit of a high-ranking Naval Officer sent to review and report on the progress we were making. While going through the records, he was taken aback to find that we had ordered for so many guages not required for our purpose and he was in a towering rage. He was closeted with my boss whom he squarely took to task for such sheer incompetence amounting to criminal negligence putting the government to the loss of a sizeable amount. What explanation had he to offer for such a disgraceful lapse? And so on.

Sitting in the adjacent room where I could hear everything, I felt as if I were the target of the 'sling and arrows of the outrageous' insults sought to be heaped on the head of my boss since the actual blame lay at my door. The impact on me of the realisation of the grave magnitude of my stupid error was stunning. I felt the need for courage to speak out the truth. After all, courage and honesty are not things to be put on the shelf, to be used when convenient.

They should be the rules of life. Baba sees to it that it is so if one avoids trying to deceive oneself and Him into the bargain.

Further, this would not be the first time when an unreserved confession of truth had steered me clear through "the sharks and shoals" of life's ocean. So, nerving myself up and invoking Baba's grace for my aid, I went and knocked for permission to enter. I went in begging to be excused for the breach of decorum in thus intruding but nevertheless requesting to be heard. Surprise and annoyance writ large on his face, the officer from the NHQ demanded to know what the dickens I meant. I said the statement I wished to make would explain everything. I could see he was arresting his inclination to tell me to get out and asked with obvious impatience, "Yes, what, do you wish to say?" "Just one thing sir. I said, "and that is, the responsibility for this unfortunate state of affairs is primarily if not solely mine. Hence, it is I that should take the choking".

This momentarily nonplussed him. Presently he asked me authoritatively, "Who is running the show here, Rodney or you?".

"No doubt, he runs the show, sir, "I replied," but may I point out that situation de facto is that he has to take my word for granted for the purpose. This is the first occasion when he has had to regret it."

The officer's mood suddenly changed, he seemed a bit overwhelmed by the unexpected turn things were taking. He calmed down, rang for a chair and asked me to sit down.

"Now that you own up responsibility for the sorry mess", he continued, "will you please say how it happened and why?"

"Pure ignorance, sir," I said. "That I can see what a blithering idiot I was, though I acted in good faith. However, I am not asking for any leniency. I plead guilty to the charge if what is tantamount to criminal negligence¹."

Silence reigned in the room for a minute or so. Collecting himself, the officer exclaimed, "Well, I don't know what to do with you, Mr, Ramaswami! You have so frankly owned up the error for which you alone are not responsible. That calls for the frankness on my part too. I myself was guilty of having committed such blunders when young. "Then, turning to my boss, he continued, "The only thing to do now is to forget the whole affair. A few lakhs are nothing to the government. We need honesty. I shall recommend for the loss to be written-off". "You can go, Mr, Ramaswami, thank you." He concluded.

Tears welled up in my eyes as I realised the full significance of the dramatic manner in which acting in a split second as He always does, Baba had turned the tables to retrieve my position.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 12

" A breath can make them, as a breath has made"

- Goldsmith

How my tense confession and readiness to take the whole blame upon me for the technical blunder jointly committed by my boss Lt.Cdr.Todd and myself won for me the spontaneous approbation of Cdr Rao has been narrated in a previous article. More pleasant surprises yet were to follow. After the visitor had left, my boss called me and said with feeling that I need not have taken the full

brunt upon me. I replied that it would be less than honest if I had not. However, the reason for calling me was different. It was to tell me that Cdr. MRA Rao, (who had visited us) was greatly impressed with me and would like to take me on this staff on promotion., if I could be spared. He was however, informed that this matter should be put up to me since nothing could be anticipated about my action. The fact was I had willy-nilly established a reputation for having my own way by first refusing to be deputed to the U.K. and later turning down an offer of promotion elsewhere.

Before long, the Cdr. paid an unscheduled visit to our unit and was to leave the next day. no reference was made to my intended promotion. At about seven next morning as I was scurrying to get ready, there was a knock, Imagine my surprise and embarrassment for being dishevelled when contrary to all expectations, I found the Cdr. In full Navy-blue uniform with golden strips denoting his rank on the shoulders and around the sleeves standing full six feet murmuring an apology. Welcoming him in, I hurriedly dressed myself and came with coffee for both. It was December, 1956. We were standing in the front room before Baba's portrait in standing posture with the 'biksha-patra' (in which pose he appeared to revive my dead son and accept '*biksha*') Broaching the subject in a gingerly manner, he said he had not actually planned the visit but came on an impulse to talk in private on a personal matter concerning me in which he too was interested. Incidentally, he wondered how I managed to carry on without a scooter. If I liked, he would see I got one allotted from the defence quota on priority basis and sanction the necessary loan for it too, a coveted possession in the '50s. I realised how when Baba wants to give, He does so with many hands from many unknown channels. At the same time there rang a bell in my mind reminding me this could be Baba's subtle method of testing me. Also, I am by nature averse to sudden luck out of tune with my standards. I just thanked him and said I was born to be a plebeian and pedestrian. Reverting to the purpose of his visit, he said it was to know my reaction to his proposal to take me on his staff on promotion in the Senior inspectorate of Naval Armaments, Cossipore, Calcutta. I was overwhelmed by the gesture and the realisation that Baba was

behind it all. It was extraordinary that a high ranking officer elects to go and see quite a junior member of the service to ascertain his action about something of positive benefit to the latter. It would be too good to be true, were it not for Baba again and again making the incredible come to pass. It is these thoughts that overwhelmed me and tears began running down my cheeks. Of course, I must confess that my attitude to life is feminine besides.

The officer was taken aback. "I am sorry if I have hurt your feelings, Mr. Ramaswami", he said with obvious concern, adding "don't you want promotion?" "No sir, you have not hurt me. I am overwhelmed by your gesture and the infinite mercy of Baba," I replied "As regards my wanting promotion or anything else for that matter, I really don't know what I want. It is upto Baba to give me what he deems fit. Hence, I would rather don't like you to go out of the way to-do me a good turn. I don't wish to be the cause of some one else thus losing his change either." Baba generally enables me to decide on intuition in such circumstances. I also felt that Calcutta was not for me, promotion or no promotion.

"It would not be like that," he rejoined. "The reason why I wish to have your consent in advance is to enable me to fix up a bungalow for you. You know how difficult it's to get a good accommodation." "I beg of you to leave things as they are," I said. The reason is my conviction born of firm faith in Baba and sustained by continuous experience that he is ever watchful of my needs and know WHEN as well as WHAT to give. What is due to me, no power on earth can hold back. All I need to have is patience. I am quite content to remain where and what I am according to His will".

It was the officer's turn now to be overwhelmed. Taking my hands in his and speaking with feeling and a new born conviction, as it were, he said, "I think you are right. Let us leave it to your Baba to decide. I thought I had known you for what you are. But I now see I was wrong. I am just beginning to know you. I only wish I had your attitude to life. You don't know how miserable I am, Mr. Ramaswami", and stopped, overcome with emotion.

Forgetting the wide gulf separating our ranks not only officially but socially too, (for I had come to know he was a scion of Serboji Maharajah of Thanjavur) I

hugged him, throwing discretion to the winds and drawn to him by sheer brotherly love and sympathy. He had wealth, rank and position and yet happiness eluded him. I had heard he was involved in legal proceedings for separation from his English wife whom he had married in England nor was he left at peace in the service by jealous superiors determined to score him off. Such is life that we have to learn to be happy by counting our own blessings vouchsafed to us by Baba. My heart went out to him and I made bold to say, "Sir, I feel that from today Baba has come into your life. Please, do learn to have faith in Him and let Him take over your burdens. All will be well". Being much older, I blessed him heartily. He thanked me with feeling and rather startled me by saying he would soon be leaving the Navy and that was the reason why he wanted to ensure my promotion in good time. However, he had no qualms about it now, with Baba to look after me. As for me I was least concerned about it. My heart sang Baba's praise for bringing me close to a person worth his weight in gold. Before taking leave, he very considerately added, "I shall be in touch with you. My help will always be available for finding a good berth for you if your service is not extended. Don't hesitate to write to me".

As is to be expected with Baba, He saw to it that Cdr Rao became a happy man. He found carnal bliss afresh, with a Maharashtrian lady and was picked by the Oerlikons, a Swedish firm, as their Technical advisor on a five figure salary at Delhi. Promotion came seeking me unasked and in the same manner my service was spontaneously extended for five years. All I did was "to work and to wait", not caring for the morrow, "heart within and God over head." Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all!

BABA'S MIRACLE - 13

HOW BABA GRANTS ANTICIPATORY BAIL TO HIS DEVOTEES IN DIRE NEED?

The following occurrence took place in the Winter of '57 or '58, It concerns a friend of mine, Shri A.K. Kumthekar by name, aged about 40 at that time and employed as an Asst. Foreman in the Inspectorate of Armaments in the ordinance Factory at Khamaria, Jabalpur. He was a highly principled brahmin

hailing from Pune greatly devoted to his parents. His first concern in life was about his aged and bedridden father and he could not think in terms of living away from the old gentleman leaving him to be looked after by others. It was in these circumstances that one fine morning his boss, a hard-boiled Lt. Col. notified him to be ready to go and attend an 18 week Senior Armament Examiner's Course at Kirkee, Pune.

The above order acted as a bomb-shell on Shri Kumthekar and he found himself in a quandary. For one thing, the passing of the Course was in the nature of a qualification for promotion and no option was allowed. For another, it would mean being away from his father for the stipulated period or shifting him to and from which would jeopardies his health. So, he put up his request to be exempted from the Course, or alternatively to be transferred to Kirkee on compassionate grounds. He then rushed to me for solace and advice. He was on the verge of tears. He had heard from me many an account of the incredible miracles Worked by Sri Sai Baba in my life and how he came to be the sheet anchor of my existence. I instinctively felt that "Baba's sanction was there in his coming to me and His intercession and protection to enable him to fulfil his filial obligation could be taken for granted. I told him accordingly beseeching him to rest assured that no power on earth could come in the way of Baba's children discharging their duty conscientiously. Only from that moment, he should without question put his faith in Baba knowing Him to be but the incarnation of Datta worshipped by them in their family. These words had the desired effect on him and cleared the gloom of despair away.

Personally I had no qualms about Shri. Kumthekar being enabled to surmount the seemingly insurmountable obstacle in his way for, this was not the first time that I had been impelled, sub-consciously or super-consciously as the case might be, by Baba to hold out similiar guarantees in cases of illness considered to be hopeless but by His infinite Mercy happily ending in complete recovery in due course.

Hardly a week had passed when my friend came to me, with crest, fallen countenance with the Lt. Col.'s reply summarily rejecting his request and

peremptorily telling him to obey the order. He was given a week's time to collect the TA and leave the station. He understandably felt that Baba was not acting in his behalf as expected. I, however, was not at all perturbed knowing Baba's inscrutable Wisdom and Methods. I therefore encouraged him to be hopeful. I assured him that not unoften Baba acts in the last split second when all hope disappears. This had some effect and he left.

In the next two weeks I was so completely occupied with the work on hand that I cleanly forgot about the affair. Then one afternoon I rang up my friend's office to know the situation. To my pleasant surprise Shri Kumthekar answered the call. Murmuring some apology, he said he was coming straight to meet me. And so he did. He was sorry he could not see me earlier due to an urgent time-bound assignment, he said.

It seems that submitting to the inevitable, he collected his TA and was planning to travel with the whole family to Kirkee by the end of the stipulated week when to his astonishment, on the evening prior to the day intended for the journey, a letter from his boss was delivered to him cancelling the original order. It left him speechless and overwhelmed at the incredibly wonderful manner in which Baba had acted. The really thrilling part of the whole affair followed the next morning, about 11 AM. As Shri Kumthekar was about to start his meal, a fakir dressed like Baba came and stood at the door. When some coins were offered to him in the usual way, he declined saying he wanted food which was readily given. Accepting it, he gave a small packet of *Udhi* to Shri Kumthekar asking him to keep it before Datta's portrait, offer 'aarti' and then open it. Accordingly, it was done. When the packet was opened, instead of the *Udhi* there were five miniature conch shells. Shri Kumthekar hastened back to the door only to find the fakir gone. Only then did it dawn upon his mind that the fakir was none other than Baba himself. The conches were kept as objects of worship. Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - **Grace** be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 14

BABA'S CONTROL OVER THE FORCES OF NATURE

" / will not try thee beyond thy limit"

- The Bible

One of the drawbacks in my life has been the lack of robust health, though I have taken it as a blessing in disguise because it prevented me from following 'the primrose path of dalliance' and induced me to keep my head well above water. However, I have remained 'a human barometer' very sensitive to heat and cold, and averse to going even on promotion to regions noted for their extremes of temperature. Thus it was that I declined to go on deputation to the U.K., and again when I was asked to go on promotion to Jabalpur in Feb '55, I had no hesitation in turning it down much to the embarrassment of the authorities and secret ridicule of my colleagues. In doing so I had not reckoned with the All-knowing and Inscrutable Baba who, as I realised much later, was behind the official move and in the best of my interests too. For one thing, the NHQ did not leave me alone. Letters and telegrams followed in quick succession, both, to persuade me and as thinly veiled ultimatum to oblige me to agree. Nevertheless, I was unmoved.

In our office, there was a self-effacing Bengali clerk named Das Babu, a man of few words and quiet efficiency. We had never spoken to each other till then. One day, towards the end of April when I was about to leave, he stood up to draw my attention, and in the gentlest of tones asked somewhat apologetically, "Why not trust God, accept the Promotion and go?". The words went home to my heart, till then adamant to pleadings and threats. It was as if "the hard rocky surface withstanding the repeated blows of the hammer and crow-bar readily cracked at last at the gentle touch of the tenderest of the roots of a tree to make way for its entry" (Thiruvalluvar) I now realise that Das Babu was the; chosen agent of Baba for the moment. The every next day a very high-ranking officer, friendly disposed towards me, beseeched me in the sincerest tones to accept the promotion and go. Baba's method of choosing His messengers is impeccable. I sensed His will and, to the surprise of all, including those secretly indulging in malicious glee till now at my seeming stupidity in refusing fortune's proffered hand, I started for Jabalpur on the evening of May 2nd, much to the delight of the

authorities who had been keeping the vacancy unfilled for my sake for three months, quite unusual especially, in the defence department. He who runs can infer from this that what God or Allah or Baba wants to give, no power on earth can take away. The converse is also true.

The next day as my train was leaving Raipur about noon, the Summer began to bare its fangs. It was only a fore-taste of its fierceness further on. I began regretting the decision I had impulsively taken, notwithstanding an inward recognition of Baba's Omnipresence and Grace as '*Bhaktha-Paraadina*'. The thought of abandoning the whole venture sneaked in. In this perplexed frame of mind, I reached Gondia at 4 pm, only to be greeted by scorching hot winds hitting the face. By 6 pm I was sitting rather bewildered in the compartment of the narrow-gauge train for Jabalpur completely at a loss. Baba alone could and must retrieve the situation, I felt and closed my eyes, half in prayer and half in despair. Imagine my very pleasant surprise when almost in a split second, as if some built-in-air-conditioner had been switched on, the suffocatingly hot compartment was permeated with soothing coolness. My astonishment when I opened my eyes to see the sky overcast with clouds and a gentle life-giving drizzle being wafted down. There was ozone in the air. I craned my neck outside the window to gulp it and let Nature's (Dwaraka Mayi's) own cool spray soothe my nerves.

I turned to the only fellow-passenger in the first class compartment and queried whether he hailed from Gondia, to which he replied in the affirmative, adding he had been residing at the place since over twenty years, engaged in business. I then enquired with some trepidation of a doubting Thomas, whether he could recollect such a phenomenon about this time in May. He asserted with conviction. "Never has such a thing occurred during the two decades of my stay here. This is quite strange". Then I felt certain of Baba's reassurance of which, being feminine in my attitude to life, I was (as I am still) in constant need, in spite of past demonstrations thereof.

The climate of Jabalpur is, certainly, one of extremes, the brunt of which was keenly felt by a valetudinarian like me from the sea-coast. The ordeal of confronting the fierce heat of the Summer of 1960 was all the more exhausting

since if followed a major surgery I had undergone not long before. Though not fully recovered, I had, perforce to be in my seat and hold the fort due to official exigencies, contrary to my habit of going on leave for the peak of the season every year. At this time we were temporarily accommodated in a building where the toilet room was isolated and a bit far. On the particular day in question the temperature had suddenly shot up. It was so scorching-hot outside the air-conditioned office, that I peeped out many times and retracted.

However, as I am accustomed to do when desperate, I mentally handed myself over to Baba to do with me as He and ventured out. Imagine my surprise, astonishment and wonder, all rolled into one, to find all the glare and searing heat gone, the sun hidden by soft, grey clouds so pleasing the eye, and cool balmy breeze so refreshing to the nerves went and stood in the open letting the honey-heavy drops from heaven fall gently over my head and face making my heart leap and sing the glory of the Ail Merciful Baba, alert at all times to the rescue of His devotees in distress.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 15

If you know about Sai Baba what I know about Him. You will call Him the Master of all creation"

- Meher Baba

The incident herein described bears ample testimony to the above-quoted assertion of Shri Meher Baba regarding Baba's absolute mastery over all creation, animate and inanimate. Indeed, we can realise that in reality the Creator and Creation are one, the latter being but the ocular demonstration of the former. This is in consonance with the latest discovery in the light of the post nuclear research in the frontiers of science according to which all manifested nature is only a phenomenon of thought behind which is The Thinker. This in turn reflects and reiterates the Biblical enunciation regarding the origin of creation viz., "Let there be light" said God and there was light and the Upanishadic axiom viz., "Swayam Samkalpa Sam Siddhi" i.e., God's manifestation in concrete form according to His will. It is as God's incarnation that Baba has repeatedly, both

during His Incarnate stay at Shirdi and after His Mahasamadhi, given recurring proof of this divine aspect. As a direct corollary of this, forces of Nature like rain, storm, lightening, fire etc., bowed to his will. The present instance is an example of this.

We celebrated the marriage of our youngest son Dr. V Satyanarayana Sai, now a lecturer in the A.P.S. University, Rewa, MP, on April 5, 1981 at Rayagada in Orissa. The other members of the family having dispersed to their respective Places, we were returning to Rewa via Raipur by the morning Passenger train from Waltair on the 7th of the month. We had not known that apart from the inconveniences incidental to travelling long distance by passenger train, we were wittingly in for an ordeal. We learnt later that people of the region avoid this train as a rule. The route traverses a tribal area more or less entirely dependent for sustenance on the sale and export of the forest produce without arm middleman by the tribals themselves. The Summer is the season of mangoes and the jack fruit in unbelievable abundance of Nature's bounty which has to be seen to be believed. At every stop came an unending stream of the girijans carrying the maximum possible load of the above items and literally hurling themselves and their burdens helter - skelter through the doors and windows into the compartments nearest to them. No railway control (even if tried) could stem that onslaught, as it were, at any cost. The result was the compartments were literally jam-packed and choking. It was a frightful situation in which one did not have any space to move at all. Even the lavatories were full so that we were obliged with unshed tears to possess our souls in patience till we reached Raipur, a matter of twelve hours of torture since to detrain too was physically impossible.

However, that is not only anticipating things too soon in vain, but also overlooking the terrible ordeal of near annihilation of the compartment in a burst of flames before that. For, this is what happened all of a sudden without any one knowing it.

One of our party consisting of my eldest son, the newly married couple and my wife besides myself, (I think it was the first,) said that smoke was emanating from the fan above, from a few wisps at first, later it suddenly swelled

to clouds, slowly filling the entire compartment. It took a little time to realise the potential danger it portended. It was obvious, that there was spontaneous ignition in the wiring possibly due to a short circuit, which if not checked at once would prove dangerous. My son Satyanarayana immediately tugged & the chain to stop to the train. Unfortunately it gave way. We became frantic.

It is imperative to mention here that even in such a situation pregnant with danger, the girijans filling the compartment just continued sitting with their sphinx-like faces, and far away looks, unmoved, unflappable, as if lost in contemplation like 'tapasvins' entrenched in their firm faith that "God is in His Heaven and all is right with the world!" It was an object-lesson for us to understand what it is to trust God in toto, this was what Baba meant when He beseeched His devotees to cast their burdens on Him and keep QUIET letting Him to take care and provide every protection we need. Indeed, it shamed me into knowing how much too far below their standard-in truth how hypocritical-my fickle faith was. Their's was RESIGNATION flowing from complete SURRENDER.

Presently, the train stopped at a station and the guard happened to pass by. When he was told of our predicament and requested for urgent redress, he just remarked with the utmost callousness, "Marjao! (go, die) and passed on as if he were Fate's minion. He clearly smelt of liquor. We had no alternative except to fall back upon our Unfailing Eternal Source of Succour and to pray. Rightly has Dr.Alexis Carrel, the great medical scientist and savant averred, that it is not the Atom that will provide the infinite source of power for the future of the humanity but PRAYER, for, when you pray with all your heart, you are linked to that DYNAMO THAT SPINS the Universe.

The All-Merciful and solicitous Baba ever on the alert as *Bhaktha Paraadina* did come to the rescue in a most unexpected and dramatic manner before despair complete by overwhelmed us. In a spilt second, the skies darkened with gathering clouds and there began a downpour which continued for over an hour, lashing on all sides, partly flooding the compartment and completely smothering out the smoke and the threatened configuration!

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE- 16

BABA'S LEELAS CONNECTED WITH MY FIRST VISIT TO SHIRDI

Being both constitutionally and temperamentally inclined to remain where and what I am, I did not, at first, agreed to be sent to Kirkee for an 18 week course of training in Armaments from October, 1955. I was then working as Leading Examiner of Naval Armaments at Vishakapatnam. Ordinarily, such an attitude will not at all be countenanced in the department. However, having been enabled by Baba to make by mark, I was allowed a certain latitude. Moreover, it was primarily intended for Armament Examiners in the Army, and they had offered to entertain just two of us as guest-candidates from the Navy. Hence, I was not pressed further.

Some days later, while reviewing the situation, it occurred to my mind that Baba's hand was behind it all, that He was providing an opportunity for me to visit Shirdi, not far from Kirkee, Pune. Here it should be noted that ever since his advent into my life in 1942, I had no chance to visit Shirdi. Nevertheless, I believed in every word of His, as recorded by H.H. Narsimha Swamiji, that He is with us at all times wherever we may be and whatever we may be doing. This belief became a certainty, when in March '44, He manifested Himself with the *biksha-patra*, took *biksha* and brought my firstborn son back to life, So, for us Dwaraka Maayi where we were and continues to be so.

As far as our visiting Shirdi is concerned, it is entirely ⁿ His hands, notwithstanding all our effort or none for that Jitter. Thus, an amount I had set aside to cover the intended roily-trip to Shirdi found its way to other uses, and now without the least effort, He was bringing about my visit. This was borne out by the fact that none was deputed from the Navy for the future courses. When this realisation dawned upon my mind, I forthwith backed out of my earlier stand and expressed my willingness to go to Kirkee. I confessed I was keen because of the Shirdi visit rather than the course which somewhat annoyed my boss. So, I went. Candidates from different establishments and disciplines, not a few of them

quite brilliant, had come. Diwali was approaching, and I decided to utilise the two holidays for the Shirdi visit. One day, as was my habit, I was telling some of my colleagues about the Infinite Benevolence of Baba in granting the wishes of any one approaching Him. Two of them, specialised in metallurgy, named Sri Soni and Sri Choudhary, hailing from Kanpur and Katni, respectively, asked me whether I meant what I said without exaggeration. On my categorical assertion that I did, they believed me and agreed to accompany me to Shirdi. The former, and the younger of the two, wanted that he should marry the girl he loved greatly. The latter's wife was long overdue for her delivery, and he was feeling restless on this account. I had no hesitation in assuring them that they could rest assured of favourable and good news awaiting them on our return. They were impressed, and we three reached the sacred place at about 7.00 pm on the Diwali day, 1955.

The place was literally jam-packed with pilgrims - men, women and children - obliged here and there to camp on the roadside. The dormitories and some of the present buildings were yet to come up. However, on my explaining to the management that I belonged to Waltair and was closely associated with the late Sri Durgiah Naidu who had pioneered the effort to build guest-cottages at Shirdi and was familiar to them, we three were generously accommodated in the storeroom. Rather an extraordinarily kind gesture!

The first thing I did after depositing our things was to go to the meals counter to buy tickets, when I was admonished by Shri Soni that "our first priority is Baba's darsan and not food". But I had no qualms about it knowing that Baba knew my heart. I was aware of Baba's approval for a spiritual trio like me of the Upanishadic dictum; 'Annam Brahma' (Food is God). Be that as it may, after darsan and food, we went to listen to the *Kirtan* at the Samadhi *mandir*. On entering, my glance fell on a woman's attractive face. Was it mere chance or Baba's method of testing? I went out and came back to the room. After all, one spot is as holy as another at Shirdi, I felt, even as any part of a thing made of sugar-candy tastes as sweet.

The next morning, by the time I bathed and came for Baba's *darsan*, there was already a long queue of devotees with trays loaded with flowers and offerings of different kinds. Only then was I somewhat shamed into realising I was empty handed. I then went to the bazar and after buying things for 'naivedya' besides a garland and just one rose in bloom, returned and took my position. When compared with the huge garlands smothering, as it were, the *samadhi* and costly offerings made by others, I felt like a beggar at the royal Darbar.

At last, my turn came. With some trepidation, I lifted the tray to give it to one of the priests. Luckily for me, the young man in charge of the stores happening to stand by Baba's statue, recognised me. Possibly sensing the discomfiture in my thoroughly humbled countenance, rather impelled by Baba Himself, he reached out for the garland and the rose, put the garland round Baba's neck till then unadorned, and placed the rose on His Head! I felt accepted. Tears of gratitude overwhelmed me.

On reaching Kirkee the same night, the joy of my two companions knew no bounds to find a telegram and a letter carrying good tidings awaiting them, one announcing Smt Choudhary's safe delivery and the other from Sri Soni' parents ratifying the match of his own choice!

Note : Sri Soni later joined the Bhilai Steel Plant, was deputed to Russia for training and attained high status, while Sri Choudhary joined the I.A.F as Technical Adviser (Metals).

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE - 17

"I will not let my devotees to come to harm.....And, if a devotee is about to fall, I stretch out my hands to support him, and thus with four, (i.e. a number of) outstretched hands at a time save him"

- Baba's Charters & sayings, edited by H.H.B.V.Narsimha Swami

The above charter of Baba granted for all time by Him during His Incarnate stay at shirdi is continuing to find fulfillment both materially and spiritually. Two instances of how. He averted imminent danger to life are being

narrated here. Sometime during 1978, I developed what is known as periarthritis in my right shoulder-joint for which there is no cure in allopathy. One afflicted with it, cannot move the affected limb beyond a limited latitude without being subjected to excruciating pain. The only treatment to be had is physiotherapy which, for this particular ailment, at any rate, happens to be an euphemism for third degree torture as far as the patient is concerned! for example, in a case like mine involving the arm, one exercise is for the person concerned to rotate a big wheel hinged to a pinion with a handle and fixed vertically above shoulder-level, which can be done only by stretching up the arm fully for every revolution, bringing tears to the eyes for sheer pain. I underwent this gruelling ordeal for over a month without any improvement. During this period, I had to commute to and from the hospital by bus almost always overcrowded. One day, while getting out, rather being squeezed out, as it were, through the human mass blocking the way and overflowing the entrance, I was swept back by the rushing mass just as I was stepping out but before my feet could touch the ground. The result was that I found myself wedged in mid-air, my hands stuck to my sides, in the midst of a bunch of men on the footboard on one side and those desperately hanging on to whatever they could hold on to precariously on the other. I had nothing to hold on to nor foothold! I was in such a fright as one caught between receding and onrushing waves. Now, the bus began to move. Any one around me moving forward or back would have spelt my doom by forcing me to drop down and be injured seriously if not fatally.

I was reminded of David Livingstone describing his feelings when he was caught in the jaws of a lion in Africa. He knew what was happening, but "Nature, a mother kind alike to all" had numbed his senses, like the spinal anesthesia before a surgical operation. My condition was similar. Then the miracle happened. A hand from outside, forcing its way through the surrounding mass of human sardines, dragged me out forcefully. I staggered on to the ground half-dazed. I found my saviour to be a young man. Before I could collect my senses to thank him for saving me from the impending danger, he had disappeared in the moving crowd making my search futile. I have no doubt that it was Baba

incognito. Who else could have seen through the human wall and so unerringly caught hold of my arm and pulled out in a split second before it was too late! I decided that I had had enough of this treatment which was proving worse than the endurance of the trouble.

Impelled by Baba, I am sure, I resorted to hot fomentation with salt crystals and the use of *Udhi* with progressive improvement leading to cure. In retrospect, I have no doubt in my mind that, through such varied and intensive suffering, Baba made me expiate for my 'Runaanubandha' to grant redress when I had thus paid for it. Even then it was a rare blessing, because I know many persons having to carry the cross of this affliction for life.

The second instance is this. After getting into a bus in the city to reach our area, I learnt it was a wrong one. My wife was with me. Immediately, I asked her to get down and followed close behind. As she put one foot down, the bus began to move. I did the stupidest of things in the circumstances. I gently pushed her as if pushing her to her doom. She tattered, and would have fallen headlong but for a good Samaritan, I saw close-by who caught her arm and held it till she steadied herself, and went away. Meanwhile some one shouted to the driver to stop, and I too got down. My wife was quite shaken. While feeling grateful to Baba for having averted a great danger, I told her what I saw and said, "Thank Baba for sending a person in the nick of time to save you from a fall". "There was none by my side to help me", exclaimed my wife, somewhat mystified, adding, "I didn't see anyone, nor feel someone holding me by the arm!" It was my turn to be mystified, because it was so clear to me that some *one did stand there* gripping her arm and preventing her fall. Who else could it be but Baba Himself, the *Bhakta Paraadina* in the form of a stranger!

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

AN APOSTLE OF SHRI SAI BABA

"Too many a gem of purest ray serene the dark . unfathomed caves of ocean bear"

- Thomas Gray

Among the less known apostles of Baba but by no means the least important was Shri R. Narayana Swamy Konar of Shri Sai Baba Darbar, Wright Town, Jabalpur. He had been a devotee of Baba for pretty long. However, the manner in which he came to be known to the general public as a blessed devotee of Baba is itself a leela through which as a first step Baba's divinity came to be realised in these parts of the country.

Shri Konar was employed as Train Examiner in the S.E.Rly. at Howbagh, Jabalpur. One of the conditions of his service was a compulsory medical examination every year to determine physical fitness, especially the eye-sight. In the winter of 1954, he appeared as usual before the medical board. When his papers reached the office, it was found that he had failed in the eye-test. He came to know of it through friends. It so happened that the date coincided with the scheduled date for his annual pilgrimage to Shirdi. He had concluded that in any case, his services would be terminated on medical grounds and he would be pensioned off. So, without waiting for official intimation and obtaining leave either, he went away to Shirdi.

When Shri Konar was away, there was a flutter in the office. In the first place, his boss was annoyed at the casual manner of his taking law into his own hands and absenting himself as well as leaving the station on his own. This was strange in the case of a man known for his meticulous adherence to rules. Now this breach would mean a break in the service and would adversely affect his pension and other benefits later on when he would be retiring in due course. Such were the officer's remarks. Then some one close to him observed that the question did not arise, that for all practical purposes, Shri Konar could be considered to have retired from the date of the medical examination which had gone against him and his present breach was purely technical not worth taking note of. "What the hell are you talking about?" flared up the officer. "Whoever told you that the medical examination had gone against him? I have before me his category 'A' report and as far as I know Konar is good enough to go on at least for a year more; find out if he has returned and send for him." The clerk concerned and the few officials in the know of things were mystified and could

not believe their eyes. The most surprised was Shri Konar himself on being told that he was placed in category 'A' by the Medical board. Now, it dawned upon his mind that it was a clear case of Baba's *Leela* and that He had fulfilled Himself according to the *sloka*.

(He makes the blind see and fools wise)

The officer was kind enough to Shri Konar and asked him to put up his application for leave for ex-post facto sanction, and put an end to the whole affair.

This was a turning point in Shri Konar's life. From then onwards, he not only became a magnet of Baba for attracting an ever-increasing number of devotees of all ages and religions but also His instrument for achieving many miraculous results in the lives of those who sought his help-It was for getting cured of bodily and mental ills, for success in examination and interviews, for promotions, for redress from evil spirits, for children for success in matrimonial affairs, etc. Here, one remarkable thing should be noted. Guruji, as Shri Konar came to be known to one and all (some even called him Narayana Baba) continued to possess the clarity of vision of category 'A' till the last and never used glasses. He only put a few drops of the '*abhisheka theertham*' in his eyes daily. It acted as a panacea for all eye-troubles of others too.

As long as he was in service, the enclosed front verandah of the Rly. Quarters served the purpose of a Mandir for Baba's worship. A band of devotees, mostly young, helped and took part in the daily '*aarathi*'. Thursdays were of course special days. Guruji had always a saffron cloth tied over his head during the '*aarathi*' or when giving *Udhi* to devotees. He had become a disciple of Abdulla Baba at Shirdi. There is a Photo of his in Abdulla Baba's cottage at Shirdi and imbibed from him some incantations which he used along with *Udhi* to cure ills and for exercising evil spirits. He was simple and unassuming with a child-like nature which put others at ease. Till his retirement in 1958 he celebrated Rama Navami and Mahasamadhi Day festivals on a modest scale for the former, Baba's idol was taken in procession around the *mohalla*. It was during this period one night after '*aarathi*' (it was a Thursday) when Guruji was chatting with one

Sadhu, he saw a fakir who had all along been sitting some distance away, entering the enclosure. As Guruji was welcoming him, the latter turned to the Sadhu and blessed him saying that in due course he would become known to the public and his true merit would be recognised by them. Presently, the latter took leave and went away. Guruji then offered to massage the legs and thighs of the guest to which the latter did not agree at first, threatening to go away. However, Guruji's importunity softened him and he allowed it. Just then, Guruji's elder sister who was keeping house for him came side. Seeing him with a *fakir* at such late hour, she asked to tell the *fakir* to go away. The latter told her that it was who would be going away. As Guruji did not seem to heed her, she locked up all the doors, lest these self-invited guest should disappear with some articles, and went to bed. The *fakir* then asked Guruji to make some tea and partook it. Before retiring, he asked for a *lota* of water to be kept beside him for the night.

Early in the morning, when Guruji woke up, the *fakir* was not to be seen. It now became clear to Guruji it was Baba Himself in disguise. Seeing the locks in position, his sister too was now convinced about it. The *lota* was half-full with water. Guruji preserved it carefully using it for special purposes as a penance and always kept it filled to the original level with Gangas water⁵. The lady passed away shortly after this occurrence making Guruji realise that it was to this that *that fakir* (Baba) had cryptically referred.

Knowing him intimately as I did and having had the privilege of sharing mutual experiences of Baba's *Lee/as* with "him, I can say without hesitation that as a rule, Guruji preferred to treasure them in his heart.

After his retirement in 1958, Guruji had a small house built with the amount of his gratuity supplemented by the financial help of one or two rich devotees⁶. The front-hall with the verandah took up the major portion to serve as Baba's Mandir. It is this that later came to be known as Shri Sai Baba Darbar at Jabalpur. It began drawing devotees from neighboring places extending as far as

⁵ Guruji's grand nephew (niece'son) Shri B.N. Konar employed as UDC now in the Bansagar Project Circle Office, Rewa, MP is keeping some of the sacred water. He also vouches as having heard from Guruji that something like human excreta was found where the fakir had slept, and thought he was for preserving that too, his sister swept it away.

⁶ Shri Pathak of Pathak Bros., Car-dealers was one.

Nepa Nagar, especially for the Rama Navami and Samadhi Day celebrations. He had no issue. To the best of my knowledge and belief, his relationship with his 'Sahadharmini' was platonic, his energy being sublimated in the service of Baba and His devotees. Now he was available at all times of day and night-to answer devotees' calls, and their attendance for the '*aarhi*' continued to increase overflowing onto the verandah and spilling over into the street, especially on Thursdays. An hour in the afternoon, usually between 2 pm and 3 pm on thursdays was reserved for the '*sumangaiis*' / *suhaasinis*' for the worship of Baba with '*haldi, kumkum*'. The '*aarhi*' later in the evening, at 5-30 pm during October-March and 6.30 pm during April-Sept, was preceded by '*ashtothara puja*' in which all, irrespective of caste or creed, took part. The *prasad* consisting of a mixture of fried gram and parched rice from the Darbar along with the '*Naivedya*' offerings of devotees was distributed to all. It was a pleasant surprise to find the majority belonging to the younger age-group. With more and more persons from the business community evincing keen interest, the celebrations for Rama Navami came to be on a grander scale than before extending to about a week, with daily cultural programmes and *bhajans* by various groups. The main day's procession with band and fireworks, covered a longer route along main roads, and took 5-6 hours to return to the darbar. On the final day, virgins were fed on a mass scale and *prasadam* distributed to the assembled devotees bringing the celebrations to a happy end.

The Mahasamadhi day's *puja*, a whole-night function, also attracted a good number of devotees eliciting from them a generous response in terms of service and contributions. Both the festivals were managed by a Committee of responsible men freshly chosen every time. Guruji made it a Point not to handle the cash collections personally. He also repeatedly turned requests for creating a kind of trust with monthly contributions of members on the ground that it would inevitably lead to corruption of some kind and would detract from the dedicated approach currently obtaining. As already indicated, he meticulously forbade the touching of his feet except by a select band of young devotees (of transparent sincerity).

At the first meeting, Guruji gave the impression of being quite an ordinary man not worth fussing about. I have the feeling that he consciously took pains to go unnoticed, as it were. I myself must plead guilty to the charge of thought like that in the beginning. Only to those who sought him out, attached themselves to him and believed in him did he come to be known by occasional flashes as a chosen agent of Baba. Indeed, as will be seen from examples to be set forth by and by, he communed with Baba and words emanating from his lips especially at 'aarti' time had the sanction of Baba and found fulfilment. In other words, he was gifted with *Vaak Suddhi* and Baba evidently heard his prayers of intercession on behalf of those in trouble of any kind. He asked such persons to write out their request/ailment on slips of paper which he placed before Baba where they remained till he deemed it necessary. For each of them he lighted an *agarbothi* daily and prayed. In specific cases like an examination, interview, courtcase or surgery where obviously there was Baba's sanction he offered special prayer for success by burning *agarbathie's* continuously for the duration of each as notified in advance. With all his child like simplicity he was nobody's fool. He could easily see through cant and hypocrisy. To persons without faith he would not give *Udhi* but tell them to take it from the receptacle kept before Baba. For the different ills of persons who sought his help he administered *Udhi* to be taken with different vehicles (*Anupan*) like water, milk, honey etc. or *Abhisheka theertham* of Baba's *Padukas* with uniformly good results-

He also suggested special observances like fasts and complete reading of *Satcharita* within a week and distribution of sweets at the end for overcoming obstacles and achieving success. Where a person was not in a position to carry out the suggestion, he himself offered to do so. In rare cases where obviously he did not have Baba's approval, he declined to interfere. Friday was the day of silence from 5 am to 5 pm and devoted to answering letters of outstation devotees in which he was prompt. No letter ever went unanswered. He was never known to be so sick till the fag end of his life to be obliged to avoid Baba's 'aarthi' though he was troubled with ailments incidental to the aging of the body. Only a week or two before the end of his earthly sojourn, he returned from a visit

to Nepanagar in response to the wished of the devotees of that place He attained samadhi on 6.7.81 in his 87th year.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE THROUGH GURUJI-1

"Why fear when I am here"?

- Baba

WOMAN SAVED FROM HAVING TO UNDERGO CAESARIAN (1967)

Among the ardent devotees of Baba at Jabalpur were a young Maharashtrian husband and wife who did nothing without obtaining Guruji's prior approval. Accordingly, they got it before the lady was admitted in the Lady Elgin Hospital for Women for her confinement. In the course of routine examination including X-ray, it was found that the baby lay across the womb and would have to be taken out by a caesarian operation by cutting open the wall of the abdomen. This being a major operation involving an element of risk to life, It was necessary to obtain the written approval of the husband for the purpose. However, when he was asked to fill the relevant form and sign it, he ran to the darbar to seek Guruji's approval for or against doing so.

It so happened that Guruji was about to offer the noon 'aarti' to Baba, when this gentleman reached the darbar. Greatly perturbed and in an excited tone he wished to know whether he should give his consent for the operation or fetch his wife way back home for delivery. At least that is what he later claimed to have said. It was not known what exactly Guruji had heard him say. The conversation was in Marathi which Guruji spoke besides Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and Hindi. He said, "Do so" (Asankra) and went on with the 'aarti'. The husband, however, felt convinced that it was a reply to the latter part of his question and meant he should fetch his home.

The greatly relieved husband sped back like an arrow to the hospital and without even as much as a by your leave' to the doctor or nurse began escorting his wife out of the ward to the waiting rickshaw outside. Prof. Mrs. Dave, the gynaecologist, was informed and came hurrying to the ward to warn the man in no uncertain terms the grave risk, may be death en route, to which he was

exposing his wife by this fool hardiness. But no, nothing would deter him. Guruji had spoken his approval. Hence, there was no fear. Rather he was happy that the danger of the cursed operation was warded off. The lady too was no less happy. Such was their FAITH in Guruji. "FAITH" as St. Augustine said, "is to believe what you do not see, and the reward of that faith is to see what you believe."

In this new found joy, the couple reached home safely and the lady already suffering from the pains of labour was put to bed. Even before any mid-wife could be called, rather without any need for it, she delivered without much trouble a healthy baby. The Master obstetrician had seen to it! Glory be to Baba's name! To Sai Nama Mahima!

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai- Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE THROUGH GURUJI-2

" More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of "

- Tennyson

HOW SHRI PATIL BED-RIDDEN FOR MONTHS WITHOUT HOPE OF RECOVERY WAS MIRACULOUSLY HEALED. AND HOW I BECAME A HOMOEOPATH

Homoeopathy had been a desultory hobby with me for a long time. I kept a small box of medicines but they were used occasionally at home or for 'a select few who sought help. To the best of my knowledge and belief none of us had referred about this to Guruji. However, one day he sent word through one of my sons, who was a regular visitor to Baba's darbar, asking me to start practice. I ascertained from my son that there had been no previous talk regarding the subject. I then attributed Guruji's knowledge to his second sight of which he had given proof on certain occasions. But the big question was how to comply with the advice. In the first place, I was not registered as a Homoeopath. Secondly, I did not enjoy the sort of health to do justice to the job. Thirdly, I fumbled. I was afraid of giving remedies which might prove worse than the disease. So, I just kept my own counsel and took no action.

Some days later, one morning, Guruji himself came and said abruptly, "Come, I want you to treat a patient who was in the Victoria Hospital for some months without any benefit and continues to be bedridden. He is Mr. Patil, superintendent in Defence Accounts, now on loss-of-pay-leave, and the family is in great trouble and the sons still at College. They are all devoted to Baba". My heart was in my mouth as I heard this account. I felt this was asking me bite more than I could chew. I marshalled enough courage to tell Guruji that I had not so far treated even one such case, and he should kindly spare me. One remarkable thing about him was he would not argue with any one on any issue nor try to press his point. He would simply say, it is all Baba's will. Likewise, he now said, "All right, if you feel like that, leave it". Being an introvert and given to introspection. I felt at once that I had not properly understood him. He obviously wanted me to be merely an instrument, (Nimitta Matra) and he would do the rest by invoking Baba's grace. So, why fuss about it? So, I told Guruji that, on second thoughts, I was prepared to do my best. " Ah, yes, that is why I came to you. Now, before we go, I want you to give me a dose of medicine for my old ear-discharge". This was another surprise, because so far I had not seen him using any medicine. He only used to put a few drops of '*abhisheka-theerthom*' in the ear. I did accordingly without further thought. Now I realise it was a kind of symbolic imitation for me as homoeopath. As Robert Oppenheimer, the associate of Albert Einstein, says, "symbolism is more real than fact, especially in religious and spiritual matters".

Now, I followed Guruji to see Patil. He was practically in a moblised who lay still in bed. I was feeling my hollowness as a doctor. I was, however, sustained by the belief that 'God cures and the doctor takes the credit'. I prescribed a daily dose of Kali Phos 200x and came home after seeing Guruji off to the Darbar. My thoughts were on Shri Patil almost on end. Yet, I did not pick up enough courage to go and see him for three days. There was a sneaking fear he might be worse. But, what was I to say if Guruji wished to know how the patient was progressing. This thought alone dragged me to Shri Patil's house on the morning of the fourth day. As with trepidation I entered the room where I expected to see him lying

motionless in bed, I was shocked with astonishment at what I saw. The gentleman, supporting and propelling himself with both the hands resting against the wall, was slowly perambulating around. I stood speechless wondering whether to believe my eyes. Truth, indeed, was proving stranger than fiction. When he turned round and saw me, he burst out sobbing with tears streaming down his cheeks and uttering incoherently, "Baba, Baba, you have come, you have saved me Baba," and so on. Swami Vivekananda said that, to a hungry man, God has to come in the form of bread (Annam Brahma) . Similarly, in retrospect, it strikes me that Shri Patil saw Baba in me, his doctor, for the nonce. The Master Physician had taken over! The veil over my eyes, so to say, as far as my poor understanding and appreciation of Guruji's 'at-one-ment' with Baba was concerned, was removed in a trice. I also came to see clearly that, with Baba as my Sheet-Anchor and Guruji as pilot, I could boldly venture ahead in the practice of Homoeopathy, which accordingly I did, and, in spite of myself, was enabled to produce many miracle cures. On Guruji's advice, I applied for registration, which I was granted on the basis of age and proven experience. I was officially launched on a career as a Homoeopath.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE THROUGH GURUJI-3
HOW A MAJOR FRACTURE OF THE FEMUR (THIGHBONE) OF SHRI
LAJJA SHANKAR JHA, PAST 90 YEARS, WAS MIRACULOUSLY
FUSED AND HEALED (1967)

This concerns Shri Lajja Shankar Jha, famous educationist of the Benaras Hindu University and the father of Dr. V.S.Jha, our former UNESCO Commissioner in the UK and Australia. He was 92 or 93 at the time. One night, as he got up as usual to answer a call of nature, he got entangled in the mosquito-net and slipped over the edge of the cot and fell. As a result, his thigh bone was fractured. He was immediately shifted to the nearby Nursing Home where an X-ray examination showed the fractured parts slightly overlapping each other. The surgeon, Dr.Chatterjee, felt that it would be too risky to try to set the bone which was bound to be too brittle to stand the pressure involved. "So he put a gravity

bandage and left it, hoping that, in due course, it would help to bring the fractured parts into position when further steps could be thought of.

It was at this junction one fine morning in December, 1967, that I was introduced to Dr.Jha, forthwith beseeched me to take over the treatment of his father saying he would speak to Dr.Chatterjee known to him since the latter's childhood. Though now I felt a little more sure of myself, even as (Nimitha Matra) an instrument after the miraculous recovery of Shri Patil (see No.2 miracle worked through Guruji), I nevertheless, requested Dr. Jha to see Guruji and obtain' his approval first. I was conscious of two aspects of treatment, one, orthopaedic and the other, spiritual. Obviously, the first was out of question, for, even if the bone was set, the fusing of the fracture at this age was impossible. As for the second, namely, invoking Baba's perennial and unfailing help, it is an 'open sesame' to all with faith, irrespective of age or any other consideration. Is not faith to believe what you cannot see and the reward of that faith to see what you believe?

Dr. Jha returned with a beaming face with Guruji's O.K. for me to go ahead as well as assurance for success. The treatment was started at once. The same afternoon, four or five members of the family attending upon the grand old man finding him sleep, came out to bask in the sun. Presently, hearing his call, they hurried into the room to be asked who it was that had just been in. He had felt a hand gently sweeping across and down his fractured thigh without anyone answering his query as to who it was. It was their turn to be mystified, for, none of them had come in nor seen any one else to do so. I was thrilled when I came to know this in the evening. I knew in my heart that it was Baba answering Guruji's prayer in behalf of the senior Jha. When after a couple of months, an X-ray was taken, wonder of wonders! It showed the bone had fused and became whole, no doubt, set by the Expert Hands of the Master Orthopaedist! It was the second feather in my cap, though I was fully well aware of being only a proxy for receiving it.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE THROUGH GURUJI-4

" God fulfils Himself in many ways lest one good custom should corrupt the world"

-Tennyson.

MIRACLE-CURE OF PSYCHO-SOMATIC ILLNESS (1971)

During 1970-72, I was in Gwalior practising as a homoeopath, For some months in early 1971 there was an acute scarcity of kerosene which could not be had for love or for money. Hence my 'kirana' dealer, one Mr. Kapoor, suggested he would introduce me to Mr.J.PGupta, a Sales Engineer of the I.O.C. at Gwalior at that time so that I might seek his good offices for the purpose. Thus, I met the officer. It was towards the beginning of March. Before I could explain the purpose of my visit, Mr.Gupta requested me to hear what he had to say adding it was something personal and important. I was no doubt intrigued. The following is an account of what he said.

One day in the preceding September, Mr. Gupta dreamt that while he was on his way to the office, his scooter skidded near the railway station and he fell down. However, it was out of his mind in the morning. Strange to say, as he was going to the office, at the exact spot indicated in the dream, the scooter skidded throwing him down, though there was no injury as a result. He took it in the stride and soon had no thought for it. Exactly three months later, he dreamt that as he was driving his car and nearing the station, at the selfsame spot where the scooter had skidded, the car turned turtle throwing him off. In the process, his right forearm was fractured and tongue cut and bleeding. Imagine his shock and utter fright on waking to find that the fore-arm was actually fractured causing terrible pain and the tongue half severed and bleeding partly drenching the bed sheet. He was taken to the hospital where the fracture was set and the tongue stitched, and he became all right physically but developed psycho-somatic troubles, for curing which he was advised to go to the A.I.I.M.S. Delhi for psychiatric therapy. Accordingly the gentleman proceeded on leave and, on his way to Delhi visited his native village in U.P where his father, after consulting his friend, a Hanuman devotee, advised his son to go back to Gwalior, saying that he

would meet a person by March and, with his help, become all right. Now, we were in the threshold of March, and my being a homoeopath rang a bell for him. he earnestly beseeched me to come to his rescue.

So far, so good. But I told Mr. Gupta frankly that I must feel subjectively I had the sanction for doing so. I, therefore advised him to write to Guruji, Shri R. Narayanaswamy Konar of Shri Sai Baba Durbar, Jabalpur, who it was that had launched me into homoeopathy and whose anticipatory blessings I always sought before beginning to treat such baffling ailments. He did so. It so happened that Guruji was away on a protected tour, and it was not till the end of April that a reply came telling him to go ahead with my treatment, and that, by Baba's grace, he would be cured.

Now, I know that I would be instrumental in bringing about a miracle-cure as had been achieved on previous occasions through the twin blessings of Gurukataksham and Baba's grace before which no illness or evil force can ever stand.

The doses of Kali Phos 1m completely cured the gentleman and restored him to normalcy.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

BABA'S MIRACLE THROUGH GURUJI-5

" A breath can make them as a breath has made"

- Goldsmith

HOW BABA'S UDHI CURED A REFRACTORY CASE OF CANCER OF THE THROAT AND CONVERTED AN AGNOSTIC INTO A DEVOTEE

This concerns a Parsee gentleman named Doongajee, Sessions Judge at Jabalpur in the sixties, who became afflicted with cancer of the throat. This led him to resign the position and go to Bombay to get first class treatment. His wife, however, coming of pious Maharashtrian stock, had faith in Baba and would have liked him to do likewise but in vain. However, the best available treatment, including radiation therapy, proved futile. The lady having known about Guruji at Shri Sai Baba Darbar, Jabalpur and some of the miracle-cures effected by him

through Baba's grace, got into touch with him on her own and sought his help. He replied that he would certainly pray to Baba and do his best on one condition, namely, her husband, if cured, should be devoted to Baba. This was an anchor held out to a drowning man, and it was accepted. Guruji then made 21 small packets each containing a big pinch of *Udhi* and sent them with the instruction that they were to be taken for 21 days first thing in the morning with honey. As was to be expected, once again, Baba exhibited His '*Chamatkar*' and there improvement from day to day Leading to a cure, and without any need for further prompting Mr Doongajee became an ardent devotee of Baba*.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

The Doongajees were seen attending Shri Sai Baba Durbar which was proof enough that the cure had taken place.

BABA'S MIRACLE THROUGH GURUJI-6

HOW UDHI CURED AN ADVANCED CASE OF CONSUMPTION

Shri B.N. Konar is a clerk in the Bansagar Project Circle office at Rewa. In the Sixties he began suffering from consumption which reached an advanced stage. He began vomiting blood. Being a grand nephew of Guruji (Shri R.N.Konar, who attained samadhi in 1981) of Shri Sai Baba Durbar at Jabalpur, he approached the latter for redress. As was his wont in such cases, Guruji made 21 doses of *Udhi* and sent them to be taken for 21 days first thing in the morning with honey. It was accordingly done and, stage by stage, the cure was completed. Today B.N.Konar is in good health, married and blessed with a bonny baby boy.

Glory be to Shri Shirdi Sai - Grace be to all

Note : Guruji used to prescribe *Udhi* with honey in the morning , as a panacea for many ills. H.H. Shri Narasimha Swamiji, a great apostle of Baba used it as the only medicine par excellence.

TEN MORALS

FROM TEN INCARNATIONS OF LORD MAHA VISHNU

1. *Recover the treasure of wisdom from the deluge of doubt*

-Matsya

2. *Live unattached as master of here and hereafter*
- Kurma
3. *Carry the burden of duty on twin tusks devotion and discipline*
- Varaha
4. *Do not allow your ego to hide the glory of God*
- Narsimha
5. *Offer yourself at the feet of Lord and gain the feet*
- Vaman
6. *Learn the lesson of surrender or suffer*
Parasurama
7. *What one meets in life is destiny, how one meets it is self effort*
- Sri Rama
8. *Strive to become an instrument in my hand*
- Krishna
9. *Perfect yourself so that you may aid others to perfect themselves*
- Buddha
10. *Build the mansion of life on truth, morality, peace and love*
- Kalki

Some resonant thoughts of (Late) Dr. P.S.R. Swami on positive living

1. "In life almost everything marriage, happiness, worries, wealth, position etc is prarabda, though in our ignorance we blame fate or others."
2. "No man born of woman is free from sufferings. It is an attitude of the mind that makes the difference."
3. "How I have been austained amidst the worries and upsets by constantly bringing to my mind a universal truth viz. The happiness and misery of any person is equal to 'K' i.e. constant. It is 'K' for a beggar or a prince. Only we do not know how to evaluate the good things and adverse things in life. Since I believe in this axiom and realise its truth, I manage to reconcile myself to my lot."

That is the only way; We can't go on attempting the impossible and making ourselves and others miserable."

4. "We should remember that almost every great writer was cursed with a strife-stricken domestic back-ground or adversity and/or poor health. Socrates, Tolstoy, Goldsmith, Carlyle, Hardy, Keats, Byron, Oscar Wilde, Lincoln and go on. Even on the spiritual side lack of domestic peace due to an ill-matched or termagant and shrewish wife dogged the foot-steps of many a saint. In all these cases, these draw-backs helped rather than hindered their progress. In every case, it is the will to do and achieve that mattered. It is a case of sublimation of our emotions into fruitful channels, say like a broken-hearted lover blossoming into poetry or music. Faith and hope are the twin virtues which convert the gloom of despair into bloom of success. I think, you know that even now I am attracted to a well tuned out quotation and pay attention to correct expression. It is like humming a good tune when you hear it.

A time will come when other things which cause worries now will pale into insignificance and the attempts and achievements intellectual and spiritual will enliven the depressed spirits and add substance to an otherwise drab and empty existence."

5. "Even as we remember to take the medicine as many times as prescribed without fail, should we not remember to take the divine panacea for all the ills as often as we can. I knew it in theory already but as you know by now certain words and ideas acquire significance and certain truths become self evident only at a particular moment in a particular context, through a particular agent. "

6. "Apathetic moods do not permit our normal functioning. This is nothing peculiar to any one. It is a disease of civilisation involving mental strains and stresses, prolonged office work, sedentary habits, cares and anxieties, lack of recreation etc. I have been a victim of it and learning to live with it so that it will not overwhelm. The negative consolation is that practically none leading a city life particularly, is free from it to a greater or less extent. It is only a matter of degree and quality, depending upon constitutional and environmental factors. The answer for that is

a). Dependence on God and learning to draw strength from Him, like a battery getting charged from the electric circuit. In Course of time, this process becomes continuous. The need for Namasmaraṇ, as often as we can.

b). Drawing inspiration from good books.

c). Use of select Homoeo medicines which fortunately act directly on our mind and emotions and work wonders."

7. "With Sai grace all good will follow. What is required is FAITH which we lack in totality. But in His Infinite Mercy He accepts even a little trace of it or even an honest craving to have it. It is the motive and the will that matters."

8. "Beauty of total faith where it is difficult to demarcate wisdom and foolishness."

9. "Bhakti is a feminine virtue. We can have only one husband and that is BA BA, our BABA."

"It is enough that you do what you feel yourself called upon to do and it does not matter whether it is religious or secular work - since devotion to the task of your life is the best form of worshipping God."

SOME SPIRITUAL TRUTHS (Vibrant thoughts of great noble minds)

1. Truth is knowledge - a transcendental spiritual knowledge of soul & God and knowledge is infinite.

2. Truth must have no compromise - No gradings

3. Truth is God. Lord dwells in truth. Truth is fact and truth in its totality is one supreme reality.

4. God is an omniscient omnipotent and omnipresent entity - A transcendental living reality.

5. Realities do not fit into opinions.

6. Knowledge is the gift of experience while wisdom is realisation of supreme reality.

7. Experience is the father of wisdom.

8. Wisdom manifests as perfection and perfection stabilizes wisdom.

9. Lord is the light of knowledge and knowledge is awareness. Impulses not to be ruled over knowledge.

10. All creation is but a product of thought and manifestation of knowledge only.
11. God is the cause of all causes. An ultimate supreme cause and source of all activities.
12. First and last, God is all in all and sustaining force of everything.
13. God is infinite, illimitable and eternal
14. God is everything, Our guide, guard, guardian, grace and governor of our lives.
15. Instinctions and Intuitions are the inspirations of the grace of God from within.
16. Divine messages are ever universally relevant and eternally pertinent.
17. God is a well-wisher rather than a wish-fulfiller. Hence all wishes are not fulfilled.
18. Lord is a cosmic intelligence and power - a palpable reality of entire creation - an immanent principle working behind the moving force of life and energy in and through taking different names & forms. Not any concept of mind to be limited to time, space and . objectivity with dimensions.
19. The frame work of creation is an amalgamation of right and wrong, joy and grief, cold and warmth. It is against nature to desire, expect and accept only right and joy alone.
20. Nature is to be analyzed as it is and accepted as it is but not to be interpreted according to tendencies for pain or pleasure. We have to learn to fit in ourselves to the grooves of cosmic set up without disturbing it and know to play our part well and quit as any other thing of this cosmos play its role.
21. God is both maker and material as well.
22. Different Gods are but different aspects & powers of nature and expressions of one Supreme conscious reality of Lord alone.
23. Lord is the supreme source of light of whom soul is a ray.
24. Lord is beyond logic since logic proves, disproves not conclusive.
25. The pinnacle of glory is at the feet of Lord only.
26. The source and base of happiness is God alone.

27. While body is the temple, eyes are the windows of the soul.
28. Sky is the celestial quality (silence) of the soul.
29. Idols represents Gods as flags represents Nations.
30. Devotion to the Divine is the only source of knowledge to salvation.
31. Devotion to the Divine is not a mental melody as contended by atheists.
32. Heart will be dry without devotion.
33. The dry land of heart is to be reaped with rain of devotion for a happy blissful life.
34. Bhakti must be a consistent and continued contemplation.
35. Consistant and constant conviction for devotion makes possible of all impossibilities.
36. Bhakti like clothes beautifies personality.
37. Faith in God alone can solve perils and problems of life.
- 38. Faith is to believe what you do not see and the reward of that faith is to see what you believe.**
39. Belief is a judgement before knowledge subject to correction after verification with knowledge.
40. Faith and action are as necessary to spiritual life what soul and body are to our mundane life.
- 41. Vagaries of life are but the dispensation of providence & compassion of Lord.**
42. We have to make the best of the bad bargain of adverse circumstances & situations with good slokas with heartfelt and radiating power of devotion to God under boiling devotion of 100 degrees not 10 or 15 degrees of devotion.
- 43. Eternal vigilance is not only the price of liberty but also salvation.**
- 44. Doctrines are methods only, not religion.**
- 45. Principles are the privileges to apply & propriety to reject.**
- 46. The faculty of reason is the heritage of man.**
- 47. Where reason fails instinct guides.**
- 48. Man's extremity is God's opportunity.**

49. Inclination of sin is to go by chanting of Lord's name alone by choosing prayer according to one's own aptitude and attitude.

50. Aptitude and Attitude determines altitude.

51. Attitudes are the mirrors of the mind that reflect thinking process.

52. Punya is a cumulative effect of a collective committed penance.

53. Vibrations are source of energy.

54. Vibrations of impulses of energy and intelligence is thought. Today's thoughts are tomorrows decisions.

55. Mind is imaginary while intellect is determinative

56. Alertness of mind and vigilance of thoughts alone controls emotions.

57. The silent inner tragedy is mechanical thinking alone.

58. Thoughts are to be controlled with sublimation rather than suppression.

59. Indian culture is the product of experience of generations in the field of truth discovered by analysing the complex mass of facts and things as seen through the vision of the wise.

60. Broader the vision greater will be the choice.

61. Chance and choice to those who use the them best.

62. Choice is choosing values through instinctive and intuitive steadfast mind.

63. To choose is to commit.

64. As is the vision so is the perception. As you sow. So you reap.

65. Right performance of today will be the best preparation for tomorrow.

66. Perform work as fulfilment of duty with loyalty and devotion.

67. Work well accomplished is the joy of life.

68. Well lived today is yesterday's dream of happiness and tomorrow's vision of hope.

69. Vision of success without action is imagination alone?.

70. The vision of totality is to see the infinite through finitude.

71. Success of the totality is to be pursued as against success as an individuality.

72. As we are from totality, we are ought to be connected to Totality alone.

73. Equanimity is the essence of perfection.

74. A simpler way of equipoise is well balanced life in every field rather than yielding to extremes in life.
75. Absolute evil can be counteracted by absolute good alone.
76. Unity of goodness is the only way to combat badness.
77. The price of greatness is responsibility.
78. Responsibility and accountability are the two wings of freedom.
79. Value is to be valued with valuability.
80. Deep commitment, acceptance and Trust are part of solutions to generate ideas.
81. A good reputation is a person's greatest wealth.
82. A flatterer is a secret enemy.
83. While pain is inevitable misery is optional. Difficulties and disappointments are the events to maturity.
84. To see is to know; To desire is to be able to; To dare is to have.
85. While success is getting what we want, happiness is liking what we get.
- 86. Gratitude is but heart's memory.**
87. Progress is spelt by effort and exertion alone.
88. Right beginning with sterling rectitude is half way to victory.
89. Secret of success is constancy in purpose with bravery and skill.
90. Concentration is the key to accomplishment.
91. Gates of activity are to be entered into with awareness of consciousness alone for a successful accomplishment.
92. Fear is an acknowledgement of weakness.
93. Courage accomplishes impossible.
94. What cannot be excelled with talent can be triumphed with effort.
95. Men are wise in proportion to their capacity for the experience.
96. Deep living convictions alone rule the world.
97. Strong convictions precede great actions.
98. Actions are only certain aspects of a person but they themselves are not persons.
99. Thought is the ancestor of action and action speaks louder than words.

100. Thought determines destiny.

101. Act constitutes web of destiny.

102. Actions of today becomes destiny of tomorrow.

103. Destiny is a matter of choice to be achieved.

104. What we are is the result of our thoughts. Today's thoughts are tomorrow's decisions.

105. Thoughts are the living dynamic force in proportion to its intensity, depth and warmth expressed in words and deeds of great events.

106. Efforts guided by aspirations are the warp and woof of destiny.

107. Excuse is but a guarded lie alone.

108. The hands that serve are holier than the lips that pray

109. Response is joy what reaction is to pain. Reaction reflects our own weaknesses.

110. We have to respond rather than to react when situation tempts and passion blows.

111. Five ways to respond to situation : Firm understanding, single pointedness, courage to reject/revolt, accept with love & joy, and surrender to God's will.

112. Obstructions are but the instructions to change our way of actions. Ability is a matter of mind's imagination, thought and action alone.

113. Cheerfulness is the sunshine of life.

114. As morning shows the day, Childhood shows the man.

115. Child is the father of the man.

116. The greedy are ever needy.

117. Bribes cannot chloroform honesty into silence always. An honest man is the noblest person of God.

118. Feel what you think. As we think, we become victims of our own thoughts.

119. Powerful present and compelling future should make us to look at problem wisely for solutions rather than explanations.

120. Success is a journey, not a destination for satisfaction,

121. Economy is in itself a source of great revenue.

122. Love, taste and anger are matters of experience rather than descriptive with human knowledge.

123. Loosing temper on principle is preferable to passion.

124. Evil is always tempting and fascinating.

125. The burden of wrong and agony of grief can be reduced, however, to bliss of hope in proportion to the loyalty that man offers to sublime ideals and his efforts to put them into practice.

126. Human life is a composite of the secular and spiritual.

127. Spirituality does not solve your mundane problems always. But it tells you how you can live with them peacefully.

128. Process-of purification is discipline only.

129. Difficulties and disappointments are the events to maturity.

130. Earnestness is enthusiasm tempered by reason.

131. The great end of life is not knowledge but action.

132. Great actions speak great minds.

133. Art is the shadow of humanity that reveals man himself than his objects.

134. Art is a revelation of man while Nature is revelation of God.

135. Look before you leap, see before you go and think before you act.

136. Ignorance is not innocence, but sin.

137. Where ignorance is bliss, it's folly to be wise.

138. What cannot be mended has to be ended and what cannot be ended must be endured.

139. Life is multi-dimensional with infinite possibilities.

140. Life is not for indolent contemplation - a routine mechanical mundane existence - Action is insignia of life to set direction for higher purpose of ideal examining with power of discrimination to apply rather than accept till last breath.

141. There is more to life than increasing its speed.

142. Life is to be lived as we can rather than as we wish to derive its right value.

143. Life is to be aimed at its worthiest use and subliment end for self-realisation.

144. There is not so much to greater power of intellect or greater quickness of apprehension than to better application of time

145. The time is always right to do what is right.

146. Time is meant not to be merely passed it out. But to be filled up with useful thoughts and works.

147. Timely patience is as valuable as timely action.

148. Timeliness is the weapon of the worldly wise.

149. Habits are the grooves into which time will wear us for good or bad.

150. Our around habits alone can count for our health and longevity ultimately.

151. Time is divine; Time is treasure and Time is the life of the soul.

152. Methods make time.

153. Punctuality should be made not only a point of courtesy but also a point of conscientiousness too.

154. Delay is preferable to absence; better late than never. But better never ever late.

155. Promptness is the mother of confidence.

156. To everything there is a season and everything is in its time.

157. Time makes more converts than reason.

158. Time is the school in which we learn and time is the fire in which we burn.

159. We must accomplish ourselves to make the time work for us for the betterment of tomorrow.

160. We must take time before time takes us :

Take time to think

Take time to read

Take time to work

Take time to pray

its is the source of power

it is the foundation of knowledge

it is the price of success

it is the union of mind & meditation with God.