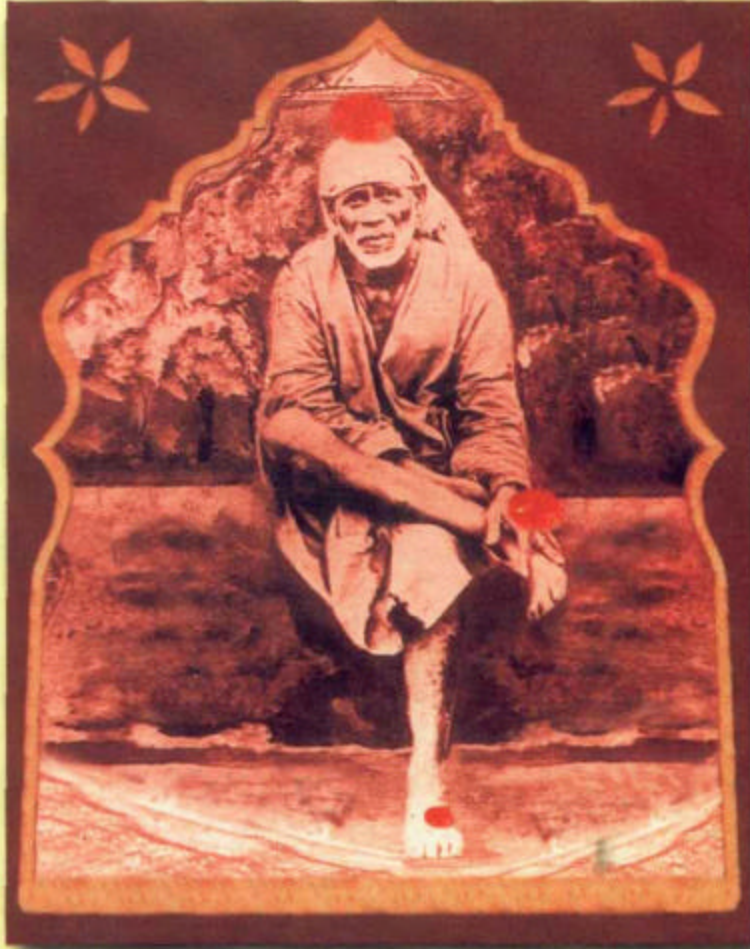


Ambrosia In Shirdi - Part-1
(Baba`s Leelas Before 1918)



**ANANTA KOTI BRAHMANDA NAYAKA
RAJADHIRAJA YOGIRAJA PARBRAHMA
SRI SATCHITANANDA SADGURU
SAINATHA MAHARAJ KI JAI**

Ambrosia in Shirdi - Part-I

(Baba's Leelas before 1918)

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Dedication

To My lovely sisters,

The good karmas of my previous lives gave me my eldest sister, Ashalata Mital "Mother Her" is what we called her when we were young. She is more than a mother to me, my mentor and guide. She encouraged me in ways, too numerous to mention.

Thank you Asha for being you.

To Brinda Dutta "Bee" who told me to go for it and taught me to be me and stood by me through thick and thin.

Thank you Bee

I don't know where I would be without both of you. Please accept my humble dedication.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With a heart bursting with gratitude, I humbly lay this book at the Holy feet of "The Parabrahma Sri Sat-Chit-Anand, Sadguru Sai Nath Maharaj". Thank you

'Ambrosia' (Baba), for giving me this opportunity, for 'not a leaf moves without thy consent'.

My heartfelt gratitude to my guardian angels M. Bose and Sada S. Code for helping me in ways unimagenable.

I am truly indebted to the descendents of Baba's 'Ankita Bhaktas' for allowing us into their homes, and giving us material, and allowing us to take photographs.

From Harda ;Raju Parulkar and Govind Naik.

From Indore :Viswanath and Vanita Naik.

From Mumbai:Virendra Tarkad, Manohar Pithale, Anil Dixit, Sai Nath Gawankar, V. Pradhan, Anuradha Tarkad and the Borkar family.

May Baba shower His grace on you and your family.

My countless thanks to the printers

My Family Guru



B. V. Narasimha Swamiji 21st August 1874 - 19th October 1956

Sai Bhakta Vinny

Founder, All India Sai Samaj, Madras

A WORD ABOUT THE COMPILER

I was born in 1943 in Arvankadu (Nilgiris), the youngest of the four children. My father was a hardcore atheist, while my grandmother was a gentle devout lady. Ever since I was young, my mother was forever sick, often at death's door. My father took her from one doctor to another. At last, she was admitted in the Vellore Medical Hospital. To make a very long story short, after abdominal surgery, many tests and many consultations, they too gave up, and asked my father to take her home.

One day, my father read in 'The Hindu' that H.H.Narsimha Swamiji was coming to the Naga Sai temple, Coimbatore. The paper also gave a glowing account of Swamiji's divine nature and how He healed so many people. My father decided to take my mother to Him. Thankfully, they took me too. This was in 1949, The day before the meeting, my mother had a dream. She saw this 'gentle bearded man' with lots and lots of devotees around Him, seated in a palanquin. He was wearing a short Flannel gray kafni or kurta. She told my father about her vivid dream, not knowing that she was to meet Him the next day.

Swamiji asked my father, what did he want - a promotion, wealth, children or fame." My father pointed to my mother and said, "She is terribly sick. Please heal her. I can always find another wife, but not a mother for my kids." Swamiji asked Dr. Chari to check her pulse, which was irregular and erratic. Then He placed His palm on her head. My mother shivered and said,

" It is ice cold." He again placed his palm on her head and said, "Now what?" My mother was filled with warmth, and at once held His hand saying, 'Aha'. He then gave her Baba's Udi and a sthothra, " *Achuta, **Ananta**, Govinda.*" He asked her to say it 21 times for 21 days. He had also told her to apply Udi and take it internally with water.

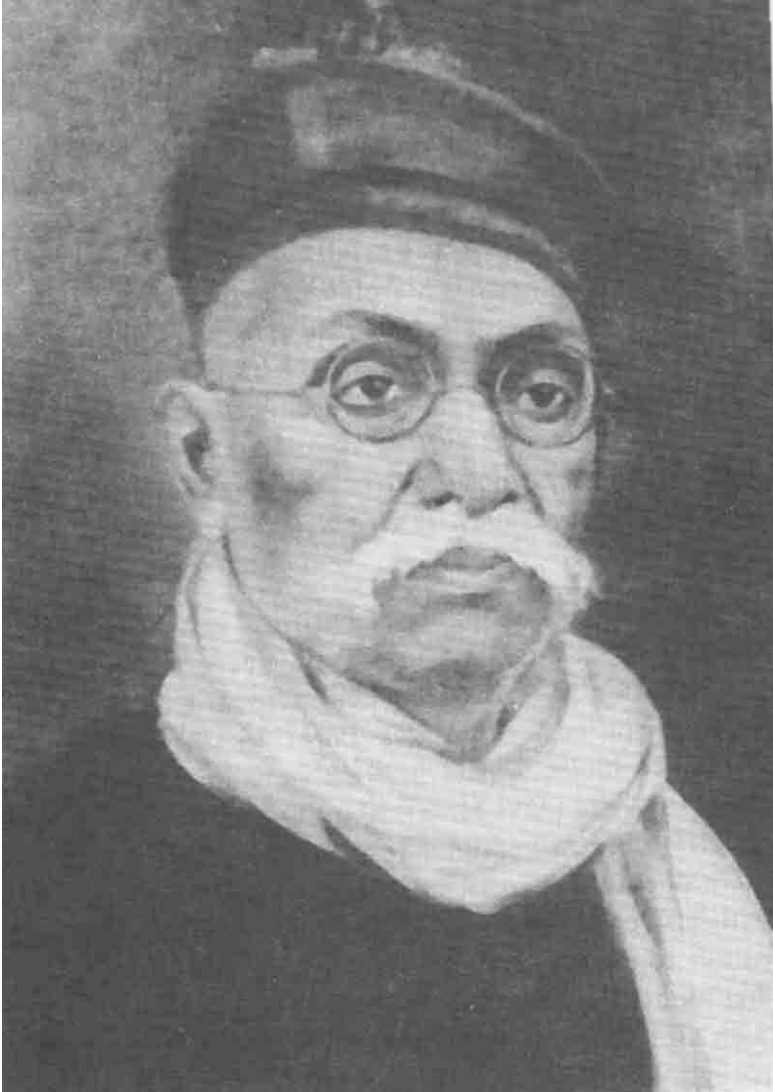
While all this was happening, I was standing near the door looking at this gentle bearded man. I thought this must be Santa Claus. I had an irresistible urge

to pull His beard. He beckoned me to come near. He then picked me and made me sit on His lap. The feeling was so good that I laid my head on His chest and patted His beard. He then placed His hand on my head and blessed me.

Of course, by His and Baba's grace, my mother recovered fully and my father became a Baba bhakta. Sometime later, we went to Madras to thank Him. Swamiji said, "I've done nothing. It is Baba's Udi and grace that has worked. So thank Him and pray to Him. By the way, Prabhu, go to Central India and do Baba's prachar." He then gave my father Udi with a photograph of Baba. My father wondered at His words but sometime, later, we were transferred to Khamaria, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh. There, we started doing Thursday poojas. Later, my father got a Baba temple built. Often, my father used to remind us of Swamiji's words, telling us that even a mustard seed of Baba's Prachar and Seva adds up. He, on his part, visited Shirdi, wrote prolifically on Baba and held Satsangs.

I finished my studies and joined the Jabalpur Medical College. Once, in 1963, we visited Shirdi. At that time, the Sai Nath Hospital was being built. I vowed to do Seva (free service) there. After graduating, I did my Post Graduation in Kalavathi Saran Hospital, Delhi and later went to USA. In the US, I did my Boards in Paediatrics and was very successful. By then, I had forgotten my vow, as the years rolled by. But a little voice kept asking me whether "All this was necessary". My father's words kept haunting me. I kept pushing them aside, but the voice persisted. At the height of my career, I decided to give it up, and come and live in Shirdi, Baba willing. From 1994, I stayed in Shirdi.

One day, I took some photographs of Baba's Bhaktas whom I love very much. When Bose Anna saw them, he said, "Why can't we have a photo exhibition with printed matter?" That started it all. From that time, I have not looked back.



Govind R. Dabholkar (Hemad Pant) (1856- 1929)

Ambrosia in Shirdi Part-I The Introduction

The year 1910 is written in gold on the heart of every Baba devotee; for that was the year that Dabholkar visited Shirdi. He saw Baba grinding wheat, only to throw it at the village boundary, to stop the cholera epidemic. His curiosity was aroused, and he wished with all his heart to write the ***'Satya Charitamrit' of Baba's life. He sought permission and it was granted. "You have my full consent to write My life. Take notes and keep them. If My Leelas are recorded, sins committed through ignorance will be dissolved when these are heard and or read with love and devotion, the cares and troubles of worldly life will be forgotten,"*** said Baba.

So, Dabholkar set about, writing, hearing and seeing the leelas of His Guru. With keen interest, love, devotion and humility, he kept a record of them. He actually started writing '*The Pothi*' in 1922; and it was published in 1929 after he took samadhi. The Marathi Pothi is written Ovi Meter, like Eknath's Bhagwat. It is usually sung rather than read. The fantastic task was done during Sadguru Sainath's sojourn on earth, and with His consent. This fascinating book is a Bible or Koran for every Baba devotee. So great is its power, that many a Leela, cure, wish and material benefit has been affected. The Phalastuti given at the end has been accomplished and much more.

Spiritual enlightenment and progress has been achieved. In short, if there is one Pothi that anybody needs, it is the Sai Satcharitra. It is a must in every house. It has fifty-three chapters and nine thousand, three hundred and nine verses and many pages. It wasn't possible for Dabholkar to write each and every Leela, it would have been in many volumes.

Here are some of the Leelas that occurred before 1918, that haven't been mentioned in 'the Pothi'. I humbly lay them primarily at the feet of Sadguru Sainath for His blessings. With utmost humility, I also beseech Dabholkar to bless this earnest venture. As far as possible, complete names and dates are mentioned. It is my honest hope, that these Leelas will augment those given in the Satcharitra.

Ambrosia in Shirdi Part-1

Leela 1

"I may be here in My physical body, and you may be far away beyond the seven seas. Yet, whatever you do there I know instantly. Wherever you may be, when you spread your hands before Me in supplication with faith and devotion, there I stand behind you day and night, as steadfast as your faith and devotion is," said Baba to Cholkar (Sai Satcharitra Ch.15).

Baba's words are true for each and every bhakta (devotee) even now; as they were then. This is such a Leela where Baba literally went beyond the seven seas to rescue a bhakta.

It was during World War I; Capt. Jahanghir F. Daruwala was at sea, with his fleet of ships. To his utter dismay he realized that all but three of his ships were hit by the enemy and were sinking fast. Soon these three ships with the passengers, and himself would meet the same fate. Being a good Captain he hoped to ferry the remaining ships to safety.

He had Baba's photograph in his pocket. He promptly took it out and earnestly prayed to Baba to come to their rescue. Just as he has praying, Baba sitting in the Dwarkamai shouted "*Haq, haq*". The devotees surrounding Baba, were astonished to see Baba completely drenched, from head to toe. The water flowed in torrents, and the Dwarkamai soon became a pool of water. The devotees simply removed buckets and buckets of water from the Dwarkamai for about an hour. Then they gave Baba dry clothes to wear.

As Baba was silent about the cause of His being drenched, one of the devotees drank the water as tirth (holy water) and found it extremely salty. He wondered at that, but kept quiet. Simultaneously, at sea, Capt. Daruwala saw Baba in person, pull and tow his ships to safety. On the third day after this incident Baba received a telegram from the Captain, thanking Him for the rescue operation. Immediately on his return he came to Shirdi and fell at Baba's feet. He thanked Baba for answering his prayers so swiftly and saving the lives of his crew and the passengers. Capt. Daruwala was an ardent devotee and he took a great deal of interest in Baba's affairs. He donated Rs.2,200/- in two installments for the repair of the Sabha Mandap. As a small 'thank you gesture'¹.

Leela 2

Rama Krishna G. Kothari was born in 1908. He was a Pathari Prabhu by caste. His parents first visited Shirdi in 1911. On that visit, they saw Baba standing near the railing (Kathada) of Dwarakamai, distributing Udi to the Bhaktas. They were filled with devotion, and were overwhelmed with the love, to see this beautiful sight. Upon their return home, they started worshipping a photograph of Baba (it was a print of Jaykar's painting). They also started doing Bhajans and called the Bhajan Mandali (group) 'Sai Laj'.

In 1913 his father was seriously sick with pneumonia. Dr. Naik was treating him, but was skeptical of his recovery. He told the family that the chances of recovery were slim, and he would succumb to the disease. Hearing this his mother prayed to Baba and vowed that if her husband survived, she would do 'Padyatra' (walk) to Shirdi and thank Baba.

The Bhajan Mandali also came to his home to perform the Bhajans (hymns), the whole night. At nightfall the disease took a serious turn, the doctor was summoned at 10.00 P.M. He gave the patient an injection and medicines but told the wife that at about 12.00 P.M. her husband would die. The relatives on hearing this, read the Bhagwat Gita to the patient. Simultaneously Baba's Bhajans continued. At about 11.00 P.M. the patient started to suffocate, and had great difficulty in breathing. The distort wife seeing his condition wailed and cried saying 'Baba save my husband'. The crisis lasted till 1.00 A.M. when the doctor was called again. He again gave the patient an injection, but assured them that the crisis was over.

The Bhajans continued till 4.00 A.M. when the Bhajan Mandali and the relatives assured the wife that her husband had survived. So she better get ready, for the 'Padyatra' (pilgrimage by foot) as per her vow. From that time the patient steadily recovered, and was ambulant in a few moments. So the family and the Bhajan Mandali started for Shirdi. At Kopargaon, the family hired five bullock carts to take them to Shirdi. But the wife would not sit in the cart. She just walked, behind the carts although her legs were swollen and bruised.

A short distance from Shirdi there was a stony, and thorny path. So she went and rested under a tree. She noticed a man with a white beard in a shepherd's dress. He approached her and said, "Your vow has been accepted by Baba so mother, go the rest of the distance by bullock cart".

The lady heard the loving tone in the voice but she adhered to her vow, and trudged the rest of the way. When she reached Dwarkamai, Baba was seated with His devotees when Baba said to Nana Saheb, "***I met this lady on the way and told her to ride in the cart, but she would not listen. See how***

swollen and bruised her legs are! But they will be alright by the evening."

True to His word the swelling and the bruises vanished by evening.

They stayed at Shirdi for a few days and returned home with Baba's blessings and Udi.

Leela 3

"I forgot my vow to Baba," thought Govinda Rao Garde of Nagpur. He recalled, how his nephew was suffering from some disease when he visited him. At that time, Govinda Rao vowed that if his nephew recovered, he would send him to Shirdi for Baba's darshan. The nephew did recover in two days. But he forgot his vow, although his nephew visited him three times, hoping that he would remember, after seeing him hale and hearty.

Some time later, the nephew visited his uncle only to find that he was sick with the same disease. Since it was a Thursday, all the family members gathered together and prayed and sang Bhajans. They entreated Baba for his recovery. That day, he was well enough to attend the pooja (worship) when he was reminded of his vow.

He vowed again saying, "Baba if you cure me, I and my nephew will come for your darshan." He found that he recovered quickly and hurriedly went with his nephew to Shirdi to thank Baba.

In Sai Satcharitra Ch.36 describes the story of two gentlemen from Goa and their fulfillment of their vows.

Leela 4.

Govinda Rao Oak lived in Andheri, Bombay. Once he and his friend, Krishanji Agasthe went to Shirdi. They had Baba's darshan and stayed for two to three days. On the day of their departure, both of them purchased a photograph of Baba. Neatly they tied the photographs in a bundle. On the way home, Govinda Rao was remiss, as he had not purchased a photograph for his brother. On reaching home, they opened the packet containing the photographs. To their utter surprise there were three photographs although they had paid for two. Mentally, he thanked Baba for this Leela and gave his brother one copy as Baba's prasad.

Leela 5

At every opportunity, Chidambar R.K. Gadgil visited Shirdi for Baba's darshan. This was easy at first, as he was the Personal Assistant to the Collector of Ahmadnagar district. Then he worked as a Mamlatdar in Sinnar. Time and again he came to Shirdi and took Baba's darshan.

Then he got transferred to a distant place, with the order 'to join immediately'. He followed the orders, but with a heavy heart. The journey he took was via Kopargaon yet he could not break his journey, and go to Shirdi. At Kopargaon, he was thinking how 'futile it was, as he could not have Baba's darshan being so close to Shirdi'. Just as he thought this, a packet containing Udi was thrown in his lap. He looked out of the window to see who had done this, but could not find anybody. He reverentially picked up the packet and kept it safely. Some time later he got a chance to visit Shirdi when Baba said, ***"Even though you could not visit Shirdi did I not give you My Udi at Kopargaon?"*** Gadgil was filled with joy at Baba's love and concern, so he put the Udi in a Talisman and wore it constantly.

"I am absolutely in the power of My devotees and stand by their side. For ever I am hungering after their love and readily answer their call in distress" said Baba to Dada Bhatt (Sai Satcharitra Ch.II). When Dr. Pandit applied sandal paste to Baba's forehead with love.

Leela 6

A Cashier of a well-known firm at Bombay, had embezzled a large sum of money. He had a master plan, and that was, to go to Shirdi and seek refuge there. So he did exactly that. A warrant for his arrest was put out. The Manager of the firm was asked to execute the warrant and bring the culprit for prosecution. The Manager was a Baba devotee. He diligently searched all the places far and near, but could not trace the culprit. Out of desperation, he thought he would go to Shirdi and place the matter before Baba, before giving up the search.

So he went to Shirdi and to the Dwarakamai for darshan. When to his utter amazement he saw the Cashier shampooing Baba's feet. On seeing the

Manager, the Cashier was at his wits end. He prostrated before Baba and begged Him to save him.

Baba advised him to go with the Manager to Bombay, and confess the whole matter and request to be pardoned. The Cashier carried out Baba's words to the letter. Thus the Cashier was saved from criminal prosecution. The firm thanked the manager for dexterously handling the affair.

**"SHARAN MAJA ALLA ANI VAYA GELA DAKHAVA DAKHAVA AISA KONI"
{SHOW ME. DO SHOW ME ANY ONE WHO HAS SOUGHT SHELTER AND
REFUGE IN ME AND WAS CAST BY THE WAY SIDE OR ABANDONED}
(11 PROMISES OF SAI BABA)**

Leela 7

"When Brahmadev has created this Universe, if we do not appreciate it, His ingenuity and skill will be in vain. He who has no evil thought in his mind, why should he fear any one? Eyes do their work of seeing. Then why be embarrassed," said Baba to Nana Chandorkar (Sai Satcharitra Ch.49) when the beauty of a Muslim lady, who came for Baba's darshan, charmed Chandorkar.

"I lost my eye sight I do not mourn its loss as it keeps me from seeing undesirable things. Yet, I yearn to see the Sagun Roop of my Lord, You. Therefore grant me sight till I am satiated at beholding your form. Then you may withdraw the sight again," prayed a devotee to Baba. Baba at once restored his sight. He looked at Baba with love and devotion for a long, long time. When he was filled with joy and completely satisfied he lost his sight again. Thus Baba fulfilled his wish.

Leela 8

In Dadar, Bombay lived Vittal Yashwant Deshpande with his parents and grandfather. A tragedy brought him to Baba. His grandfather suddenly fell sick and gradually lost his sight. All sorts of remedies, treatments, doctors and vaidas were tried. But, he became totally blind. Vittal was very fond of his grandfather and he helped him move around the house.

There lived in Bandra, a Satpurush named Govind Rao Mankar. He was a devotee of Baba and advised the grandfather to go to Shirdi, and seek Baba's blessings for a cure. The grandfather was impressed by the Satpurush, and was determined to go to Shirdi. He requested his son to take him to Shirdi, but for some reason, the trip was postponed.



Vittal Y. Deshpande

In 1916, Vittal was just twelve years old. As his uncle was busy, it was decided that Vittal would take his grandfather to Shirdi. Before leaving, his parents repeatedly told Vittal to behave properly and take care of his grandfather. They reached Shirdi and went to the Dwarakamai. They took darshan and prostrated before Baba, who said, **"Give Me Rs.6/- dakshina"**.

Vittal thrust his hand into his pocket and found that he had a Rs.10/- and a Rs.5/- note. He gave Baba the ten rupee note, which He did not accept, nor would He accept the Rs.5/- note, nor would He give him the change. Vittal tried again, but Baba stubbornly said, **"Give Me Rs.6/- dakshina"**. So, Vittal brought his grandfather to the Sabha Mandap below, and seated him in a corner next to the wall. He went out to get the change. But try as he may, no one gave him the change. Frustrated and wondering how his grandfather was, he started crying. Suddenly, a well-built man stood before him. He had on a clean dhotar (Indian dress) a pagdi (turban), Poona shoes and chandan (sandalwood paste) on his forehead. Gently, he asked, "Child, why are you crying?" Vittal told him how stubborn Baba was and his inability to get change. Quietly, he gave him the change. Vittal ran to Dwarakamai and placed the Rs.6/- at Baba's feet **"Daro mat, beta. Allah Malik achcha karega. Ab thumhara kaam hogaya"** (**Do not fear my child Allah Malik will do good. Now your work is successful**). Vittal was astonished, but rather confused. He had not told Baba why he had come, nor had Baba asked him. He just stood there staring at Baba. Baba repeated the same words again. Still confused, he went to the corner where he had seated his grandfather, but he wasn't there. He searched in the Sabha Mandap, but couldn't find him. Fearing

that he may have walked out, he ran out of the Dwarakamai, but there was no trace of his grandfather. Again, he ran around the village, calling his grandfather, but he couldn't find him.

Dejected and afraid, he started crying bitterly, wondering if his grandfather had fallen or hurt himself. Lo! The same man stood before him. "Why are you crying now?" he asked gently, patting Vittal on his back. Though sobbing, Vittal told him what had happened. "Your grandfather is seated on the steps of Sathe Wada", he said, pointing in that direction. Vittal ran and found his grandfather happily seated on the steps, eating sugarcane.

Angrily, he said "Why did you leave the place I seated you at? Suppose you fell and hurt yourself? How did you reach here?" the grandfather told him that as soon as he went to get the change, his sight started returning. "By the time you came back, I could see clearly. So, I came to the Wada". Vittal was relieved to hear this. He also understood why Baba asked for Rs.6/-only. The dakshina of Rs.6/- could possibly mean 'giving unto Baba the six internal enemies (lust, anger, greed, pride, delusion and envy) that thrive through the five senses (sight, hearing, speech, smell and taste). Especially sight (Sai Satcharitra Ch.16 'Shadripus') is explained.

On the way home, he lost his cap, and was afraid to tell his grandfather about it. Finally, they reached Dadar. His parents were awaiting their arrival, when he turned around, his grandfather was missing. He collected all their bags and walked slowly towards his parents. They eagerly questioned him about the trip. He mumbled something, just then his grandfather arrived with a new cap. He was then filled with immense joy as he finally got proof that his grandfather could really see.

"But who was the mysterious gentleman, and how did he know who my grandfather was?" he wondered.

Leela 9

"Give up all anxiety. The moment you put your foot in Shirdi, your sufferings have ended. You may sink neck deep in the sea of obstacles, you may have sunk deep into the pit of sorrow and suffering, but know that

he who climbs the steps of this Mosque will enjoy the greatest happiness. The Fakir of this place is very kind, He will eradicate your disease and pain. He who has compassion for all, will look after you very lovingly," said Baba to Bhimaji Patil of Narayangaon when he was suffering from pulmonary T.B. (Sai Satcharitra Ch.13).

In Thajanpur Chebedi near Sinner, Nasik district lived Lakshman Baji Avare. In 1910 he suffered from terrible pain in both his eyes. The eyes watered constantly, and finally he lost his sight and became blind. All sorts of remedies and medicines were tried but of no avail. A friend of the family advised them to go to Shirdi. Have Baba's darshan, and assured them of a permanent cure. One Thursday they came to Shirdi and had Baba's darshan. Baba looked at Lakshman kindly and said "***Allah Achchha Karega***" (***Allah will do good***) and gave them Udi. They returned home, when they noticed that the watering and pain had subsided. So they made weekly trips to Shirdi every Thursday, and took Baba's darshan for six months.

The villagers advised the mother to take her son to JJ. Hospital, Bombay for treatment. On the day of their departure to Bombay, Lakshman had a burning sensation all over his body. Regardless, he left for Bombay.

There a British ophthalmologist (eye doctor) examined him and told him that he would not regain sight as the eyes were badly damaged.

With a heavy heart they returned to their village. Lakshman however, determined that whether he recovered his sight or not he would stay in Shirdi at Baba's side. The family came and stayed in Shirdi for some time, then the mother returned to her village leaving her son behind. Lakshman had intense faith in Baba. Every morning, he washed his eyes with the water that Baba used to wash His face with. This he did for one month when suddenly, his sight got restored, but not fully. One evening he took Baba's darshan in the Chavadi. Baba gently clapped His hands on Lakshman's chest and Lo! He could see clearly again. So overwhelmed with gratitude was he, that he stayed on in Shirdi till Baba's Mahasamadhi.

Radhakrishna Mai asked Lakshman to pump water from the well (now in Saran Jame Baug) and do all the work that she ordered. This seva he willingly did as a token of gratitude for his recovery.

Leela 10

From 1913 to 1915, Swami Sharan Anand saw a blind man in Shirdi. He was doing Hari Kirtan, and kept beat with his cymbals. In 1942 or 1943 he saw the same man reciting chapters of Shrimad Bhagwat Gita and singing verses from Dnyaneshwari's Amrit Anubhava. Curious about this, Swamiji said, "When did you get your sight back?" He replied "Through Baba's grace I received this precious gift. I had a blessed vision of Him years ago, and since then, I can see, read, write and move freely". To assure Swamiji he read out several verses from the Amrit Anubhava. How wisely he used the sense of sight!

Leela 11

He longed for Baba's darshan. But no matter what he did his plans failed. This upset and frustrated Joshi and he got angry at Baba. "All my friends and relatives keep going to Shirdi, why am I denied this opportunity? Baba! If you are really a saint, you will give me darshan, even without my going to Shirdi" said Joshi. Simultaneously at Shirdi a family from Konkan were about to return home after taking Baba's darshan. Baba asked the man 'if he could do a piece of work for Him', the devotee readily agreed. Then Baba said, **"You go home by mail, and give this packet of Udi to the person who requests you to give him a span of space for sitting"**. The devotee agreed to Baba's strange request. He and his family were comfortably seated in the train. At every station, the man looked for the gentleman. But no such person approached him. At last, the train pulled out of Kalyan. The devotee thought that he should write to Baba about his non-compliance. Then the train halted at Thana. Just as the train was moving out, a man rushed into his compartment, drenched in perspiration. He gasped and said, "Please pick up your child and give me a span of space to sit as I am feeling giddy." The Konkani devotee readily picked up his child, and gladly handed over the packet of Udi. He told him of Baba's strange request, and as Joshi had said the very words, he handed over the Udi. Joshi respectfully

received the Udi packet. He thought of Baba's kindness towards an angry child and was forever grateful.

Leela 12

"Do coconuts produce children ? How can you be so superstitious?" said Baba to Shama (Sai Satcharitra Ch. 36). Shama was pleading with Baba on behalf of Mrs. Aurangabadkar. He beseeched Baba to give her the coconut and His blessings. Thus the barren lady might get a child. ***"She will get a child in 12 months,"*** said Baba.

This is another coconut Leela.

A lady from Poona was desperate to go to Shirdi, and seek Baba's blessings. But, however hard she tried, her attempts failed, for some reason or the other. She was sure, if she received a coconut from Baba, she would get a child. She was very sad and dejected and wondered about the future.

One night she had a dream vision. Baba came and gave her a coconut as prasad. When she woke up, and thought over the dream, it seemed so real, that she looked around. Lo! There was a coconut on her bed. She vowed that if she got a child by this prasad, she would take the child to Shirdi. A year later she delivered a male child; so she went with her child and gratefully laid him at Baba's feet.

Leela 13

Mention is made of Hari Bhau Karnik in Sai Satcharitra chapter 33. In 1917 on Gurupurnima he visited Shirdi and after proper rituals offered dakshina to Baba. While he was getting down the steps, he wished he had offered one more rupee. As he was given permission to leave, he proceeded to Nasik. There Narasimha Maharaj demanded, "Give me my one rupee" which . Haribhau gladly gave, realizing how Baba, had reclaimed the rupee.

Before this visit to Shirdi he was once in trouble. His relatives dragged him to court unlawfully. Having heard of Baba he came to Shirdi. He bowed to Baba and offered a coconut, betel nut and dakshina. Baba asked him to go to the Wada and take rest. Two days later, he met Baba; he was dejected and sad at the behaviour of his relatives, and was thinking of the law suit. Baba, in His

characteristic way, told him 'all about the case'. The other devotees asked him if he was acquainted with Baba. "No, I have not met Him before, but He surely knows me". On the fourth day of his stay, he met Baba who said, **"Wait for six months and see the fate of the mischief makers!"** True to His words, six months later he was acquitted and the troublemakers suffered much for their misdeeds.

Leela 14

"In the Wada there are many thieves fasten the doors and be alert for they will rob you of all your belongings and attack you fiercely. Property is never permanent, as for the body, it is for ever transient knowing that death is near, conduct yourself according to Dharma," said Baba to Vijayanand Swamy (Sai Satcharitra Ch.31). Baba knew that he was going to die and alerted him to do the right thing by reading the Holy Scriptures.



Appa Kulkarni

He said the same to Appa Kulkarni, who did not understand His words. **"Thieves will come and fight with you. They are very clever in selecting persons, and will take away only what they want. Beware!"** But Appa took trouble to safeguard his property. At that time, there was an epidemic of cholera in Shirdi. One night, Appa had incessant vomiting and diarrhoea and suffered from cholera. Soon, his body became cold, clammy and pulseless. Seeing his condition, Appa Kulkarni his wife ran to Baba and begged for Udi and blessings to save her husband. Baba calmly replied, **"Do not grieve. Death awaits all those who are born. Birth and death are acts of the almighty. No one lives or dies here. If you look at the phenomenon of life with the eyes of wisdom, you will realize that you are no different. When the clothes become old and fade, you throw them away. In the same way, the soul, which is immortal, casts off the worn out body. Do not stop him from going. Let him leave as he has reached his life's goal. He will go to heaven. He is right now changing his clothes before Me."**

Then, his wife returned home, weeping, but comforted by Baba's words. Appa died soon after. The villagers were frightened, lest cholera spread in

epidemic proportions. They came to Baba and begged him to stop the epidemic. Baba said, **"Only seven will die of cholera."** After seven people succumbed to it, the disease abated.

Leela 15

Tatyasaheb Nulkar was a sub-judge at Pandharpur. He was well versed in the Shastras and Vedas. He was a skeptic and thought it was not necessary for him to have a Guru. Once he had severe pain in his eyes during his visit to



Nulkar

Jalgaon. As his brother was a doctor, he thought that he could readily get treatment from him. There he realized that Gurupurnima was three days away. So, without any remedy, he set out to Shirdi. Upon arriving at Shirdi, he lay down in Sathé Wada for a while, before going for Baba's darshan. In spite of the tormenting pain, he went to Dwarkamai for Baba's darshan. Baba in his characteristic way said,

"Shamya, my eyes are giving me great deal of trouble and I am suffering too much pain". The moment He uttered those words the pain in Nulkar's eyes ceased.

Nulkar stayed in Shirdi till his death. During the time of his death, Baba sent His Udi and Tirth to him thereby giving him Sadgati.

Leela 16

Moreshwar Pradhan and his wife Chottubai loved Baba from the bottom of their hearts. Baba likewise reciprocated. He looked after their welfare in every



Moreshwar Pradhan

When the children had chickenpox and subsequently they all recovered. The youngest, who was also the weakest. Then the illness took a serious turn. Doctors also gave up hope of child's recovery. The child turned pale and a collapse appeared on the child's face. The parents tended to the child but with a heart full of sorrow. They chanted Baba's name con-

tinuously. Chottubai suddenly fell asleep, only to see Baba before her. Baba said, **"What is all this? The child is all right and safe. He will ask for something to eat at 6.30A.M. Do give him whatever he wants without fear."** Chottubai woke up and looked at her child who seemed to have recovered at that very moment,

and was sound asleep. Exactly at 6.30 A.M. the child asked to be fed. The mother joyously gave him all that he wanted. The child Moreshwar Pradhan fully recovered in a few days.

Leela 17

Baba. Lakshmibai and Janabai were grinding wheat with the hand mill, when a lady from Bombay entered Dwarkamai. She sat beside them, and asked Baba if she too could grind the wheat. Baba said that she would get tired. Nonetheless, she was eager to grind as much as was possible. Baba asked Lakshmibai to let her grind the wheat. The lady was full of questions, and was eager to get answers from Baba. She started asking Baba, why the wheat was ground? Why He threw it at the village boundary?

Baba said, ***"Akkabai Maaribai, Marriamma (i.e. dieties of cholera and smallpox) want to enter the village so I feed them on the other side of this village and prevent them from entering Shirdi. As they are propitiated, they do not enter Shirdi. Thus, I save My devotees."***

Then she asked whether there was 'Jari', 'Mari' (durdevatha=evil forces). Baba said, ***"Yes, there exists durdevatha; but they will not do any thing to us."*** She said that some people are dying because of durdevatha. To this, Baba said, ***"Durdevatha was scolding Me and insisting that she be allowed to enter this village so I requested the Almighty to give her the allotted person."***

"Are there evil spirits, Baba? When I was in Naigaon, in Bombay, an evil spirit would come from the side of the well and go to the room upstairs and disappear." The Omnipresent, Omniscient, Baba replied, ***"Yes. But they will not do anything to harm us."*** Then Baba told her that the spirit she saw, was that of the owner of the house. ***"He comes and goes upstairs and disappears where you delivered"***.

The lady was astonished to hear all these facts and asked Baba how He knew them. ***"I know you from childhood, you have forgotten Me, but I do not forget. I call all My children to Me even if they are thousands of miles away. I look after all equally, be they good or bad."*** After a while she felt tired and

asked Lakshmbai to resume the grinding. The lady returned to Bombay unafraid and assured of Baba's love and protection for her and her family.

Sai Satcharitra Ch.J describes the leela of Baba grinding wheat. **"Go at once, to the village boundary and throw all the flour at the side of the brook there!"** said Baba to the four women. Thus Baba prevented Cholera from invading Shirdi,

Leela 18

In 1917, during Vaishak month a doctor, his wife and son came to Shirdi. He hoped that Baba would drive away the evil spirit that tormented his son. In the Dwarkamai, the doctor thought that Baba's grinding of wheat and throwing it at the outskirts was futile and just a superstition. Baba reading his thoughts asked him to come at 3.00 P.M. Exactly at 3.00 P.M. he and his family went to Dwarakamai. The doctor and his son sat and started massaging Baba's legs upon Baba's orders. Just then, an ugly, devilish looking lady came and grabbed his son, wanting to take him away. Baba, undaunted, gave her a blow with His satka. She fled, crying loudly. Baba then said, **"She came to eat your son. She was deprived of her ration. I did not throw the flour at the outskirts today, as you thought it was unwanted. But I drove her away with My satka. Now she will not torment your son"**. The father and the son were filled with awe at Baba's Antarjnan and kindness. Then Baba gave them permission to go on the next day.

Leela 19

In the Sai Satcharitra, Ch.29, the Leela of the avaricious Bhajan Mandali from Madras is given. Some of the details like their names, address, and other particulars are missing. The Leela given below elaborates upon it.

He was called Bhau Swamy because his Guru was Ram Bhau of south Kanara. This Govinda Swamy worked in Madras Electric Tramways. He and his family went on an all India pilgrimage in 1915. They visited Shirdi on 23.8.1915. They sang beautifully and did bhajans daily. Baba gave them Rs.2/- and two rupees worth of burfi. The burfi he sold for one rupee and twelve annas. All these details he wrote in his diary daily.

One day, he had a dream vision of Baba (which is elaborated beautifully in the Sai Satcharitra). After this revealing vision, the greedy skeptic became an ardent devotee. Dr. Pillai asked him to write his dream, which he did, and handed it over to him. Knowing of Radhakrishna Mai's love for bhajans, he performed bhajans in her home too. She gave him a Marathi book containing the life of Baba, which he treasured.

His wife Adilakshmi was given sakshatkar (vision) of Sri Ram at noon Arati while the rest of the Mandali saw Baba sitting in his usual place. Filled with joy, she decided to make prasad of Bhaaji and Payasam for Baba. On 30/08/1915, while preparing it, she fervently prayed to Baba to accept it, as she had prepared it with all her love and devotion. Eagerly she took it to Dwarakamai and handed it over. To her utter consternation, the lady (Durga Bai) placed it last in the rows of Prasad offerings. Baba however, slowly moved to the back, and opening her dish, devoured the whole of it with great relish. This touched the lady to the bottom of her heart further strengthening her devotion in Baba.

Leela 20

The story of Dr. Vir Hate and the one rupee is given in Sai Satcharitra Ch.29. A little more is given here about him.

Capt. Dr. Hate was a staunch devotee of Baba and lived in Shirdi for some time, and then returned to Gwalior. One day, Saval Ram of Gwalior came to him distraught as his son was missing. Dr. Hate said, "Go to Shirdi and take Baba's darshan and you will surely find him". Saval Ram agreed. After some time he received a letter from the boy saying that he was in Egypt. He had secretly joined the army, as he feared his parents' wrath. Now he was returning to India. Saval Ram's joy knew no bounds. But instead of going to Shirdi, he and his wife went to Bombay to receive the boy.

When they met, Saval Ram was upset, as his son was emaciated and suffering from high fever. He rushed with the boy to Gwalior for treatment. Again he told Dr. Hate about it. The doctor chided Saval Ram saying, "You failed to keep your promise. Now take the boy to Baba and he will be alright". The three of them then set out to go to Shirdi. Just before they left Dr. Hate gave one rupee to

Saval Ram and said "Place this in Baba's hand. Do not fail to bring it back". He wanted the blessed coin to keep in his Puja.

Saval Ram returned with his family and told Dr. Hate that his son was recuperating. He also gave the rupee to Hate. On receiving the coin Hate felt it was not the same coin he had given. Disappointed, he told Saval Ram to go back to Shirdi and fetch his coin. On returning home Saval Ram told his wife about the incident. She however, just went inside and brought Dr. Hate's coin, which she had put away safely. The next day a thrilled Dr. Hate received his prasad (coin) and Saval Ram apologized for the substitution. He related what had happened and Dr. Hate was satisfied.

Leela 21

For a long time Raoji. B. Upasani suffered from asthma. Upon the advice of Kaka Dixit, he went to Shirdi, in 1913 for Baba's darshan. On seeing him, Baba said He was glad that he came, and gave him Udi with His blessing. From then on, Raoji started feeling better and returned home.

In March of 1913 his son fell ill. For six days he had relentless high fever, continues and unabating and the doctors gave up hope. The doctor and Upasani sat near his bed as they thought that his end was near. At 2 A.M. the exhausted father went out and sat in the varandha. He dozed off for a short time when he dreamt of Baba. He saw Baba applying Udi to his son's forehead, then Baba standing before Upasani said **"Don't worry. He will perspire after two hours and his condition will improve. After he gets well bring him to Shirdi for My darshan"**. Upasani woke up and so it happened exactly as Baba said. After two hours his son did perspire and felt better. The doctor was surprised at his recovery. Three days latter Upasani received a letter from Shyama. "I had not written to you so far as I had no direction from Baba to do so. Now upon Baba's orders I am stating what Baba said **"I have been to your friends place in Dhulia"**. I asked Him who that friend was? **"Upasani Balakrishna Raoji"** He answered clearly. Then added **"I go to his place often. Write to him"**. Hence this letter from me.

Fifteen days latter Upasani, his wife and son went for Baba's darshan. Early in the morning they got down at Kopergaon and bathed in the Godavari hoping to attend the Arati. However the tongawala was late and Upasani was doubtful of reaching Shirdi in time for the Arati. Here at Shirdi Baba said "**Shama, stop the Arati for a little while, your friend Raoji is on his way. He has set his heart on attending the Arati**". As soon as the family stepped into the Dwarakamai, the Arati started. Baba called the son and asked him whether he recognized Him from his vision, when he was ill with fever. Raoji and his son immediately prostrated before Baba and thanked Him for His timely help.

Leela 22

When Krishnabai Prabhakar came for Baba's darshan, He gave her a four-anna coin. This coin she treasured and did puja to it daily. One day, a lady came to sell coconuts. Krishnabai unwittingly gave the four-annas along with some other coins to her. When her household chores were done, she realized her folly and cried bitterly. In the evening, there was a knock on her door. With a sad heart, she opened it, only to see the coconut vendor. The lady just handed over the four-anna coin and took another in return.

Leela 23

"Eat! Eat this prasad," said Baba to Sridhar J. Dighe and made him eat three handfuls of prasad. Baba asked him to stay in Shirdi for a few days. Then sent him to Narsingh Maharaj at the Kala Ram Mandir. Narsingh Maharaj received him well and asked him if Sai Baba had sent him. He stayed comfortably in the home of a grape merchant on the Maharaja's request. The merchant bought him a ticket for Bombay. Then he went to see Narayan Maharaj at Khedgaon. "You are blessed by Sai Baba," said Narayan Maharaj and made him stay there for a few days. Then Dighe returned home fully satisfied with his pilgrimage. Dighe firmly believed that this was the result of Baba's prasad and blessings.

Leela 24

Baba loved Shanta a lot. She was the daughter of Babu Girvandikar of Shirdi. Lovingly Baba called her 'little sister' and she called Baba 'brother'. One

day she slipped and fell into the well near Dwarkamai. Every one feared the worst; but to their utter surprise, they found the girl floating, though her trunk and legs were below the water. They however, pulled her out. When they checked her, she had no bruises or wounds, though the well was very deep. Shanta told them, "As I accidentally fell into the well, my Baba, my brother held on to me. Thus, I was able to float, and only the lower part was submerged in water."

On another occasion, a little boy was going home. It was raining rather heavily. He had an open umbrella, which obstructed his view. In front of his house they had dug the ground to lay the foundation for a building. Accidentally he slipped and fell into the pit. Although the pit was very deep, he walked to the other side and climbed out. When questioned he said Baba made steps for him so all he had to do was to climb them and come to the other side.

Leela 25

Das Ganu was a gifted man, he could compose Abhangs extempore, sing Kirtans beautifully, write commentaries on Isha Upanishads (Sai Satcharitra Ch.20). It relates the story of how Kaka Dixit's maid servant enlightened him to write the Isha Upanishad's commentary.

Then he decided to write a commentary on Dnyaneshwari Amrit Anubhav. He felt he should write it, explaining the details, so that the common man could read and understand it. Das Ganu told Dada Maharaj of Satara of his intent. The highly knowledgeable Dada Maharaj was skeptical and said, "You must first understand the original text, before embarking on such a detailed treatise. If you stay with me and learn and understand the book, then you will be able to write the commentary."

But Das Ganu thought differently. "If Baba wants me to write the Tika (commentary) then He will give me Buddhi (wisdom). I will not go to anybody to learn it." Dada Maharaj did not appreciate Das Ganu's idea. Nonetheless, he prayed to Baba on his behalf.

Then Das Ganu began the commentary on the first two chapters and went to Dada Maharaj with the same. Dada asked him about his progress. So Das Ganu read what he had written. Dada complemented him on the commentary

and said "Baba is truly a Samarth because of His favour on you such a scholarly Tika has been written".

Leela 26

In the early days, the Bhills often waylaid the trains. In 1914, Ganpath D. Kadam and his family were travelling by train to Shirdi. Just after they passed Nasik, a gang of Bhills jumped into their compartment, with the intent to attack and rob the passengers. At that time, Kadam was reading a book of holy songs. The gang stood by his side for five minutes or so. Thinking that they were interested in the book, Kadam started reading it loudly. After a while the Bhills left one by one. Kadam looked up from his book and saw a Fakir seated opposite him. When he looked again, the Fakir had disappeared just as the Bhills left. When Kadam reached Shirdi, Baba said, "**Well, have you come safe and well guarded?**" Kadam at once fell at Baba's feet and thanked Him for guarding him and his family. He also realized that the Bhills took to their heels fearing the Fakir,

Leela 27

Although he attended Das Ganu's Kirtan and Pravachan unlike Cholkar (Sai SatCharitra 12). He did not have faith in Baba. He thought that Baba was a Muslim. In 1910, this Ramachandra V.Pathankar, a Retd. Clerk of Alibaugh was in distress. His monthly earnings of Rs.30/- did not suffice to meet his family expenses. There was a certain photograph of Akkalkot Swami at Balkrishna Buva's Mutt, Dadar that attracted him. He visited that Mutt often, as he was devoted to Swami Samarth.

One day Ghansham Gupta, a close friend of his, asked him to accompany him to Shirdi. He assured Pathankar that all his expenses for the trip would be borne by him. Pathankar was reluctant at first, and then he agreed to accompany Ghansham, on the condition that he wouldn't give any Dakshina to Baba. If he did, it would be no more than one rupee. Ghansham agreed to this and both of them went to Shirdi.

At that time, there was only one hotel in Shirdi. Unfortunately, Pathankar found a few worms in the dal when he was having lunch. He started shouting at

the top of his voice. "Did I come all the way to Shirdi to eat worms?" he said. Then, both the friends went for Baba's darshan. Baba, on seeing Pathankar, flew into a rage and drove him away. Pathankar was upset and decided to leave Shirdi, without Baba's consent. The other devotees consoled him and asked him not to do so.

Latter both the friends went for Baba's darshan again. Baba had calmed down and looking at Pathankar, He said, "***Do people come here to eat worms?***" On hearing this vital question, Pathankar fell at Baba's feet. He realized that Baba was omnipresent. Then, Baba gave him darshan as Akkalkot Swamy, the very same roop that he worshipped at Balkrishna Buva's Mutt.

Pathankar was overwhelmed and realized that Baba was not different from Swami Samarth. He gave Baba one rupee Dakshina. But, Baba asked for Dakshina again. He gladly gave another rupee. Then, Baba gave him permission to leave. Upon returning home, he got another job, which gave him a better salary, and he could live comfortably.

Baba took two rupees Dakshina and gave back a hundred.

Leela 28

Balaji Patil Newaskar quitely went about doing Baba's seva. He swept and cleaned the streets that Baba walked on daily. When it was harvest time he brought the whole harvest to Dwarkamai and offered it to Baba. He and his family happily lived on whatever Baba gave them. In Satcharita the wonderful Leela of how his family fed thrice the number of guests, is given. It was Bala's annual Shradha ceremony. His daughter-in-law diligently cooked food enough for the estimated number of guests. While she was serving them, she realized that thrice the number of guests had arrived. With Baba's grace and a little Udi, the last guest was fed to satiety with plenty of food remaining. (Sai Satcharitra Ch. 35).

This is a similar Leela whereby Baba's grace not threefold but a multitude of guests were fed with food remaining.

When Purandare once visited Shirdi, he stayed with Bala Shimpi. Baba told him that He would come to dine with him, along with two other Fakirs. With

great joy, Purandhare asked Baba what he should prepare. **"Make rice, sheera, bhaji, two vegetable curries and masala khichidi,"** said Baba. After the Noon Arati, upon his returning home he saw that every thing was ready. Then four to five Fakirs came and had their meals. While leaving, they informed him that many more would soon arrive. Later, a batch of twenty Fakirs arrived. Satiated, they too left. Then another ten Fakirs came. They too were well fed and food still remained. Then Purandare went to Baba with betel leaves and dakshina and invited Him for meals. Baba smiled and said, **"I have eaten a lot and I am satiated and satisfied."** Then Baba asked Purandare to have his meals along with Bala Shimpi. All of them, Purandare's family and Bala dinned together and still food was abundant.

Purandare partook the food as Baba's Prasad. He also carried the food to Bombay and distributed it to his friends and relatives and told everyone this wonderful Leela.

Leela 29

Baba had an endearing way of calling his Bhaktas (devotees) by pet names. Some of them are given below.

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1) Madhava Rao Deshpande | Bhatacha Shamyaa |
| 2) Tatyaa Patil | Kothyacha Ghodmukhya |
| 3) Dr. Pillai | Andhoji Filial |
| 4) Pilaji Gurav | Guravacha |
| 5) Hari Seetharam alias
Kakasaheb Dixit | Langada Kaka |
| 6) Dabholkar | Hemad |
| 7) Dadasaheb Kapharde | Bapusaheb Tapusan Dada |
| 8) Sagun Mehru Naik, | Takki (Deceiver) |
| 9) Bapusaheb Buty | Buttya |
| 10) Bapusahefa Dhumal | Bhau |
| 11) Madhu Fasle | Ardha Gandhu |
| 12) Radhakrishna Mai | Avadasa (Moodevi) |
| 13) Balasaheb Dev | Chindi Chor |

14) Abdul Baba

Halalkar

While the female devotees He usually called as 'Mai' or 'Ayi' (mother). 'Tai' (sister) or with respect Bai' or 'Mousi' (aunty).

He had a very strict code of conduct with the ladies. They could not enter the Dwarkamai at night or while He was resting. He pulled His Kafni down to His heels whenever a woman was present. Shampooing His feet was allowed only below the knee.

Leela 30

"Sometimes I am a dog, sometimes a pig, a cow, a cat and an ant, a fly, and a aquatic creature in such various form do I move about in the world. Know that I like only him who sees Me in all the living beings. So give up the sense of differentiation. This is the way to worship Me," said Baba to Mrs. Tarkhad (Sai Satcharitra Ch.9). She fed a hungry dog that came to her door at lunch time. Then came a hungry pig smeared all over with mud and dirt; happily she fed the pig too.

Baba used to feed a mongrel dog daily. The dog used to sleep on the steps of Dwarkamai one day Madhu False hit the dog, who was obstructing his path. Baba at once flew into a rage and said, ***"It came here for Me and not for you. Be aware hereafter."***

In Devotees Experience, page 166, the story of Hansaraj is given. As he was an asthmatic, Baba forbade him to eat curds. However, Hansaraj could not resist his love for curds. He got the curds made at home and asked his wife to hang it in a sling from the ceiling. Every day, a cat came and ate the curds. One day Hansaraj stayed at home to catch the cat in the act, so he could punish it. This is exactly what happened. The cat stealthily came in climbed up and ate the curds. Hansaraj waited with stick in hand and beat the cat as it left. Later he went to see Baba in Dwarakamai. Baba said, ***"There is a man who wants to die by eating sour and pungent things. But I would not allow him to do that. Today I went to him in the form of a cat. That fellow has given Me a caning on the back. See here!"***

Then Baba exposed His back and thereby showed the welt marks.

Mahalsapathy used to feed a crippled bitch daily. One day having fed her he said "go, go" but the bitch would not move, so he took a stick and beat it. Later when he went to Dwarakamai, Baba said, **"There is a bitch, sickly like Me in the village. Every one is beating it"**. Mahalsapathy remembered his behaviour and repented, (Ref. ~~ Life of Baba, Vol.2).



Mahalsapathy

After taking 'bhiksha' Baba put all the food collected into the 'Kolemba'. The cats and dogs of Shirdi waited for Him to return so, they could eat to their hearts content. He, who would not drive away the animals would He allow them to be beaten?

DAKSHINA MIMAMSA

Dakshina literally means 'sacrificial fees'.

In Sai Satcharitra Ch.14 is the wonderful story of Ratanji Shahapurji Wadia of Nanded. He went to Baba on Das Ganu's advice, because he was filled with sorrow and despair, as he had no male children. He longed for a son and prayed to Baba from the bottom of his heart. Baba said, **"And so, after all these days you have come to Me today! But then give Me first whatever dakshina you wish to give. Only then will you get your satisfaction"**.

Ratanji had brought with him the most beautiful garland the choicest fruit and of course dakshina. Full of love and humility, he offered them at Baba's feet. But Baba said, **"I know you have already given Me three rupees and fourteen annas. Now give Me the remaining money as dakshina"**. Here Baba identifies with another saint called Mauli Saheb, who was invited for lunch by Ratanji. The amount spent for that purpose was exactly rupees three and fourteen annas.

Baba stayed in the Dwarakamai for sixty years. From the very beginning, He went for biksha to the five chosen houses. He ate very little. The rest He distributed to the devotees, the dogs and cats survived because of that bhiksha. His needs were very little. All He required was a little tobacco, oil for burning the lamps and wood for His Dhuni.

Why did Baba demand dakshina?

The most significant meaning for dakshina was to rid the devotee of ego, and instill non-attachment to the transient things. Baba had a unique method of taking dakshina. Usually, He asked only for that amount that the devotee had wished to offer. At other times, He would keep on asking the devotee till his pockets were empty. There was a lesson behind this. He then asked the devotee to borrow it (instilling humility). Some times it was to instill faith, for another devotee would give that same amount unknowingly. Time and again the devotee left Shirdi penniless and Baba appeared on the way in some disguise and took care of every thing.

The most striking feature was the significance of the number.

- 1) Re. 1/- . The number one stood for jeeva or even Brahma.
- 2) Rs.2/- for nishta, faith and saburi (Sathe and Radhabai Deshmukh. Sai Satcharitra Ch.18 & 19)
- 3) Rs.4/- often indicated the ego complex, i.e., Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahankar and the need to surrender it at the feet of the Guru.
- 4) Rs.5/- symbolized the senses, i.e. the Indriyas (The Marwari and quick Brahma Cyan. Sai Satcharitra 16 & 17).
- 5) Rs.6/- refers to the six internal enemies (Mrs. Tarkhad. Ref: Devotees' experience)
- 6) Rs.9/- refers to Nav Vidya Bhakti of the Bhakti Marga (Laxmibai and Anantrao Pathankar and the parable of the mare, Sai Satcharitra Ch. 42 and 21 respectively.)
- 7) Rs.15/-. Giving Dakshina here means deriving lessons from the scriptures and lodging them in the heart where Baba resides. (Prof. Narke. Ref: Devotees' experience)
- 8) Rs.16.50/-. Sharanagati (total and complete surrender to Baba).

Some times the amount was large; implying a pay raise or bonus and the exact amount was demanded by Baba.

Leela 31

One devotee had gone to Shirdi for Baba's darshan and wanted to give Baba dakshina. On beholding the luminous roop of Baba, he was so overwhelmed that he forgot to give dakshina and returned home. That night, his wife dreamt of Baba who told her about a packet of money that was lying on a shelf in the bathroom. She related her dream to her husband, who realized that he had kept the packet there upon his return. He regretted having forgotten to give the dakshina. So he went immediately and sent the amount by money order.

Leela 32

Repeatedly Baba asked Purandare for rupees two as dakshina. Purandare went to see Baba often out of the deep love and regard he felt for Him. Every time Baba asked for rupees two nothing more or nothing less. Curious about this Purandare asked Baba about it, Baba replied, **"It is not these coins I want from you. I want Nishta (concentrated faith) and Saburi (joyous patience)"**, Purandare replied that he had given all his faith to Baba and was patiently awaiting progress. Baba told him to keep up his faith unflinching and to be strict and anxious to fulfill all the promises he had made. Further Baba said, **"You should have truth always with you. Then I will be always with you wherever you are and at all times."** Humbly, Purandare promised to try his best and entreated Baba's help for controlling his mind.

Leela 33

Baba once asked Butti to go to Dixit Wada and get rupees sixteen and half as dakshina from Kaka. Butti at once got up and went to the Wada. There he found Kaka and Bala Saheb Bhate about to discuss the Eleventh Skanda of Eknath Bhagavat, that they had just read. Butti related the reason for his coming there. Kaka had only one rupee left with him at that time. He said, "I have already given sixteen and half to Baba," and explained to Butti the significance of the amount. Then Butti returned to Dwarakamai and told Baba what Dixit had just said and Baba gladly accepted.

Leela 34

Once Chandorkar and his family were at Shirdi, during the solar eclipse. He requested Baba to allow him to go to Kopergaon, to do Puja and bathe in the

Godavari. Baba readily agreed. After he finished his rituals and bath, he gave a four-anna coin as dakshina to a Fakir. Upon his return to Shirdi, Baba showed him the same coin that He had accepted during the solar eclipse.

Leela 35

A devotee from Aurangabad sought refuge in Shirdi at Baba's feet. A Police warrant was filed against him for an injury case. He brought with him Rs.800/- in cash and had two gold rings on his fingers. At Shirdi he stayed at Dixit Wada and dined at Sagun Meru's hotel. Daily he took darshan of Baba who asked him for Rs. 100/- as dakshina. Soon, he was depleted of the money so he asked Sagun Meru to write to his brother for Rs.1000/-. Forthwith the brother came with the money, took Baba's darshan and left.

Baba depleted him of the Rs.1000/- and he had no more money left. Meanwhile the police found out that he was at Shirdi. They arrived with the warrant and searched for him. The devotee heard that the police had come for him, so he ran to the Dwarakamai and sat before Baba. The police did their duty of searching and then came to Dwarakamai. They looked for him but could not see him though he was sitting in front of Baba. When they left, the devotee prostrated before Baba. Baba said **"You may go home tomorrow after meals. Your troubles have come to an end."** The next day he received a letter stating that he had been acquitted. Happily he returned home, and latter earned a lot of money, thus the dakshina provided protection, relief of mental anguish, and latter a good income.

Leela 36

Baba kept on taking dakshina from Shankar Rao till his pocket was empty, and he had no money left for his return journey. Shankar Rao had full faith in Baba and was not a least bit worried. He knew that 'He who takes one rupee will give back ten fold'. A day before his departure a friend of his came to Shirdi. They both met with great joy. Then the friend gave Shankar Rao Rs.20/- which he had borrowed many years ago. Thus Shankar Rao received the money loaned to his friend and had a comfortable journey home.

Leela 37

It was June, 1914 Sai Sharan Anand was in Shirdi. Before returning to Bombay, he kept some coins in an old compass box for Baba. He was staying in Radhakrishna Mai's house and he kept the box below the cupboard and left. Soon as he reached Bombay, he learnt that Baba sent word to Radhakrishna Mai to search under the cupboard for the box and send the 'dakshina'.

She made a thorough search and found the box and sent the money to Baba at once. This pleased Sharan Anand greatly.

Dakshina literally means 'sacrificial fees'. In this case, Baba asked Radhakrishna Mai to search for the dakshina and bring it to Him. Thus, He accepted the fees and gave credence to the Shruti 'Yagnen Danen Tapasya', i.e., those who are anxious for self-knowledge will find its secret in giving dakshina as one of the means of attaining it.

Baba gave Swami Sharan Anand 'sanyas' in 1952 and 'Sadgati' in 1982.

Leela 38

In 1917, Gajanan Narvekar was suffering from high fever. He sent his son to Baba with five hundred rupees dakshina. The son did as he was advised, as soon as Baba received the money, He started shivering. A devotee sitting next to Baba said, "Baba you are shivering with fever all of a-sudden?" Baba replied, **"Whoever I accept dakshina from, I have to bear their troubles and set them free."** Similarly, He received rupees five hundred from Moreshwar Pradhan and took upon Himself all the troubles of his family.

Leela 39

In 1915 Triambak Govind Samanth went to Shirdi. We had only Rs.5/- with him, out of which he gave Rs.1/- as Dakshina to Baba. Baba demanded one more rupee, which Samanth was reluctant to give. None-the-less Baba kept on asking for it, till finally Samanth parted with it. Baba took the Rs.2/- and turning them upside down said **"You have given these Rs.2/- to the one letter God (Ganapathi). Now you may go. Ganu Mahar will bless you"**. Samanth was in a hurry to leave, and rather upset at parting with the other rupee, that he didn't understand what Baba said.

By His blessing Baba wanted to remind Samanth, that He had appeared to him, earlier as Ganu Mahar. Samanth was then 21 years old and Baba as Ganu Mahar had initiated him with the mono syllabled mantra of Lord Ganapathi. Then Samanth had performed one crore of Japa of the same.

He had received Baba's permission to leave. Disgruntled he came to the main road, but there was no tonga to take him to Kopergaon. Meanwhile a tonga from Rahata turned up with a Gujarathi man in it. He beckoned to Samanth and asked him to accompany him. Samanth sat next to him and they proceeded to Kopergaon. The Gujarathi asked, "are you coming after taking Baba's darshan? If you give one rupee He demands another rupee" Samanth was astounded to hear this. How could he know all this he wondered!

On reaching Kopergaon the Gujarati paid both their fares, further, he bought two tickets to Dadar, Bombay. They had a comfortable journey, and alighted at Dadar. The Gujarathi gave Samanth a hearty meal. Samanth was puzzled at his kindness. He asked the Gujarathi's name and address 'Ganu Marwadi, Plot No1, behind Masjid Bunder'. He said and left. The next day Samanth went to meet his benefactor and return the money. He searched invain, as no Ganu Marwadi lived there. The whole area was inhabited by Muslims.

Samanth then thought about Baba's words seriously. He recollected how he had lost his way in the forest near Triambakeshwar earlier. At that time some robbers have taken him captive to a cave and threatened to kill him. He had fervently prayed to Ganapathi for protection. When a loud voice called out "Jai Malhari" this frightened the robbers and they set him free. On another occasion he missed his way in the same forest, again he had prayed to Ganapathi. Suddenly a man affected with black leprosy stood before him and said "My name is Ganu Mahar. You have missed your way. I will show the way, but, you must not turn back and see. Agreed". Samanth had agreed and they proceeded. Ganu Mahar was behind him directing him and conversing with him. When they reached the main road Ganu Mahar was silent. Samanth turned around and there was no one.

Thinking over it calmly he realized that he who had freed him from the clutches of the robbers, Ganu Mahar who had showed him the way in the forest, and Ganu Marwadi the kind Gujarathi gentleman were forms assumed by Baba. Thereafter Samanth began worshipping Baba in the form of Ganapathi.

Leela 40

Dr. Talvailkar was a devotee of Baba. On one of his visits to Shirdi, Baba blessed him and gave him Udi. This Udi he preserved carefully. He began his practice and would see patients only after doing Baba's puja. He became famous as he cured many serious patients.

One day a serious patient came for treatment to him as a last resort. Many a doctor had treated him and failed. The patient was in the terminal stage, but his relatives had pinned their hopes on doctor Talvailkar. He pacified the relatives and gave the patient some medicine. Then he prayed to Baba. "Baba, only Your Grace can save and cure this patient," he said. With this, he gave the relatives three packets of Baba's Udi. "Give him one packet of Udi mixed with water internally for three consecutive days," he instructed. The relatives did as advised and the patient gained consciousness. The doctor made a house call on the third day only to see that the patient had improved considerably. Then he prescribed some medicines and the patient recovered gradually and was fully cured.

When the patient came for the final check up, the doctor told him that he had not saved him and took the patient to Shirdi. When they entered Dwarkamai, the doctor pointed to Baba and said, "He saved you from death". The patient ran to Baba and clasped His feet thanking Him for His mercy.

Leela 41

Purandare had infinite faith in Baba. When his daughter or wife was sick, he knew that Baba was there to look after them. Once, his wife suffered from incessant vomiting and diarrhoea from 3.00 AM to 8.00 AM. She had continuous loose stool and vomiting. At 8.00 AM, she became cold and pulse less and went into shock. The doctor was summoned who checked her, but was doubtful if she would survive for more than an hour. Purandare was oblivious of this, as he was

in the house of a goldsmith, getting a jewel prepared for his niece. When the doctor gave up hope, some one ran to fetch him weeping all the way.

On his way home, he passed the Dutta Mandir. There he saw Baba as a Fakir with a Jholi in His hand. The Fakir comforted him and said, "**Don't fear for your wife, she will not die. Give her Udi mixed in water and she will recover in an hour. I am guarding all of you**". Purandare reached home and found every one weeping and wailing. He just went and got Baba's Udi and mixing it in water, brought it to his wife's bedside.

Her teeth were clenched; so he had to pry it open with a spoon to administer the Udi Tirth. The rest of the family was dismayed to see this and asked him not to force the Tirth down her throat. Unmindful of their pleas, he administered the Udi Tirth. Then taking some Udi, he rubbed it all over her body.

He had a bath and performed Puja and offered Naivedya. Then he nonchalantly had his meals without waiting for anybody. The doctor came about one hour later, and found that she was recovering. Her body temperature was now normal and her pulse had returned. Surprised, he asked Purandare what he had given her. Purandare said, "I have given nothing but my Baba's Udi Tirth". The doctor then gave her some medicines and left. True to His word, his wife did not die but recovered and became healthy.

Leela 42

Prangondji and his wife, Manigori had gone on a pilgrimage to Shirdi. Baba blessed them and Sai Sharanand was born on 05.04.1889. The village was Mota, Bardoli Taluka in Surat. He was named Vamanrao Prana Govind Patel. At the age of three, he was seriously ill and his parents were worried about his survival. Baba appeared as a Fakir and gave his mother Udi. He asked her to give it to her son as Tirth. He mentioned that there was a scar on his back towards the right side. "**He will be a great Satpurush,**" said the Fakir. The mother followed the instructions and the child recovered.

Vamanrao did his primary schooling at Surat and Ahmadabad. He completed his B.A. in 1910 from Elphinstone College, Bombay and subsequently passed LL.B. in 1912. Vaman had a questioning mind and he kept asking his

professors and other saints whether God was real or a nebulous phenomenon. No one could give him a satisfactory answer. His father took him to Shri Balakrishna Maharaj, a disciple of Swami Samarth. When he asked the question, the Maharaj flew into a rage, but gave him two books, the Life of Akkalkot Maharaj and Eknath Bhagavat. Still unsatisfied, he went to Shirdi on his father's advice in 1911. Baba seeing him said, ***"Why do you worry about God; there is God."***



**Sai Sharan
Anand**

After joining a solicitor's firm in 1913, he came to Shirdi during his vacation and stayed there for one year, as Baba refused permission for his return. The parents were worried about his whereabouts and welfare. They consulted an astrologer who said, "He is safe in God's paradise (Shirdi)". Permission was finally granted to him so he returned home. In 1916, he came to the station to see his friend who was bound for Shirdi, when he too suddenly decided to join him. He stayed at Shirdi for 21 days.

One day, he sustained a severe head injury when a huge bolder stone accidentally fell on his head, as he walked past Butti Wada. He started bleeding profusely and was semi conscious. By Baba's grace he recovered without even a scar or internal damage. When Vaman Rao was questioned about his injury, he said he experienced divine bliss. From that day, he became a staunch devotee of Baba. He wrote Guru Smriti in Gujarati in 1932. In 1946, he wrote Baba's life called 'Sai Baba'. Baba gave him Sanyas in Dakor, appearing as a Fakir and named him Sai Sharan Anand. In 1961, he wrote 'Sai Baba the Superman'.

A devotee gave him Baba's Padukas. At first he refused. Later he accepted them and installed them at Ahmadabad where Baba's temple, called 'Vishnu Dharmalaya', houses them. Thousands of devotees flock there, to have darshan, and many healings and miracles are witnessed. He states that from 1952, after his sanyas, Baba was with him all the time getting His service done through him. On 25.08.1982, he took Samadhi.

Leela 43

In 1915 Bapusaheb Butti once suffered immensely with high, un-remitting fever of 105°. Thus weakened he could not Baba's darshan. Baba asked him to come to see Him on someone's back. Butti came to Baba in a very weakened



Gopal Rao
Butti

state. When Baba made him sit down and gave him a feast of Payasam, Bajji, Daal, Usal (Indian cuisine) and made him eat all these in His presence. After he part took the food, Baba asked him to go back to his lodging. Without any medicines the fever abated, simultaneously Baba fell ill. But as soon as Butti recovered, Baba also recovered. Thus Baba took the fever upon

Himself.

Leela 44

On Purandare's first visit to Shirdi, he requested his mother to accompany him. The day before the scheduled departure, his young daughter was ill with high fever. Nonetheless, he could not think of canceling his trip. He left behind, his mother, and wife, and the daughter in their care. On the third day of his stay at Shirdi, Baba appeared in his wife's dream and applied Udi to the child's forehead. At that very moment, her illness took a turn for the better and she began to improve and was well when he returned home.

Leela 45

There roamed a bull in Shirdi that was dedicated to Lord Shiva. This bull caused havoc of the village gardens and fields. It grazed wherever it felt like. The villagers met together and decided to send it to Yeola Pinjrapoli (asylum for old beasts). Funds were raised and the job of taking the bull to Yeola was entrusted to Bikku Marwadi. Bikku set out with the bull, but he did not go to Pinjrapole, but sold the bull to a butcher for Rs.14/-. Upon returning, he informed the villagers that the bull was left at the Panjrapoli. That night Baba appeared in the dream of Bayaji Bayaji Kote Kote and said, **"You are enjoying sound sleep having left Me in the butcher's hand?"** The next day Bayaji informed the villagers of his dream and it was decided that he go to Yeola and rescue the bull. He went straight to the Pinjrapoli but the bull was not found there. So he headed right

away to the butchers lane and made a diligent search there. He found the bull with the butcher. He requested the butcher to return the bull and told him the whole story. The butcher however, was unwilling to return the bull as he had bought it for Rs. 14/- from Bikku. Bayaji then gave him the money and took the bull to safe haven. He returned to Shirdi and told the villagers of his actions. They were quite upset over Bikku's breach of trust, so they prosecuted Bikku who had to spend two months in jail.



Bayaji Kote

Leela 46

There is one special characteristic of the pilgrimage to Shirdi. If a pilgrim returns home without Baba's permission he invites only trouble for himself, says Hemadpant (Sai Satcharitra Ch.9) nor could the pilgrim stay on if Baba gave His permission. On the other hand, if a devotee followed the advice of staying for the required time, or having a meal, though it seemed to be late or an unnecessary delay, the events proved to be fruitful; danger was averted, trains were caught and the journey was comfortable. Many such stories are given in Satcharitra. Here are a few others.

He pestered Baba of and on for permission to go home, during his visit to Shirdi. This irritated Baba. So He told Baburao Aurangabadkar, **"Do whatever you want. I will not bare any consequences"**. Aurangabadkar presumed that Baba had granted him permission to leave. He left in haste. All went well for about a mile, and then a terrible storm erupted. Thus he was stranded in the middle of the road, unprotected and at the mercy of the elements. He could proceed only the next day. After having learnt a lesson of disobeying Baba, Aurangabadkar could not forget how cold, wet, shivering and hungry he was stranded in the middle of nowhere.

Leela 47



Shama

Shama was devoted to Baba but he often took liberties with Him. Once he had to go to the office of the Mamlatdar, on some official work. Baba forbade him to go. Non-the-less he left. Just as he crossed Nimgaon he saw the Mamaltadar proceeding to Shirdi. Shama was remiss for not heeding Baba's words. So Shama turned back and accompanied the Mamltadar to Shirdi. Rather embarrassed he went to see Baba and asked for forgiveness. Khaparde, Butti and Dixit on the other hand humbly obeyed Baba's words, however irrational it may seem and reaped the benefits.

Leela 48

After taking darshan of Baba, Karnik wished to go to Pandharpur. So, at Kopargaon he bought a passenger train ticket. At Daund, he got out and waited for the train to take him to Kuridwadi and thence to Pandharpur. In the meantime he wanted to relieve himself, but could not leave his luggage unattended. A porter obliged him by showing him the toilet and waited by his baggage. The porter also told him to change his ticket for the mail train. Karnik gave the porter his ticket and the required money and asked him to purchase the ticket. "The mail will arrive in a few minutes, so you better sit in it," he said and went away. The mail did arrive and Karnik sat and waited. His fellow passengers were amazed at this and asked him "What will you do if he does not turn up?" Karnik replied that he had faith in him. Just as the train started moving and nearly pulled out of the station, the porter came running and handed over the ticket.

What was there to worry about as he had left Shirdi with Baba's permission?

Leela 49

Marthand, a tailor in Shirdi, was desperate as he was ill and suffering a lot. There was no kith or kin or anyone else to take care of him. As a last recourse, he went and laid in the middle of the path that Baba took going to Lendi Bagh. The compassionate Baba told him, "***Just go to Nimgaon and stay there***". Marthand followed Baba's advice. He then went to Neemgaon, to Nanasaheb

Dengle's home. Nanasaheb came out of his house at the opportune moment, and received him warmly. "Baba has already informed me of your arrival in a dream. You are welcome here, so please consider this your own home," said Nanasaheb. He treated Marthand well and nursed him back to good health. Marthand left being ever grateful to him and Baba. He returned to Shirdi and thanked Baba for His omnipotent mercy.

Leela 50

Kaka Dixit was a perfect disciple of Baba. He not only obeyed Baba's orders, but also tried to inculcate Baba's nature and lifestyle, so that one day he could be just like his Sadguru. Indeed, he succeeded with hard work.

One evening, Kaka was returning home from his office. A strong able-bodied person came and asked for alms. Kaka however looked at His face keenly and was convinced that He was none other than his Sadguru. He at once gave Him some coins. The man on receiving the money just laughed and went away without asking for anything from any other person. Dixit watched Him till he disappeared. Dixit started for Shirdi on that very day. When he met Baba, he enquired about it. Baba simply said, "**Yes! I did come to you in that form.**"

Dixit was extremely pleased to hear this.

Leela 51

Once the daughter-in-law of Hari Bhau Karnik became mentally imbalanced. Karnik heard the sad news and set out to see her. She resided in Andheri, Bombay.

He caught a local train to go and meet her. When the train reached Palghar, he suddenly saw a Fakir wearing a Kafni seated behind him. The Fakir said, "Lord Parmeshwar has created all varieties of trees, for their utilization by humanity. But they know little about their significance or use. I know them pretty well." Then pointing to one particular tree, He said, "If the leaves of this tree are ground and the juice given to a madman, he will be alright."

Karnik was deep in thought and he was unaware of his surroundings. Only upon reaching Bandra did he snap out of his reverie. He looked around for the Fakir, but He wasn't there. Upon reaching his son's home, he quickly procured

the leaves of the tree and administered the juice to his daughter-in-law just as the Fakir had advised.

'Lo! She became alright!'

Two years later, she had become mentally imbalanced again. He used the same leaves, and this time, she became all right for life.

In Sai Satcharitra Ch. 7, a beautiful description is given of Baba being the famous Hakim of Shirdi. In the early days, Baba roamed about here and there, in the thickets, brambles and jungles. Most people thought that He roamed aimlessly. But the compassionate Fakir would go and collect indigenous plants, leaves and seeds. These he would use as a remedy and as cure for the numerous devotees who flocked to Him for physical relief.

Once a devotee came to Him, as his eyes were red, painful and swollen. Baba took some crushed Biba seeds (marking nuts) and made two balls out of them. Then, He placed them on each eye and bandaged them. The next day, He removed everything and poured water over the eyes and behold, the eyes were clear and bright again.

Shama suffered from Hemaroids (piles) and the pain and burning was severe. The compassionate Baba gave him a decoction of Sona mukhi (Senna pods) and he was relieved. Two years later, the condition reoccurred and Shama, on his own accord, took the same Senna pods, only to find the condition aggravated (Sai Satcharitra Ch.13).

Leela 52

Vasudev Sadashiv Joshi of Sitaram Co. and his friend Chidambar Rao K.

Gadge went to Shirdi for Baba's Darshan. They stayed in Sathe Wada and attended the Aarti that was conducted there. In the early days, there was Aarti in the Gurusthan also.



'with consent
photo'

While the Aarti was in progress, Joshi saw Narsimha Murthy in the photograph instead of Baba. He was delighted; but wonder of wonders, it happened for three consecutive days. On the day of their departure, Baba gave them Udi

and Prasad. They thought that the Prasad would not suffice for distribution, when they returned to their village. Baba, knowing their thought, gave them eight annas and asked them to buy Prasad from any shop in Shirdi, as any Prasad bought in Shirdi was His Prasad.

On another visit, Baba distributed 'burfi' for Prasad. They found it extremely delicious. So they thought they would buy some more. Baba told them that there were three baskets of prasad, so they could take three mounds from that. Happily they returned home with Baba's Udi and the 'burfi' Prasad.

Some days later, Joshi gave Rs.10/- to his friend and asked him to give it to Baba as dakshina. He also made another request and that was to take a photograph of Baba and bring it back with him. Joshi wished to do ritualistic Puja to Baba. So, he wanted the photograph. Gadge left with Rs.10/- and went to the Dwarkamai, prostrated before Baba and gave Him Joshi's dakshina. He was silent, as he had not the courage to request permission for the photograph. Baba, too, was silent for a long time. Then just before his departure, Baba Himself asked Gadge to take His photograph. Overwhelmed with gratitude, he 'with consent photo' took two photographs of Baba, one sitting and the other standing. Baba told him that the photographs should not be sold for a profit. He then gave him permission to leave with Udi and Prasad.

In Sai Satcharitra Ch.33 the story of Balabua Sutar is given. He was a famous kirtankar residing in Bombay. Once, he went to Shirdi and took Baba's darshan. Baba said, "***I have known him for the last four years.***" Balabua wondered at this, for it was his first visit to Shirdi. How could Baba have known him since four years? Why four years? He racked his brains, and then he remembered that four years ago, he made obeisance to Baba's photograph and the omniscient Baba mentioned it. He also got a valuable lesson that bowing to Baba's photograph was bowing to Baba in person. This lesson, he treasured forever.

Leela 53

Plague raged in Pimpalgaon, Baswanth, Nasik District. Waman C. Munge, a lawyer, moved his family to his farmhouse. One night, a theft was in progress in

his house. The thieves had cleverly made a hole in the wall. Munge was sleeping peacefully, and on the wall above, hung Baba's photograph.

One of the thieves entered the room and taking a small box that lay below the bed, passed it to his accomplice who was outside. The box contained cash of Rs.200/-, but had some promissory notes, worth Rs.4000/-. Next, the thief was in the process of lifting a huge trunk that was in front of the cot. This trunk was valuable as it contained the family jewelry, worth about Rs.10,000/-. Baba was watching all this from the photograph above the bed.

At that very instant, Baba appeared in his dream, woke him and warned him of the theft. So, he started shouting at the top of his voice. His sister-in-law also joined him. The commotion woke the whole family, the servants and the watchman. They chased the thieves who escaped, or so it seemed.

The next day, the small box was found, lying in the field nearby. The cash, however, was missing, but the promissory notes were intact. On that day, he had a dream vision, in which he saw Baba, Abdul and another Fakir (Abdul's Guru). Subsequently, he visited Shirdi and saw the Trio there.

Some days later, Shri Datta Brahmachari of Kopargaon, visited him for lunch. He told Munge that the lost property was recovered. The police had raided a Marwari, and confiscated many stolen goods from him. The police officer also arrived at Munge's house and informed him of the raid. Subsequently, with proper identification, he recovered his money.

Leela 54

M.R.Tagare worked as a doctor for Sakarwadi sugar mills near Shirdi. In 1914, he wished to encash his war-bonds of Rs.2500/-. Thus, he proceeded to Kopargaon Post-office in a bullock-cart. He had a bag containing the war-bonds, kept at his side. Enroute, he was busy chatting with a fellow passenger. To his utter dismay, he noticed that there was no bag beside him. Thinking that it must have slipped and fallen on the way, he stopped the cart and went in search of it. He trudged back for about a mile or two, searching diligently for it. But, alas, the bag wasn't to be found. Disappointed and remorseful about this, he went to Kopargaon as he had to visit a sick friend. That night he couldn't sleep and

tossed and turned, thinking about the loss. At midnight, he got out of bed and went and sat near Baba's photograph, praying for help. When he heard a voice saying, "Cease worrying." The voice reassured him and he fell asleep.

Next morning, he made the 'house call' to his friend who lived in a village nearby. He examined the friend and prescribed the necessary medicine and sat a while chatting. He mentioned to his friend about the loss of his bag, enroute. A little girl, standing nearby, ran and brought a bag, saying, "Is this the bag? It was found on the roadside yesterday." Thrilled, the doctor took his bag and upon examining the contents, found that the war-bonds were intact. He mentally thanked Baba for His help.

Leela 55

He desperately prayed to Baba to help him. There was a devotee who was a clerk in the customs' office. One day a bundle of custom bills were checked and verified by his officer and given to him. He was sure that he had kept them safely in the drawer of his desk. Knowing that the officer would recall them later, he wanted to keep them ready on his desk. But to his utter dismay, there were not to be found. He made a thorough search, but could not trace them. He feared a reprimand, or worse still, the loss of his job. So he prayed to Baba. That day passed without his officer asking for the bills.

The next day, rather scared, he went to the office and found the bills neatly placed on his table. He racked his brains as to who could have done this, as he was the last person to leave and the first to enter the office. He remembered locking the office in the evening before leaving and opening it in the morning.

Who but Baba could have entered the closed office and done this!!

Megha and the Trident (Sai Satcharitra 28)

Baba had once asked Megha to draw a Trident in his dream vision. Megha woke up to find Akshata (sanctified rice) all over his bed. But the door was locked and bolted securely. How could this be, he wondered!

"No door is necessary for My entry. I've neither shape nor size. I'm always everywhere," said Baba to Megha when He asked him to draw a trident.

Leela 56

Keshav was the grandson of Hari Bhau K. Karnik. He went on a pilgrimage festival of the goddess Mahalaxmi. The village was about ten miles away from his residence and was situated on the banks of a river. During his stay there, he often swam in the river. Just before returning home, he swam and bathed as usual, went to the temple, took Darshan of the goddess and returned home. On the way, he noticed that his golden ring weighing 1.5 tolas was missing. With a heavy heart, he returned home. He was sure that it must have slipped into the river while bathing. About six months later, a Fakir came to his house and asked his grandfather whether his child had lost his ring in that very river. After ascertaining the identity of the ring, he returned it and left.

Two Gentlemen from Goa

One of the gentlemen was robbed of Rs.30,000/- He bemoaned the loss and sat on the verandah in great sorrow. On the 15th day, a Fakir came to his house and advised him what to do. The money was recovered the very next day. (Sai Satcharitra Ch. 36)

Could you believe that the Fakir in the Leelas given above was Baba??

Leela 57

Bhimaji Patil of Narayangaon, Pune district was suffering a great deal with pulmonary tuberculosis. He tried all kinds of medicines; both hakims and vaidas treated him. Then he prayed to various gods and goddesses who were propitiated, but of no avail. Even exorcising the evil spirits was tried. But the disease was relentless. Then Nana told him of the compassionate Sai. So, he went to Shirdi. Seeing him, Baba said, "***The moment you put your foot in Shirdi, your sufferings have ended. The Fakir of this place is very kind. He will eradicate your disease and pain.***" (Sai Satcharitra Ch.13)

It was Baba's word and it had to be followed to the letter. Here is another Leela about pulmonary tuberculosis.

Malanbai, the daughter of D.R.Joshi Devgaonkar suffered enormously from pulmonary tuberculosis. All sorts of treatments, remedies and poultices were tried, but nothing worked. Malanbai could not bear the pain and coughing

bouts anymore. So, she insisted on being taken to Shirdi. Baba upon seeing her let off a volley of abuses and asked her to lie on a blanket and take nothing, but water by mouth. She stayed in Dixit Wada for a week, carefully following Baba's orders. Early one morning, she stopped breathing and died. Her family were moaning her loss and making preparations for her cremation.

That morning, Baba did not leave the Chawdi, although it was past 8:00 a.m. It seemed that Baba was in one of His 'rage fits'. He shouted and shouted for no apparent reason. Hitting the floor with His 'satka', It looked as if He was driving away, some unseen object. Still shouting, He strode to Dixit Wada and paused a moment, shaking his 'satka' vigorously. Then just as suddenly, as He flared up, He calmed down and went away.

The family was oblivious of Baba's actions, but as they were getting ready to bathe the body, they noticed the girl breathing. She opened her eyes and looked around frightened. She told the family what took place. " A demon-like black person was carrying me away, I was terrified and couldn't do anything. So, I called out to Baba to help me. He at once came and beat the black man quite badly. Then, He snatched me from his hand and carried me to the Chawdi." She gave a vivid description of the Chawdi, although she had not seen it. The family, hearing all this, shed tears of joy.

Was it any wonder that Baba sat in the Masjid facing south? South, the dreaded direction, from which Yamraaj comes. But everyday and all day long, He sat, facing Yama. Not a moment was He without His 'satka', the 'magical wand', with which He could drive away the Yamdoot, or save Amir Shakkhar from being bitten by the serpent (Sai Satcharitra Ch 22). With every stroke of the 'satka', He could quell the blazing 'Dhuni' when the flames roared and leapt to the ceiling (Sai Satcharitra Ch. 11).

Chandbhai Patil had lost his mare and though he searched diligently for her, he could not find her. Disappointed, he was returning back to Dhoopkheda, with his saddle.

Under a mango tree, sat an Aвалиa, who called out to him and said, "**Come here, smoke this chillum, then go. Rest a while.**" The loving tone and the

benevolent presence drew Chandbhai Patil. He went to the Aвалиа who was getting ready to smoke His chillum. Two things were wanting; the coal to light the tobacco and water to wet the cloth. The Aвалиа struck the ground with His 'chimta' and out came a live coal. Then, taking His 'satka', He struck the ground and a stream of water flowed out (Sai Satcharitra Ch 5).

This was Baba's first 'satka' Leela to the outside world. Though He had been using His 'satka' before and is still doing so.

Once, Mavsibai was kneading Baba's stomach vigorously. When another devotee asked her to be gentler, hearing this, Baba got up and striking the 'satka' on the ground, rolled His eyes around. Then holding one end of the satka with both His hands thrust it into His stomach. The other end, He pushed against the pillar in front of Him. It seemed that the 'satka' was fast disappearing into His stomach. A little later, He calmed down and resumed His seat. The devotee learnt a valuable lesson of not interfering with anyone's seva to Baba.

Baba Himself knew the depth of love and devotion that each devotee had for Him, and allowed seva accordingly (Sai Satcharitra Ch 24).

This 'satka' Baba kept with Him at all times. Even today, His 'satka' is venerated and taken in procession in the 'palki' and 'rath' on Thursday and other holidays.

Leela 58

His problem seemed to be insurmountable, as he earned very little, and had to look after his mother. So Janardhan M. Fanse, also known as Haribhau Fanse decided to give it all up. He informed his mother of his decision and decided to go to Rameshwaram. However, as Shirdi was on the way, he decided to go there and have Baba's Darshan. He stepped into the Dwarkamai and was enchanted to see Baba. Baba told him to return home as his mother was fasting and pining for him and she might die. However, Baba gave him some Udi at the time of departure. This he kept safely with him. On reaching home, he narrated what Baba said and his mother was convinced of Baba's divinity. Meanwhile, a villager approached him for help, as he was ill with cholera. Fanse gave him a little of Baba's Udi and he recovered. This led the villagers to think that he was a

physician, and the people kept coming for aid. Soon, the Udi was exhausted and he wondered, what he could do next. But the epidemic also vanished.

One day, he casually met a Marwari, who told him about his brother's plight. "My brother is seriously sick. He has tried doctor after doctor, but of no avail. Since you are a devotee of Sai Baba, you must see him. For if your Sai Baba is really so divine, he will cure him through you." Haribhau took one look at the patient and was horrified at his state. He quickly told the Marwari that his fees were very high and quoted Rs.200/- hoping that the Marwari would refuse. The amount far exceeded the fees of the civil surgeon. But the Marwari agreed. He was then in a real fix. He decided to slip away. But, he couldn't leave the village, as it was nightfall. He had now been pushed into a dark corner. As was his usual practice, he made preparation for Bhajan and prayer. To the utter surprise of the family, the patient himself did all the work. Throughout the Bhajan, the patient sat and looked at Baba's photograph with love and concentration. The Marwari was so pleased that he said, "Whether the patient dies or survives, you alone will treat him." This put Haribhau in a dilemma, and he did not know what to do. The compassionate Baba appeared in his dream and told him what the disease was, and what to prescribe and how to administer it. Haribhau did exactly that and the patient recovered.

The Marwari gave the fees of Rs.200/-, but Haribhau would not rightly accept it, saying, "It was my Guru's grace." The Marwari was uneasy at this. So he bought a shawl worth Rs.200/- and left it at his residence when he was out. Haribhau returned, only to find the gift. He somehow, wanted Baba to have it. But, by that time, Baba had taken Mahasamadhi. With tears rolling down his cheeks, he prayed to Baba. That night he had a dream. Baba said, ***"There is famine all around, so sell he shawl and out of the money, buy rice. For the present, sell it below cost price till the rice runs out. After that, sell rice for a profit and you will be able to make a living."***

Haribhau did just that and became prosperous and was able to look after his mother comfortably.

This **Leela** elaborates the power and the greatness of Baba's Udi. In Sai Satcharitra Ch. 33 and 34, Leelas are cited when Baba gave Udi and effected a cure. Be it Narayanrao of Nasik who used the ash from the incense sticks to treat the scorpion bite, as Udi wasn't readily available.

Nana was enroute to Kalyan, when a father wanted some of Baba's Udi for his daughter, who had bubonic plague. Nana had no Udi at hand. So, picking some dust from the road, he fervently prayed to Baba and applied it to his wife's forehead. The man saw all this with amazement and only later found out, that she started recovering, the very moment, Nana applied the dust.

The Jamner miracle, where Baba sent the Udi and Adkars Aarti to Nana through Ramgirbua to ease the delivery of Nana's daughter, is also very remarkable.

Leela after Leela are given where Udi was given by Baba or some other devotee and was certain of a cure.

Leela 59

Ganeshji Mahajan of Sawantwadi worked as a clerk at Khatau Mahajan Mills, Bombay. He earned a meagre salary of Rs.15/- per month. To add to all this, he frequently fell ill with some malady or the other. His mother worried greatly and fervently hoped that her son would go to Shirdi and gain good health. Ganesh too wished likewise. But, he felt that he couldn't afford the trip. Once, the water pump in Shirdi required urgent repair. So, his mill manager, R.A.Tarkhad decided to send an engineer to Shirdi. The engineer seized the opportunity and decided to take his family with him. Mrs. Tarkhad, on hearing that the family was going, decided that she would accompany them.

Tarkhad booked seats and made arrangements for both the families to go to Shirdi. Ganesh knew all this. So, on the date of departure, he came to V.T. station to see them off. He also brought some fruits, flowers and prasad to be offered to Baba. The families were comfortably seated, and there were just a few minutes for the train to depart. When Tarkhad asked Ganesh whether he would like to go, as one of the family members could not make it and there was a spare ticket. Ganesh couldn't believe his ears. He jumped into the compartment saying,

"Yes! Yes! Of course I'll go!" Then he sent word to his mother about the wonderful news, at long last, his chance to go to Shirdi. His delight knew no bounds and he thanked his manager and Baba for making all the arrangements for the pilgrimage.

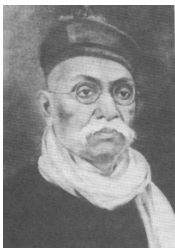
He reached Shirdi, took Baba's Darshan. From that time, the illnesses took to their heels and he was in robust health.

Leela 60

Baba once asked Kaka to accompany Him to Nimgaon, knowing full well that his left leg was hurting. On that occasion, Kaka had such excruciating pain, that he could hardly limp, even a furlong. But Kaka being the perfect devotee, said, "Yes Baba", and got up. Kaka of course knew that his Guru had a plan for him. They both set out to Nimgaon, a distance of 6 km, to and fro. Over the dusty and bumpy road, they walked. But there was not a trace of pain in Kaka's leg. When Kaka came back to Shirdi, he found that the pain had completely gone,

Leela 61

In 1917, a 'Maha Mandal' in honour of the Bharadwaj Gotra was conducted in Babol village in Vengurla taluka, Ratnagiri. They invited Dabholkar to preside and become its president. As always, Dadbholkar consulted Baba who



**Govind
R.Dabholkar**

refused permission. The same thing happened the following year. So, he dropped the idea. Baba then appeared in his dream and told him to take up the position of president, the following year. So, he did just that. Dabholkar's daughter became mentally imbalanced and started clinging to her father. She would not listen to any body, but him. As president, it was required of Dabholkar to go to Babol. So, with Baba's permission, he left and returned in four days. During that period, his daughter was quite normal. But after his return, she relapsed again. To add to all this, she started getting convulsions and couldn't be controlled by anyone. Dabholkar was quite upset as his daughter was pregnant at that time and everyone was worried about the baby.

Being a kind and caring father, he got three famous gynecologists to examine her. Each of them advised a caesarian to safely deliver the baby, but thought that the mother's life maybe in jeopardy. The very next day, a doctor came to his home on his own accord and advised him to seek divine help. This was easy for Dabholkar and he at once prayed to Baba to help both mother and child. She then delivered a normal baby without the help of surgery or the doctors. After some time, both mother and child came to Shirdi. The merciful Baba blessed her and said that all would go well. After that, all her sufferings came to an end.

Leela 62

Kaka Dixit wished to purchase some land from Laxman Bhat in Shirdi in 1910. Bhat demanded Rs.200/-, but Dixit was unwilling to pay that amount. He thought that Rs.150/- was a fair bargain. So he set about convincing Bhat. But, Bhat was adamant and Dixit was unwilling to compromise. A long discussion took place between them. That afternoon, Bhat was passing by the Dwarkamai. Baba called him and enquired about the discussion. **"What discussion was going on between you and Dixit?"** He asked. Bhat told Baba everything. Baba settled the matter by saying, **"You may sell the land for Rs.175/-."** Bhat went to Dixit to collect the money. Dixit as per his word gave Rs.150/- unknowingly, as he wasn't aware of the agreement between Baba and Bhat. Bhat also did not tell Dixit. He just took the money and went home. At home, he counted once, then again and again, to his surprise it was Rs.175/-, the amount that was settled by Baba.

Be it an extra photograph or extra money, Baba sees that His devotees are satisfied.

Leela 63

Although his application for a government loan for Rs.500/- was rejected, a farmer didn't give up. He wanted the loan for a well on his land and so applied again with the same result, a rejection. Finally, he went to Baba for help. Baba patiently heard him, and turning to Nana, asked him to do the needful. Nana was

then a collector, Chitnis. Nana said that he would try his best and present the application, but was doubtful about the acceptance.

The farmer therefore applied and Nana presented the application to the collector. Nana also told him that a similar application was previously presented, only to be rejected twice. This aroused the curiosity of the collector in charge. He called the farmer and asked him, why he was so adamant. He also asked him to state the reasons clearly. The farmer said, "Sir, I owe Rs.500/-to the government and I am anxious to repay that amount. I can't do this till I have a well to water my lands and thereby get a better yield of crops. I started digging a well, but halfway through, there were huge rocks. These rocks have to be blasted, using dynamite and then removed. The workers stopped mid-way because of this. The work can't be completed. Thus, I can't get water. Without water, I cannot get a good crop. So, I can't sell and repay my debt. So, I pressed the government for this loan, though I have been disappointed twice before." The collector was thoroughly satisfied and the loan was granted.

Leela 64

Ramchandra Maharaj was required by his Guru Gadge Maharaj to sponsor a day's expense for the 'yagna' (holy sacrifice) that he was going to perform. Ramchandra Maharaj went to Belapur, and the surrounding places, performing Kirtans. He obtained promises of sums greater than the estimated expenses. So, he was quite carefree.

When he went again, a few days later to collect them, he was disappointed. As the money wasn't forthcoming, and the people evaded him. Ramchandra Maharaj was in fix and wondered, how he could fulfill his promise to his Guru. He therefore offered an earnest prayer to Baba for help.

The next morning, a devotee brought Rs.100/- and gave it to Ramchandra Maharaj while he was performing 'kirtans'. That was the exact amount that was promised to him.

Need it be said that his faith in Baba grew by leaps and bounds!!

Leela 65

Govindrao Chandorkar was Nana's father. He, like his son, was a Deputy Collector and lived in his house' in Kalyan. Once it so happened, that there was some misunderstanding between him and the local Muslims. Upset with this, he told all his family members not to associate with any Muslims. His word was law at home. So, the family distanced themselves from their Muslim friends and neighbours. At that time, Nana was away on tour. When he returned, the family warned him about the turn of events, and informed him of his father's decision.

This made Nana quite uncomfortable, as he knew that his father thought that his Guru, Sai Baba, was a Muslim. He racked his brains as to how to convince his father that Baba was neither Hindu nor Muslim, but far above that. He was uncertain of his father's response and he felt that he would rather die than to forsake Baba. Nonetheless, he told his father that he would like to discuss something with him. He couldn't believe his ears when his father said, " My Guru is Sakharam .Maharaj, but he isn't your Guru, and Baba is. So even if Sai Baba is a Muslim, he is still your Guru, and you may most certainly continue worshipping him. There is no objection from me on this." Nana gratefully thanked his father. He was overjoyed and amazed at the way Baba gripped his father's orthodox mind and changed it for the better.

What was it that his Guru could not do?? Time and again, Baba has changed people's minds, nay, and their whole life!!

Megha, the Gujarati Brahmin was sent to Baba by Hari Vinayak Sathe. But Megha was sure that he would descend into hell, because he would have to prostrate before a 'Yavan'. Baba to him was 'Avindha' (whose ears aren't pierced), living in the Masjid. Megha went to Shirdi because his master forced him to. Reluctantly, he went to Dwarkamai and Baba roared at him saying, "**You are a high class Brahmin and I'm the meanest of mean - a Yavan. You will be polluted. So go back this very moment.**" This was a show of Baba's 'Rudra Roop'.

He was waiting to develop Megha spiritually. This He did by working on him mentally and showing him Leela after Leela. Megha, on the other hand, was changed for life. He saw Shiva in the place of Baba, every time he did Arati. With

utter devotion and concentration, he stood on one leg with the 'Pancharati' in the right hand and the bell in the left. He did Baba's Arati till his samadhi (death) in 1912. (Sai Satcharitra Ch 28)

Leela 66

R.B.Purandare was in the railway division of the government. He applied for leave once, which was accepted and granted along with passes for the journey. Joyfully, he made all kinds of preparations as he was going to Shirdi to see his Guru. A day before his departure, his superior officer called him and requested him to cancel the trip as there was an impending workmen's strike. Purandare was acutely disappointed. How could he survive this blow?? "I would rather die, than to cancel my trip to Shirdi. Any other place of visit, I could do without", he thought. He was adamant to leave as planned, though his officer had promised to sanction leave later, after the crisis had blown over. That night, Baba appeared in his dream and angrily said, "***Don't you dare come to Shirdi tomorrow .***" Purandare obeyed and attended office as usual, the next day. This pleased the officer and the doubt that he harboured, that Purandare was in league with the strikers also vanished. A month later, the officer asked him to take leave and go to Shirdi. When he went to the Dwarkamai, Baba said, "***Don't go mad. We have as yet, many responsibilities to discharge. Stay at home and chant My name. Am I not with you all the time??***"

Leela 67

Baba asked Purandare to build a house, for himself and his family, at his own expense. Purandare, with great difficulty, bought land in the desolate Bandra suburb. He started construction, but was plagued by severe headaches. Unable to bear it anymore, he wrote to Baba, pleading that, instead of giving him such unbearable pain, He had better put an end to his life. This letter he gave Dr. Pillai, with the request to give it to Baba. Upon the receipt of the letter, Baba's heart melted and He sent some Udi and snuff like powder in a small packet. He asked Purandare to inhale it, and Purandare did just that and the headache was gone. A few days later, he wrote to Baba, asking Him when he should do 'Gruha-

Pravesh'. Baba replied, " ***You may perform 'Gruha - Pravesh' on Thursday. I too will come along with you.***"



**Dada Saheb
Purandare**

So, on Thursday, Purandare made 'naivedya' for Baba. Then with Baba's photograph clasped to his chest, he proceeded to the house. Being rather poor, he couldn't have an elaborate 'Pooja' and rituals. As long as Baba's photograph was there first with naivedya, everything would go well, he thought. To his surprise, as he was walking past the Datta Mandir, he saw Baba there. Baba accompanied him to the new house, till Purandare reverentially placed Baba's photograph on as 'aasan' and then vanished.

Leela 68

Baba wanted peace and harmony amongst His devotees, whether they were Hindus, Muslims, Parsees or any other caste or religion. Once the Muslims were offering 'namaz' in Dwarkamai. Simultaneously, the Hindus were performing Bhajans, accompanied with musical instruments. The Muslims complained to Baba about this, saying that it was a hindrance to their worship. Baba, however, said, "***Those who pray sincerely with concentration will not find any hindrance. So those who want to do 'namaz' devotedly may do so, and the rest may leave.***"

Baba was extremely fair with his devotees and wouldn't allow anyone to interfere with the others' spiritual endeavours. In Sai Satcharitra Ch.3, a Rohilla came to Shirdi and recited 'kalmas' from the Koran at top of his voice, day and night. This disturbed the villagers. So they complained to Baba. However, Baba said, "***Do not harass the Rohilla. Let him shout on the top of his voice. He brings me great pleasure.***" Baba's dealings with His devotees was strict and fair. He wasn't concerned to what caste, community, creed or religion they belonged to; neither did their socio-economic or social status affect Him. All He wanted was zeal, love, devotion and total surrender to the almighty.

Leela 69

A devotee from Dewas (Madhya Pradesh) came to Shirdi for Baba's Darshan. He stayed in Dixit Wada and dined in Sagun Meru's hotel. He longed for Baba to dine with him. So he reserved a plate of food everyday.

Then he went and invited Baba to dine with him for lunch and dinner. But Baba just laughed. One night, at 10:30 p.m., just as Sagun Meru was about to close the hotel, a Nath Panthi entered the hotel and said, " There is a plate of food reserved for me. Can I have it?" Sagun Meru at once made Him sit comfortably, and offered the food to Him. He ate heartily and asked to see the person, who, had so thoughtfully reserved the food. Sagun Meru ran to Dixit Wada at once. But the devotee was fast asleep. Try as he may, he couldn't awaken him. He returned and told the Nath Panthi about it. "Always feed the hungry", He said and then left.

Everyone heard about this the next day. Shama asked Baba if He had dined at Sagun Meru's. " **Yes . I had gone to the hotel yesterday and dined to My heart's content**", said Baba. Thus it was known that Baba went in other roopas (forms) to dine in Shirdi also.

"**Today, as everyday, I went to Bandra, but there was no rice, no gruel, nothing to eat or drink; and hungry, I had to return,**" said Baba to Mrs.Tarkhad (Sai Satcharitra Ch. 9).

Baba often went as an athiti, and dined, in the homes of various devotees, at different places. Sometimes, He told the devotee that he would come for lunch and this He did, but as a sadhu, fakir or an athiti (as any living creature). It was up to the devotee to recognize Him in that form and also to recognize Him in every form.

Upasani was staying at Khandoba Mandir, Shirdi as per Baba's orders. Everyday, he cooked a meal and took it to Dwarkamai and offered it to Baba. One day, while he was cooking, he noticed a black dog watching him, prepare the food, with great eagerness. Upasani thought that it was absurd to give food to the dog, before offering it to Baba. The dog, however, followed him for quite a distance and then disappeared. Upon reaching the Dwarkamai, he offered the

naivedya, and Baba said, **"Why did you come all the way in this heat? I was there, watching and waiting for you to offer Me the food."** Upasani was astonished to hear these words. Baba refused to accept the prasad.

The next day, a sickly Shudra (low caste) was leaning against the wall watching him. He feared the "Drishti-Dosha" (evil eye) of a Shudra watching a Brahmin cook. So, he said, "Go away," and the man left. Again, Baba refused to accept the prasad. Upasani asked Him if He could have been the sickly beggar. Baba said, **"I'm in everything and beyond."** (Ref: Life of Sai Baba Vol.3)

In Sai Satcharitra Ch. 40, Deo invited Baba to his home for the udyapan (concluding ceremony of a religious observance) ceremony and Baba agreed, saying that He would come with two others. On that day, a Bengali sanyasi and his two companions came and dined. Although Deo was very courteous and looked after them graciously, he failed to recognize Baba. He later wrote to Baba saying that he was disappointed at the breach of promise, as Baba did not attend the udyapan ceremony. Baba said, **"Tell him, if he did not recognize Me, why did he invite Me ? Yet, I lunched at the function to My heart's satisfaction. I will even give up My life for My devotee . But the words from My mouth will never.be untrue."**

Leela 70

Once Nana arrived at Shirdi at about 12:00 noon and took Baba's darshan. Baba told Nana that He wanted to eat puran poli. Nana was reluctant at first, as it was way past 12:00 noon. He told Baba that he would offer it the next day. Baba wouldn't agree to this and told Nana, **"No matter how long it takes, I want puran polls today."** Nana went and searched for a lady who was willing to prepare them for Re. 1/- each. In the evening, he came to Dwarkamai with freshly prepared delicious puran poli and placed them before Baba. Baba, however didn't touch it, let alone, put a morsel in His mouth. After a while, He asked Nana to take it away as He had eaten.

Nana was vexed to hear this, as Baba hadn't eaten it, after all the trouble he had taken to get them prepared. He went to the Chawdi in a huff. Baba called him and told him to eat it, as He had already partaken of it. This happened twice.

Then, Baba said, **"You have been with Me for more than eighteen years. What have you learnt from Me? I've eaten your puran poli in the form of ants."** Nana wasn't convinced. Intellectually, he knew that Baba was everywhere and in everything. But, it was hard for him to accept it. Then, Baba made a sign to him, and that was a secret, deep in his heart that nobody knew about. Nana then realized that He was indeed in his aatma and the aatma of ants and every living creature.

Leela 71

One day, Baba was extremely angry with Sagun Meru, when he went for His darshan. He scolded him and said that he hadn't followed His words. Perplexed, Sagun Meru wondered at what he had done wrong.



Sagun Meru

Suddenly he realized that someone must be hungry. He went to the Wada and enquired if anyone had missed his or her meals. Two of the devotees hadn't eaten. So he invited them for meals and after they were satiated, he returned to the Dwarkamai. Baba smiled and said, **"Have you understood the meaning of my words? Always act thus."**

Baba, by behaviour and conduct, taught the devotees that food is Brahma and that all living creatures experience the same hunger pangs.

"Know that those who give food to one suffering the pangs of hunger, are really putting it in My mouth, and this is true everywhere," said Baba once to Laxmibai (Sai Satcharitra Ch. 42).

Leela 72

In 1912, Pilaji Gurav was thirteen years old. Both his parents dreamt of Sai Baba. His mother had a vivid dream in which Baba gave her fifty paisa and asked her to keep with the rest of the coins in the prayer room. He also asked her for a torn piece of cloth to wear. His father, on the other hand, was asked by Baba to come and live in Shirdi. **"There will be no dearth of food and clothing here,"** Baba assured him in his dream. Both the parents discussed their dreams and decided to go to Shirdi from Korala. At Rahata, they met the munim of Tatyapa Patil, who brought them to Shirdi.

Tatya asked Gurav (Pilaji's father) to play the clarion, which he did; but Baba would often throw stones at him; though none of them ever hurt him. Gurav would run and Baba would run after him, shouting for him to stop. When he did. Baba caught hold of him by the collar and said, "***I will bury both of you, father and son.***" Frightened out of his wits, he did not wish to face Baba again. Gurav



Pilaii Gurav

used to play the clarion at the arati in Dixit Wada. When he went there for the arati, he opened his heart to Kaka and told him, how he feared Baba's wrath. Kaka gently reassured him "Gurav, do not fear Baba. He wants you to settle in Shirdi. This is a blessing in disguise", Kaka said.

The next day, Gurav, with a smile played the clarion for Baba and Baba smiled benevolently. After this, he was a regular clarion player for Baba. His son got employment in Baba's Sansthan. The descendents of Pilaji Gurav still reside in Shirdi and have Baba's grace.

Leela 73

Ramabai Kanitkar resided in Yeola in 1905. Many of her friends were Baba's devotees and they asked her to accompany them to Shirdi for Baba's darshan. She kept on postponing the trip. To her surprise, she found a small photograph of Baba on her table. Curiously, she wondered how it came there on its own accord. No one had given her a photograph. She kept the photograph safely.

Once, her husband, who was a sub-judge, was transferred to Kopargaon. She too accompanied him. Thence to Rahata they went. This time, she came to Shirdi and stayed in Baba's Chawdi. She developed faith in Baba, but she yearned that Baba give her darshan as Swami Samarth of Akkalkot. Baba, however gave shakshatkar as Swami Samarth to her son and daughter-in-law. They told this to her and she was fully convinced that Baba and Swami Samarth were one and the same.

Leela 74

He walked with a limp and this bothered him a lot. Shankarlal K. Bhat owned a shop in Bombay. There he tried all kinds of treatments. But he still

walked awkwardly. Then he heard of Baba's wonderful powers and how He cured many diseases. He came to Shirdi in 1911 and prostrated before Baba, received His blessings and left. On his return journey, he walked a few steps to catch the ferry when he felt something snap. He took another step and was delighted to notice that he walked erect. Lo! The limp was gone and gone forever. He was so pleased and grateful to Baba that he told each and every customer about Baba's superhuman powers.

Leela 75

He had an intense desire to have darshan of Shree Siddhanath and spend Mahashivaratri there. So Krishnaji Narayan, also called Chottu Bhayya Parulkar, went with his family to Nemavaram. They had an early start and set out at about 3:00 A.M. by bullock-cart. Unfortunately, the wheel was damaged on the way. So they stopped at Hadas and got the wheel repaired. Thence, they had to cross a river. They reached the bank of the river, but the boatman would not take them across, as it was dusk. However much they tried, pleaded and were even ready to pay double the charges. The boatman said that he could not ferry them across at nightfall, and if he had to, a special permission had to be obtained, as per the rules and regulations. Disappointed, they decided to break journey and stay in any temple or dharmashala nearby.

Just as they were retracing their steps, a Fakir galloped in on a white horse with a pony in tow. He enquired of the boatman about crossing the river. The same reply was given to him, saying that he could not ply the boat at night. The Fakir asked him to whom the banks belonged. The boatman said, " This side belongs to the British Raj, while the opposite bank belonged to the Holkar Government. The Fakir asked Parulkar if he wanted to cross the river. Parulkar replied in the affirmative, and his inability to do so at that time. The Fakir had a dynamic personality, and he said that he would return with the necessary permission at once.

This made the boatman tremble with fear and on his own accord; he came to Parulkar and said that he would take them across. So Parulkar, his family and the cart were taken across. The Fakir waited and ascertained that everyone was

on board. Then He disappeared. The family had a wonderful pilgrimage and returned home safely.

Leela 76

Baba lived in an old dilapidated Masjid. The floor was uneven, and had pits in it. The roof was rickety and barely held together. Happily, He ate and slept there, until the devotees' repaired it. Once, Baba and three other devotees were sitting and having their lunch when Baba suddenly roared, **"Wait. Stop for a while."** Then He continued eating. His devotees wondered to whom Baba had shouted His command. After the meal was over, Baba started collecting His meagre belongings, like His tumrel, chillum, and tobacco bag and water pot. He brought it outside to the Sabha Mandap. Following Him, the devotees too climbed down the steps, and came to Baba's side. Just then the roof of the Dwarakamai caved in, crumbled, and fell down exactly in the spot where Baba and His bhaktas sat. Then the devotees realized to whom the orders were given.

"Whatever exists in this sentient Universe as a name, a form or a shape is only Myself bedecked as the eightfold Prakriti. It is also a marvel of My own creation!" said Baba to Dhabolkar (Sai Satcharitra Ch.3) when Dabholkar was granted permission to write the Sai Satcharitra.

Leela 77

Kondaji lived in Shirdi. His love and devotion for Baba was intense. Baba reciprocated and called him Kondya. One day, Kondya was sitting with Baba and chatting. It was a hot, sultry afternoon, but there was a gusty breeze. At that moment, Baba said, **"Go to Khalwadi (the place where the harvest is threshed) as your stack of wheat is on fire."** Kondya rushed to the Khalwadi, checked the stacks of wheat, made enquiries and returned as everything seemed alright. He said, "Baba, why do you send me hither and thither needlessly in the hot sun and frighten me?" Baba just pointed to the Khalwadi and said, **"See the smoke rising from your granary? The central stack is on fire."**

At that time, the wind started blowing fiercely. Anguished at seeing the smoke bellowing from his granary, Kondya ran to the Khalwadi, shouting for help. The villagers, hearing him shout, came out of their houses, and seeing the blaze

fanned by the wind, ran to Baba. They entreated Him to come and rescue the adjacent granaries, as the sparks would soon ignite them. "Please put out the fire Baba, or all the granaries will burn down. The villagers and cattle will starve without the harvest," they pleaded. Baba was moved by their pleas for help. So He went with them to the Khalwadi. Then taking a glass of water, He drew a circle around the central stack. **"Only this central stack will burn. Do not try to extinguish it. It is an offering for Agnidev,"** He said. No sooner did He say this, the wind calmed down and only the central stack was burnt down.

The devotees learnt a valuable lesson of making an offering to Agnidev, the sustainer of life. Baba had control over the five elements, viz., earth, wind, ether, fire and rain

His 'word' was law unto them.

Leela 78

Baba, in actuality, smoked very little and required only two to three chillums per year. The potter knew this. Nonetheless, he delivered two to three hundred chillums daily and demanded payment for them. The cost of a chillum was about two pie and Baba paid it. Thus the potter made a living. Baba stacked these chillums in the corner of Dwarkmai. The devotees freely took the chillums and smoked them there or took them home. One day, Deo came for Baba's 'darshan' in the afternoon and seeing the stacks of chillums, asked Baba as to why He had stored them when He Himself needed only two to three per year. Baba replied, ***"What you say is correct. I don't need more than two to three chillums per year. But My devotees come here and smoke. Some take them unseen by us. So, I have stacked them here."***

The Magical Chillum (Clay pipe)

The magical chillum, like Baba's satka, was a constant companion of Baba's sojourn on earth. Blessed was the potter who made them, and blessed was the clay that touched Baba's hands and lips.

Chandbhai Patil was truly a blessed soul, who got the first taste of Baba's chillum. The bond and debt between them was great. As Baba, after smoking and sharing His chillum, actually went and stayed with Chandbhai. He was

instrumental in bringing Baba back to Shirdi, along with the marriage party. After this event, it is history.

Baba bestowed His grace and favours on many a devotee by allowing them to smoke His chillum. The most amazing story is that of Balaram Dhurandar (Sai Satcharitra Ch.59). He was troubled by bouts of coughing fits and suffered from asthma for six years. On his visit to Shirdi, he went to Dwarkamai, one afternoon, and with great humility, began pressing Baba's feet. Baba gave him His chillum to smoke. Accepting it as prasada, Balaram took a puff. The very effort was painful and incongruous to him. But he had utmost faith in Baba; so, he smoked a while and returned the chillum to Baba humbly.

Thence, his asthma vanished completely and he was greatly relieved. The chillum was so powerful and worked like a magical mantra on him. He wasn't tormented by breathlessness or coughing bouts thereafter. However, the day Baba took Mahasamadhi, the asthma was triggered again. He coughed all day long, that day and only that day did he cough and wasn't bothered by it again. Could he ever forget the experience of the clay pipe?

Ganesh S. Khaparde was a renowned, wealthy lawyer of Amravati. He was a loyal aid to Lokmanya Tilak, who was serving a six-year sentence in Burma. He had immense faith and a deep love for Baba. Baba in turn, kept him at Shirdi and rescued him from the clutches of the British, who were waiting for a chance to prosecute him for treason and sedition. He was politically involved in several agitations against the British.

His lucrative practice dwindled and his political ambitions were also at a standstill, because of his long stay at Shirdi, But Khaparde was a spiritual man, well versed in Sanskrit and the Puranas. Time and time again, during Arati, Baba made signs and offered His chillum, when he could unravel the answers. At other times, the chillum would calm his restless mind and give him reassurances. On 22/01/1912, Khaparde says, "During the course of worship, He put two flowers in His nostrils and two others between His Ears and head. I thought this was His instruction, and when I interpreted it in my mind, He offered His chillum to me and thus confirmed it."(Shirdi diary)

Krishnaji J. Bhisma, the author of Sai Sagunopasan (Arati Book) was disgusted by the thought that the devotees were drinking Padtirtha of a Muslim, Sai Baba. He was horrified to see the Brahmin devotees puff the chillum after Baba had smoked it and mentally, he resolved not to do both. One day, Baba narrated a story to him and it was the same dream vision, he had had earlier. While doing so, Baba casually passed His chillum to Bhisma. He took a puff and was thrown into complete bliss and ecstasy and changed for life. Thenceforth, he became an ardent devotee of Baba.

Bhagoji Shinde was the first devotee to enter the Dwarkamai in the morning. He came to do seva and bandage Baba's burnt hand. Baba smoked His chillum and passed it to Bhagoji, who also accepted it.

Now, Baba is offered the chillum in the Chawdi on Thursdays and other Holy Days. On these days, the palki and rath procession is taken out with great pomp and show. Baba's 'Raj-Upchar' photograph is brought to the Chawdi and placed on the silver sinhasan and lagu-arati is performed. During Adkars 'Arati Sai Baba, Soukhyadatar Jeeva', chillum is offered to Baba thrice. The honour of offering the chillum is given to the descendants of Taty's family (See Ambrosia in Shirdi).

Leela 79

In the year 1901, Nana Chandorkar was Census Superintendent, and Vasudev Janardhan was his clerk. He asked Vasudev to accompany him to Shirdi. One day at 8.00 A.M. Vasudev, Nana and some twenty other people made a pilgrimage to Shirdi. They entered Dwarkamai, and found Baba smoking a chillum. Vasudev was the youngest and a non-smoker, while the others were eager to take a puff. Baba however, offered the chillum to Vasudev. Naturally he hesitated; Nana whispered to him to accept it, as some thing wonderful would happen thereafter. He took three puffs and returned the chillum to Baba. Baba did not offer it to the others.

After this incident, Vasudev got all the promotions he desired, and retired on a comfortable pension. After retirement, he started his own business called Sadhbai Water Supply. He was also the Managing Agent for Belapur-Kopergaon

Electric Co. Ltd. He was fully convinced that any work he undertook, after taking Baba's name was bound to be successful. The miracle of the chilium and Baba's grace was with him for life.

Leela 80

Madhu False was an ardent devotee of Baba. He served Baba day and night. Later, he worked in Baba's Sansthan. Baba made him in charge of His favourite horse Shyam Karan. Lovingly, Baba called him 'ghoda-wala'. Once, it so happened that Madhu False suddenly took ill. He turned pale and fell down, semiconscious. At that time, he was residing at Narayan Teli's house, which was behind the Dwarkamai. His mother saw his condition and started weeping and wailing, as she thought her son would die. Baba heard this and He went to her house and reassured her, ***"Why do you weep like this? Madhu will be alright. I'm by your side always. He will ask for roti in the morning. Do give it to him."*** Indeed, in the morning, False regained consciousness and asked for roti. His mother, with tears in her eyes, gave it to him, and he recovered. Baba's words as always, came true.

Leela 81

Out of the dakshina collected, Baba distributed about Rs.800/- or more daily. By evening, He had but a few coins left and He became a Fakir again. The news of His charity to Sadhus, Jnanis, Bhajan-singers and dancers spread far and wide. Some Brahmins from Kumbakonam came to Bombay and earned their livelihood by preaching the Vedanta. They heard of Baba's name and fame and his charitable disposition. Eager to get a huge amount of money, they decided to come to Shirdi. Unfortunately, they thought that Baba was a Muslim avalia. They were perplexed as to how they would bow to Him and further explain the Vedanta to Him. So, they discussed this amongst themselves and decided to bow to him as they would to Purna-Brahma, just so that they could amass a lot of wealth. They went to Shirdi and stood before Baba obediently. Baba just looked at them and asked them what they wanted. "We wish to explain the Vedanta in your presence and get sanmaan from you", they said. Baba agreed and asked them to start. They started explaining with a great deal of enthusiasm, but soon forgot

everything. Baba patiently waited a while and asked them to continue. They looked at Baba with blank expressions for try as they may, they couldn't remember what to say next. Baba however picked up the explanation from where they had left and continued a while. Then the Brahmins finished the rest. At the time of bowing, they said "Purna-Brahma" and bowed to Baba as 'Turna-Brahma" and not Baba. Then they requested Baba for their sanmana. Baba told them, that as they bowed to "Purna-Brahma", they might receive their sanmana from that "Purna-Brahma". On hearing this vital answer from Baba, they were astonished and made Sashtanga-Namaskar. Afterwards, Baba gave sanmana to them. They went away satisfied that Baba was more than "Purna-Brahma". In fact, He was Parabrahma.

Leela 82

Naik and Shantaram were great friends. Both went to Shirdi for Baba's darshan. Shantaram was an alcoholic and couldn't stay without liquor even for a day. Baba made him stay at Shirdi for six days. During those days, he abstained from drinking and was cured of alcoholism. He never touched liquor throughout his life, thereafter.

Naik had another friend, who was upset with his son, as he was ruining his life with alcohol. Time and again, the doctor advised him not to drink, but he said that he could live only on alcohol. Naik advised his friend Sonar to send his son to Shirdi. Sonar and his son started for Shirdi. at Manmad, his son started vomiting incessantly, all the way to Shirdi. as soon as he stepped into Shirdi, the vomiting ceased. They went to Dwarkamai and had darshan. Baba blessed his son and made him stay for four days. During this time, he developed distaste for liquor.

In the month of Bhadrapad, there was Gauri-Puja. On the last day, at the conclusion of the ceremonies, everyone drank merrily. His friends forced him to drink, but he refused, time and again. Then they forced a glass of liquor in his hand. He pleaded to be excused, as he saw Baba in the glass. Nonetheless, they forced him to drink. Ultimately, he drank unlimitedly, and fell down unconscious.

At that time, he felt that his whole body was on fire and the alcohol was burning inside him. After this experience, he refrained from drinking throughout his life.

Leela 83

Madhavnath Maharaj asked Laxmanrao, alias Bhausahab Pradhan to go to Baba. Bhausahab was then working as a sub-register. He was not aware that Madhavnath Maharaj had to receive a message from Baba. Just as he entered Shirdi, the omnipresent Baba merrily said, "**Nath's son has arrived and we will dine on Nath's prasad.**" The devotees sitting besides Baba knew that Baba spoke in riddles and parables. So they watched and waited. Just then, Laxman Pradhan walked into the Dwarkamai, bowed to Baba and sat down. Baba said, "**I've got sacks and sacks of gold on a donkey's back. Thieves have stolen them on the way. A hole in the ear has to be pierced only by the goldsmith. It is very difficult to pull on, in this naughty world. Tell this much to my brother Madhavnath.**"

Laxman understood the message and went away satisfied.

(Possible explanation): The sacks of gold refer to the abundance of spiritual knowledge that was readily available with Baba. One had only to seek and ask for it. The thieves are the six internal enemies that keep one away from that path, and robs whatever little gain one has made. A hole on the ear has to be pierced only by the goldsmith. The remedy for it is easy. If one goes to the right person, the Guru or Jnani, the task can be accomplished. But, one has to be constantly aware of the temptations of the naughty world and not succumb to it. Laxmanrao learnt a valuable lesson from Baba.

Leela 84

In 1909, Nana spent his Christmas vacation with Baba. His friend, Chintamani V. Vaidya had gone to Calcutta to attend a congress session. On his way back, he got down at Manmad and proceeded to Shirdi. A day before this, Nana requested Baba's permission to return home. Baba said, "**Nana, go tomorrow after lunch.**" Nana happily stayed on for another day, as usual, he Nana Saheb Chandorkar followed Baba's words implicitly. The next day, after

lunch, he packed his bags and sought permission from Baba. **"Nana, where are you going ? Your stout youth friend is on his way here."**



NanaSaheb
Chandorkar

It was about 4:00 p.m. when Baba said this. Twenty minutes later, Vaidya arrived, and with great joy, met Nana. Baba then gave permission to go, the next day. At the time of departure, Baba said, **"There was an orchard of guava fruit trees. Most delicious and delectable were the fruits. Everyone ate about twenty to twenty-five fruits. The next day, I spoiled the grove."**

Possible meaning: The orchard of guava fruit trees signifies abundance. The fruit were delicious and delectable. Baba fulfilled all their worldly desires of name, fame and wealth. The spoiling of the grove indicates the culminating of the worldly desires and the opening of a new path of spirituality, this path being straight and narrow.

Leela 85

Kaka Dixit and Shantaram M Fanse had an assignment to complete for the government. They had to travel by bullock-cart through thick forests, and soon, it became dusk. The darkness seemed to envelop everything. They had to traverse the Ranshet pass, and the bullocks became restless. The cart itself was being pushed backwards. This was a precarious situation as there was a deep ravine on one side, the mountains Kaka Dixit on the other. The Path sloped downhill behind them. Dixit and Fanse tried to ascertain, as to why the bullocks were moving backwards, they noticed another cart in front of them with a broken axle. If the cart in front shook even a little, it would be pused downhill or worse, down into the ravine.

Just then, Fanse pointed out to something. Dixit turned and looked straight into the glinting eyes of a tiger, perched on the hillside. The only solution was to get down from the rear and manually turn the wheels of the cart. It was a terrifying situation, for if the bulls panicked, they would roll backwards. If the tiger jumped down, he would make a meal of them. Fanse was rather bold. He handed the reins over to Dixit and signaled him to direct the bulls, while he would

manually rotate the wheels. Dixit's throat was dry with fright. Nonetheless, he held the reins, thinking of Baba. Suddenly, he started shouting, " Jai Shri Sai Baba, run up." Fpanse also started shouting at the top of his voice. The tiger, hearing the shout, slunk away to the other side like a timid cat. The bulls were frightened and ran as fast as they could, bringing Dixit and Fpanse safely across the ghat.

That day, 31.03.1915, was etched in his memory, how Baba saved him and Fpanse from injury and death from all sides. Both of them started shouting, "Shri Sat chitanand Sadguru Sainath Maharaj Ki Jai."

With tears in his eyes, he remembered Baba's assurance, "***Kaka, tula kalji kasli? Mala saari kalji aahe***"(***Kaka, why should you have any anxiety or care? All your anxieties, cares and responsibilities are mine.***).(Ref. Life of Sai Baba Vol II)

Oh! The power of His name!

Leela 86

Keshav M. Gawankar lived with his parents in Bombay. When he was 7 years old, he was seriously ill with 'nava jwara' (fever). All kinds of treatments and remedies were tried, but of no avail. The fever was relentless and his chest was congested and full of fluid and puss. He hovered at death's door. A devotee called Galwankar (Dhab-olkar's son in law) lived close by, he advised his parents to pray to Baba and make a vow. His aunt who was nearby vowed to Baba that they would go to Shirdi with pedhas if her nephew recovered.



Gawankar

Gawankar Early next morning, the parents noticed that the fever had come down, and there was a tiny hole in the chest below the nipple. From this hole puss and fluid was oozing out. A few hours later the doctor came to see the patient and was astounded to see him recovering. The doctor prescribed some medicines and left. He recovered good health in a few days but a tiny scar was present on his chest.

Five years later in 1918 when Keshav was 12 years, and studying in Marathi school Standard V they went to Shirdi. He, his parents and aunt went to

Dwarakamai took Baba's darshan and handed Him a packet of pedhas. Baba took the packet of pedhas and gave six pedhas to Keshav and ate the rest. Shama who was stading nearby said "What is this Deva, you are eating all the pedhas?" Baba pointing to his aunt said "*She kept Me hungry for five years*". Then He made Keshav sit nearby and lovingly passed His handover his back. Baba then asked Keshav for Daks-hina of two paise.



Kafni Given by Baba to Keshav M.Gavankar

Keshav didn't understand what was happening so Shama interjected and said "Keshav Rao just say; Baba I offered the Dakshina and You accepted it" Baba agreed and as Keshav said this Baba took off His Kafni and gave it to Keshav. Shama again interceded on Keshav's behalf saying "Baba Keshav is too young to accept Your Maha Prasad (Kafni) let me keep it for him till he becomes a little older and mature. Then I will hand it over to him,

Deva". Baba agreed again. So Shama preserved the Kafni with tender loving care and gave it to him at an appropriate time.

When the family was was ready for departure every one stood up and did Namaskar by folding their hands. Keshav also did the same. Baba looked at Keshav and becokened him to come near then Baba held his hand gently pulling

him to be seated. As soon as Keshav sat nearby Baba swiftly slapped him across his cheek. Keshav's head reeled and he saw stars. His whole body started quivering and shaking and this lasted for a few hours. Then catching hold of his shendy (tuft of hair). He pulled his head and placed it on His feet. Baba then applied Udi to his forehead and gave him a palmfull saying "*Jao beta Allah bhala karega*" (*Go My son Allah will do good*).



Bhakar offered to Baba in 1939

Keshav's Moksha Guru was Triambak Vittal Samanth (Bahu Maharaj) who visited Shirdi in 1914 and had given Baba Rs.2/ dakshina. Baba then demanded two more rupees and said "*I will send one of my sons to you*" (Keshav). Under his Guru's grace Kehav studied religious books, academically he became a

doctor and began to prosper. But he did not forget Baba. He prayed to Baba daily and as years rolled by he became an ardent devotee. He started celebrating Ram Navami and Vijaya Dashami in his home in Bombay. He did Anna Daan on both the festivals according to his means. In 1939 he dreamt of Baba who said "*Bikshecha Bhakar le gode*" (*the bhakar obtained from Biksha is very sweet.*) So he decided to take Biksha. This was while he was staying in Suneel mansion, Bombay. He got seven piles of Bhajri and jhumka bhakar was made from it. About 250 to 300 people ate to their hearts' content. Before Anna Daan was started 11 jhunka bhakar were offered as Naivedya to Baba. Of the Naivedya offered one bhakar was left before Baba the rest was made into small pieces and distributed. Wonder of wonders the bhakar even after 35 years or more is neither stale nor bitter or covered by fungus nor eaten by ants even now.

Leela 87

Her life seemed unbearable, as she felt she was a burden on her family. Besides all her friends and relatives were married, at, an appropriate age and even had children. She was 25 years old and still a spinster. One day she heard of Baba from one of her friends. She immediately vowed to Baba that if she got married and settled within a year she would visit Shirdi. Prostrate at Baba's feet and give Him a coconut.

The days rolled by, and before she knew it, her parents had found a suitable groom for her. Before the year was over she was married. She settled comfortably in her in-law's home. Now her vow had to be fulfilled. She told her in-law's about her desire to visit Shirdi. But they would not allow her, as they did not believe in Baba. Disheartened she told her husband at every opportunity she got. Finally her husband agreed saying 'you will have to make the pilgrimage alone' Overjoyed she made arrangements to go to Shirdi and took a coconut with her. She reached Shirdi and went for Baba's darshan. Upon returning to her room she realized that her nose ring was lost. She made a diligent search but could not find it. Also she had not given the coconut as per her vow.

Lamenting her loss and rather disgruntled with Baba she went to Dwarakamai. Upon seeing Baba's calm serene form she could not hold back her

words. "Here Baba is the coconut I promised to give You, if I got married. That did come true and my devotion towards You increased by leaps and bounds. So I came all the way to fulfill my vow. Here I lost my nathi (nose ring) besides it being inauspicious I will have to face the wrath of my husband and in-laws'. Baba patiently heard what she had to say then He calmly replied "*Don't cry unnecessarily. The Nathi is with you*". Perplexed, she shook her clothes and searched again but couldn't find it. As it was getting late and as she had to leave Shirdi, she said 'Here take this coconut. Baba replied '***The coconut is yours you break it.***' The lady handed the coconut to Baba again and Baba said '*break the coconut*'. This went on for some time finally the lady broke the coconut before Baba and was about to hand it over when she saw her nathi inside it. She looked at it again and again for she couldn't believe her eyes. With tears in her eyes she looked at Baba who just smiled at her.

In Sai Satcharitra Ch.25 (Gunaji) a note is given about Damu Anna. He was dejected as there was a theft in his home. A long time friend of his stole a jewel box including his wife's auspicious nathi. He wept before Baba's photograph. The very next day the man returned the box and begged his pardon. Leela 88

In Sai Satcharitra Ch.15 a lizard chirps excitedly and happily, awaiting the arrival of her sister from Aurangabad. And so it happens that the lizard comes with a devotee from Aurangabad in the mouth bag of his horse, and runs and meets her sister. Baba answers the devotee when questioned about the chirping of the lizard "*The lizard is overcome with joy that her sister is coming here to meet her from Aurangabad*". Be it a chirping of the lizard or the twittering of birds Baba knew and heard every thing.

Nana Saheb Dingle was a long time devotee of Baba. He loved Baba intensely and Baba would go to his home in Nigoj off and on. They would sit and chat for some time, and Baba would return to Shirdi. One day Baba in great haste went to Nigoj early in the morning. Dingle was pleasantly surprised to see Him. He made Him comfortable and both of them sat in the courtyard chatting. A few hours later some birds perched on a tree nearby started twittering excitedly.

Nana fell silent and listened to them. Baba knew that Nana could understand the bird language. Baba said *"Nana what are the birds saying"*.

Dingle was silent because he knew Baba's power. Baba knew the past, present and future let alone what the birds were saying. But because Baba asked him he replied "They say nine people will die in Shirdi today". Then Baba hired a tonga and returned to Shirdi. At Shirdi the villagers were happily preparing Prasad for Shani Dev. They had a big handi of prasad ready, and all the villagers were assembled there, to partake off it.

Baba, however, went to the Dwarakamai and sent a messenger to fetch Bhagoji Shinde immediately. Bhagoji came atonce and Baba said ***"Go to Shani Mandir immediately and throw all the prasad on the floor"***¹. Bhagoji was astounded to hear this but as Baba had commanded him, he did just that. Hurriedly he carried out the task and ran back to Dwarakamai and took shelter at Baba's feet. As expected the villagers ran to Dwarakamai and angrily complained to Baba of the sacrilegious act committed by Bhagoji. Baba calmly said ***"I ordered him to do so now go and see what is in the prasad"***. Confused they ran to the scene and taking a big ladle they swirled the prasad around only to find a dead serpent in it. Trembling with fear they ran back to Dwarakamai and prostrated before Baba. They thanked Him for saving the whole village from utter calamity and death.

Leela 89



Bala Saheb Bhate

Many incidents are given in the Satcharitra about skeptics who became ardent devotees of Baba. The Malegaon doctor (Sai Satcharitra Ch.34), Solicitor Jetha Bhai Thakkar (Sai Satcharitra Ch.35) and many others. The story of Bala Saheb Bhate is mind boggling. He was a Mamlatadar at Kopergaon, and a long time friend of Chandorkar. They knew each other since college. While Chandorkar was well versed in religious scriptures, Bala Saheb was just the opposite. Chandorkar was an ardent devotee of Baba and Bala a skeptic. Whenever they met Bala Saheb ridiculed the very idea of a well educated

person like Chandorkar going to pay obeisance to a human. Often he tried to convince the devotees from not making the pilgrimage to Shirdi. It seemed as if his mission in life was to sabotage the pilgrimage of any devotee going to see Baba.

He was transferred to Sakori in 1894. There he heard a Kirtan about Kabir, and Thamel by Sant Bahu Maharaj. Somehow he was drawn to it and heard it attentively. He then came to Shirdi and took Baba's darshan. The very sight of Baba filled him with peace and bliss. He just sat and stared at Baba, oblivious of his surroundings. After a while his companions asked him to accompany them back to Sakori. He just said "Wait, wait a little bit". They waited but he continued sitting, and as hours rolled by, they left. So changed was he that he decided to stay at Shirdi and make it his home. The once responsible person seemed to have forgotten all about his job, family and home. He stayed on and served Baba till His Maha Samadhi.

This dramatic change caused concern amongst the other devotees. Dixit, Chandorkar and Shama asked Baba to intervene. Baba asked him to apply for leave for six months. This application he did write and send, but his mind was made up. Even his superiors, co-workers and friends came to advise him, and take him back. He just said "Once a person finds his goal he should not leave it". His employer knowing that he was a good employee gave him pension of Rs.25/- per month on 'compassionate basis' because his mind was gripped by the Fakir of Shirdi. Balasaheb, however, progressed spiritually under the compassionate Fakir and he stayed on in Shirdi till his death.

Mention is made of him in Sai Satcharitra Ch. 1 and 44. After Baba's Mahasamadhi the thirteenth day ceremony was conducted by Balasaheb Bhatte when 'til anjali, tilarpan and pinda pradan' was done.

Leela 90

A couple along with their sister-in-law went on a pilgrimage. The husband and wife were ardent devotees of Baba. But the wife's sister was not. Enroute to Rameswaram they halted at Madras. The Gujarathi Dharamshala that they stayed in was clean and well maintained. But the sister-in-law was very rigid and

orthodox in her way of thinking. She observed all kinds of rituals, and pollution taboos. Though the stay was pleasant, she incessantly grumbled about the non-compliance of pollution taboos. Her sister said "You are grumbling so much about pollution taboos here. Even though this place is very good. I wonder what you will do at Shirdi? There even orthodox devotees place their heads on Baba's feet joyfully". Aghast to hear this her sister replied "If that is so my prostrations to your Sai Baba from here itself. I don't need to go there".

That very evening the sister-in-law got shooting pains in her limbs. She could not take even a few steps. Despite massages, fermentations and medicines the pain didn't subside. As night fall approached they decided to leave the sister-in-law with her sister in the Dharamshala and proceed. The devout sister said "From the time you high handedly spoke about Baba you have been suffering from this excruciating pain. You are missing Rameshwar and Baba. Sai Baba is God almighty. You salute Him and Rameshwar from here itself as you are going nowhere". The remark had a profound effect on the sister.' She thought about it. She became repentant and said "I am sorry I withdraw my words. If my shooting pain stops by morning and I am able to complete the Rameshwar pilgrimage I will immediately go to Shirdi for Baba's darshan". A few hours later the pain subsided and by morning she was well enough to proceed. Thus she realized that Baba and Shri Rameshwar was one and the same.

Baba didn't give credency to orthodoxy, taboos and fasting. All He wanted from His devotees was a heart bursting with 'Nishtha'. Baba never fasted and was extremely fond of raw onions. In fact, He kept a bag of onions in the Dwarakamai and ate them every day. In Sai Satcharitra Ch.23, the story of Ram Baba a great student of Yoga, who came to Shirdi is given. Although he had studied and practised Yoga meticulously he could not attain Samadhi even for a few minutes. He hoped that Baba would help him and bless him. He entered the Dwarakamai and was aghast to see Baba eating stale bhakri and raw onions and doubts assailed him. Baba reading his thoughts said **"Only they should eat onions who can digest it"**.

Leela91

Kavji Patel of Andheri, Bombay, had a burning desire, to build a temple in memory of his father. He requested permission from Baba to build a temple of Vani Devi. Baba said "No". At a later date he requested again. Baba again said "No". Thenceforth he pestered Baba for permission whenever they met. Baba said **"In spite of My saying 'no' repeatedly you still pester Me do what you like and suffer the consequences"**.

Quickly Kavji started making preparations for the Vani Devi temple, on the advice of a quack. The moment the quack entered the village plague broke out and a few villagers succumbed to it. Kavji lost faith in the quack. But still didn't believe in Baba's advice to instal his family diety. So he installed the idol of another goddess.

For the next two years he was beseeched by misfortunes and illnesses. He was often at deaths door. Finally he developed faith and went for Baba's darshan. Baba said **"Instal your family diety and remove the idol of the other goddess"**. He obeyed Baba and was saved from further misfortunes. Grateful to Baba he composed a Kirtan in Marathi about this incident.

Leela 92

Bapu Saheb Jog had loaned Rs. 1,400/- to his wife's relative. At that time he was employed and earned Rs.2,000/- per month. So he gladly gave it. Interest and other details were worked out. Time rolled by, and the debtor was silent. In the meantime Jog retired. He and his wife came to Shirdi and made it their home. Jog did excellent seva and pooja of Baba. Mention is made of him in several places especially in Sai Satcharitra Ch.37 'The Chavadi Procession'. Jog wrote to the relative about the loan, but it was not forthcoming. Finally he went to Baba for permission to go personally and recover the money, or, to file a suit. Baba said **"Where will the money go? The money will come to your doorstep. What is the hurry?"** Jog was rather disappointed and said "12 to 14 years have passed and not a pie has been returned by him. Will he now come to my doorstep to return the money"?

Jog asked Baba time and again about the money, and Baba's reply was the same. Jog finally got tired of asking Baba. He pacified himself that there was no prospect of his ever getting the money back. A few days later the debtor came to Shirdi with a couple of friends. They went to Jog's house. Jog was astounded to see them. The relative did bring the principal of Rs. 1,400- but not the interest. He sought the help of Jog's wife, to convince Jog to accept the principal amount, and release him from the debt. At first Jog's wife was reluctant to intercede. But the relative begged and cajoled her-for help. The companions too requested Jog to forgo the interest but Jog was adamant. At last both of them agreed to ask Baba and abide by His decision. They went to Dwarakamai and asked Baba about this. Baba told Jog to accept the principal and Jog agreed. He realized that he finally got the money that he had given up as lost. Then there was no legal proceedings and unpleasantness, so he accepted the money, and freed the debtor. Upon receiving the sum he took it and gave it Baba. Baba took a small amount and returned the rest.

Leela 93

"Don't be worried the boy will get a good bride and every thing will be alright in good time" said Baba. He comforted the mother of Abdul who was distraught. She had come from Nanded to complain to Baba and seek His help. Abdul was married and had a son when his Guru sent him to Shirdi. Abdul came to Shirdi to serve Baba and this he did for forty five years (he took samadhi on 2nd April, 1954). His family stayed on in Nanded. As years passed by his son came of age, and his grandmother was looking for a suitable bride for him. The elders of one household told her that, they didn't wish to give their daughter in marriage to the son of a Fakir. Disappointed she then came to Baba.

A few days later his grandmother and he went to visit some friends and relatives. There, they met a person who was interested in making an alliance for his daughter. The grandmother told him that her son was a Fakir. But the gentleman was rather keen and offered the hand of his younger daughter, although his elder daughter was unmarried. The wedding took place with great joy and merriment and Baba's predictions came true.

Leela 94

Moreshwar Pradhan and his wife Chotu Bai were devoted to Baba. In fact his whole family loved and revered Him. Once his elder son was sick with typhoid. The fever was relentless and the boy was weak and pale. Seeing his condition, the aunt vowed to take the boy to Shirdi, if he recovered. Within 14 days the fever subsided and four to five days later the boy was allowed to sit in bed. The aunt, Chotu Bai and the son then set out to go to Shirdi. The doctor advised them against it. On the way the boy seemed to have a relapse. This frightened Chotu Bai and her sister. They both feared that if anything untoward happened, they would be ridiculed and laughed at. The aunt who made the vow was extremely frightened about the consequences.

Nonetheless they reached Kopargaon. There a man asked "Shall I get you a tonga?" Hearing this the boy said "Have we reached Sai Baba's house? Now help me sit up'. Overjoyed his aunt laid him on her lap, and they reached Shirdi safely. They carried the boy for Baba's darshan. Baba held him with both His hands to a standing position. Quite effortlessly the boy stood up, Baba gave him a banana and a mango that he ate without any problem. Baba said ***"Well will the world laugh at you for having brought him here?"***

Leela 95

"Is Agni Dev also controlled by Baba?" she thought repentently. The Leela of this story and Agni Dev is as follows. She was recently and happily married to Aba Samanth. While he was an ardent devotee of Baba she didn't believe in Him. One evening he returned home bringing with him a beautiful sari. As he gave it to her, he said "This sari was given to you by Sai Baba". She was quick to retort "What has Baba got to do with the sari? You worked and earned the money to buy me the sari." She then kept the sari in a box and started preparing dinner. After dinner she said "Now let us see the sari". She ran and brought the sari, upon opening the packet it was charred to pieces. Filled with, anguish at the loss, but still doubting Baba she said "If I get a new sari tomorrow I will know that the sari was burnt because of my lack of faith".



This Photograph Baba hugged then gave to Vishnu B.Pithale

The, next day just before returning home empty handed, a friend stopped by, and gave Samanth Rs.10/-that he owed for some work done earlier. Samanth then bought another sari and gave it to his wife. She received the sari and repented her words and also came to have faith in Baba.

Leela 96

D.K. Joglekar lived in Dadar, Bombay. In 1914 he went to Gurudeswar as he was devoted to Vasudev Sarawathi Tembe Swamy (Ref. To Tembeswamy is given in Sai Satcharitra Ch.6). During the course of his stay there, he asked Tembeswamy, who would look after him after Swamiji's Mahasamadhi "Go to Shirdi my brother Sai Baba is there" said Tembeswamy. Delighted and satisfied with his darshan he returned home.

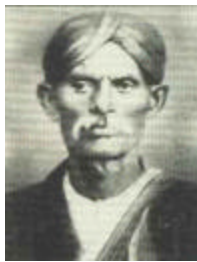
In 1916 he decided to go to Shirdi. He rented a small room in Kopergaon, every day he walked from Kopergaon to Shirdi. Upon reaching Dwarakamai he sat in a corner hoping that Baba would call him. At the end of the day he returned to Kopergaon. This went on for five months, yet Baba neither called him, nor gave His blessings, or even a sign of recognition. Soon he realised that his money was running out, even though he subsisted on Kichidi alone. The next day he went to Shirdi, but this time he decided to go to the Sanctum Sanctorum and bow to Baba. As he was climbing the steps of Dwarakamai Baba looked directly at him and said "**Chato Javo, Chalo Javo**" (**Go away, Go away**). The next day he tried again with the same result. Baba said "**Why have you come here? Go away**". None-the-less his heart was filled with love and devotion for Baba.

He thought it was not prudent to try again so he decided to return home. At that time he realised that he had only five annas left. As there was no alternative to get the necessary funds he decided to board the train without a ticket. As he was doing so, a Porter tugged at his shirt. Wondering what the Porter wanted he stepped onto the platform. The Porter handed him a ticket and five annas. Astounded he asked "Why have you bought this? When? Who told you to?" Puzzled the Porter said "Yesterday you gave me the money to buy the ticket, so here it is along with the balance of five annas". Thrusting the ticket and

change into Joglekar's hand the Porter moved away and disappeared in the crowd.

Years rolled by, but he knew that Baba was his saviour. In 1952, he once visited the Vaidyapad temple in Dadar. Then in Baba's photograph he had darshan of Tembeswamy, Swami Samarth and Dattatreya. He realised that Baba was one with the trio, and Tembeswamy's advice to go to Shirdi was not in vain. What more could he have asked for?

Leela 97



Vishnu Balwant
Pithale

The wonderous Leela of the cure of Harishchandra Pithale's epileptic son is given in Ch.26 of Sai Satcharitra. Harishchandra was blessed by Baba who said ***"Bapu I have given you Rs.2/- earlier, keep these Rs.3/- along with them, and perform their proper puja, regularly. It will benefit you greatly"***.

Harishchandra returned home and tried to solve the mystery of Baba's words, as it was the first trip to Shirdi. His mother narrated how his father had received Rs.2/- from Swamy Samarth, earlier thus solving the mystery.

The whole family had gathered to hear, all about the pilgrimage to Shirdi. His brother Vishnu Pant Balwant was also present, and a keen desire to visit Shirdi arose in him. He worked as a Thalati in Ville Parle and was rather busy. In 1917 he first visited Shirdi. Carefully he made all preparations, and roamed the fruit market so he could get the choicest unripe mangoes. Finally he found a fruit vendor who had delectable mangoes. Making sure that the fruit were unblemished and unripe he bought a basket of mangoes and set out to Shirdi. Thinking in his mind "If I get ripe mangoes they will spoil by the time I reach Shirdi, but these unripe mangoes will rippen there".

He reached Kopergaon and proceeded thence to Shirdi. Here at Shirdi Baba was sitting with his devotees and talking, when the Dwarakamai was filled with an aroma of mangoes. The devotees looked at each other and wondered where the mangoes were kept. As Baba said nothing they just waited. Vishnu Pant in the meantime reached Shirdi and kept his belongings and the mangoes

in the room and went for 'Dhuli Darshan'. Baba welcomed him saying **"What have you brought for Me? Where are the mangoes?"** Vishnu Pant was abashed and said "Baba the mangoes are in the room as they are unripe" to which Baba replied **"Go and fetch them, can't you smell them?"** Vishnu Pant went to the room and brought the basket and placed it before Baba. Upon opening it he was surprised that the mangoes were ripened perfectly and were ready to eat.

Happily Vishnu Pant stayed at Shirdi for three days. He made sure he had Rs.15/- for expenses for his return journey. On the day of his departure he bought a photograph of Baba hoping that Baba would touch it. He carried it to the Dwarakamai and waited. Baba beckoned to him saying **"Bhau give Me Rs.15/- as dakshina"**. Vishnu Pant at once emptied his pocket and gave the Rs.15/-. Then Baba asked him for the photograph, which he happily gave. His joy knew no bounds when Baba took the photograph and held it to his heart for a moment. He returned the photograph and granted him permission to go.

Vishnu Pant though happy was in a quandry, as he had no money. Finally he decided to walk to Kopergaon as there was no money for the tonga. He walked about half a mile or so when a tonga drew up and stopped near him. The driver said "What are you doing walking in the heat of the day? You do not look like a villager?"

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

He went into the station and looked around hoping he could find some acquaintances. But no one was around from whom he could borrow money. Finally the train pulled in and he decided to travel ticketless and bear the consequences. At the next station the Ticket Collector entered his compartment looking at him he said "Namaskar, Pithale Saab". Vishnu Pant however, could not recognise him. He feared that since the Ticket Collector recognised him he

would surely ask for his ticket and would cause a great deal of embarrassment. But no such thing happened, and he reached Bombay without any problem.

The next day a huge automobile pulled up to his doorstep. A well-dressed gentleman came to his home and enquired "Are you Thalati, Vishnu Pant Pithale?" Vishnu Pant was bewildered and thought "I must be in trouble now, why is he asking if I am the Thalati?" The gentleman said "I am J.R.D. Tata, I am in the process of buying land at Sahar (the present air-port). I have a huge staff on my pay roll but they can't transcribe the Marathi papers into English and vice-versa. I heard you are a capable Thalati and also bilingual". Vishnu Pant was aghast at what he said and nodded his head. Then the gentleman continued "as a Thalati you earn only Rs.35/- a month. If you agree to work for me I will give you Rs.150/- per a month". Quickly Vishnu Pant said "I will do this transcription for you, but give me two days to think about working for you". Tata said "Alright" then drove off.

Vishnu Pant was in turmoil now. "What if I give up my Government job with pension and benefits and this man does not keep his word? What if he dismisses me after his work is done?" he thought. He spent a restless night. Suddenly it dawned on him that Baba had emptied his pocket of Rs.15/- and was returning it ten fold. Two days later Tata's Secretary came to his home with the job 'appointment letter' and the details of the job benefits etc. And asked him to sign on the dotted line. He bowed to the photograph that Baba had blessed and signed.

Leela 98

Chandrabai Borkar of Ville Parle, Bombay, was an ardent devotee of Baba. Her husband Ramachandra Borkar worked as a Civil Engineer was a skeptic, and did not believe in Baba. Fortunately for Chandrabai her husband did not resent or prevent her from going to Shirdi. Ramachandra was employed in the construction of bridges, so he was often away from home on tours. This enabled Chandrabai to visit Shirdi and spend time with Baba. She first visited Shirdi in 1892 or so, and witnessed many divine Leelas. This further strengthened her faith, love and devotion for Baba. Baba lovingly called her '**bai**',

and asked her to stay in the home of some devotee whenever she visited. Every day after Arati Baba gave her Udi and blessed her. The Udi she collected in a box and preserved it in her home. Fully aware of the power and potency of the Udi she used it sparingly but readily gave it to the sick and infirm. Baba also gave her a tooth, and like Kasibai, she too made a Talisman and venerated it.



**Chandrabai
Borkar**

Ramachandra never visited Shirdi but Baba enveloped him in His grace. He often warned Chandrabai of any calamity that may be fall him. Thus Chandrabai visited Shirdi off and on for twenty years.

In 1918 Baba asked her **"Bai what is your heart's desire"**? Chandrabai without hesitation replied "Baba you are Antaryami, what is there for me to tell you". At that time she was 48 years old. She yearned to have a child but had never asked Baba. Her friends, family, and doctors alike declared conception was out of question at her age. Chandrabai was however, full of 'Shraddha and Saburi', she knew that nothing was impossible with Baba. Time rolled by and three years later her menses stopped. About five months later she noticed that her stomach had bloated, simultaneously she was vomitting, and had swelling of the feet. Doctor Purandare diagonised her to have a tumour of the uterus and advised surgery. Chandrabai refused surgery and said "I will bide my ten months and then decide". Dr. Purandhare patiently explained to her that at 51 years, and after a long and continued absence of conception pregnancy was impossible. She was adamant for she knew that Baba's grace could make the impossible possible. During that period her physical condition deteriorated. She resorted to taking Udi and water only for months.

On Dhanatrayodashi a son was born, 3 years and 2 days after Baba's Mahaniryan. She continued to do her house hold chores upto the time of delivery. To the surprise of every one it was a safe and easy delivery, without the aid of a doctor, nurse or any medications.

**JO JO MAJA BHAJE JAISA JAISA BHAVE THAISA THAISA PAVE MEIN HE
TYASE**

Leela 99

"Wherever I go she comes in search of Me, she is a sister of mine for seven births" said Baba to Kaka about Chandrabai.

In July, 1918 Chandrabai visited Shirdi to have Baba's darshan. Baba said ***"Bai you need not take the trouble to come and see Me here henceforth. I am with you wherever you are"***. His compassion and love for her overwhelmed her and she broke into tears. After getting Udi from Baba she left and went to Panchagani. Although it was a serene beautiful place, she was restless. One day she got a message from Kaka Dixit that Baba was thinking of her often, and that Baba's health was deteriorating rapidly. Hastely she went to Shirdi and was there when Baba took Mahaniryan. She was fortunate to give some water to Baba at the last moment, as did Nimonkar. Then Baba leaned on Bayyaji's shoulder and took Samadhi.

MAJA JO JHALA KAYA VACHA MANI TAYACHI ME RUNI SARVAKAL

Leela 100

Inscrutable are the nuances and ways of Baba for when He showers His grace, the impossible and unimaginable is possible. Baba rarely left Shirdi in the physical body, except to go to Rahata, Nigoj and Rui. In this Leela, He goes to stay in Ukrool village near Bhivpuri road. Keshav R.Pradhan was a hardcore



**Keshav Rao
R.Pradhan**

atheist. But, his dearest friend was an ardent devotee of Keshav Rao R. Pradhan Baba. Pradhan worked for a pedhi of a Parsi. gentleman at Bombay. His job entailed him to go Manmand, Nasik and Koparrgaon for bill collections. His friend who frequently visited Shirdi urged him to go to Shirdi either during his tour of duty or to accompany him. But all his requests fell on deaf ears. After much cajoling and even coercion, Pradhan finally agreed to accompany his friend.

Before he made the trip, he told his friend emphatically and clearly that he wouldn't step into the Masjid. After he was quite sure that his friend agreed, only then did he accompany him.

Upon reaching Shirdi, they took a room on rent and stayed there. Soon, it was time for the Noon Arati and his friend went to Dwarakamai, leaving Pradhan in the room. At 12.00 noon, the Arati started and the peels of ringing bells filled the air and charged the atmosphere with spiritual energy. Pradhan heard the bells ring in his room. He got restless and soon it turned into a hypnotic spell as he stood up, swaying to their beat.

Before he realized it, he was walking in that direction and soon entered the Dwarakamai and stood among the rest of the devotees. When the arati was over, the devotees went to Baba, one by one. Pradhan, however, sat in a corner and looked at Baba with intense concentration and try as he may, he couldn't take his eyes of Baba's divine form. He sat there and gazed at Baba, bewitched. Soon, the Dwarakamai was empty and Baba beckoned to him. Still in a daze, he went and sat in front of Baba. With a smile, Baba put out His hand and asked for Dakshina. Pradhan thrust his hand into his pocket and handed over Rs.2,500/-, the entire sum, that he had collected for the pedhi. Then, in the same dazed state, he returned to his room. When he came to his normal state, he was mortified at what he had done. Thinking about the money, he realized that he hadn't enough money to return home, let alone repay his employer. Nonetheless, he started for Kopargaon by tonga. As he had no money with him, he took of his gold ring and offered it to the tonga driver. He requested him to sell the ring and take the fare from it. Suddenly, a well-dressed gentleman appeared on the scene and paid the fare. He proceeded to buy the ticket to Bombay and expertly made all the arrangements for a comfortable journey. He then seated Pradhan in the compartment and disappeared in the crowd. Pradhan was speechless and wondered at the kindness of the gentleman.

He reached home, but was in a lot of turmoil about the repayment of the money to his employer. He wasn't affluent and kept wondering as to how he would repay the money and what explanation he could give. So, he decided to call 'in sick'. He sent word to his employer that he was unable to attend work due to an illness and he may be absent for a long period. The employer, however, granted him the leave, and told him to return only after he was fully recovered.



Sai Baba Temple at Bhivpuri Road



Tulsi Brindavan where Baba was seen in 1916



Replica given to Keshev Rao Pradhan

He also told him not to worry as he had received double the amount of money from the customers. Pradhan was astounded to hear this and it dawned on him that the kind gentleman, and the recovery of the money was Baba's Leela. At that moment, the atheist turned into an ardent devotee.

This event had such a profound effect on him that he started visiting Shirdi as often as he could. After darshan he would ask Baba to come to Ukrool (Bhivpuri road) at each and every visit. Once in 1916 he visited Shirdi after darshan he requested Baba to come to Bhivpuri. Baba picked up one of His replicas given to Him by a devotee and handing it over to Pradhan said **"Go back to Bhivpuri. Erect a temple and place this replica in it. Start all the functions there and don't come to this place again for that is your Shirdi"**.

Pradhan brought the replica to Bhivpuri but did not follow Baba's orders. When he visited Shirdi, Baba said **"When I have come to your house why do you come here? Bhivpuri is your Shirdi now"**. After a few days he erected a small temple and installed the replica with all the rituals and daily pooja with offerings were performed. So also, all the festivals. The temple was built adjacent to his house and was serene, beautiful with abundant trees and lush greenery. In front of the temple and to the left was a huge ancient peepal tree next to a banyan tree. Once at mid-night, Pradhan heard the temple doors open. He and his family went to see who it was, every one was surprised at what they saw. Baba entered the temple and closed the door behind Him. At 3.00 A.M. the door was opened and Baba left. He narrated this wonderful experience to all his friends and relatives who also came to behold this wonderful event.

Pradhan passed away in 1939. But before this, he left the management of the temple to his sons and son-in-law, A.V. Gupta who was an ardent devotee of Baba. The temple soon became famous in the neighbouring villages and in Bombay and other places. As devotees used to flock there and an expansion plan was undertaken. This plan was halted for a while because of lack of funds. So a devotee, Narayan Purohit started doing Parayan of the Satcharitra to find a solution. On the fourth day, Baba appeared in his dream and said **"Where is My**

dhuni? There is no dhuni here how can this be Shirdi?" When Baba orders some thing he finds a solution. The dhuni was lit by A.R. Walawalkar the grandson of Hemadpant. The total expenses was borne by Kumar Sen Samarth.

This is a 'must visit' temple. Because it has many notable features.

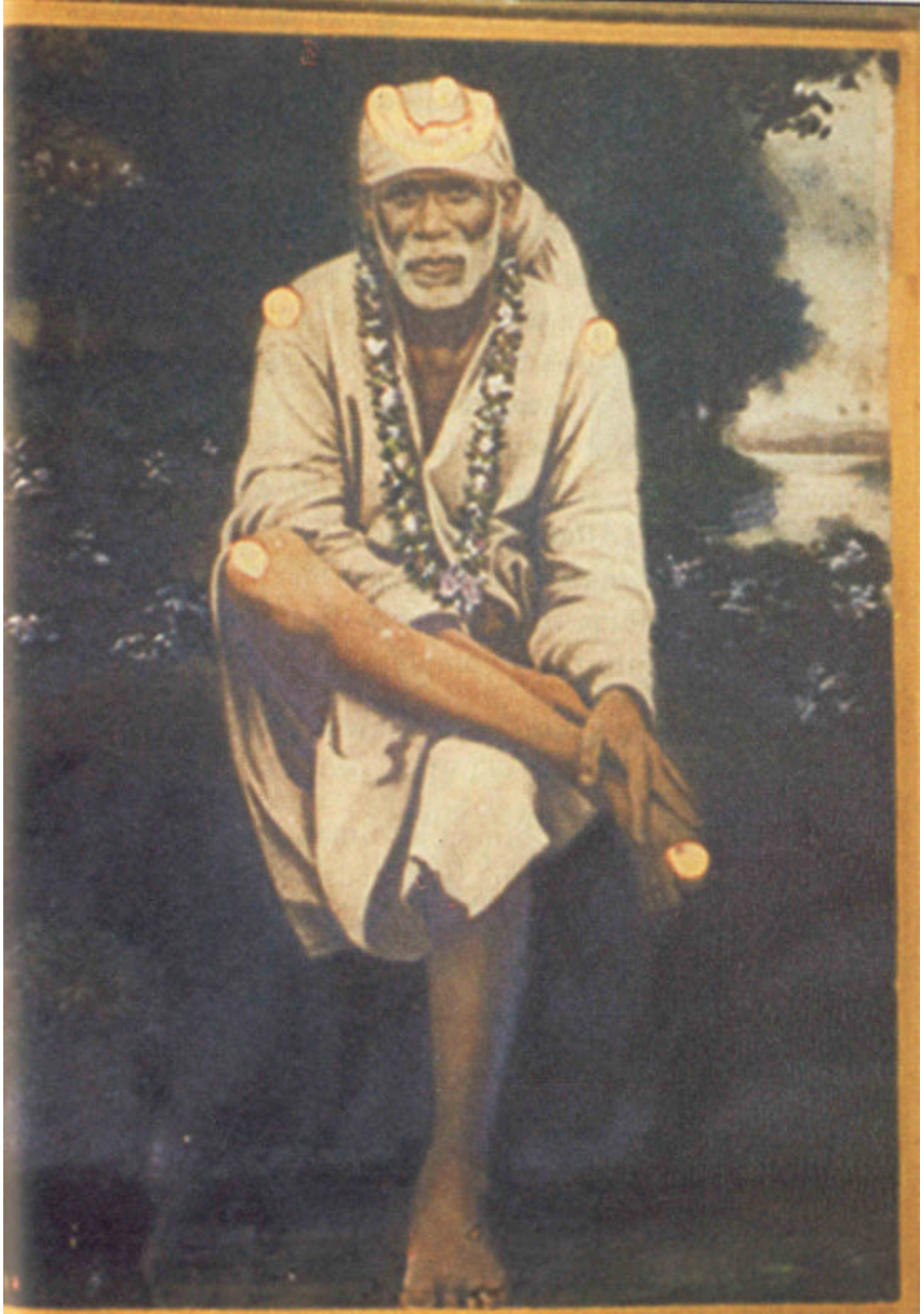
Leela 101

Baba sent His photograph to Saddu Bhayya Naik in 1915, through Balaram and Muktaram. This was the photograph that was kept in Dixit Wada; it reached him on 8.2.1915 on Thursday (Dasnavami). Baba also sent a letter saying ***"Through this photo I have come to your home. Without My permission don't come to Shirdi again "***

Rudrabhishek and Puja were performed and He was placed upon a sinhasan and Anna Daan was done. Then Muktaram climbed on the roof to hoist a flag. He was precariously perched on the roof and the flag was hoisted three fourth of the height when his arm ached terribly. Simultaneously Baba asked a bhakta seated near Him to massage His arm and said, ***"Allah Mallik Saddu Bhayya Garebon ka wali ha. Allah se bada kyon hein (Allah Mallik is the savior of the poor. Who is greater than Allah?)"***. At that very moment, the pain in Muktaram's arm also disappeared and he was able to comfortably complete the task.

The flag thus hoisted everyone was joyous as Muktaram was safe.

Baba looked after him at all times. Once there was an epidemic of plague in Harda. Everyone fled dissenting the village. At that time, Saddu Bhayya had gone to his ancestral village, Brahmingaon, about 7 miles away, leaving his father with Baba's photograph in Harda. Saddu Bhayya wrote to Baba asking him about the photograph and the plague. Baba told him to perform puja to the photograph daily and go back to Harda and send his father to Shirdi. A few days later, two dead rats were found near the photogarph. Saddu immediately wrote to Baba and consulted Him. Baba in his characteristic way said, ***"Allah Mallik was there and there is nothing to fear."*** Saddu Bhayya stayed on in that house and was safe.



Baba sent this Portrait to Saddu Bhayya on 8/02/1915

Saddu Bhayya had three sons. The eldest was Ananda Rao, then Laxman



Saddu Bhayya

Rao and Shankar Rao. Saddu Bhayya took samadhi in 1937. The photograph sent by Baba was in Bhamingaon unattended. One day Laxman Rao got a vivid dream in which Baba said **"I came to your home through this photograph, and you have discarded Me. If you don't come and free Me within two days My leg will be eaten away"**. Laxman Rao was shocked at this dream, but couldn't

understand it. He went to the court as usual but was restless the whole day and could not do a jot of work.



Plague infested house

That night he had the same dream. In which Baba said **"you have not heeded My warning, if you don't come and set Me free. My leg will be eaten away by termite (white ants)"**-. This dream terrified Laxman Rao the very next day he

went to court and applied for leave. Hastely he went to the house in Bhamingaon. When he opened the door he was shocked to see that termite had eaten the wooden frame, and had just invaded the photograph below Baba's big toe.



Laxman Rao

Laxman Rao At once he took down the photograph and cleaned it. Then he took the photograph to his home in Indore. There he got it recleaned and re-framed and kept it in his home. Daily puja was performed. Now Baba in that photograph is being tended to with tender loving care by Vanitha (Laxman's daughter).

.Leela 102

Dr. Rajaram Kapdi was born in Shirdi on 22.8.1914. His father Jaydev Vaman Chitambar was the Headmaster of the Marathi school in Shirdi. Rajaram thus played a lot in the Dwarakamai and with Baba. Baba called him 'Ganpat'. One day his mother noticed that Rajaram had a swelling on the right side of his face. It was the below of the lower right eye lid and next to the right Dr. Kapadi side of his nose about 1/3" big. His mother was concerned and worried about it.

At that time a doctor from Bombay had come to stay in Shirdi for a few months. The doctor was quite attached to Rajaram and would take him for a walk every evening. That evening his mother asked the doctor about the swelling. The



Dr.Kapadi

doctor diagnosed it to be 'a growth of the nasal bone' and suggested that it be removed. However, the surgery could only be done at Bombay. Hearing this his mother remarked that her father had such a swelling in the same place and nothing was done to it.

A few days later, Rajaram was playing with Baba and did not return home at the usual time. His mother noticed that he was not at home and went to the Dwarakamai, There she found Rajaram sitting with Baba. She picked him up and carried him out of the Dwarakamai and slapped him. Baba called her softly and said **"He was your father in his past life and My friend. Don't ever hit him again"**. His mother took heed of Baba's words, and the fact of the physical similarity and didn't beat him again.

That Thursday she adorned Baba's photograph at home with 'haldi, kum-kum' and performed Arati. She applied some Udi on Rajaram's forehead and called him 'Appa' (father). From that very moment the swelling started subsiding and became alright.

Leela 103

In the Sai Satcharita Ch.9 the story of Ram Chandra Tarkad and his son Jothinder is mentioned. How Jothinder extracted a promise from his father, to worship Baba's photograph in the sandalwood shrine daily. Ram Chandra assured him again and again that he would perform the puja daily and offer naivedya, to Baba and then have his lunch. Only after Jothinder was fully convinced of his father's words did he accompany his mother to Shirdi. But one day his father forgot to offer naivedya. Here at Shirdi Baba said **"What could I do O! mother? Today as every day I went to Bandra but there was no rice, no gruel, nothing to eat or drink. And hungry I have to return"**.



Sandalwood Devara described
in sai Charitra Chapter 9



Ram Chandra Tarkhad forgot to
offer Naiveday to Baba in this
photograph

This Leela tells about Baba's divine sport. How He came to the Tarkad home in the form of this photograph. One day Ram Chandra and Jothinder had an identical dream. In the dream they saw a beautiful 'Devara' (a small shrine kept in the home). Upon awakening both of them related the dream and were surprised to note that their dreams were identical. Without delay both father and son set out to buy the shrine. Finally they found a beautiful sandalwood shrine and brought it home. Now all that was needed was a photograph of Baba for 'pratistha' in it. The next day, Ram Chandra and Jothinder were taking a stroll in Chor Bazar when they casually stopped at a shop. The shop keeper gesticulated to them to come near. Not knowing what had happened they approached him. He said "Here is your packet; please take it". Ram Chandra and Jothinder simultaneously asked "What packet? Who gave it? For whom is it?" The shop keeper then related the story.

"Yesterday a man stopped by and handed me this packet. He asked me to give it to a person wearing a round cap, accompanied by his son, who has long hair. They will come to your shop tomorrow". He then went away "as the

description he gave fits you perfectly, I am handing over the packet". They opened the packet and found a portrait of Baba. They took the portrait home to the Prayer room. Wonder of the wonders the portrait fit perfectly in the sandalwood shrine.

Jothinder besides being highly spiritual, loved Baba intensely. Thus Jothinder adhered to the ritual of daily puja and offering naivedya to the portrait. In fact he was willing to forgo his trip to Shirdi, lest his father forget to offer naivedya to Baba.

Leela 104

Dasganu an Ex. Police Constable turned into a 'Keertankar' by Baba's grace. Ch.15 of SaiSatcharita describes 'Dasganu established in Naradeeya Keertan Padhati'. Baba admonished Dasganu for his elaborate dress, and outward show. The only pre-requisite was the purity of heart and soul, with intense passionate and fathomless bhakti.



Dasganu

Once Jothinder and his mother were sitting in the Dwarakamai when Dasganu came to seek permission from Baba. He was going to some village to perform 'keertans'. Baba gave Dasganu permission and turning to Jothinder said **"Bhavu, take mother and accompany Ganu on this trip"**. Surprised, but pleased they bowed at Baba's feet and accompanied Dasganu.

The devotees who had invited Dasganu had made all arrangements. The keertan began and a huge crowd had come to hear Dasganu's rendition. Suddenly there was a commotion some huge well built Bhils walked upto Dasganu and demanded that he stop 'all this noise'. Calmly Dasganu replied that he was singing praises unto the Lord. The leader of the gang said "This is all nonsense" and pointing to the Baba's photograph he shouted "Who is this?" Dasganu rose to the occasion and gave a glorious account of 'the Shirdi Sai Baba'. The leader said "All these Babas and saints are rouges and scoundrels". Pat came Dasganu's reply "My Baba is the living God of Gods. You have only to witness His power, compassion and love.

Only then will you believe". The leader then challenged Dasganu saying "Our relative has just died and we are about to take him to the cremation ground. If your Baba is so great he will bring him back to life. Failing this we will take the life of the three of you. Agreed". Dasganu politely asked him to be seated and wait patiently. They went and sat next to the body.

Dasganu turned to Jothinder and his mother and wondered "I have given them the assurance of Mother Sai. Now what to do?" Without hesitation Jothinder said "Maharaj let us seek refuge in Baba. You just sing 'Sayi Raham Nazar Kama, bachho ka palan karna'. They bowed to Baba and shifted the burden on Him. Then Dasganu sang with all his love, devotion and faith, beseeching Baba to look after His children. Soon he was dancing in exctacy and 'laya' for Baba. All the while Jothinder was looking at Baba and the Bhill leader. Wondering what would happen! After about 15 minutes and what seemed like Eternity. The dead man started looking around. He was as alive as could be.

The Bhill leader came forward and prostrated before Baba.

Leela 105

Jankibai Engle was born in 1905. She first visited Shirdi in 1912 when she was six years old. Her parents were devoted to Baba and took her on the pilgrimage to Shirdi. They went to Dwarakamai and found Baba sitting near the 'kattada' (wooden railing). Her mother went to prostrate before Baba but Janki was frightened. She stood near the entrance afraid to go near. Her Jankibai Engle mother asked her whether she was frightened. She nodded. Her mother pulled her by the arm and threw her at Baba's feet. Gently Baba picked her and patted her back, and simultaneously patting His leg with His other hand.



Jankibai Engle

Softly He said ***"Ja Beta Ram Mai Ho Javo"*** (***Go, child and get immersed in Ram***).

Later she understood how Baba blessed her in 1912. Even at the age of 88 she could walk unaided and with an erect posture. She also did 'keertan' and danced with joy spreading love and devotion all around.

Just after she got married, her mother was gravely ill and she kept remembering her daughter. She sent a fervent prayer to Baba beseeching Him to send her daughter home. Jankibai got a dream in which Baba told her **"Not to forget or forsake her mother and to go and visit her"**. Her mother-in-law refused to give permission. None-the-less she packed her bags and left. Knowing that Baba was behind her. She visited her mother for two to three days and returned home without any grave consequences.

Leela 106

Chottu Bhaya Parulkar of Harda was an ardent devotee of Baba, and Baba loved him intensely. In the year 1914 an Artist named M. Ramakrishna Rao



Chottu Bhaya

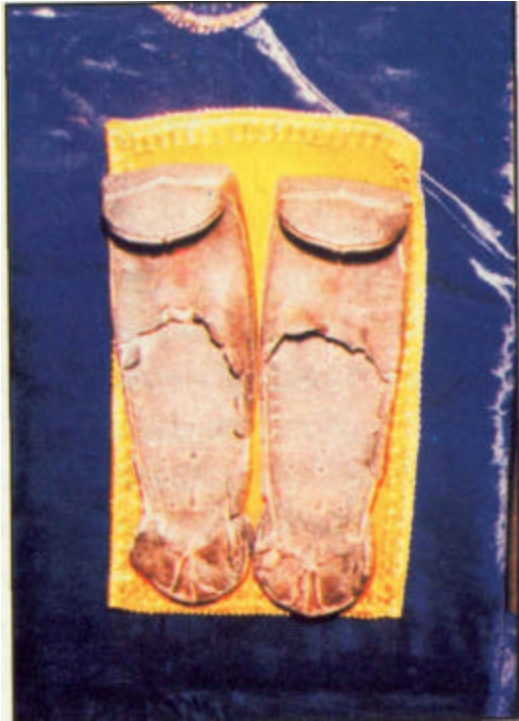
of Bombay came to Shirdi and made a sketch potrait of Baba on 7.6.1914. As he was completely enamoured of Baba's luminous roop. Dixit, Kaka Mahajani and every devotee who saw the drawing liked it a lot. The devotees knew that Baba would get extremely angry upon seeing it. They decided to keep it in the Dwarakamai and covered it with a white cloth. Fervently they hoped that Baba would be a good mood, so they could show it Him. The Noon Arati was peaceful and Baba didn't get angry. After the Arati Baba was smiling, so Shama said "Deva this Artist has made a sketch drawing of You, we would like You to see it".

Even before he could complete His sentence Baba roared **"Where is the photo? Bring it before Me. Why are they making My photo? Bring it at once"**.

The devotees meekly brought the portrait and placed it before Baba. Rolling His eyes He picked up His satka and lunged towards the portrait, and was about to strike it. When He calmed down. Shama asked "Deva what is to be done with the photo?" The devotees were standing transfixed and waiting. Baba looked in all four directions and at every devotee. Chottu Bhaya was standing next to Baba. Baba beckoned to him and softly said **"Take this photo home, everything of yours will become gold"**. The drawing is 2 1/2 and 3 1/2. . Chottu Bhayya took the drawing home and venerated it.



'Take this photo home and everything of yours will become gold'



Padukas given to Chhotu Bhaya by Baba on Gurupurnima

On another occasion a devotee from Pune offered Baba Padukas. That day Baba went to Lendi Bagh wearing the Padukas which was rather unusual. Upon His return He took off the Padukas washed His feet and went into the Sanctum Sanctorum. Then He gave Chottu Bhayya the Padukas which he worshipped.

Leela 107

Eager to have their Sadguru's darshan on Gurupurnima day the devotees flocked to Shirdi. They came from far and near, some did 'Padyatra', others came by tonga or bullock-cart and still others came by train. Every devotee hoped to receive that special blessing from Baba. Bearing gifts of flowers, garlands, fruits, sweets and shawls they came to the Dwarakamai. Some Bhaktas brought books hoping that Baba would sanctify the book by His touch and return it, so that they could read it, and benefit from it. Others brought photographs of Baba, hoping to receive the photograph back as 'prasad' so that they could worship it. They all rushed to the Dwarakamai trying to get Baba's darshan The Sabha Mandap was packed to suffocation, and the devotees were trying to get into the Sanctum Sanctorum. Baba suddenly turned to Jothinder and said ***"These people are walking all over Me. I feel pain as they kick Me". Jothinder go and rescue Me"***. Jothinder was surprised to hear this as Baba was sitting near the railing in His usual place.



'Preserve this Photo' said Baba to Jothinder Tarkhad



Jothinder Tarkhad



Baba's Pocket, Silver Padukas, Gold and other coins given by Baba to Jothinder Tarkhad

Then pushing Jothinder gently Baba pointed in a certain direction and said **"Go and rescue Me"**. Then Jothinder said "Baba the crowd is overwhelming if I go they will crush and stampede me". Baba assured him that nothing would happen to him as he was under Baba's protection. Jothinder obeyed Baba's instructions and slowly made his way, in that direction. Finally he reached almost to the end of the Sabha Mandap, when, he found Baba's photograph on the ground. Some devotee had dropped the photograph. The devotees in their enthusiasm to reach Baba were treading on it.

He picked up the photograph and brought it to Baba. Baba with a look of relief on His face gave the photograph to Jothinder **"Preserve this photograph"** said Baba. This small photograph is still in the 'Tarkhad home' and is venerated and prayed to daily

Baba's Pocket, Silver Padukas, Gold and other coins given by Baba to Jothinder Tarkhad

Leela 108

Once Jothinder visited Shirdi. In those days Shirdi was a small hamlet without electricity or sanitation. The pilgrims had to go to the outskirts of the village and use it as toilet. There was a small rivulet that they made use of. The

place used is now opposite to Lakshmi Nagar. One day it was drizzling rather heavily. When Jothinder went there suddenly he heard a man shouting 'Londa Ala' . The meaning is - a huge wave of water has come). He didn't understand what was said, so he did not look around or pay heed. The rest of the pilgrims ran to safety. Suddenly there was lightening and he looked up to find a huge wave about 20 to 30 feet high was about to descend upon him.

He knew for sure that he would be washed away or drowned. He just stood up and closing his eyes he said "Baba melo" (Baba, I will die). After some time he heard water gushing and swirling. He opened his eyes and saw its fury, branches, small trees dead goats and snakes were drifting by. He looked around only to find that the water had parted and he was standing on an island of dry land. He waited for some time for the water to recede. Then he waded in knee deep water and came to his room. After taking a bath he went to the Dwarakamai to thank Baba. Holding His feet he thanked Him. Baba said ***"You said, Baba melo. Do you think you came to Shirdi to die?"***



Silver Padukas given to Jothinder by Baba



**Sivanesan
Swamiji**

Sivanesan Swamiji is known to me since 1955. My relationship with Swamiji was more like a 'big brother and spoilt younger sister', rather than Swamiji and Sadhak. He quietly went about, doing Dhuni Puja for me and looked after my material and spiritual welfare. In 1987, there was a crisis in my life. My father, who was a heart patient for many years, was sick. So, I would often run to Shirdi to cry in despair to Baba and Swamiji.

One day, Swamiji said, "Rewrite Ambrosia in Shirdi and make it simple, so that any one can read and understand it." At that time, I was quite upset, and writing was the last thing on my mind. My father passed away in November 1987; but this thought was there in the back of my mind.

I finally followed Swamiji's advice and used 'Ambrosia in Shirdi' as a guide and reference book. 'Ambrosia in Shirdi' was written by Shri Ramalinga Swami, Life Member, Shri Sai Baba Sansthan when he was residing at Munja Baba Sthan, Shirdi under the guidance of Sivanesan Swamiji. The first and only edition was in July 1984 of 2000 copies. Hence, very few people got to read this gem of a book. I humbly thank Shri Ramalinga Swami for giving me this opportunity to rewrite this book.

Ambrosia in Shirdi is one of a three part series. It has coloured photographs and depicts the life of Baba, especially His 60 years at the Masjid (Dwarkamai) in Shirdi. His daily routine, Bhiksha route and Lendi Baug route, the five blessed houses that He took Bhiksha from. His visits to Rahata, Nmgaoon and Dhabolkar's house in Bandra, Bombay, and some rare photographs of Baba. Ambrosia in Shirdi part-1 narrates the Leelas of Baba that took place before 1918. Dabholkar, in the Sai Satcharitra has mentioned many a Leelas beautifully. But, it wasn't possible for him to write all the Leelas as the book would have run into many volumes.