

JAN 2009

SAMARPAN

A Spiritual India Magazine

**Have a blessed
2009**

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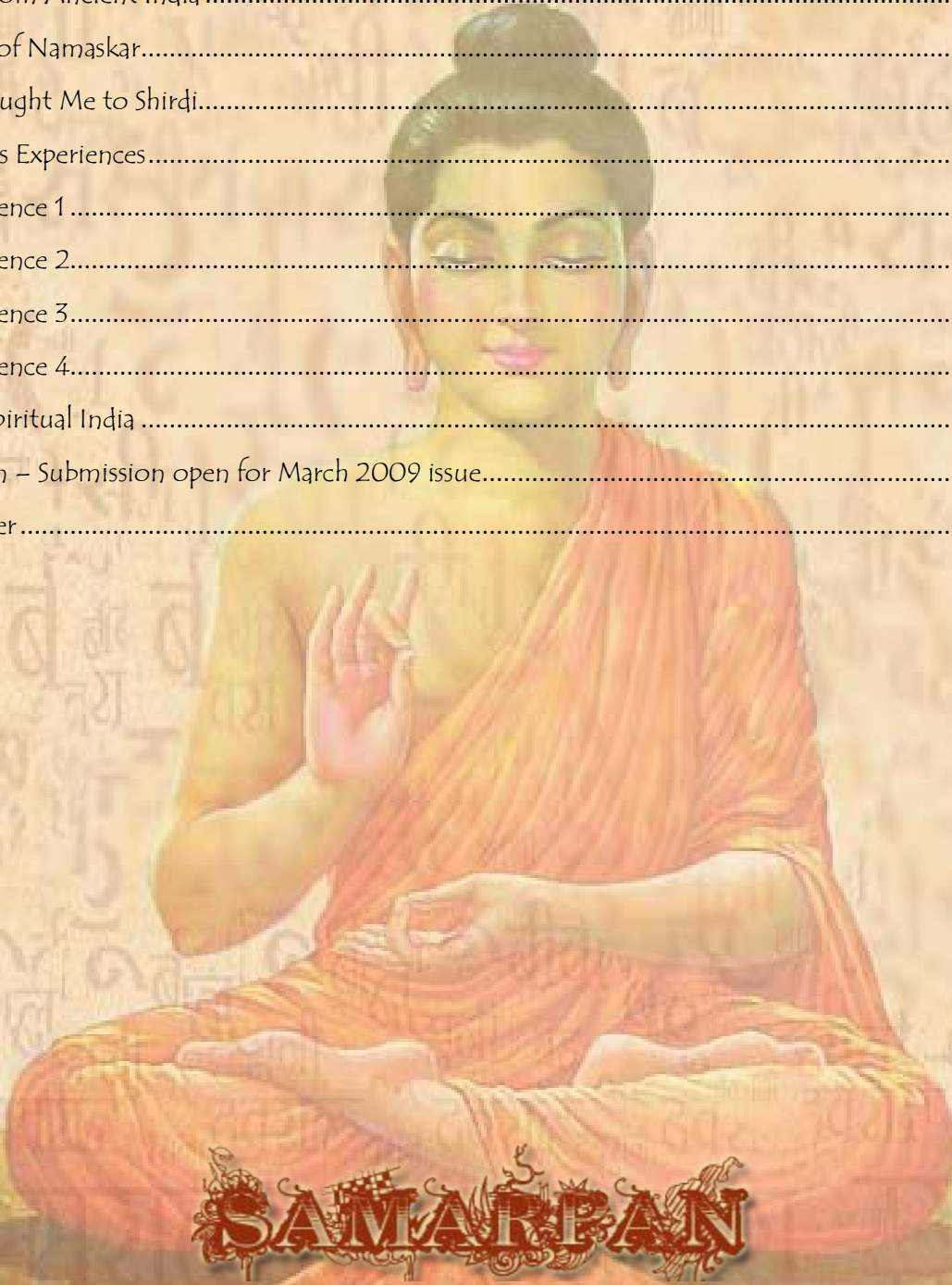


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From Editor's Desk

It was a Thursday on the first day of this year. I knew how it feels for a Sai devotee. New Year always brings lots of new hopes and since the first day was a Thursday, I was very excited and happy and felt that this is definitely going to be a good year. In the evening I went to Sai temple, did pooja and offered some money in the hundi of the temple.

The next day, I heard about an old friend whose father died 5 years back. I haven't heard about her since then. I didn't know that she had to abandon her study due to the financial crisis. She joined a beauty parlor to support her family. She has a younger sister who was physically challenged. I was shocked to learn about her story. She was a very bright and ambitious student and she had lots of dreams about her higher education. I really felt bad. I tried to help her and offered her financial help so she can resume her study. But it was too late. She couldn't accept my offer as she had discontinued her studies long back as she had to support her family.

Later in the day I remembered an article about Shirdi Sai Sansthan becoming the second richest

temple in the country just behind the temple of Tirupati. There were talks of enormous amounts of money collected by the temple as donation or offerings by people. I wondered how much of that money is actually utilized and how much of that money remains idle not serving any purpose. People donate hundreds of crores of rupees every year to various temples and spiritual organizations without even caring how much of that money would be utilized.

This incident made me realize that there are definitely better and even more practical ways of utilizing the money which we want to donate. And this can be achieved if we look around



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the place we live and identify the needs of the people. Because India is a land of contrasts, we can always find people who are in greater need of goods and financial assistance than us. For example we can support the education of a kid of a poor family, pay for the medical bills of the person who cannot afford it, feed poor people or donate our money to an organization which is actively involved in social work and not just sit on piles of money. Most of the famous Temples are already very rich and practically they do not need any money at least for a couple of years.



There is no better sight in the world than seeing the face of a small child who cannot afford education and who has just been given a notebook and other accessories by you. If you think you have very little money to help, you can save that little money and add onto it till it becomes significant enough to bring a change in a needy person's life. You can even save a fixed amount of money per month and use it later when you see someone really needs it. If you look around carefully, you will find lots of opportunity where the money can be utilized.

Donation is not a formality to please our lords but it's a way to support and appreciate a noble cause. The responsibility lies on us to plan well and donate the money very carefully as it belongs to our Sai. We give full attention to our SAI who is

sitting inside a temple but we often ignore SAI who lives in each and every human soul in this world. Let us make judicious use of our assets to spread happiness in the lives of people who need it most.

Have a blessed year ahead.

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Shirdi Sai Baba

By: Arvind narvekar.

This man of God, who is worshipped as God by thousands & thousands of people all over the world, was a unique Saint. Sai Baba was an absolute embodiment of divinity, a rare phenomenon. He was manifestation of the divine on earth in human form.

Devotees of Sai Baba know that this God walked the earth to protect humanity against sins & degradation. Shirdi in Ahmednagar is indeed a blessed abode to have had this God spend almost his entire life there until his "maha-samadhi" in 1918. Shirdi Sai Baba is still present in some subtle form to take care of his devotees forever. He responds readily to the calls of the yearning seekers.

Although Sai Baba is physically no more, his presence & grace are felt by his devotees. Great masters walk the earth for setting right the spiritual & moral order and to guide men on the god ward path.

There is no record of Shirdi Sai Baba having initiated any disciple to take over. Whenever earth is over-powered by evil and the pious people are troubled and whenever the righteousness is declining, God incarnates to restore dharma.

No matter what divine stories are being told about Sai Baba's miraculous powers, he never claimed himself to be a God. Baba's miracles were to provide succor to the suffering humanity and to infuse strength into them to face life as it is, and to reinforce faith among people to turn toward God. There were countless beneficiaries who were transformed morally & spiritually.

God is inspiring all of us all the time. And while some of us have had such mystic experience, we have chosen to call it something else like serendipity, coincidence, luck or chance encounter ! We forget that it could be the divine intervention to give us hope.

Well, how did this "fakir" get the name Sai Baba? Mahalsapaty, the priest of Sri Khandoba temple in Shirdi, first greeted him "Aao Sai" (welcome Saint), and from then on, the fakir came to be known as "Sai Baba of Shirdi".

Baba never fasted himself nor he inspired his devotees to do so. In fact, neither fasting nor over-eating is advisable, but a man of restraint is definitely better than a man of indulgence.

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I totally trust in Shirdi Sai Baba, & I submit my will to him. He is the protector of my safety and my well-being. I pray, " let my faith be permanent & infinite". I hold on to the feet of Baba and I am blessed.

They say God is everywhere and truly speaking, when we perceive God in all his manifestations our thoughts inside are enlightened.

God loves us the most, and does not expect anything from us. It is up to us whether or not to offer prayers to God.

The sage of Shirdi, the Sai Baba, emphasized two virtues for well-being : devotion or faith (Shraddha) & patience (Saburi). It's faith that helps one accept all happenings, good or bad, with equanimity. Patience helps one to live uncomplainingly so that one is able to accept without anger what cannot be changed.

All I request you is to "open the inner eyes of your eyes" and give your life another look: are your core needs met? Do you have a home? Food on the table & hunger satisfied? Clothes to wear? Do you have fine health? Do you have dreams & get good night's sleep? Is there regular money coming in? Can you walk, talk, see the beauty that surrounds you? Do you have a loving family and noble friends who adore you & touch your heart? Then, thank God for what you have.....

We all have limited time left. Every moment, we are getting closer to the grave. This factual reality should be driving us to live a fuller life.

Let me Quote George Carlin here: "Paradox of our time is, we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider roads but narrower view points, we are spending more although we have less, we own big houses to accommodate small families, we have more conveniences but less time to spare, we have more degrees but less sense, we have more knowledge but less judgment, we have more experts--yet more problems, we have gone on multiplying our possessions but declined our values, we plan more but accomplish less, we have learned to rush but not to wait, we probed into outer space but not our own inside space. We talk too much, pray rarely, get angry easily, drink too much, drive too fast, stay up too late, read seldom--but watch the idiot box TV too much. God has become a silent spectator in our fantastic times, watching our doom and even he is perhaps feeling helpless!"

Pray, because prayer has tremendous power, and you must also have faith. You know, my health is better, my finances are okay, my life is beautiful, Sai can help the needy, I keep smiling....., my family is wonderful, Sai have many good friends,all because of the mercy & grace of God. It's just amazing what God can do! I'm grateful beyond imagination to God. With God, anything is possible.

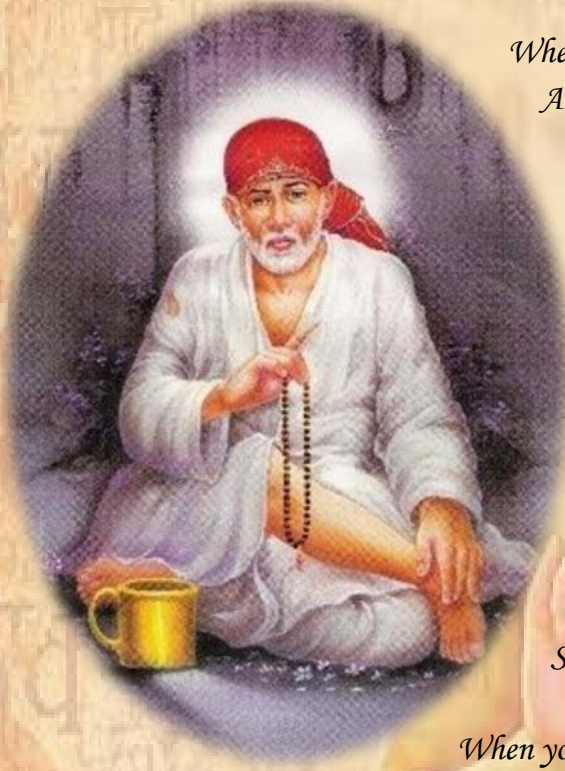
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Sai is always near so why fear

*When things are down
And you are out of your mind
Remember just remember
Sai is so kind.*

*When your life is in darkness
And nothing is right
Remember just remember
Through the darkness, Sai is the light.*



*When nothing makes sense
And everything seems dense
Remember just remember
Sai is the wise.*

*When times are troubled
And no one seems to care
Remember just remember
Sai is so fair.*

*When your heart is breaking
And your pain makes you fall
Remember just remember
Sai sees it all.*

*When you are weak
And the road seems long
Remember just remember
Seek strength from the strong.*

*When life is a burden
And everything is unstable
Remember just remember, Sai is the able.*

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*When the way is cloudy
And there is no one by your side
Remember just remember*

Sai is the only guide.

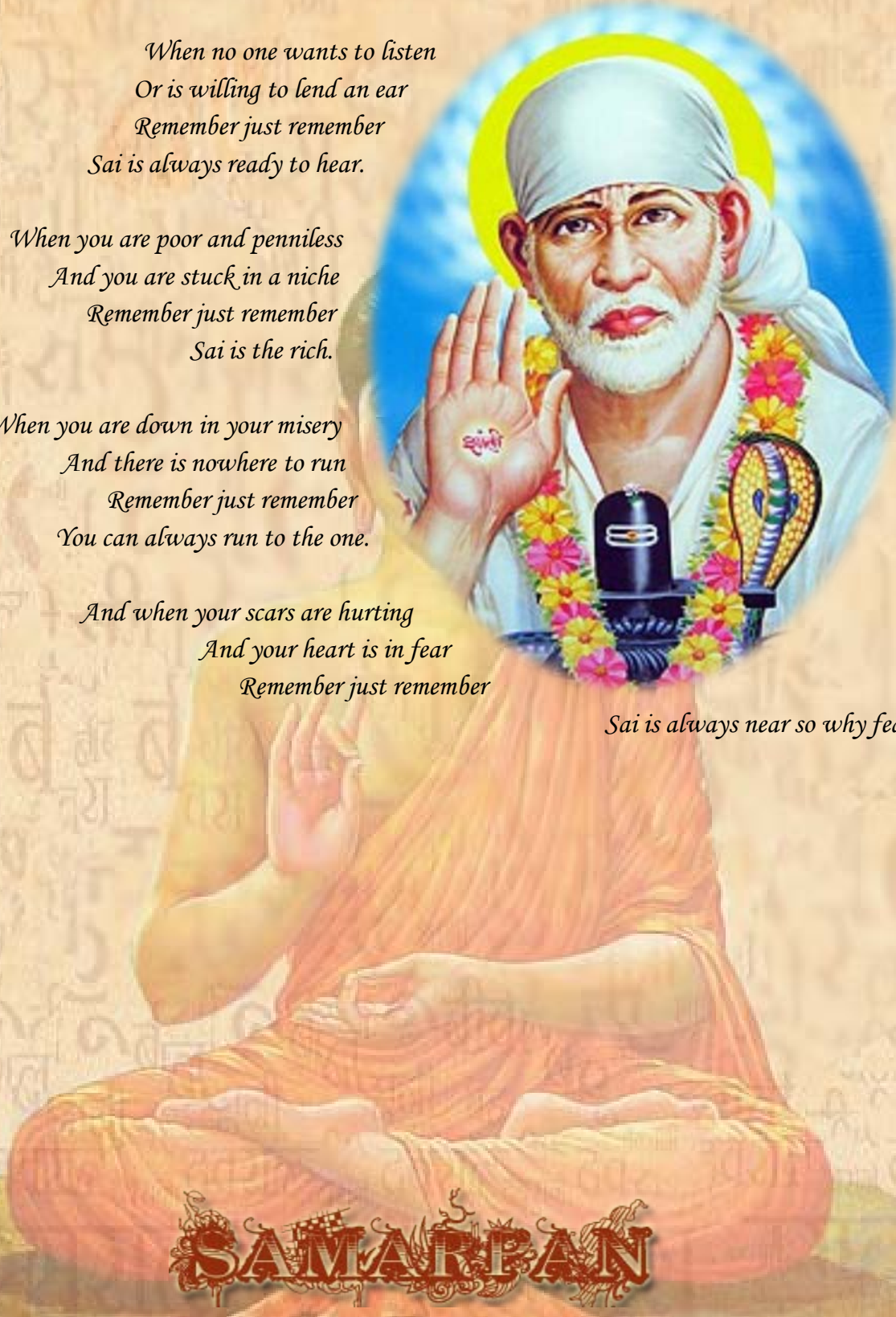
*When no one wants to listen
Or is willing to lend an ear
Remember just remember
Sai is always ready to hear.*

*When you are poor and penniless
And you are stuck in a niche
Remember just remember
Sai is the rich.*

*When you are down in your misery
And there is nowhere to run
Remember just remember
You can always run to the one.*

*And when your scars are hurting
And your heart is in fear
Remember just remember*

Sai is always near so why fear.



Ma's Kindness

In 1948, Anandamayi Ma's birth anniversary was being celebrated in a private garden in New Delhi. One morning in the midst of satsang a weird looking man entered the garden. Dressed in a queer fashion, his face bore the look of insanity. He walked straight over to the women's side and spoke to each woman with her head uncovered: "Cover your head!" No one took any heed of him. This seemed to annoy him much. Finally he approached Ma and repeated his request to her. She at once complied with his wish and motioned to the girls sitting near her to do likewise. Every woman in the assembly followed suit. The stranger was visibly pleased at his sudden success. With a triumphant smile he walked across to the men's side and sat down quietly. After some time, however, he got up, announced in a loud voice that he wanted to leave. Ma handed an orange to someone to be passed on to him. This for some unknown reason infuriated the stranger and he threw the fruit at Ma with violence. He aimed well and it hit her. A wave of indignation surged through the crowd. Two of Ma's devotees caught hold of the offender and tried to lead him out of the garden. At the gate he freed himself from their grip and attempted to return to the satsang. One of the devotees hit him and with difficulty the intruder was finally turned out on the street. Ma later reprimanded the devotees, telling them: "You are not to prevent anyone from coming to this body. Moreover, you must not beat anybody."



Next morning the stranger came again, he was decently dressed and looked normal. He straightaway sat down with the men in a dignified manner and remained quiet throughout the satsang. When it was over, he went up to Ma and talked to her. She invited him for lunch, and

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he stayed until after the meal. He was found to be an educated, cultured and amiable person. Afterwards it transpired that the throwing of orange at Ma had caused the man such deep remorse that he was healed of his mental disturbance. He had been unbalanced and was restored to normalcy by Ma's grace.



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I Long for You

By: Ashok Jain

*You are the very atom I breathe in,
Shelter I embrace and origin of mine.
A majestic relief and succor in need present,
Unfolding love and energy abundant.*

*Limited my cup desires to encase infinity,
Toast me nectar of your might and beauty.
Countless births you have remained obscure,
Your absence always stretched the pain longer.*

*I don't waver from the path which leads to you,
It might be close or a dream quite far.
I will walk towards you with a thin silhouette visible,
I will put all my energy to seek you in every life.*

*I long for you with inner void and parched lips,
It is you whom every moment my broken heart seeks.
Inner dryness seek an outlet in outer tears,
Why don't you speak up in kindness like whisper?*

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Why do we light a lamp?

In almost every Indian home a lamp is lit daily before the Lord. In some houses it is lit at dawn, in some, twice a day at dawn and dusk- and in a few it is maintained continuously (akhanda deepa). All auspicious functions and moments like daily worship, rituals and festivals and even many social occasions like inaugurations commence with the lighting of the lamp, which is often maintained right through the occasion.

Light symbolizes knowledge, and darkness ignorance. The Lord is the "Knowledge Principle" (Chaitanya) who is the source, the enlivener and the illuminator of all knowledge. Hence light is worshiped as the Lord Himself.

Knowledge removes ignorance just as light removes darkness. Also knowledge is a lasting inner wealth by which all outer achievements can be accomplished. Hence we light the lamp to bow down to knowledge as the greatest of all forms of wealth.

Knowledge backs all our actions whether good or bad. We therefore keep a lamp lit during all auspicious occasion as a witness to our thoughts and actions.



Why not light a bulb or tube light? That too would remove darkness. But the traditional oil lamp has a further spiritual significance. The oil or ghee in the lamp symbolizes our "vaasnas" or negative tendencies and the wick, the ego. When lit by spiritual knowledge,

the "vaasnas" get slowly exhausted and the ego too finally perishes. The flame of a lamp always burns upwards. Similarly, we should acquire such knowledge as to take us towards higher ideals.

A single lamp can light hundreds more just as a man of knowledge can give it to many more. The brilliance of the light does not diminish despite its repeated use to light many more lamps. So too knowledge does not lessen when shared with or imparted to others. On the contrary it increases in clarity and conviction on giving. It benefits both the receiver and the giver.

Swami Chinmayananda Said :

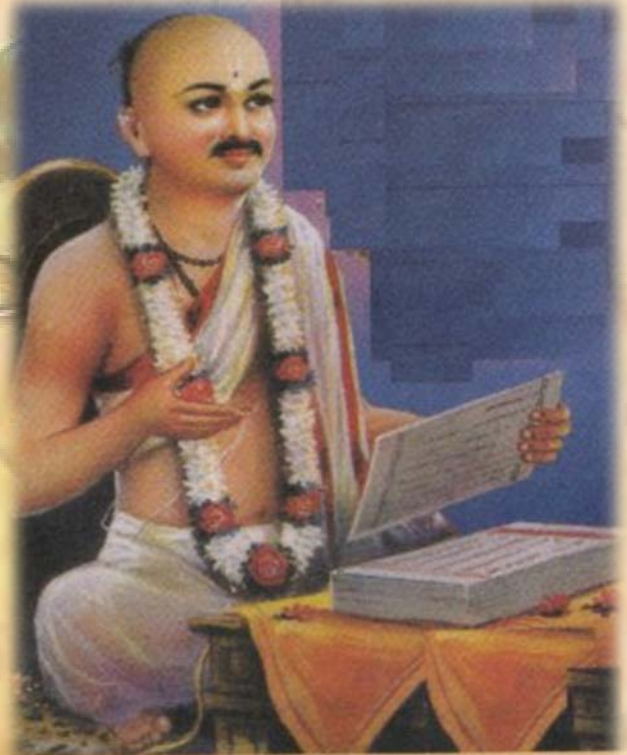
Which else shall beautify a home, but the flame of a lovely lamp?
Which else shall adorn the mind, but the light of wisdom deep?

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Stories of Saints – Saint Eknath Maharaj

The Sai Satcharitra has numerous mentions of "Eknath Bhagwat" book and how Sai Baba asked his devotees like Kakasaheb Dixit, Shama (Madhavrao Deshpande), Hemadpant & many others to relish this valuable book..

Kakasaheb had just read Hari-vrinda & came to Baba to ask what he should read next. Baba asked him to read Eknath's "Vrindavan Pothi". Kakasaheb did not understand which book Baba was referring to. He came with a copy of "Eknathi Bhagwat" & Baba agreed that this was the pothi he was referring to. Kaka still could not understand why Baba should call it as 'Vrindavan Pothi'. He commenced reading and when he reached the end of the book, he found the last verse of the last chapter (31) as follows, "Know this (book) is not just Eleventh canto (of Bhagwat). This is the Vrindavan of 31 parts. Here Sri Krishna always resides, in his own essence, full of his own bliss'. Then kaka realized how much thoroughly familiar Baba was with Eknath Bhagwat.



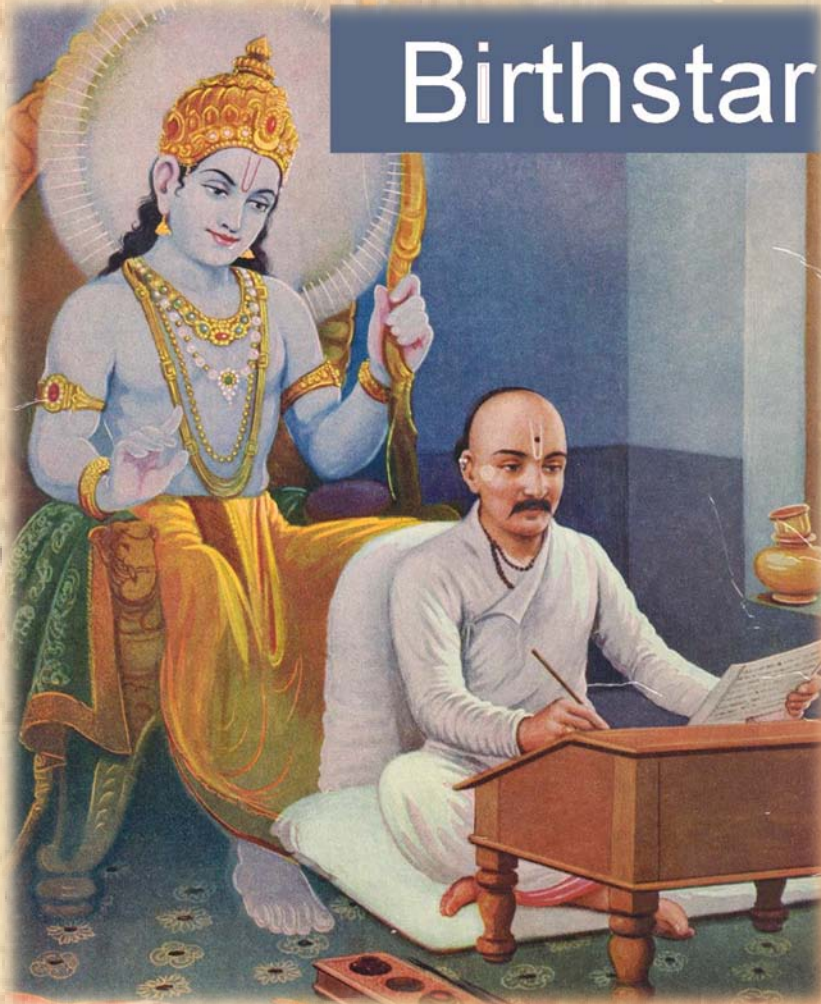
संत एकनाथ SANT EKNATH

After finishing reading Bhagwat, Kakasaheb asked Baba whether he should read some other spiritual book given to him by his friend. Baba Said "No. Only these 2 books (Eknathi bhagwat & Bhawartha Ramayana) are sufficient for us".

Now, both these books are written by Saint Eknath Maharaj. Sai Baba's dependency on these books for his best devotees is an indication of how much he loved & admired Eknath Maharaj & his works. Eknath Maharaj's another famous composition is the book 'Rukmini Swayamvar' which describes how the preparations were going on for the marriage ceremony of Rukmini & how Shri Krishna appeared in the marriage assembly & took away Rukmini after defeating the kings, when her marriage was about to happen with some other king against her wish.

The life story of Eknath Maharaj is great in itself & devotees will love to hear in brief, how the composer of such great works, spent his lifetime.

This child Eknath was born in a Brahmin family in the 16th century at Paithan, on the banks of Godavari River. He lost his parents even before he was three years of age. He was brought up by his grandparents. When he was only a growing child, one night he had a dream in which he was asked to go at one particular place & meet his guru Janardan Swami. When he woke up he was in two minds. How could he leave his grandparents alone and go on some remote spiritual conquest. But he made up his mind & one night left secretly, leaving his grandparents & with tears in his eyes.



Later he met his Guru Janardan Swami, who brought him up and initiated him spiritually. After his spiritual study was over, his Guru asked him to return home, marry & lead the life of a householder. It is from here that his magnificent works began. In order to make his livelihood simple, he was given the Jahagiri of some villages by the then ruler. Eknath Maharaj lived the life of a pure Brahmin, following all the regulative principles of religion. He was a great devotee & spent time contemplating on the Lord. The Lord liked him so much that he decided to give him his company.

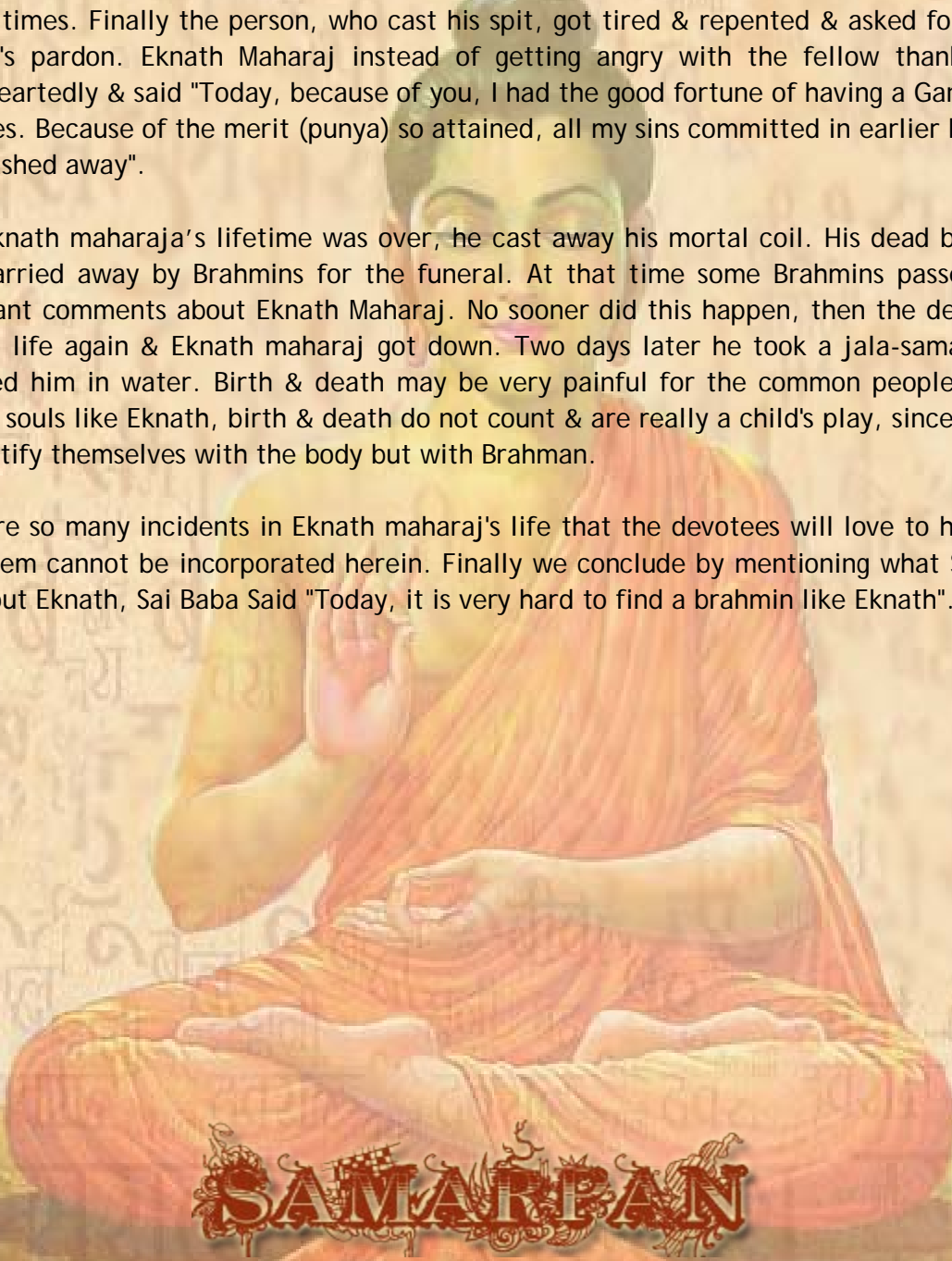
One fine day, Lord Krishna came to his house, assuming the attire of a cook-servant & said that, he wanted to serve Eknath maharaj as he liked serving a pure Brahmin like him. Eknath Maharaj asked him his name. He replied that his name was "Shri-Khandya". Finally he was given the work of a cook-servant in the house. He used to do all the cooking in the house & also assist Eknath maharaj in spiritual matters. In this way for full 12 years, Eknath Maharaj got the company of Shri Krishna!!! But till the end he did not know that his cook-servant was none other than the master of the universe!!!!!! Finally at the end of 12 years, Eknath Maharaj came to know from a Brahmin, that his cook-servant was none other

than Shri Krishna. On knowing this, he went to search for him, in the house, but he could not find him. The Lord had disappeared & Eknath Maharaj was in tears. He prayed to the lord to give him his vision. The Lord showed him his chatur-bhuja form & disappeared. The experiences that Eknath Maharaj got with Shri Krishna are too glorious & too numerous to mention. A complete book can be written enumerating the experiences.

Eknath Maharaj had the good fortune of visiting Kashi & it is here that he finished writing of the Eknathi Bhagwat. One incident in Eknath Maharaja's life that took place at Kashi, displays his unparallel tolerance. Once, while at Kashi, Eknath Maharaj took a bath in the holy Ganga & was returning when a bad fellow cast his spit on him. Eknath maharaj was unperturbed; he returned to Ganga & had a bath again. Again while returning from the bath, the bad fellow, cast his spit on maharaj. This time also maharaj remained unperturbed & went back to have another bath in Ganga. This sequence continued to happen, not for 2 or 3 or 4 times, but a full 108 times. Finally the person, who cast his spit, got tired & repented & asked for Eknath maharaj's pardon. Eknath Maharaj instead of getting angry with the fellow thanked him whole-heartedly & said "Today, because of you, I had the good fortune of having a Ganga-bath 108 times. Because of the merit (punya) so attained, all my sins committed in earlier life have been washed away".

When Eknath maharaja's lifetime was over, he cast away his mortal coil. His dead body was being carried away by Brahmins for the funeral. At that time some Brahmins passed some unpleasant comments about Eknath Maharaj. No sooner did this happen, then the dead body came to life again & Eknath maharaj got down. Two days later he took a jala-samadhi i.e. immersed him in water. Birth & death may be very painful for the common people but for realized souls like Eknath, birth & death do not count & are really a child's play, since they do not identify themselves with the body but with Brahman.

There are so many incidents in Eknath maharaj's life that the devotees will love to hear, but all of them cannot be incorporated herein. Finally we conclude by mentioning what Sai Baba Said about Eknath, Sai Baba Said "Today, it is very hard to find a brahmin like Eknath".



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Stories from Ancient India

Once upon a time there lived a great king called Shibi. He was very kind and charitable. His fame spread all over the earth and spread in the heavens too. The lord of heaven Indra wanted to test him. So Indra and God Agni started from heaven. Agni assumed the form of a dove and Indra, of a fierce hawk. Agni flew in the front fluttering the wings as though terrified and Indra followed at a distances as if in hot pursuit. They straight flew to the palace of the king.

Shibi was in the garden distributing charities to the poor. The little fluttering frightened dove came and perched upon the wrist of Shibi looking at his with tearful eyes full of fear. Shibi immediately took her in his hands. Stroking her back kindly he said, "Fear not, O dove, I will save you from all harms." Just as he was saying this, the hawk came angry and haughty and tried to snatch the dove away from the king's hands. But the king raised his hand in a flash and obstructed the hawk. The hawk looked at the king angrily and said, speaking like a human being, "This dove is my bird of prey. I had been pursuing it from the morning. Why do you obstruct me in having my food, O king?"

Shibi replied, "O hawk, this poor frightened dove has sought my shelter. It is my duty to protect her from all harm. I won't allow you to snatch her away from me and make her your prey." The hawk then said, "Rajan, is your kindness limited only to the dove? What about me? Am I not equally entitled to claim your pity? I am a bird who can live only be eating the meat of small birds. By depriving me of my food are you not condemning me to die? Is this your dharma?"

King Shibi was nonplussed. He was very thoughtful. At last he said, "Hawk, what you say is true. I won't deprive you of your food. But at the same time I can't give up this poor frightened dove. Will you accept if I give you some other flesh as a substitute?" The hawk replied, "Very well king. I have no objection as long as my hunger is satisfied. But you must give me flesh exactly equal to that of the dove. I won't accept less." And he further mockingly



added, "But where do you get substitute flesh from? Will you kill another life to save the life of this dove?"

Shibi hastily replied, "No, no, I won't think of harming another life, be sure. I will give you my own flesh in the place of the dove." He then turned to his attendant ordered them to bring a balance. Shibi placed the dove on one side of the balance.

He took out his sword and cutting small portions of his flesh placed it on the other side. But strange! The dove which looked so small and frail in the pan could not outbalance it! King Shibi went on cutting portion after portion from his body and placing it in the balance. Yet to no purpose, till at last no more flesh remained in his to cut. Wondering at the heaviness of the dove, Shibi then threw away the sword and he mounted the balance. Lo, now the balance was quite equal. Rejoicing that he was at last able to give the hawk its due, Shibi turned to the hawk and said, "O hawk, my weight is equal to the weight of the dove. Please eat me and leave the dove."

As he said these words there was a cheering applause from the Gods who gathered in the sky to witness the test. The hawk and the dove shed their assumed forms and stood before him in their shining glorious forms.

Indra said, "O kindly king, know that we are Indra and Agni come down from heaven to test you. You have indeed proved yourself to be greater than your fame. You will be blessed with long life and vast riches. Your name will remain in the world as long as the sun and the moon remain." So saying, Indra touched Shibi with his hand. Lo! All the cuts and wounds vanished from Shibi's body and he stood there as strong as ever. He bowed to the Gods with great devotion, who blessed him and returned to their abodes.

Benefits of Namaskar

By: Kandasamy Gunasekaran

While visiting places of worship and viewing the Deities or after meeting an elderly or a respected person our hands are automatically joined together in Namaskar. Namaskar is a Sattva predominant impression on the mind, an action that maintains the rich heritage of Indian culture. Namaskar is a simple and beautiful act of expression of divine qualities like devotion, love, respect and humility that endows one with Divine energy.

The meaning of the word is most beautiful and great. We are all part of the Supreme Being and so we bow to someone saying, 'I bow to "The Divine" in you or the God in you'.

If Namaskar is done just as a formality the act is not based on faith, the benefit derived from it is minimal. Along with faith it is essential that every religious act be correctly performed according to the Science of Spirituality, so that it gives complete benefit.

Doing Namaskar to each other: When meeting someone of the same age-group do Namaskar by joining the fingers and placing tips of the thumbs on the Anahat chakra (at the centre of the chest). This type of Namaskar increases the spiritual emotion of humility in the embodied soul. Sattva frequencies from the universe are attracted by the fingers (which act as an antenna) and are then transmitted to the entire body through the thumbs which have awakened the Anahat chakra. This activates the soul energy of the embodied soul. In addition, by doing Namaskar in this manner to each other, frequencies of blessings are also transmitted.



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Baba Brought Me to Shirdi

I am a Malaysian, came to Chennai in the month of March'08 for some project work. I had wished to go to Shirdi since long time, however being a foreigner and unsure of how to go to Shirdi and also not being familiar with to local dialects except English, I was checking here and there and remained idle worrying being a lady, how shall I reach there. However, I did pray to Baba to help me reach his place.

One fine day, one of my aunties called me from Malaysia, saying that she is going to Shirdi during her trip to PUNE and asked me whether I was interested to join her in Pune. I was excited as this was the only opportunity I had to see Baba and straight away agreed to her offer.

My aunty was arriving soon; I booked a flight to Mumbai quickly. However when i reached Mumbai I realized that I had only one hundred rupees with me. I had forgotten the remaining cash at Chennai while leaving in hurry. I started to pray to Baba to help me as I was without money. My worry level increased, however I trust in Baba that he will help me kept it to a level which I could bear.

With hundred rupees in hand and feeling of trust in heart I hired an auto from the airport and asked the driver to take me to the nearest State Bank of India branch. Even though I reached the bank, I did not have any clue why I was heading there as I did not have any account there. I paid the hundred rupees to the auto driver and I was left with nothing.

I met the bank manager and explained him my situation. While I was talking I was praying incessantly to Baba all the time. After few minutes of explaining, the manager generously allowed me to make a call to Chennai. I called my friend in Chennai and asked her to transfer some money in Bank manager's account which was done within an hour. I collected money from the manager and travelled to Pune and met my aunty there who was waiting for me to join her to Shirdi.

I cannot express how much the trip meant for me. I experienced the glory and kindness of Baba to its maximum at every moment. My level of devotion peaked when I reached Shirdi. I still feel myself fortunate that from my hometown called Butterworth, I am a lucky person to have visited Shirdi. I left Shirdi with Baba's grace and love enveloping me and mentally I made a resolve to construct a temple of Baba back in my hometown in Malaysia. I would consider my life worthwhile if I can fulfill this dream in my life.

Devotee's Experiences

Several devotees have sent their experiences with Sai Baba to us and we aim to publish as much as possible here. Thank you to all the members for sharing their spiritual experiences with all of us.

Experience 1

Once I had prayed to our Sai that I will bring my dad to Shirdi if I get selected in my Interview. With Sai's blessings I cleared my first round of interview. The next day was my second round of interview and when I was doing my second round of interview I had asked my dad to sit in the reception of the company and read Sai Satcharitha till my interview gets over. And so did my dad. Interview was over and once when I came home I prayed to Baba saying that if things go well, I will come to Shirdi with my dad. And with his blessings only everything came well and I got selected in one of the best and the biggest software firm. There was only 15 days left for my date of joining and I did not have time to plan for a Shirdi trip. As I got re-located from my home town for around 6 months my vow to Baba was pending. After coming back to my hometown I had planned many a times but something or the other would come in between say work, family occasions etc which kept me not fulfilling my vow for a long period of 2 years after my entry to my first job.



One afternoon during weekend I was in my afternoon nap as I was so tired after my long week's tiresome job at office. I had a dream in which my dad came and opened my bedroom door and he woke me up and told "Come we'll go to Shirdi". I immediately woke up. I did not see my dad nearby. I ran in search of my dad and asked him whether he came to my bedroom and uttered something. My dad's response was a "No. I did not even move from my place for the past 2 hours." After hearing this I came to know that it was a dream which Baba had given me to remind me of my pending vow. In fact I was so happy and proud at home after getting such a dream. I kept telling everyone at home that "Baba came in my dream and personally called me to Shirdi". I really became serious and somehow adjusted my hectic work at office

and made a plan to Shirdi. But as my dad was not able to make it up for the trip I took my mom and my brother. In no time I planned for another trip and took my dad also with me.

I am really blessed to step into Shirdi thrice in my life so far. This time I had prayed to Sai that I would like to come to Shirdi every year with his blessings that would make it possible for me. Only with Sai's blessing, my silent/secret prayer which I had posted earlier can happen. I hope with all my heart that my faith in him will get me success. I also hope that he will never make me fall down in this important prayer of my life as he knows that, if I fall here, then, for sure it will be very difficult for me to get up and move my life forward.

He had only made me think everything, he had only made me do everything and he is still making me do everything.

Experience 2

I was a person who did not have faith in living Gods like Sai. In such a state I never knew about Shirdi Sai Baba. Once I happened to take my friend to a devi temple for our prayer. On the way to the devi temple there is a Shirdi Sai Baba's temple, though I cross the path daily I never go to Sai's temple as I did not have faith. On that day when my friend crossed the temple she said "Hey Shirdi Sai's temple" come we shall pray here and go. I told her a strict "No". I asked her to go in and worship but told her not to call me or force me. But she did not hear me. She just pulled me inside the temple. The moment I stepped into the temple I just had one thought "Whichever God you are. I don't know you. I have been forcibly pulled inside the temple. As I have stepped into your place without a little faith please do not put my family or me into troubles. Really sorry to come inside your temple without having faith. It was my friend who pulled me in". Thinking all these I just stood aside till my friend finished her prayers.

After that I fought with her for pulling me inside the temple and scolded her not to force me to come inside a holy place when I do not have faith. After this incident we went to devi's temple for prayers.

After this incident I happened to go to pune to my friend's house and her mom had plans of having a Shirdi trip. As I was staying at their place I also went with their family to Shirdi. After stepping the Shirdi soil, I really came to know that Baba had only pulled me to him according to his wish.

After my trip from pune to my town I also had Baba come in my dream. From there on after reading Sai satcharita that was bought by my friend's mom. I really felt that Baba wanted me to be his devotee. Otherwise how would have I reached Shirdi so unexpectedly.

I still thank my friend and my friend's family for being a messenger for me to reach Baba's feet...Great is Baba's leela. From that time onwards am a staunch devotee of Shirdi Sai. He is with me always holding me tight and I am sure he will never let me go.

I am in a situation now where Baba can only help me and bless me. Please Baba help me and make my prayers true!!!

Experience 3

"Sairam,

I would like to share my experiences on Sai's punyathithi 9th oct 2008. We had invited 6 families for the puja. Since it was a working day only the ladies were able to come as we have scheduled it in the morning. Just couple of days before the puja 3 of my friends called



and said they will not be able to participate in the puja due to the so called forbidden days. I was little upset and was telling Sai, Sai I planned to perform this puja with your permission. Now I don't understand where the mistake is whether I had any bad intentions in my mind/ego and so on. Sai told about this to my husband he Said don't worry u don't need to worry about the counts u just need to do the puja with full devotion and faith. I accepted his statement as I too know that Baba needs faith and devotion.

On the day of the puja I told Sai, Sai I will not be reducing the quantity and will be cooking prasad for 6 families as per scheduled you need to come with devotees and participate in the puja and bless us all.

What a miracle!!! my neighbor who was to come back from vacation on 9th eve came on 8th eve itself, and my long time wish is to get cooked brinjal dish with curd - (mentioned in Sai satcharitra)from a resident of pune , by the grace of Baba I happened to meet on 8th aft a friend (whom I got to know a couple of months ago.) I was checking with her about the recipe and she happily Said she herself would come and cook on 9th morning, I told her about the puja she was so happy as she has newly come to U.S. she was very happy about attending puja, and told me that her sis is Sai devotee. Three of my

friends who could not participate in the puja they had sent their husband to collect prasad so it became 8 families.

My husband was not in town on that day and I have two sons ages 7 and 3 yrs. I was telling Baba, you have to give me a helping hand to perform all my work in time so that we could do the puja without much delay. My friends they all came well before the time, each one did their best. We performed the puja and everything went on well. Including my friends kids there were 4 little ones 2-3yrs old they were all so good and watched the puja. In fact there was a 30days baby too.

In fact in the afternoon looking at the prasad my friends were saying why did u cook so much who is going to finish all this. I Said Sai, will send devotees, its okay if it is excess. Exactly u can't just imagine I just had one spoon of each dish of prasad to save for my husband who was to land on 10th night and all the dishes got exhausted except sweet. One of my friends she came with her family at 10.30 night to have Baba's darshan and had Prasad. I was thinking I was not able to go to temple just then my neighbor came to us saying they r going to temple, I was so happy and packed some prasad and sent with her.

I was still not getting any clue of Sai participating in the puja and I did not get sleep until 12 clock night and did not switch off the light and did not put my Sai also to sleep. Whenever I get such doubts I write to Sai and so I wrote chits to Sai, the chit said that Sai participated in the puja. Just then Sai wanted to give pill to my little one when Sai opened the medicine pouch Sai found Sai Dwarakamai photo was so happy seeing still I wanted one more clue.

Then I told myself okay Sai don't know how u came today u r not giving me any clue let me at least put u to sleep. Just then I found a colored printout of Sairam with the heading SAIVRATAKALPAM which was brought by my friend and she gave the same to me to make copy if Sai need. As soon as I saw the printout I started shedding tears, "OH SAI YOU HAD COME IN THE MORNING ITSELF IN THE FORM OF PRINTOUT THAT TOO THE SAME VRAT WHICH WE HAD PERFORMED AND IT WAS ME WHO DID NOT REALISE YOUR ARRIVAL. I carried the printout and hugged and wept and felt so happy and then I went to sleep. We took pictures of the puja I will forward it later.

What else we need from SAI than such a blissful day, HAIL TO SAIRAM, SAINATH MAHARAJ KI JAI.

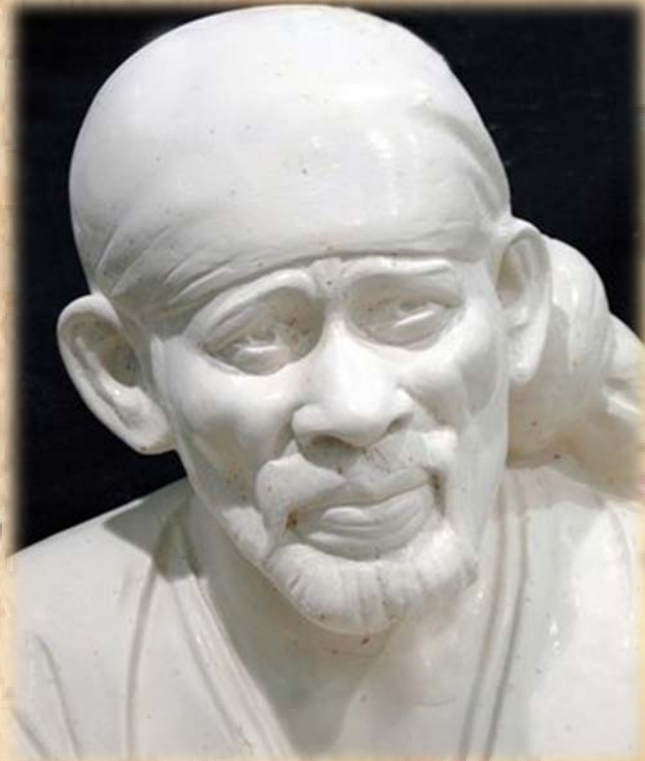
Experience 4

Submitted By: Rosy

I belong to Patiala, Punjab. I was a teacher at that time. I used to visit a temple near my house & pay obeisance to Sai Baba. I had no photo of Sai at my home & never used to

remember Him at any other time. It was only when I used to go to temple, that I would pay obeisance to Him.

One day my Mamiji called me up from Amritsar & said to my mother in law that she wanted me to accompany her for a trip to Shirdi with a group of around 15 persons. I got ready to go to Shirdi. She knew a person in Amritsar by the name of Mr. Suri. He is a follower of Sai Baba. He was also accompanying us to Shirdi. He was supposed to get my reservation done for Shirdi from Amritsar. When I asked my mamiji if I have to come to Amritsar, she refused saying that your reservation will be from Patiala. She said that Sai Baba has directed Mr. Suri to pick Rosy

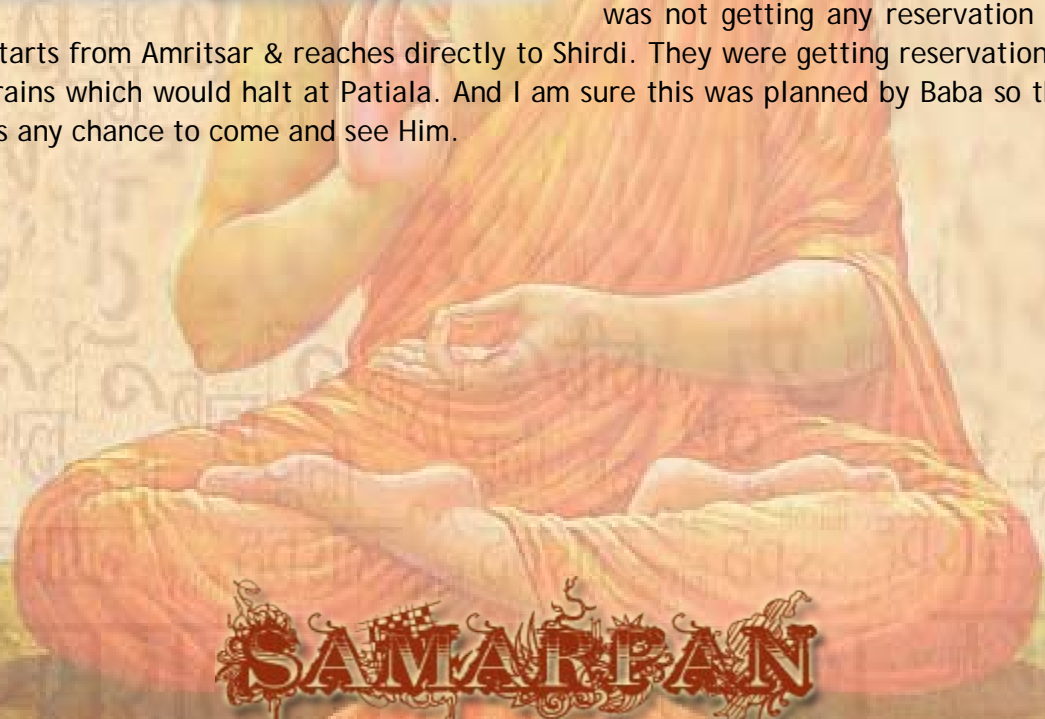


from Patiala. I was really shocked. I thought my mamiji was joking as such I never remembered Sai, how can He be so considerate for me! I thought of asking Mr. Suri myself.

Finally the day came. I went to Patiala railway station and the train arrived. My mamiji, her entire group along with Mr. Suri was there in the train. I asked Mr. Suri if it had really happened that Sai Baba directed him to pick me up from Patiala. He said 'Yes, it has happened & I too wished to meet you.'

This is how Sai Baba drew me towards him. Sai Baba is great!! Next year too, I planned to visit Shirdi. I called up my mamiji & asked her to get a reservation for me too. She laughed & said that she was not getting any reservation in train

which starts from Amritsar & reaches directly to Shirdi. They were getting reservation only in those trains which would halt at Patiala. And I am sure this was planned by Baba so that I do not miss any chance to come and see Him.



चिंतन

एक बार एक महात्मा ने एक कहानी सुनाई। उनके दो शिष्य थे। उनमें से एक वृद्ध था , उनका बहुत पुराना और पक्का अनुयायी कड़ी साधना करने वाला एक दिन उसने गुरु से पूछा , “मुझे मोक्ष या बुद्धत्व की प्राप्ति कब होगी ?” गुरु बोले, “अभी तीन जन्म और लगेंगे।” यह सुनते ही शिष्य ने कहा, “मैं बीसवर्षों से कड़ी साधना में लगा हूँ मुझे क्या आप अनाड़ी समझते हैं। बीससाल की साधना के बाद भी तीन जन्म और ! नहीं नहीं !” वह इतना क्रोधित और निराश हो गया कि उसने वहीं अपनी माला तोड़ दी, आसन पटक दिया और चला गया। दूसरा अनुयायी एक युवा लड़का था , उसने भी यही प्रश्न किया। गुरु ने उससे कहा, ‘तुम्हें बुद्धत्व प्राप्त करने में इतने जन्म लगेंगे, जितने इस पेड़ के पत्ते हैं।’ यह सुनते ही वह खुशी से नाचने लगा और बोला , “वाह, बस इतना ही ! और इस पेड़ के पत्ते तो गिने भी जा सकते हैं। वाह, आखिर तो वह दिन आ ही आएगा।” इतनी प्रसन्नता थी उस युवक की , इतना था उसका संतोष धैर्य और स्वीकृति भाव। कहते हैं , वह तभी , वहीं पर बुद्धत्व को उपलब्ध हो गया।

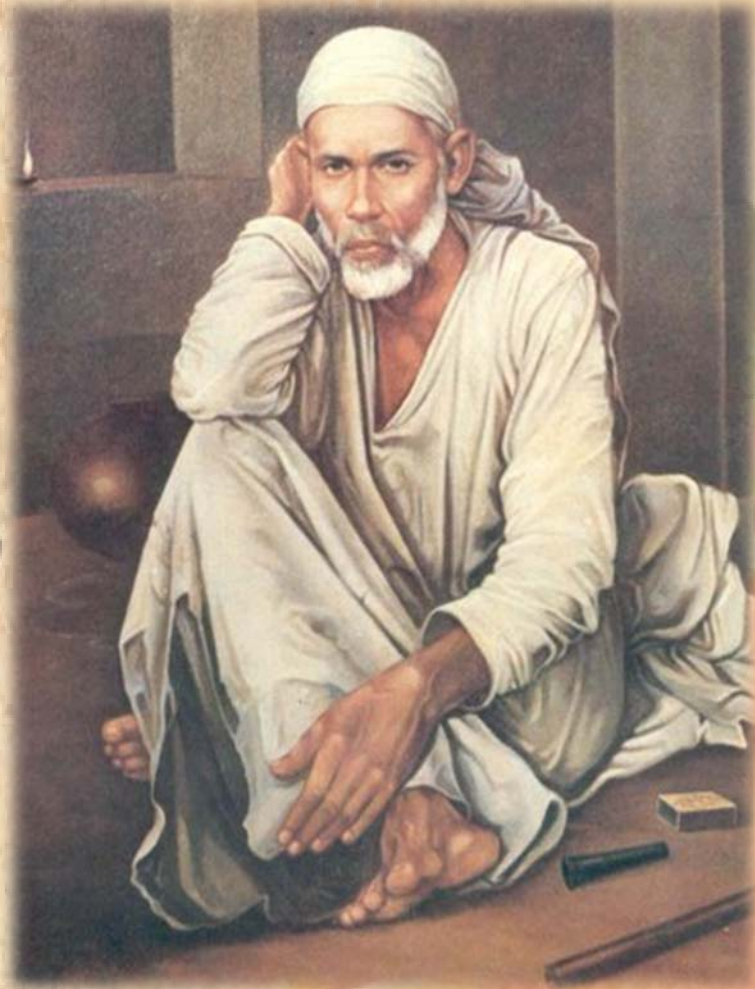
धैर्य ही बुद्धत्व का मूल मंत्र है अनन्त धैर्य और प्रतीक्षा। परन्तु प्रेम में प्रतीक्षा है तो कठिन। अधिकांश व्यक्ति तो जीवन में प्रतीक्षा निराश होकर ही करते हैं, प्रेम से नहीं कर पाते।

प्रतीक्षा भी दो प्रकार की होती है। एक निराश मन से प्रतीक्षा करना और निराश होते ही जाना। दूसरी है प्रेम में प्रतीक्षा , जिसका हर क्षण उत्साह और उल्लास से भरा रहता है। ऐसी प्रतीक्षा अपने में ही एक उत्सव है, क्योंकि मिलन होते ही प्राप्ति का सुख समाप्त हो जाता है। तुमने देखा , जो है उसमें हमें सुख नहीं मिलता, जो नहीं है, उसमें मन सुख ढूँढता है। उसी दिशा में मन भागता है। हाँ तो प्रतीक्षा अपने में ही एक बहुत बढ़िया साधना है हमारे विकास के लिए। प्रतीक्षा प्रेम की क्षमता और हमारा स्वीकृति भाव बढ़ाती है। अपने भीतर की गहराई को मापने का यह एक सुन्दर पैमाना है।



जीवन के लिये श्री साईं के उपदेश

"शिर्डी परम भाग्यशालिनी है, जहां एक अमूल्य हीरा है। जिन्हें तुम इस प्रकार परिश्रम करते हुए देख रहे हो, वे कोई सामान्य पुरुष नहीं हैं। अपितु , यह भूमि बहुत भाग्यशालिनी तथा महान् पुण्यभूमि है , इसी कारण इसे यह रत्न प्राप्त हुआ है।



केवल गत जन्मों के अनेक शुभ संस्कार एकत्रित होने पर ही ऐसा दर्शन प्राप्त होना सुलभ हो सकता है। यदि आप श्री साईं बाबा को एक दृष्टि भर कर देख लेंगे, तो आपको सम्पूर्ण विश्व ही साईंमय दिखलाई पड़ेगा।

यदि श्री साईं बाबा के उपदेशों का , जो कि वैदिक शिक्षा के समान ही मनोरंजक और शिक्षाप्रद है , ध्यानपूर्वक श्रवण एवं मनन किया जाए, तो भक्तों को अपने मनोवांछित फल की प्राप्ति हो जाएगी।

अपने भक्तों के कल्याण का सदैव ध्यान रखने वाले साईं कहते हैं:

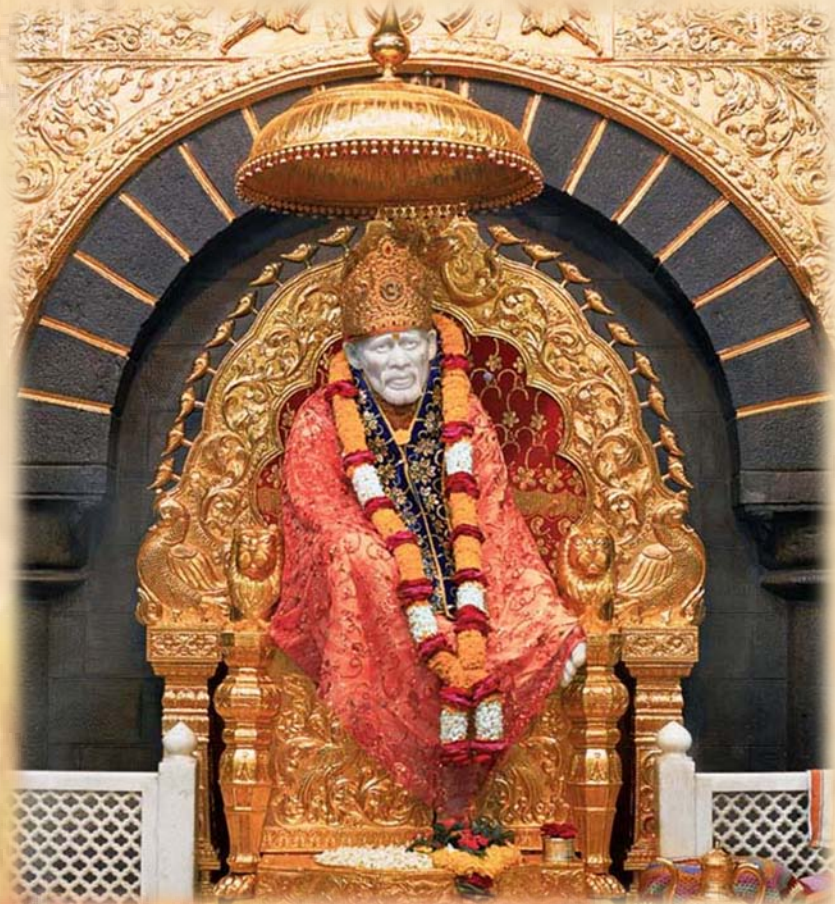
"जो प्रेमपूर्वक मेरा नामस्मरण करेगा, मैं उसकी समस्त इच्छायें पूर्ण

कर दूंगा। उसकी भक्ति मे उतरोत्तर वृद्धि होगी। जो मेरे चरित्र और कृत्यों का श्रद्धापूर्वक गा यन करेगा, उसकी मैं हर प्रकार से सदैव सहायता करूंगा"

साईं आगमन

श्री साईं नाथ की कृपा का एक और उदहारण मैं आप सभी के साथ बांटना चाहता हूँ । अपनी शादी से पहले बाबा से प्रार्थना की थी कि वह इस अवसर पर स्वयं पधार कर मुझ दास को कृतार्थ करें । घर पहुंच कर मैं बहुत सारी जिम्मदारियों में व्यस्त हो गया और इस प्रार्थना की मुझको सुध भी नहीं रही ।

अब आप सभी श्री साईंनाथ की कृपा का अवलोकन करें । ठीक मेरी शादी वाले दिन , दिनांक 24-02-08 को, मैं घर के अन्य कार्यों में काफी व्यस्त था कि अचानक बाहर किसी ने गेट खटखटाया, मैं बाहर निकला तो क्या देखता हूँ कि गेट पर एक साधू खड़ा है । या तो इसको अतिव्यस्तता कह लें या मेरी भ्रमित बुद्धि कि उस समय भी मुझे अपनी की हुयी प्रार्थना की नहीं याद आई । मैंने उस साधू से पूछा, " बाबा, क्या सेवा करें " । उत्तर मिला , "बेटा हम तो भोजन करने आये हैं" ।



यह उत्तर सुनते ही मस्तिष्क में बहुत सारी बातें एक साथ आयीं । मुझको याद आई मेरी वह प्रार्थना जो मैंने साईंनाथ से की थी । परन्तु उस साधू की वेशभूषा और चेहरा मोहरा साईंनाथ से मेल नहीं खाता था । इन विचारों के भंवर में ही मुझको याद आयीं 'साईं सद्चारित्र' में वर्णित उनकी कई लीलाएँ कि किस प्रकार साईंनाथ अपनी भक्तों के बुलावे पर कोई भी रूप रख कर पहुँच जाते हैं, चाहे वह श्री देव के यहाँ उद्यापन में शामिल होना हो , चाहे श्री हेमादपंत के यहाँ होली भोज पर शामिल होना हो या फिर श्री तखंड के यहाँ नैवेध्य ग्रहण करना हो ।

इस विचार के मन आते ही मेरी तो खुशी का ठिकाना न रहा | श्री नाथ स्वयं चल कर आये, इससे बड़ी बात और क्या हो सकती थी | मन में अद्भुत प्रसन्नता थी, न मैं कुछ बोल रहा था न ही वह कुछ बोल रहे थे | तृप्ति से भोजन करने के बाद, उन्होंने मुझको बुलाया और आशीर्वाद दिया | मैं जानता था कि वह कभी प्रकट नहीं करेंगे कि वह कौन है, वह तो सिर्फ अपने इस नादान बालक की मनोकामना को पूर्ण करने चले आये थे | इस कारण मैंने भी कोई अनर्गल प्रश्नोत्तर नहीं किया |

उनकी यही कृपा क्या कम थी कि मेरे द्वारा मेरी प्रार्थना का विस्मरण होने पर भी नाथ ने पधार कर मुझ मूर्ख को अपने आशीर्वाद से कृतार्थ किया | उस मालिक की कृपा का किस बुद्धि से आकलन करूँ, किस जबान से उनकी रहमत का वर्णन करूँ, यह नहीं समझ पाता बस यही जानता हूँ कि मेरे जीवन का हर क्षण उनकी दया से ही गुजर रहा है |

इस दुनिया में सभी संगी साथी मदद के लिये एक हाथ बढ़ा सकते हैं, पर मुझे तो मेरे साईं ने हजारों हाथों में संभल रखा है | ज्यादा कुछ कहने के लिये शब्द कम हैं मेरे पासशायद कभी भी नहीं हो पायेंगे इतने शब्द कि उस मालिक की रहमत का शुक्रिया अदा कर सकूँ | मेरे नाथ की मुझ पर दया के लिये मैं यही कह रहा हूँ

"लिये आ रहा था मैं बैचैन दिल को,
कि तू मिल गया दर पर आने से पहले |
मुझ पर तो साईं का इतना करम है,
मुझ पर मेरे मालिक का इतना करम है,
भरी मेरी झोली फैलाने से पहले |"

www.SpiritualIndia.org

About Spiritual India



Spiritual India (www.spiritualindia.org) is a nonprofit initiative for spreading spirituality present in its various forms. The website is a store house of Bhajans, wallpapers, spiritual books and other spiritual resources. In addition the website has two forums on Shirdi Sai Baba (<http://forum.spiritualindia.org>) and Sathya Sai Baba (<http://sathyasaiBaba.spiritualindia.org/forum/>). These two forums give spiritual seekers a platform to interact, share experiences and learn from each other.

Please send your feedback at mag@spiritualindia.org.



SAMARPAN

www.SpiritualIndia.org

Samarpan – Submission open for March 2009 issue

Samarpan is the first online magazine on Sai Baba of Shirdi. If you like to publish your creation in Samarpan, please send us an email to mag@spiritualindia.org with your entry.

All the approved entries will be published in March 2009 edition. You can send the following items:

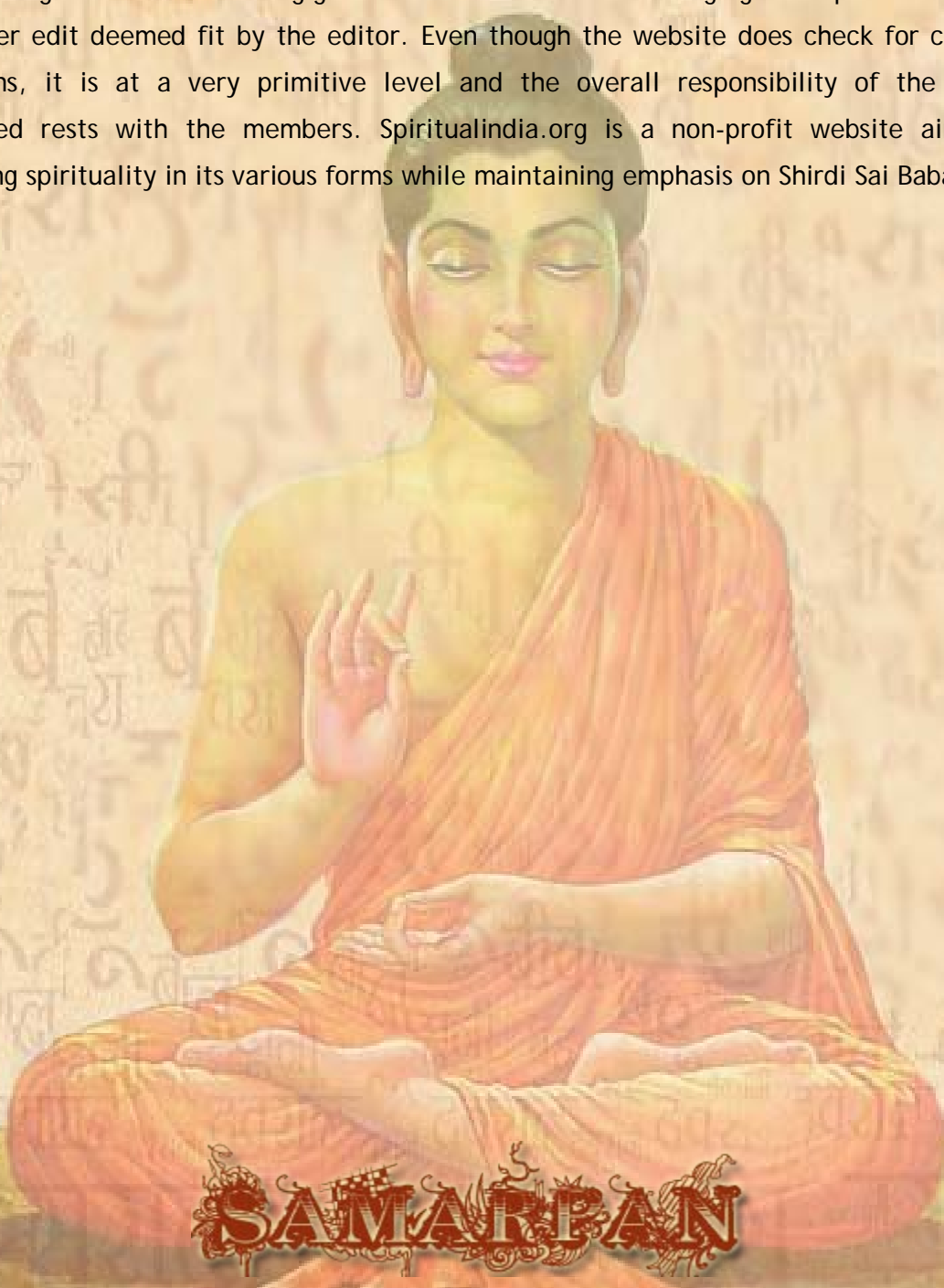
- Spiritual Article
- Mythological stories
- Poems
- Bhajans
- Spiritual Experiences with Sai Baba
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Your article should be original. Please do not submit any copyrighted article. Please send your article latest by March7, 2009.

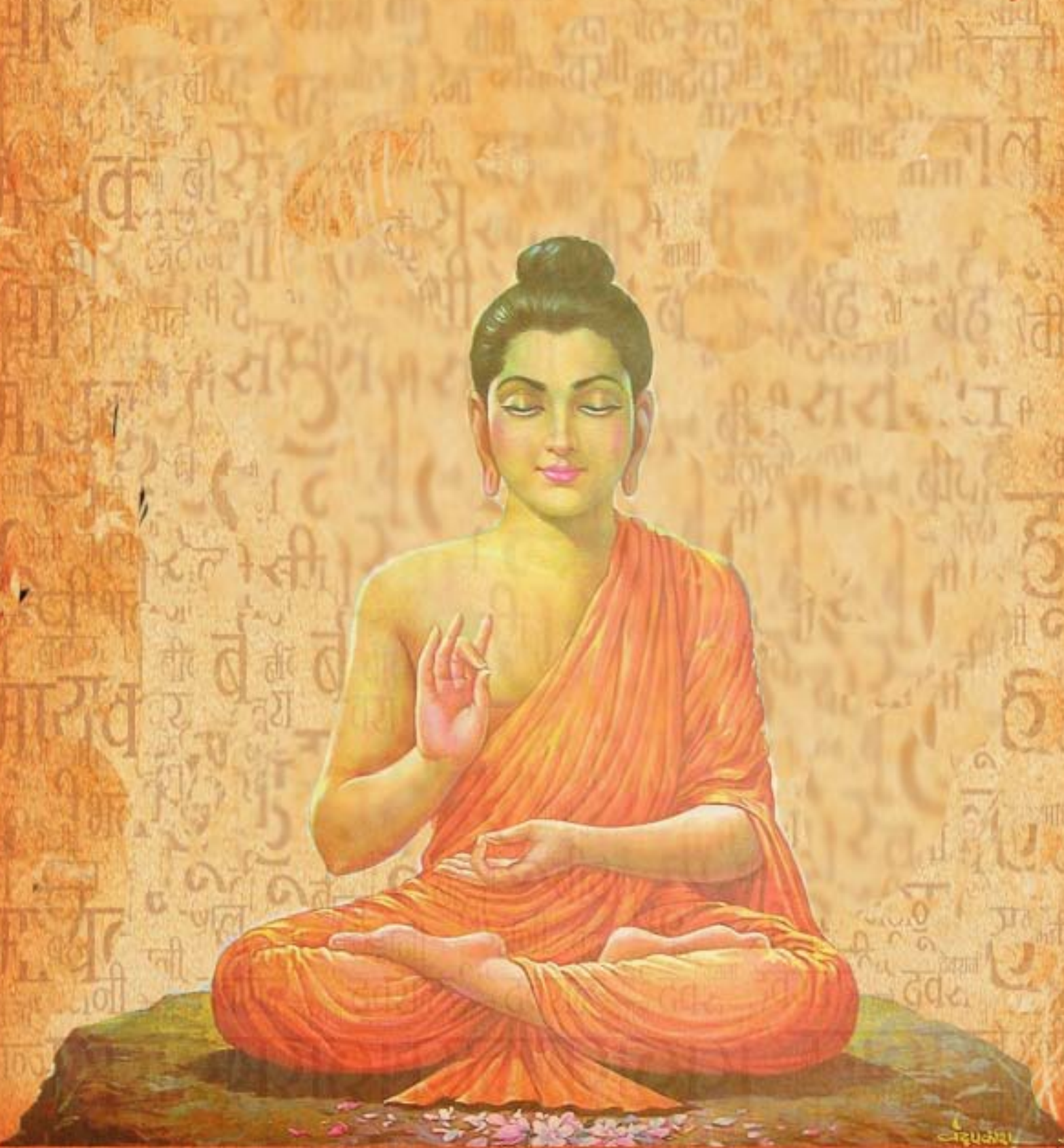


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Arushi