

VII

4MAY, 1936, POONA

Raguvir B.Purandhare, S/oh Bhaskar Purandhare, aged 60, Brahmin, Deshasth Shukla Yajur Veda (Kelva Mahim, Thana District - originally) now at Bandra, Retired clerk of G.I.P. Rly Sainath Ashram, 59-B, Perry Road, Bandra, states:

I heard first of Sai Baba in 1909 and went to see him. I was always desirous of association with Sadhus - saintly people. I heard he was a Saint, so I felt attracted to him. He appeared in my dream and called me to Shirdi. At that time my elder daughter (then aged six months) was very ill and so my mother objected to my going. I still persisted in going to Shirdi and I took my wife, that child and my mother with me to Shirdi. I remained there (first visit) for thirteen days. On the third day of my visit, the child got alright. Baba did not permit me to go back till the thirteenth day. I did not ask him about any matter. He told my mother that for seven centuries, he (Sai Baba) was connected with me. **“I will not forget him - I will always remember him even if he is away more than 2000 miles. I will not eat even a bit without him,”** said Baba.

Then I started away to Nasik with his permission. We went back to Dadar where I was living. My wife got an attack of cholera and the doctor gave her up as hopeless. I gave Baba's *Udhi* and *Tirtha* to her. I saw Baba at the side of the Datta Mandir in front of my Dadar house and he ordered me to give the *Udhi* and *Tirtha* and so I gave her the *udhi* and *Tirtha*. Half an hour later, she had recovered sufficient warmth and the doctor felt hopeful of her recovery and she recovered. Since then I visited Baba very often and stayed long periods at Shirdi in obedience to Baba's order. Baba would occasionally ask Mr.H.S.Dixit to write to me to go over. I have visited Baba often with Dixit.

I went with no worldly motives, though I was very poor; I was an orphan. He told me to continue my previous *Upasana*. I was and am fond of worshipping Vishnu and of prayers. I continued the same. He asked me several times for Rs.2 only. Once I asked him what for he asked always for Rs.2. He then said "**It is not these Rupees I want. I want *Nishta*, i.e., concentrated faith and Saburi (patience).**" I replied I had given these - faith in him and was patiently awaiting progress. He told me to keep up *Nishta* and to be strict truth always with you. Then I will be always with you wherever you are and at all times." I promised to try my best and wanted his help for controlling my mind. "Please get that done by me" I told him. He agreed. All this was at my very first visit. He then told me to buy my own house. I had only Rs. 35 salary. By his grace, in three years time I got the house. At once as soon as he said "Buy". I purchased a plot and began to build and in three years, the building was finished at Bandra wherein I am still living. "Do not ask for a single pie from anyone. I will help you myself." I was slow at first in building. He threw stones at me for my delay. Nana Saheb Chandorkar and H. S. Dixit offered to build it for me. But Baba would not permit it. I then took a loan from my office of Rs. 500 and the built it. It was a lonely building in a field. Baba said that he was sitting himself there and guarding me and my young wife. So I stayed on. I lost my wife in 1920.

He often insisted on my adherence to truth. I am now joint treasurer of Baba's Sansthan. After Baba's demise, he would appear to me and order me to go and stay at Shirdi

and attend to duties, relating to Sansthan. I see and recognize his control over me in all details of what I have to do and am doing.

He directed me to cooperate with Kaka Saheb Dixit (i.e., H.S.Dixit) and told Kaka Saheb to cooperate with me. We two acted together as intimates.

He never talked to me of *Dhyana*. He never asked anybody to pray to him only. "Continue your usual prayers, be it to *Shanker* or to Vishnu," he said. He used to give Darshan to the devotee in that form. e.g., S or V. or Goddess, whichever the devotee adored.

About 1913- My mother was long pressing me to go to Pandharpur. I did not mention the matter to Baba to get the necessary permission. Baba himself broached the subject of going to Pandharpur and asked her when she was hoping to start. Then Baba gave my wife and mother *Darshan* of himself as Vithoba and Rukmai, at Shirdi Masjid. They were highly pleased and did not want to go to Pandharpur. He often asked her afterwards when she would go to Pandharpur. She always replied thereafter that her God was there at Shirdi which was her Pandharpur*. When my wife was ill once before her delivery, Baba appeared in a dream and applied udhi and she got up and cried, "Baba is come and applying *Udhi* fresh and hot from the *Dhuni*. My body is burning. So get up." She got alright. Like this, Baba has appeared several times.

When in great difficulty, I always cried before his picture at home and he would then appear before me at once and comfort me. Nana SC told me of Baba's sending a man with Udhi to help his daughter in her delivery in ill health at jamner; that a tongawalla and horses not sent by him fetched the messenger and disappeared. That messenger is a Ramgir Gosavi still alive at Shirdi. Baba used to call him Babugir. Nana's two sons, Babu and Bapu, are at Kalyan in Chandorkar wada, Kalyan." A daughter of his is living at Poona. Nana was proud of his Sanskrit knowledge. Sai Baba asked

him to explain tadviddha pranipatena etc., and he did. Baba corrected him and explained it better. This is mentioned in (Satcharitra) 2ch. on that matter: Ch.31,32, &33. of “Bhakta Lilamrit” by D.G. and I Ch. in “Santa Katamrit” by D.G: deal with Sai Baba and “Bhavartha Deepika” by Dabholkar.

Sri Sai never talked in my presence about *Adwaita*, etc. He said always **“Allah will protect,” “God protects us all the poor, etc.”** Garibko Alla balid hai, Alla accha karega. He never said in my presence that He (Sai) is in all. But he often identified himself with God.

He said Jo koye yemasajidme aave, jiska masajidahe payi laga. uska bedha par hai. whoever steps into the Masjid, reached his goal. Jaisi jiski niyath, vaiyasi uska barkat If you act in a good way good really will follow.”

I do not remember his talking of Pranayama, Kundalini, etc., and I never cared for these. N.S.Chandorkar said Baba knew Sanskrit. Baba took up Bhagavata etc., and pointed out passages to people as specially suitable for them. This supports N.S.C.

Babā's foreknowledge of his own death:

Two years before 1918 Dusserah, i.e., Dusserah of 1916, Baba burnt all his kupny, *langote* and kerchief which he took off saying **“This is my *Simollangan*”** simollanghan People make *Shami* worship and present *Shami* leaves to each other and cross their frontier, as though they were having a successful raid on that day. When people asked him why he burnt out his clothes on this special holiday, he said “This is my *Simolangan*” i.e., crossing the border. Two

hours later, he wore new cloths, Kupni, *langotee* and headkerchief just as all people wear new clothes on that day. He remained two hours naked after burning the clothes he wore and was fierce. People forced him to wear these new clothes then, which were always ready by the dozen.

Baba told Ramachandra Dada Patel (who was ill then) that Tatya Patel the head of his family 'would go away on this day, after two years'. Two years after that, Tatya was seriously ill. Baba also was ill for a week before Dusserah; Baba gave up the body and Tatya recovered. So people say that Baba gave up his own life to save Tatya's i.e., in exchange of Tatya's. Such examples we find in the lives of other saints. Even now Baba is saving life. Here is an instance.

In 1932 - I was hopelessly ill of Sciatica and Rheumatism. I then saw *Yama's dutas* near me. But Sai Baba came up, sat on my bed, took my hand on his knee and prevented *Yamadutas* touching me or my bed. I was saved.

I was very passionate, i.e., hot tempered. He told me often **"If anybody comes and abuses you or punishes you, do not quarrel with him. If you cannot endure it, speak a simple word or two or else go away from the place. But do not battle with him and behave like that. Isaka vada bahi (barobari) karana nai. I feel sick and disgusted when you quarrel with others."** He said this to me and to others also several times.

Twelve or fifteen days before SaiBaba's death, he drove away myself and Dixit to Bombay. He told us, **"I will go further and you follow me."** He gave us permission to go, at the Masjid saying, **"My Turbat (Tomb) will speak; My name also will speak, My mutti, i.e., clay will give you replies"** and told us to clear away. We went away in a bullock cart. He had no disease at the time and we did not expect his death then. He had spoken these words previously and we did not understand their import or importance. Baba never talked in my presence of the goal of life or about Mukti, or *Swarga* or Paradise. He said once **"I will take my kaka in vimana."**

In 1926 on an Ekadasi in perfect peace and talking of Baba, Kaka Dixit suddenly expired. Baba has often said to me and to others. **"He who is mine, even if he dies 1000 miles off, I will drag him to myself just as we draw a sparrow with a thread"** and to many people he said **"I will not allow my man**

to get away from me". I saw some devotees dying at Shirdi on Ekadasi. They must have got *Swarg* thus. Baba did not, to my knowledge describe *kylash*, *Vykuntha*, *Swarga* or *Moksha*.

In 1914-16 or so, Baba was asked by a lady "When will I get a good birth?" changal divas kevaha ye illu.

Baba: Dusara janm changal ye iil - **"In your next birth"** Next day, she jumped into a well to end her life but was saved. He occasionally foretold the future. I never asked about my own future. "Taking in *Vimana*" means *Sadgati*.

Baba advised one Sagun Meru Naik to put some ghee on the rice and place the rice with ghee in the *Dhuni*(fire) as an offering and then bring the rest to him. This was in his (Sai Babá's) lifetime. Ever since then, S.M.N is doing this. Baba ate that food. That food was brought from his own house. Previous to that, his Naivedya had no ghee. The Naivedya is still continued by that man. (I have not seen Baba eating animal food). He told Fakirs to utter *Fatya* when Moslems made offerings.

Once he asked me to give him all the old copper coins I had. I gave him all I had. I don't know what he did with them. He had old coins tied neatly in a cloth (so as not to make any jingling noise) and kept them in his side pockets. He asked me for *Dakshina*. I gave up everything. Once I thought I had nothing left of all my coins. Then Baba said, **"you have still a two anna piece in you pocket. See"** I saw and found it and gave him that also. He used to completely exhaust the finances of many in this way. I do not know with what object he did that. Some people asked him why he wanted so much money. Baba replied **"I am not asking of every one. I ask only from the man whom the Fakir (God) points out. But in exchange, I have to give that man ten times the money for my own use. I have no family etc."** He used to give the money freely to all people, singers, *tamashi*, Fakirs etc. He used to bring lots of fuel for his *Dhunimayi* mother fire at the *Dwarkamayi*.

The tulasi grove (Brindavan) at the mosque was put up after 1909-1911 or 1912. We all helped in that. The *Mantap* (or tin shed) in front of the Masjid was put up in 1912. G.S.Khaparde explained *Panchadashi*, etc., in Sathe's

wada. Upasani Baba also attended there. I never attended, as I was busy with works always. Balvant Ramachandra Noolkar was a retired Sub Judge. He came, lived and died at Shirdi.

Sai Baba was seriously ill in 1915. He had Asthma. He would not eat anything then. He was breathing hard; I cried. Baba asked me **“Why cry?”** I said “I cannot see this state of yours. Baba said, **“Don’t fear. In two or four days I will be alright, Allah has given me this sickness and he will make me alright, within that period. You need not cry. I remembering you the last two or three days and told Kaka to write to you to come.”** Kaka did not write. Sai Baba said **“Do not write, he is coming himself”**. Infact, some how I went up during his illness, not knowing he was ill. He never took medicines for his illness as a rule. Even during his illness, he was supported and carried by the devotees to his begging place. There he would beg and come back and yet not eat the food. He carried on his usual routine of begging, lending, etc., even during all that illness. One day, during his illness, he climbed up the terrace of one house through a staircase, then went over to the next house terrace and over Radhakrishna’s. Then a man lifted him up and brought him down to the ground and that man was paid by Baba, 3 or 4 rupees. Baba then said. **“We must not get the labour of anyone for nothing.”** I saw all this. An ambulance chair was then brought for him, but he never used it. Malegaonkar Fakir Baba (called Bade Baba, Bade Mia by Sai Baba) was getting most moneys.

In 1920 when my wife was seriously ill of influenza, she felt sorry, she could not attend the *Urs* Ramanavami. That night Sai Baba appeared in her dream and said **“Do not cry. I will take you for the *Urs*.”** She got slightly better next morning and narrated this to me. Illness still continued and she expired on Ramanavami Crying “Baba, Baba” to the last. On the Ramanavami flag processions; 10 A.M., 12 Noon; Hindi Kirtan of Ram *Janma* begins after the procession ends and flags are hoisted. Then Moslems begin reading their quaran. They would take Sai Baba’s sandals and go round with it in procession. We, Hindus, would accompany it. They would accompany our flag procession, so in the Arati it is recited that Sai Baba has taken birth to obliterate the difference between

Hindus and Mohammedans Yavanaswarupi etc., I saw he had a hole in his ear and when he bathed naked, he had no been circumcised, so far as I could see. Megha worshipped Sai Baba as “Shanker” standing on one leg. Sai Baba told him in a dream to draw the figure of a *Trisul* on the wall of Sathe’s Wada in which Megha lived. Megha did so. A *lingam* was added soon after and is still there, with Sai Baba’s permission and was worshipped by Megha.

Megha narrated an incident that he wanted to give Sai Baba a *Gangasnan*, i.e., a bath in the water of Ganges (Godavari). But Baba said, **“Wet this head only. Head is the chief. Put a little water on it.”** But Megha went to Godavari at Kopergoan and brought a tubful of water and poured it all over Sai Baba’s body. However only the head was wetted. Even the clothes were not wetted. I did not see this, I have heard Sai Baba sing a song once or twice. He would gladly hear people sing to him.

Occasionally, what Sai Baba talked to us, would be found when we went at once to hear *Pothi*, i.e., the reading of sacred works at Sathe’s wada where Bapu Jog read Eknathi Bhagavat. I had several experiences of the sort. I cannot remember details of even one instance.

5TH MAY, 1936.

Baba used to be near the Dhuni, early morning facing south, leaning on a post and doing something. I cannot say what, People were not allowed to go near, i.e, even 50 feet. The *Sevakaries* could carry on their usual service or work of clearing, replenishing fuel for Dhuni, etc. No others could go so near as they. He used to utter words like *Yade Haq*. They were seldom clear or audible to us at some distance. *Allah Malik*, *Allah Vali Hai*, i.e., God is the Master and Protector, he used to say often and at all times.

I once got leave from the office at Bandra and from my mother to go. The next evening I had to start for Shirdi. But during the night, Sai Baba appeared to me in my dream and said, **“Don’t come,”** I wondered why. The morning after I was to have left, there was a strike in the workshop. If I had left overnight as I first proposed my officers would have suspected me to be at the bottom of the strike and I would be in

trouble. Sai Baba saved me from that.

Yashwantrao, grandson of Raghunath Mukund, Engineer, went with me to Sai Baba in 1911 or 1912 at Ashad Guru Purnima when cholera was raging in Shirdi. He did not wish to return before I did. But Baba told him to go and gave him his *udhi*. But he did not wish to start. He stayed on though I also told him to go since he had leave of Baba. That night he had an attack of cholera to which he succumbed at Shirdi the next morning. Sai Baba went to Megha, when the later was dying, shed tears there and covered the corpse with flowers and went to the funeral ground where Megha's corpse was burnt. Megha lay ill for two or three days before death. Baba used to give him *Udhi* then.

Once Sai Baba prevented me from going away to Bombay even after 4.30 P.M. The last train at Kopergoan for Manmad would leave at 6.30 P.M. It was a Bazaar day (Monday) I got a bullock cart. Baba told Rege to go with me. We reached the river at 6.45 P.M. and reached the Kopergaon station at about 7.45 P.M. The train had gone away. There was a special train, however, running that night which stopped at 8.15 P.M. at Kopergaon and took us to Manmad and thence we reached our homes. There were no trains to Manmad from Kopergoan at night, i.e., after 6.30 P.M. in those days.

On the very first occasion of my seeing Baba, he told me to go to "*Sala*". Mr. Dixit explained to me that "*Sala*" was the residence of Radhakrishna Ayi. I went there. She did not open the door, but inquired from within who I was, etc. I replied. But she would not let me in. After waiting for about ten minutes, I went to the Masjid. Baba asked me if I went to "*Sala*". I said I did but had been kept outside the bolted door by Ayi. Baba told me to go again, I obeyed. This time Ayi opened the door, fell at my feet, held my feet fast and was crying. I was greatly puzzled, as I had not know her nature. But from that day forward, she loved me up to her death, with a deep motherly love. Thenceforward, she was all in all to me. I spent every minute of my time at Shirdi in service to Sai Baba, in accordance with the directions of Ayi. She made me work hard all day long for Baba, mostly at her residence, often at Masjid and elsewhere. Radhakrishna Ayi was a per-

sonality of a strange sort. She would sing charmingly and with deep emotion. Suddenly, she would break into laughter or melt into tears and either continue slowly with choked voice or stop the song altogether by her sobs.

Often Baba detained me at Shirdi, even after my leave expired. In 1912, e.g., he thus detained me. When Syama or anyone mentioned that I had to go back lest my boss should find fault with me, Baba would reply **“I am his boss”** and keep me on. Thus in that year after long overstaying my leave, I returned and went at 1 P.M. on a Thursday to the office. The foreman of the shop called upon me to explain and reported about my absence without leave. I handed him my resignation. My officer, Mr. Wilson, the Deputy Superintendent, sent for me and asked me where I had been. I said I was at Shirdi. He knew everything, tore my resignation paper and put it into the waste paper basket. The foreman was discontented but was powerless to do any harm. The chief told the foreman that I was not his, i.e., the foreman’s servant or subordinate. In six months time I was promoted and that foreman became my subordinate.