

The Greatness of Darshan

I bow down to Sree Ganesh

I bow down to Sree Saraswati

*I bow down to the **Guru***

I bow down to the Family Deity

I bow down to Sree Sita-Ramachandra

I bow down to Sree Sadguru Sainath.

1. Now I bow down to the saints and the virtuous. Their merciful glances immediately burn mountains of sins and wash away the impurities of the *Kaliyug*.
2. Their heaps of obligations cannot be repaid in this birth, or in many future births. Their casual talks are full of valuable lessons for our welfare and confer imperishable happiness.
3. Their minds do not know any difference such as 'this is ours and that is yours'. Such worldly differentiation never arises in their minds.
4. In the previous chapter, the Guru's greatness was described to some extent. Now, in this chapter, listeners hear of the importance of *UDI*.
5. Baba repeatedly asked and took *Dakshina* from which he did charity, helping the poor and the needy. From the balance, he purchased a lot of firewood which he piled in heaps.
6. He offered the dry wood as an oblation in the *Dhuni*, in front of him. The ashes from the burnt wood which were considerable, were distributed to the devotees.
7. At the time of departure from Shirdi, while seeking leave from Baba, it was customary to give *Udi*. All the devotees knew this.
8. In fact when Baba asked for *Udi* to be brought, it was felt that it was really the permission granted to leave and they felt happy to return home.
9. Also, when one was residing at Shirdi, Baba did not give *Udi* to anyone in the afternoon, morning or evening. One was sent back empty handed.
10. This was a daily routine. But what was the significance of that *udi* for which the *dhuni* was kept alight perpetually in the Masjid. Why was this done daily?
11. What did Baba hint at, or have in his mind, when giving the 'vibhuti'? "All this visible phenomena in the universe is as transient as the ashes. Bear this definitely in mind.

12. The body itself, like that drywood, is made up of the five elements, and remains to endure life. When the life span is over, it falls dead and will be certainly reduced to ashes.
13. You and I will undergo the same stages. So that you should remember this and I should also be aware of it, day and night, I give the *vibhuti*.
14. The entire universe is full of *Maya*. Brahman is the only reality, while the universe is illusory. Bear this in mind that this is what the *udi* teaches.
15. No person belongs to anyone in this world - be they wife, son, uncles or nephews. Naked you come and naked you will return. The *udi* is a reminder of it".
16. If this *udi* is applied to the body, then physical and mental sufferings are cured. But the true significance of the *udi* is deep and it is meant for discriminatory detachment.
17. Giving as much as possible as '*dakshina*' develops a tendency towards detachment. Later on one is able gradually to know what detachment is.
18. Even if one acquires detachment, if it is not accompanied by discretion, it is useless. Therefore, honour the *vibhuti*.
19. To bring together discrimination and detachment both *udi* and *dakshina* are linked. Unless we have both, at the same time, it is very difficult to cross over the river of existence.
20. The young and the old came for *darshan* and humbled themselves at Baba's feet. Whenever they returned Baba gave them *vibhuti*.
21. The *Dhuni* was kept alight regularly in the Masjid. It burned day in and day out, throughout the year. Baba gave a handful of the ashes from it, when bidding farewell.
22. He gave the ashes as '*prasad*', smeared it with his thumb on the forehead and together with it placed his hand on the head, wishing for the well-being of the devotees.
23. Ashes, *vibhuti* and *udi* are three words with the same meaning. This was the *prasad* distributed daily in unlimited quantity by Baba.
24. This world is like the *udi*. This is the real importance of *udi*. Bear it in mind and you will realise it one day.
25. Like the drops of water on the petals of the lotus, this evanescent body will fall, therefore abandon all pride in it. The giving of *udi* showed this.
26. This expanse of the whole universe is like a '*rangoli*' design drawn with ashes. Think about the illusory nature of the world and the reality abides only in the *Udi*.

27. *Udi* is only dust. All existence, which has name and form, ultimately reaches the same state. Whatever changes are observed in the world, they are only for name's sake. This is experienced from the never-changing qualities of dust.
28. When Baba was in a joyful mood, he used to sing. The listeners should hear with respect an interesting snatch from one of his songs.
29. "O playful Ram has come! And brought sacks of *Udi*", were the two lines he sang. Whenever he was in a happy and joyous mood, he sang this refrain repeatedly, in a melodious voice.
30. In brief, how many sacksful of *udi* has this *dhuni* produced? None is capable of counting them. This *udi* is supremely beneficial.
31. After listening to the deep purport in giving this *udi*, and its spiritual and devotional significance, the listeners want to know its effect on purely worldly matters of health and prosperity.
32. *Udi* has this quality also. Otherwise how could its importance increase? Sai is proficient in showing the path of salvation. After helping the devotees in mundane matters, he leads them to spiritual progress.
33. There are innumerable stories about the ways in which the *udi* benefitted the people for their health and prosperity. But mindful of the length of this book, I shall briefly relate just a few of them.
34. Once there lived in Nashik, a Brahmin cook called Narayan Motiram, whose surname was Jani.
35. Similarly, there was another devotee of Baba called Ramchandra Vaman Modak. This Narayanrao was in his service; and was also a faithful devotee of Baba.
36. When Baba was in body, Narayanrao went to Shirdi with his mother for Baba's *darshan*.
37. At that time Baba had suggested to her that the time had come for her son to cease serving others. "Now his connection is only with me.
38. Enough of this servility. It is better to have one's own business". Later on, after a short while, God was merciful to him.
39. His dependence on his job ended and he began to enjoy his freedom. He established a boarding and lodging place of his own.

40. He named it '*Anandashram*', worked hard for it, and soon turned it into a flourishing business which gave him satisfaction.
41. Seeing how things transpired, his faith in Sai increased and later grew into firm devotion which was confirmed by experience.
42. The truth of Sai's words was experienced. The listeners got another story to hear, and their love for Sai increased. Inexplicable are the deeds of Sai.
43. Sai always spoke in the first person but it was always meant for someone else. For those who observed him carefully, this was a regular experience.
44. Later, as he got more experiences, the grandeur of Narayanrao's devotion and love increased. Listen to one more novel experience of his with devotion.
45. Enough. One day, a friend of Narayanrao was stung by a scorpion, all of a sudden and suffered intense and unbearable pain.
46. Baba's *udi* was very efficacious, if applied on the seat of pain. But though Narayanrao searched for it, he was unable to find any.
47. His friend was unable to bear the agony and the *Udi* could not be found anywhere. So he took a *darshan* of Baba's picture and prayed fervently to Baba.
48. Then just near that picture, the ash from the joss-sticks, which had been burned earlier before it, was lying and he treated it as if it were *udi* only.
49. Taking a pinch from it, and chanting Sai's name, he smeared it where his friend was stung. The experience matched the faith.
50. It will be a great marvel to hear that no sooner was the ash applied with the finger that the pain disappeared, as quickly as it had come, and both were choked with love¹.
51. At least in this case it was the ash from the joss-sticks, which was applied to one who was in pain. But, even if dust from the road is applied, treating it as if it were *udi*, it grants the same experience.
52. The application of this dust, not only to an ailing person or someone diseased, but to anyone else is beneficial.
53. Once, the daughter of a devotee was suffering from plague. When this news reached her father suddenly, from another village, he was worried.

54. The father lived in Bandra, while the daughter lived in another village. He had no stock of *udi* with him, so he sent a message to Nana².
55. "Kindly pray to Baba to remove my anxiety", he requested Chandorkar and asked him to send *udi* as *prasad*.
56. The messenger met Nana on the way, as he was going to Kalyan with his wife, at that time.
57. Nana received this message at Thane, near the railway station. Since he found no *udi* with him, he picked up a little dust from the ground.
58. Standing there on the road, invoking Sai Samartha, and turning around³ applied a pinch to his own wife's forehead.
59. On the other hand, the devotee left for the village where his daughter lived. There he was very happy when he received the joyful tidings.
60. The girl had suffered from very high fever for three days. She had been shattered by the suffering; but since a day earlier, she was a little comfortable.
61. Inquiries revealed that the recovery began at the same time that Nana had pleaded before Sai and applied the dust as *udi* to his wife's forehead.
62. Enough of this story about the illness. At the opportune time, it will be related in detail. This was an anecdote concerning the *udi*.
63. Sai, ever ready to work for the welfare of his devotees, performed a miracle when this very same, loving Chandorkar was the Mamlatdar at Jamner. Listen to it.
64. The greatness of this *udi* is beyond limits. If the listeners are willing, I shall narrate another miracle which will astound them.
65. Nana's daughter, who was in labour, was in intense pain; and from Jamner Sai Samartha was being invoked constantly.
66. No one at Shirdi was aware of the state of affairs at Jamner. Baba, however, knows everything and is all-pervading. There is nothing in the universe that he is unaware of.
67. Baba was one with his devotees. Realising the circumstances at Nana's home Sai Samartha's heart overflowed with compassion. See what he did immediately!
68. He thought of sending *udi*. At the same time Gosavi Ramgir Buva had an urge to go to his village.

69. His village was in Khandesh. He made all preparations to leave and came to the *Masjid* to take *darshan* and be at Baba's feet.
70. For no one left Shirdi for any work without touching Baba's feet and obtaining his permission, as long as he was in body.
71. Whether it was a wedding, or a thread ceremony, or some auspicious function as per *shastric* rituals, or any other work or the intention to perform some work, Baba's permission was necessary.
72. Everyone was firmly convinced that without his whole-hearted permission, *prasad* of *udi* and blessings, no function would proceed smoothly.
73. This being the custom of that village, Ramgir came in accordance with it, touched Baba's feet and asked permission to leave.
74. He said: "Baba, I am going to my village in Khandesh. Give me *udi* and blessings and your permission to this servant to leave".
75. Baba affectionately called him by the name 'Bapugir'. He replied: "Go happily to your village. But rest a while on the way.
76. Go first to Jamner and stay at Nana's home. After inquiring about his well-being, then proceed further".
77. Then he said to Madhavrao Desphande: "Shama, make a copy on a piece of paper of that Arati of Adkar and send it to Nana with the Gosavi".
78. Then he gave *udi* to the *gosavi* and made a small packet of it and placing it in his hand asked him to give it to Nana.
79. "Take both the *udi* and Arati and give them to Nana. Inquire after his well-being, and then proceed to go to your village," he said.
80. This 'Arati Saibaba', is like 'Dnyaneshwar's Arati' composed by Rama Janardan. They both have the same tune.
81. Rama Janardan was a devotee of Swami Janardan, while Madhav Adkar was devoted to Sai's feet. This was an inspired composition and without it, Sai's worship is incomplete.
82. As Baba liked this Arati very much, listeners should hear this arati from beginning to end, which Baba sent with the *udi*. Later, you will realise the fruits of it.

Arati

Refrain:

'We do Arati to Sai Baba, the giver of happiness to all. Give refuge to the downtrodden and to your devotees who are at your feet. We do arati to Sai Baba.

Burn up the desires. To those who are engrossed in the Self, teach them to obtain Moksha. Let them see the Lord *Shrirang*⁴, with their own eyes. Lord *Shrirang*. We do Arati...

You grant suitable experiences to everyone in accordance with their faith and devotion. O, merciful one! such is your own way. Your own way. We do Arati.....

Meditation upon your name removes the worldly sufferings of all. Unfathomable is your action. Show the path to the unfortunate ones. Show the unfortunate ones. We do Arati.....

In this age of *Kaliyug*, you are the true *Brahma Avatar*, that has taken form and descended on this earth. You are also Swami Dutta Digambar⁵. Dutta Digambar. We do Arati.....

Once a week, on Thursdays, the devotees take a trip to have a glimpse of the Lord's feet and to avert their worldly fears. Avert fears. We do Arati.....

The only wealth that I desire is to serve at your feet, O Lord of Lords. We do Arati.....

Just as the Chatak bird desires to drink pure water⁶ so give me Madhava, knowledge directly O Lord! And kindly give me your assurance. Your assurance. We do Arati.....'.

83. The Gosavi said to Baba: "I have altogether two rupees with me. Baba, how will I reach Jamner with only this amount?".
84. Baba said: "Go without any care. Everything will be arranged for you." Having full faith in Sai's Words, the Gosavi set out.
85. Taking these instructions from Baba, and obeying his orders, Bapugir left for the assigned work immediately, after taking the *udi* as prasad.
86. During those days, there was no rail route to Jamner, as it is now; and it was not easy to make the journey. So the Gosavi was worried.
87. Setting out in the train, the passengers had to alight at Jalgaon, from where they had to go on foot the rest of the distance.
88. After paying the train fare of Rupee one and 14 *annas*, there remained only 2 *annas*. How was he to go further?

89. These were the thoughts causing the Gosavi worry at Jalgaon station. When he came out, after handing over the ticket, he saw a peon at some distance.
90. The peon seemed to be in search of some one. He approached the passengers and asked: "Tell me who is Bapugir from Shirdi".
91. Knowing that, that peon's inquiry was only meant for him, the Gosavi came forward and said: "Yes, I am that person. Tell me what you want".
92. He said : "Chandorkar has sent me for you. Come quickly and get into the *tonga*. He is waiting for you".
93. The Buva was greatly pleased and he felt that a message must have reached Nana from Shirdi to enable him to send a *tonga* on time, which had saved him a lot of trouble.
94. The peon looked very smart, with a beard, twirled moustache, and side - burns, wearing a livery. The *tonga* also looked well maintained.
95. The horses matched the *tonga*. They were certainly not hired out animals. Leaving other *tongas* behind they moved ahead due to their eagerness.
96. The *tonga* had started for the journey around 2.48 a.m. and was halted at dawn near a stream on the way.
97. Then the *tongawallah* unharnessed the horses to water them and said: "I'll come back soon after which we will have refreshments at leisure.
98. I will fetch a little water and then we will eat mangoes, 'pedas' and 'gulpapdi'; then after re-harnessing, the horses we will leave".
99. From his beard and dress he looked a Muslim. Hearing his words, Ramgir had doubts about accepting the refreshments from him.
100. Therefore, he asked him about his caste. He said: "Have you doubts about me? I am a Hindu from Garhwal and a Kshatriya. I am a Rajput by caste.
101. These refreshments have also been sent by Nana for you with me. Certainly, have not the slightest of doubts. Eat them free of worry".
102. When his doubts were thus removed, they both had the refreshments. The *tongawallah* harnessed the horses and the journey came to an end at sunrise.
103. As they entered the village, Nana's office became visible. The horses also stopped for a moment. Ramgir felt happy.

104. The Buva looked for a secluded place in which to relieve himself. When he returned, he was surprised by the sight.
105. No *tonga*, no horses, no *tongawallah* could be seen! No one was to be seen at that moment. The place was deserted.
106. Ramgir wondered : 'What is this marvel? After bringing me so far, where has he gone in such a short time?'
107. As he was eager to meet Nana, the Buva went inside the office. When he learned that Nana was at his residence, he decided to go there.
108. Buva inquired the way, along the road, and easily found Nana's home. He reached and sat on the verandah and Nana called him in.
109. They met one another. He took out the *udi* and *arati* and placed them before Nana and told him the whole story.
110. It was a marvel that, when this *udi* came, Nana's daughter was suffering intensely, due to some obstruction in the delivery.
111. To ward off this difficulty, the *Nava-Chandi*⁸ *Havan*⁹ and *Saptashati*¹⁰ recitation was in progress. The Gosavi was surprised.
112. Nana then felt as a hungry person feels when a platter of delicacies is placed before him or as a thirsty *chakor* feels when he gets nectar in his mouth.
113. Nana called his wife and gave her the *udi* to administer to his daughter with water and he himself began singing the *arati*.
114. Within moments, a message was received from the inner quarters, that the girl was better as soon as the cup of *udi* was put to the lips.
115. She was freed from pain immediately and had a safe delivery. The crisis passed away happily. Everybody's worries were over.
116. Then Ramgir asked Nana: "Where did the *tongawallah* go? I do not find him here also. Where is the *tonga* that you sent?"
117. Nana replied: "I did not send. I do not know of what *tonga* you are speaking. Who knew that you were coming? Why should I send the *tonga*?" .
118. Then Buva told the story of the *tonga*, from the beginning to the end to all. Nana was surprised, thinking about Baba's loving concern for his devotees as his own children.
119. What *tonga*! Which peon! This *Sai Mauli* (Mother) is the Lord of the Universe performing various wonderful feats! At the

time of difficulty, he comes running to the devotees because of the intensity of devotion.

120. So be it. Let us go ahead with the story indicated earlier. After some time, Baba himself took *Maha Samadhi*.
121. On *Vijayadashmi*, the festival of *Dassera*, in the year 1918, Baba considered it an auspicious day and chose to leave his body on that day.
122. Then, later, the *Samadhi* was built. Before that, when Baba was in body, Narayanrao had *darshan* twice.
123. Now three years had passed since the *Samadhi*. Though he had an earnest desire to take *darshan*, he could not get a proper opportunity, whereby he was distressed.
124. One year after the *Samadhi*, Narayanrao was distressed by illness. All medications were tried but were of no avail.
125. Though he was tormented by the illness, he meditated day and night upon Baba. How could there be death for the Gururaya? He gave *darshan* to Narayana.
126. One night, he had a dream that Sai was coming from a cellar. He came near Narayanrao and assured him.
127. "Do not worry. You will be better from tomorrow and at the end of one week, you will be able to sit up on your own".
128. So be it. Eight days passed. Every word proved true. Narayanrao was able to sit up and his heart was filled with emotions.
129. After some time, Narayanrao came to Shirdi for the *darshan* of the *Samadhi* when he narrated this experience.
130. Can he be called living only when he was in body? How can it be said that he is dead when he has taken *Samadhi*? Sai transcends life and death, pervading the entire universe.
131. Just as fire is inherent in the firewood though not visible and which ignites when rubbed, this Sai is for his devotees.
132. Once when one sees him with love, then he becomes his slave for the rest of his life. He is hungry only for the singular love and responds to the call of such a person.
133. No special place or time is needed for him to be present. He is, for ever, everywhere. How and what means he uses is beyond anyone's comprehension.
134. Sometimes he creates such situations that we are filled with unreasonable doubts. At such times, concentrate on his feet and ability to meditate will increase.

135. If the mind concentrates in this way, then one can achieve deep meditation on Sai. This is what Sai gets done and it is achieved without any obstacles.
136. It is not necessary to refrain from routine activities. All desires will disappear on their own. If the mind is thus trained all work will be accomplished without efforts.
137. Since this body has come to this earth, which is the theatre of action, one will have to engage in actions, inevitably. Then why not amass enough of wealth and property and have wife and progeny?
138. Whatever happens let it happen to the fullest. Let us deeply desire only meditation on the *Sadguru*. Doubts and delusions will be destroyed. The predestined difficulties will be warded off.
139. Considering the devotion of the devotee, how Sai eminent for genius, learning and valour, gives the devotees a variety of experiences and increases the grandeur of devotion!
140. He adopts any mode of dress and manifests anywhere at will. He roams anywhere for the welfare of the devotees. All that is required is that the disciple should be devoted.
141. Please listen with reverence to another story which has a similar bearing. Hear how the saints toil day and night for the sake of their devotees.
142. Open the doors of your ears, and unlock the temple of your heart and let this story touch the very core of your being. It will drive away the fears of mundane existence.
143. In the past year, for the well known war with the Germans, an army was needed to be amassed to fight against the enemy.
144. The British Officers, posted in India, were recruiting persons, from all the cities in all the quarters.
145. A devotee's turn to be recruited came in 1917 from Thane District. The story took a new turn.
146. His name was Appasaheb Kulkarni. He was devoted to Sai. This also was Sai's grace. His *leelas* are unfathomable.
147. Many years back he had obtained a picture of Baba from Balasaheb Bhate, which he worshipped.
148. With his whole heart, he regularly worshipped the picture with available sandalwood paste, consecrated rice and flowers and offered *naivedya*.
149. Appa's heart ached for opportunity of Sai's *darshan* in person. 'When will I be free from ties of karma? When will my heart's desire be fulfilled?'

150. The darshan of Sai Baba's picture is itself a *darshan* in person. There should be only total devotion. You will get proof of this in time.
151. Taking *darshan* of the picture is equivalent to taking *darshan* in person. Listeners should hear with reverence a description to this extent.
152. Once Balabuva Sutar, a Bhajan singer, resident of Bombay, known as the Modern Tukaram, went to Shirdi for *darshan*.
153. This was the first meeting. They had never met before. But the moment they saw one another, Sai clearly said to him.
154. "I have known him since the last four years". Bala Buva was surprised. "Why does he say so?"
155. Baba has never left Shirdi. I too have laid my eyes on this place for the first time. Then, how is it that he has known me since the last four years?"
156. Thinking thus repeatedly, he recollected an incident which had happened four years ago. Bua remembered bowing to Baba's picture once.
157. Then Balabuva immediately understood the significance of those words; and said: "See, how all-pervading are the saints and their love and affection for the devotees.
158. I had just bowed to a picture. I saw him in person to-day. Whereas I forgot this a long time back, Baba kept it in mind.
159. It is not correct to say that I had forgotten but I did not immediately understand the meaning of his words. I did not have the capacity to know that this was the fruit of my *obeisance* to the picture.
160. Baba knew me; but I had no idea that he remembered me. It is only when the saints remind one that one realises it".
161. One can see the reflection of the sun's or moon's disc in a clean mirror or clear water. A picture is also a pure reflection of the personage by which splendour is cast upon persons serving subordinately.
162. Therefore, the *darshan* of a saint's picture is equivalent to the *darshan* in person. The all-knowing attribute of the saints is the lesson that is learnt by all from this.
163. Enough. The listeners must attentively hear the earlier story now. Bear in mind the previous reference.
164. Appa lived in Thane town. He had some work in Bhivandi. He left his home saying that he would return after eight days.

165. Only two days had passed when something unusual happened at his house. A fakir came to the door of his Thane residence.
166. Everyone who saw him clearly felt that this was Sai himself. He was exactly like the picture, from head to toe, and the figure tallied completely.
167. His wife and children stared at the fakir and everybody was surprised. They felt that Baba himself had come.
168. Though no one had *darshan* in person, earlier, from the resemblance to the picture they knew that it was the same Baba. Their curiosity was aroused.
169. All of them asked the fakir: "Are you the same Sai of Shirdi?" Listeners should hear with attention what the fakir replied to them.
170. "In reality, I am not Sai myself but I am his obedient servant. I have come here to inquire about the health of the children by his orders".
171. Later when he asked for '*dakshina*', the children's mother respected his words and immediately gave him one rupee. He too gave her *udi*.
172. He gave Sai Baba's '*vibhuti*' in a small packet to the lady and said: "Keep it near that picture. It will bring you happiness".
173. Completing his mission thus, the fakir took leave with the words, "Sai must be waiting for me"; and he set off on his way.
174. Then he took the way by which he had come. Then see what happened there. Sai's '*leela*' is inconceivable.
175. Appasaheb who had left for Bhivandi, instead of going further returned as the horses of his *tonga* became sick. His onward journey had to be cancelled.
176. He returned to Thane in the afternoon and learnt all that had transpired. Appasaheb regretted that he missed the *darshan*.
177. He felt ashamed that only one rupee was given as '*dakshina*'. "If I had been there, I would not have given less than ten rupees before he was sent back".
178. Thus said Appasaheb. He felt dejected and sad. He believed that he would be able to find the fakir in the *Masjid*, so he left to search for him, without eating anything.
179. Appa searched in all the places such as the *Masjid*, '*takiya*', and all such places where travellers stay, for the fakir.

180. Though he got exhausted searching he did not trace the fakir anywhere. Being disappointed and hungry he went home and had his meal.
181. But he did not know that one should not set out on a search on an empty stomach. It is necessary to satisfy one's *Atma* and then carry on the search.
182. Baba's story of this purport will show the truth of this principle. Why should it be repeated here? The listeners know that chapter well.
183. In the previous chapter named "Guru's Greatness", a wonderful story has been narrated by Sree Sai, as his own Guru's words very tenderly.
184. The same truth was experienced by Appa, when after lunch he went with his friend Chitre, for a casual walk.
185. Enough. After walking a little distance, he saw a gentleman approaching him very speedily till that spot as if he was desirous of finding him.
186. When he came and stood near Appasaheb, he unobtrusively but carefully looked at him and thought that this must be the same person who had come in the morning.
187. 'I feel that this is the same fakir whom I was searching earlier. He resembles the picture from top to toe. I am confused.'
188. While Appa was debating this within himself, that fakir extended his hand and Appa placed one rupee in his hand at that time.
189. He asked for more and he gave him one more; till he had given three. Yet that fakir asked for more. The real marvel is ahead.
190. Chitre had three rupees, which Appa borrowed and gave to that fakir. Yet he asked for more.
191. Appasaheb told him "I will give you more if you come home". The fakir agreed and all the three returned home.
192. Immediately on reaching home, he took out and placed three more in his hand, totalling nine rupees. Yet the fakir was not satisfied.
193. When asking for further '*dakshina*', Appasaheb truthfully told him that he now had only one ten rupee note left with him.
194. All the change was finished, and there was nothing else left. The fakir said: "Why not give the note"; and Appa did that too.

195. As soon as the note came into his hands, he returned the change of nine rupees and the fakir left the same way he had come, walking with great speed.
196. When one considers the essence of this story, it is, that Sai fulfils the wish of the devotee, as expressed. This was his creed.
197. Considering the enthusiasm of the listeners, I am reminded of another story, having the same purport, at this opportune time. Listen to it with great respect.
198. There was a loving devotee, named Haribhau Karnik, resident of Dahanu. He was a singular devotee of Sai.
199. In the year 1917, as it was the most holy day of *Gurupurnima*, he came for pilgrimage to Shirdi. I will tell a short story about him.
200. He did the worship according to rituals and offered clothes and '*dakshina*'. When he took permission to leave and came down (the steps), he had a thought.
201. He felt like going up and giving Baba one more rupee. But he had to give up this idea and keep the rupee without offering it.
202. The same gentleman¹¹ who had got for him the permission to leave, he himself gave him a sign, from up above, that once the permission was granted, one should depart immediately.
203. Having faith in the indication, Karnik left on his way. He got down at Nashik with his friend, on the way.
204. When Karnik went for darshan to the temple of Kala Ram, he had unexpected *darshan* of the saint Narsing Maharaj.
205. Maharaj was sitting surrounded by devotees. But he suddenly got up, held Karnik by the wrist and said: "Give me my rupee".
206. Karnik was surprised but joyfully handed over the rupee. He felt that it was Sai, himself, who knowing his desire was accepting the rupee.
207. It is not true to say that Sai accepted it. Though Karnik had forgotten it, he held his hand and by force took it. This is the real truth.
208. Vacillation is the characteristic of the mind. Waves after waves arise. Initially one thinks of something but at a later stage some other thought occurs.
209. The wave of thought which arises initially, provided it is good and virtuous, should be nurtured. This would be beneficial.

210. Bear it in mind. Study it carefully and meditate upon it. Do not forget it and make every effort to keep your word.
211. Appasaheb had spoken of it but later he may have forgotten. But as he had spoken of it, Baba fulfilled his desire and showed the marvel of devotion.
212. Otherwise, why did the fakir who had nineteen rupees with him including the ten rupees note, give Appa nine rupees only? It was because of Appa's intense desire to give ten rupees, only.
213. This was the necklace of nine coins, which had been touched by Baba's hands - indicating the nine types of devotion. This was the way Baba reminded him of it.
214. When you listen to the story of Baba leaving his mortal coil, you will realise the novel way of doing charity, as he had given nine rupees at that time¹².
215. His wife had given only one rupee whole heartedly which had been accepted with great satisfaction and the fakir (Baba) had not asked for more.
216. But Appa felt that the one rupee given by his wife was too little and had he been there, he would have given ten times as much to the fakir.
217. In this way Appa who had become bound by his own words by saying that he would have given ten ruppes, how could he have been free from his debt until he had given the full amount as per his words?
218. This fakir was not like the others. Was he a beggar that he would accept whatever was placed in his hand and go back?
219. The day had not ended and he came back on the same day that Appa had spoken. Appa had doubts that he might be an unknown fakir.
220. Initially when he was asked for the money, he had six rupees with him but he did not part with the amount because of the doubts.
221. Enough. If he did not have love for Appa, would Baba have come in the guise of a fakir? If he had not made a pretext for the *dakshina*, how would the story have been interesting?
222. Appasaheb was only an instrument, to teach us, for we are all the same. We start with good resolutions but change them according to the situation.
223. We are most generous with words but at the time of doing charity we are full of doubts. We are torn by vacillation and rarely have certainty.

224. But rarest is that beloved son of God who speaks little and well. He acts as he speaks and he does, what he promises.
225. If there be a devotee with singular faith, whatever be his wishes, worldly or spiritual, Sai has the power to fulfil them.
226. Although Appasaheb was intelligent, and a scholar in English, he was initially given only Rs.40/- as salary by the Government.
227. But since receiving this picture, his salary slowly increased and became many times more than forty.
228. It was an immediate experience of all the people that Baba gave ten times as much as he received - ten times the power and the position.
229. Besides, love towards the spiritual increases on account of faith and devotion. Isn't this something unusual? Baba's skill is wonderful.
230. Later Appasaheb asked for the '*vibhuti*' that the fakir had given. When he looked it was a small packet, which he opened with love.
231. With the *udi* there were flowers and consecrated rice, which he found in the packet. He had an amulet made and wore it on his arm with great reverence.
232. Later when he took Baba's *darshan*, the hair which Baba gave to him personally was also placed in the amulet most lovingly.
233. How great is Baba's *udi*! ¹³ Ashes are also the ornament of Shankar. He who applies it on the forehead with devotion, will find all difficulties removed immediately.
234. He who, after his ablutions and bath, applies *udi* regularly and drinks the *tirth* of the washings of Baba's feet, will be purified and benefitted.
235. Besides, the real importance of this *udi* is that he who takes it will have a full life and his sins will be completely destroyed. He will enjoy bliss and contentment always.
236. Such a sweet feast of the nectar of stories has been arranged by Sai because of Appa. We are the uninvited guests there but let us fully enjoy them together with him.
237. The host and the guests, both have the same feast. There is no difference in its taste and sweetness. Be satisfied on partaking this blissful food.
238. Hemad surrenders to Sai. Enough of listening to this, for the present. In the next chapter there will be narration of greater importance of the *udi*.

239. How the application of *udi* and Sai's *darshan* cured tubercular bone-ulcers, guinea worms and bubonic plague - listen to it with full attention.

May there be well-being! This is the end of the thirty-third chapter, of the *Sree Sai Samartha Satcharita*, written by the devotee Hemadpant, impelled by Saints and virtuous people, called "The Power of the *Udi*".

This is offered to *Sree Sadguru Sainath*.

May there be auspiciousness!

Notes :

1. There is a similar experience of Baba recorded by Hari Sitaram Dixit, thus:- Once Bapusaheb Jog was stung by a scorpion, around about 8 o'clock at night. He went immediately to Maharaj. As he was climbing the steps, Maharaj said: "What is the matter Bapusaheb?" Bapusaheb answered: "Baba I have been stung by a scorpion." Maharaj said: "It will be alright. Go." Bapusaheb returned from the steps only; and before he left the compound, his pain totally stopped.

Once an astrologer had come to Shirdi who had acquired the power of a demon communicating by whispering in the ears the affairs of people. He went for Maharaj's *darshan* but his mind was greatly concentrated on making money. He saw no opportunity there to make money, so he took *darshan* and quickly went to Rahata. There, at night, he was bitten by a scorpion. He suffered intense pain. Then, he applied the *udi* given by Maharaj and began chanting Maharaj's name unceasingly. Consequently the pain eased and his faith in Maharaj developed. The next day, the astrologer went to Shirdi again. He stayed there for 15 to 20 days and by Maharaj's grace earned about Rs. 300/- there.

2. Nana Chandorkar.
3. The wife walks behind, as per Hindu tradition.
4. Vishnu.
5. The three-headed Deity who is considered as incarnation of Brahma - Vishnu - Mahesh.
6. Rain water as it falls from the clouds.
7. Sweetmeats.
8. A ceremony for propitiation of the Goddess Durga, by repeating the stotra in her praise, nine times.
9. Oblations to the fire for the Deity.
10. Collection of seven hundred verses in praise of Durga in Markandeya Puran.
11. Madhavrao Deshpande.
12. To Lakshmibai (Shinde).
13. Another example of the importance of *udi* had been recorded by Hari Sitaram Dixit. An extract from it is given below:-
"A gentleman named Khimji Lalaji Joshi lived in the Punjabi chawl in Parle. His daughter had been ill for a long time. Once, she became serious. At that time, her mother came to our house and took away Maharaj's *udi*. She felt a little better immediately with that *udi*. Later Khimji went to Shirdi with his wife and daughter. The girl was so weak that she was unable to walk. Her

arms and legs had become thin as sticks. Someone picked her up and made her sit near Maharaj.

Maharaj applied udi to her and blessed her. In a couple of days she was able to walk on her own. She had difficulty in sitting and getting up only. So she complained about it to Maharaj. Maharaj gave her a fruit to eat and from then onwards her difficulty was removed."

One day a friend came to my office and said: "Since the last eight days I am unable to sleep. I am taking the doctor's medicine but it's of no use". I gave him Maharaj's udi and asked him to take it for three days. The very next day he came to my office and said: "I took the udi last night and I had very good sleep throughout the night".

Similarly, the son of my friend who lived in Bandra, was not getting sleep for two months. His father took him to Shirdi for Maharaj's darshan. That same night he slept and from then onwards he got sleep every night.



Baba distributing Udi in Dwarkamayi

