

The Re-appearance of Sree Sai

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

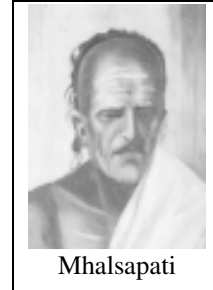
I bow down to Sree Sita-Ramachandra

I bow down to Sree Sadguru Sainath.

1. Now to continue the story from the previous chapter... Baba disappeared from Shirdi and reappeared with Chand Patil. Listen to how all this happened.
2. How Baba created and tended the garden by himself watering it ; of the gathering of Gangagir and other saints. Listening to this narration will be sanctifying.
3. Later on, Baba who had disappeared for some time, how this gem of a person returned to Shirdi in the *Barat*¹ of a Muslim.
4. Before that, Devidas had taken up residence at Shirdi and later Jankidas, the ascetic, also came there.
5. How all this happened, I will recount in detail. Listeners, listen to it attentively and with respect.
6. In a small village called Dhoop, in the district of Aurangabad, there was a fortunate Muslim, whose name was Chand Patil.
7. While he was travelling to Aurangabad, he lost one of his mares and there was no trace of her for two months. He lost all hope.
8. Patil became completely despondent and was greatly distressed by the loss of the mare. Carrying the saddle on his back, he began his return journey.
9. Leaving Aurangabad four and half *kos*² behind, he came across, on the way a mango tree, underneath which he saw this gem.
10. Wearing a cap on his head and a *kafni* on his body, a wooden stick under his arm, crushing tobacco and preparing it for filling his *chillum* for a smoke - when a strange thing happened.
11. As Chand Patil was passing by, he heard the fakir calling out to him: "Come along here, have a smoke and then proceed further. Sit for a while in the shade".

12. The fakir asked him what was the saddle for and Patil answered that he had lost his mare. Then he told him "Go and search for it near the stream". The horse was found immediately.
13. Chand Patil was wonderstruck and thought to himself that he had met an '*aulia*'³ 'There is no limit to his powers. He cannot be called an ordinary being'.
14. Afterwards Patil returned with the mare to the original place. The fakir made him sit next to him. He then picked up in his hands a pair of tongs.
15. Then he thrust it into the soil there, took out a burning coal and put it on his '*chillum*'⁴ which was in his hands. Then he picked up his '*satka*'⁵.
16. Next, there was no water around to wet the '*chappi*'⁶ for his chillum, so he beat the '*satka*' on the ground and water began to spring.
17. The '*chappi*' was soaked in the water and then squeezed dry. He wound it around the '*chillum*'. He smoked it himself and made Patil smoke too. Patil was dazed.
18. He made a request to the fakir to sanctify his house by his presence; and the fakir, who had manifested himself only for such divine *leelas*, obliged him.
19. He went to the village the next day, stayed with Patil for some time; and, then, returned to Shirdi.
20. This Chand Patil, '*Karbhari*', was the headman of the village. A marriage was arranged with a girl from Shirdi, for his wife's nephew.
21. It was fortunate that an alliance with the bride from Shirdi was fixed for the nephew of Chandbhai's wife, who had become of a marriageable age.
22. Along with carts and horses the marriage procession started for Shirdi. Out of love for Chandbhai, Baba also joined in the procession.
23. The marriage was over and the marriage party returned. Only Baba stayed behind and stayed on for good. Thus Shirdi became blessed.
24. Sai, the Eternal, the Ancient One was, neither Hindu nor Muslim. He had no caste, nor family, nor '*gotra*'. Know him to be the Self-Realised Soul.
25. People called him "Sai, Sai". How was this name given to him? "Welcome Sai", is the reverence, with which he was welcomed and that is how this name remained.

26. Near Khandoba's temple, in Mhalsapati's threshing ground, when Baba alighted with the marriage party, on that day, he was given this name.
27. Originally, the threshing ground belonged to Mhalsapati. Later on, it belonged to Aminbhai. When the marriage procession came, it was here that it halted under the banyan tree.
28. The bullocks were unyoked at the threshing ground, in the extensive open space in front of Khandoba's temple. Baba, along with the marriage guests, alighted there.
29. When the youthful fakir got down from the cart, and was first seen by Bhagat (Mhalsapati), he went forward to him saying "Welcome Sai". Since then he has been called by that name.
30. Later on from that time, everybody called him "Sai, Sai". And that became his proper name.
31. He smoked his *chillum* there, resided in the *Masjid*, enjoyed the company of Devidas, and felt happy in Shirdi.
32. Sometimes he would sit in the *Chavadi*, sometimes in Devidas' company, sometimes in the Maruti temple, absorbed completely in the Self.
33. This Devidas was already living in Shirdi before Baba came there. Later came the Sage Jankidas of the Mahanubhav sect⁸.
34. With that Jankidas, Maharaj would sit and chat; or, Jankidas would come where Maharaj used to sit.
35. Both were fond of each other and would meet regularly. Their kinship developed and pleased everybody greatly.
36. Similarly, a very famous Vaishnava householder-saint, called Gangagir, who hailed from Puntambe was a frequent visitor to Shirdi.
37. Great was Gangagir's surprise in the early days when he would see Sai carrying water from the well, in earthen pitchers, in both his hands.
38. When he first set eyes on Sai, Buva openly proclaimed "It is the good fortune of Shirdi that this precious gem has associated itself with Shirdi.
39. Although he is carrying water on his shoulders to-day, he is not an ordinary person. Blessed is the soil of Shirdi on which he has set his foot".
40. Similarly, another well-known saint, named Anandnath, had predicted for him that he would perform miraculous deeds.
41. This famous Anandnath had established a *math* in Yeola. He came to Shirdi once, along with some of the dwellers of Shirdi.⁹

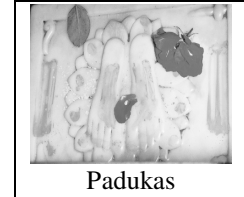


Mhalsapati

42. Anandnath, who was the disciple of the great saint of Akkalkot when he saw Sai, exclaimed: "This is indeed a diamond, a real diamond.
43. Though to-day he is lying on the garbage heap (i.e. neglected), it is not just a flint but a diamond". These were the words of Anandnath when Baba was a youngster.
44. "Mark my words carefully. Later on you will recall them". After prophesying thus, he returned to Yeola.
45. Those were the days of his youth, when Sai did not shave his head but grew his hair long and dressed like a wrestler.
46. Whenever Baba would go to Rahata, he would bring saplings of marigold and jasmine. He planted them in barren land and regularly watered them.
47. Waman Tatya, a devotee, regularly supplied two unbaked earthen pots to Baba to water the plants with his own hands.
48. Baba would carry the water on his shoulders from the tank near the well; and, at sunset would keep the pots at the base of the neem tree.
49. No sooner were they kept on the ground they would break on the spot; and early next morning, Tatya would bring new ones for him.
50. An oven-baked pot is more durable. But Baba required only the unbaked and new. So without undergoing the trouble of baking, the potter would sell the pots.
51. For three years this continued and the wilderness was transformed into a garden. This is the place on which stands the *wada* to-day which provides the devotees, a place for close association with him.¹⁰
52. Here¹¹, under the neem tree, a devotee named Bhai¹² installed the *Padukas* of Akkalkot Swami, for worship by devotees.
53. Swami Samartha of Akkalkot was the chosen deity of Bhai, who worshipped his portrait regularly with devotion.
54. He thought of going to Akkalkot to have the darshan of the *padukas* and to offer worship to them with his heart and soul.
55. He got ready to start from Bombay the next day. But that decision remained unfulfilled and instead he left for Shirdi.
56. One day before his departure he saw a vision. Akkalkot Swami commanded him: "At present Shirdi is my abode. You go there".
Padukas
57. Obeying the command with reverence, Bhai left Bombay. He lived in Shirdi for six months and was at peace and happy

58. Bhai was full of devotion. So, to commemorate the vision he installed the Swami's *padukas* under the neem tree.

59. In '*Shake*' 1834,¹³ in the bright half of the month of *Shravan*, on an auspicious day, the *padukas* were installed under the neem tree with the singing of *bhajans* and with great devotion.



Padukas

60. At the auspicious *mahurat*,¹⁴ the installation ceremony was done by Dada Kelkar, while the rites and rituals were performed by Upasani¹⁵ according to the *Shastras*.

61. For the future, arrangements were entrusted to a *Brahmin* named Dixit¹⁶ who would perform the puja and a devotee by the name Sagun¹⁷ looked after the management. This is the story of the *padukas*.



Sagun Meru Naik

62. Such are the unaffected saints, who are truly incarnations of God, and appear on earth for the salvation and benefit of mankind.

63. Some days later, a strange thing happened. Listeners who listen with respect, will marvel about it.

64. There was a seller of beetle-leaves by the name of Mohideenbhai. A dispute arose between him and Baba which flared up into a wrestling bout.

65. Both were skilled wrestlers but destiny prevails over strength. Mohideen proved stronger. Baba being weaker lost.

66. After this, he took a decision. Baba completely changed his attire. He put on a *kafni* and tied a loin cloth. He also wrapped a piece of cloth around his head.

67. He used a gunny bag or sack for his seat and also as his bedding. He wore torn and worn-out rags and was content with them.

68. Sai would always say: "Poverty is better than Kingship, far better than riches. The Lord is the befriender of the poor".

69. Gangagir also passed through the same phase. He was very fond of gymnastics. Once while engaged in a wrestling bout, he also had a similar feeling of dispassion.

70. At the opportune moment he heard the words of a realised person: "One must realise that the body should be serving God and should wear out in the service of God".

71. While still engaged in wrestling, he heard these words of grace. Because of them, he discarded the worldly life and sought the path of spirituality.

72. Near Puntambe, on an island in the middle of the river, stands Buva's math, where some of his disciples also stayed to serve him.
73. Enough about him. Later on, Sainath only answered questions put to him and would never talk to anybody on his own.
74. During the day, he would sit under the neem tree; and, sometimes, under the shade of a protruding branch of the Babul tree by the side of a stream, near the outskirts of the village.
75. Sometimes he would wander about at his pleasure during the day, or in the afternoon or in the early evening, near Nimgaon, a mile or so away.
76. The famous family of Trimbak Dingle had the Jahagirdari¹⁹ of Nimgaon. Babasaheb Dingle from that family was dearly loved by Baba.
77. Whenever Baba took a round of Nimgaon, he would go to his home and with great affection spend the day talking with him.
78. He had a younger brother whose name was Nanasaheb. He had no son so he was very dejected.
79. There was no possibility of a child from his first wife. Therefore, he married for the second time. Still fate could not be altered. One cannot fathom destiny!
80. Later Babasaheb sent him for Sai *darshan*. And with Sai's blessings, he received the '*prasad*' in the form of a son.
81. As time went by, multitudes thronged to have the *darshan* of Sai. Sai's fame increased and the news reached Ahmednagar.
82. There, Nana²⁰ moved in the Government circles and was influential with the officials among whom was Chidambar Keshav, the Secretary to the District Collector,
83. to whom he sent a letter, saying that the great Sai is worthy of *darshan*; and that he should have *darshan* bringing along with him his wife, son and family friends.
84. One after another, thus many people started pouring into Shirdi. As Baba's fame spread, so also his circle of devotees increased.
85. Although he was not in need of company, he was surrounded by devotees during the day. But after sunset he would retire in the dilapidated *Masjid*.
86. With *chillum*, tobacco and a tumbler, he always kept a '*satka*' near him. He wore a '*kafni*' reaching upto his ankles and a white piece of cloth round his head.

87. He would tie around his head a white cloth, which was washed, and artistically twisted behind his left ear, like matted locks of hair.
88. Dressed thus, he would go at times without a bath for eight days at a stretch and walked bare-footed. He only sat on the gunny bag cloth.
89. His seat was always a piece of sacking. He did not know what a bolster was! How could there be any proper bedding or grandeur?
90. During those days that old sack-cloth was his favourite seat. It always remained there for all the twenty-four hours.
91. That was the only seat and the bed. He wore a '*kaupin*'²¹ tied at the waist and had no other garment. Only the '*dhuni*' was there to ward off the cold.
92. Baba would sit cross-legged, facing South, with his left arm resting on the railing in the *Masjid*, gazing intently into the *dhuni* in front of him.
93. Along with ego and passion, all kinds of desires were offered as oblation; and, also, worldly aspirations were thrown into the *dhuni*; by different ways and means.
94. In this manner, he fed the log of the pride of knowledge in the brightly burning fire and also repeated "Allah Malik", thus keeping the banner of the Lord's name flying high.
95. And how big was that *Masjid*? The whole place was the size of two rooms²² in which he sat, lived, slept and received all visitors.
96. The mattress and the cushion are a recent feature when devotees began gathering around him. In the early days one could not go near him without fear.
97. It was from 1912 that the change came over. The renovation of the *Masjid* actually started since then.
98. There were knee-deep pits in the flooring of the *Masjid*. But because of the faith of the devotees the flooring was paved with Shahabadi (hewn) stones one night.
99. Before moving into the *Masjid*, Baba stayed at the *takia*²³. He stayed there long, peacefully and untroubled by anyone.
100. Here, tying jingling bells around his feet, he would dance gracefully and sing melodiously with devotion to the accompaniment of a tambourine.
101. In the early days, the great Sai was very fond of burning oil lamps. Therefore, he himself used to go to the shopkeepers and ask for oil.

102. Carrying a tumbler-like container in his hand, he begged for oil from the shops of the grocers and oil-mongers. After bringing it he would fill the earthen oil lamps.
103. He burnt the lamps brightly in the temples and the *Masjid*. This continued for sometime.
104. Out of love for the worship of the light, he even celebrated Deepavali with illumination. He would make twisted wicks from rags and would burn the lamps in the *Masjid*.
105. He brought the oil, daily, free of charge. Therefore, the oil-mongers conspired against him to put an end to this nuisance.
106. Later, when Baba went to ask for oil as usual, and when all refused, look what a wonder took place.
107. Baba went back without a word and put the dry wicks in the earthen lamps. What could he do without the oil? The grocers watched that fun!
108. Baba picked up a pot, which was on the parapet of the *Masjid*, in which there was little oil, not enough even to light the evening lamp.
109. Then he put water into the oil and Baba drank it. Thus having offered it to Brahman, he took pure water.
110. Then he poured the water in the lamp and soaked the dry wicks completely; struck the matchsticks and lit the lamps for all to see.
111. Seeing the lamps burning with water, the grocers were dumbfounded. They felt disgusted with themselves that they had lied to Baba.
112. Even though there was not a drop of oil, the lamps burnt throughout the night. People started commenting that the shopkeepers had now lost Sai's grace.
113. The grocers felt repentant for having harassed Baba (causing him anguish without any reason) and having committed the sin of uttering lies. They thought how great is Baba's power!
114. Baba never thought of this. He was never angry or hated any person. He had no friends or foes, and all creatures were equal for him.
115. So be it. We will continue with the former episode - Mohideen's victory in the wrestling bout. Further, the life story is very interesting. Please listen attentively.
116. Five years after the wrestling bout, a fakir called Jawahar Ali of Ahmednagar came to reside in Rahata along with his disciple.
117. Finding an open place near the temple of Veerabhadra, the fakir camped there. This fakir was very fortunate.

118. If he were not fortunate how could he have acquired a delightful disciple like Sai, whose fame had already spread?
119. There were many kinds of people in the village. Amongst them were also quite a few Marathas. Out of them was one Bhagu Sadaphal, who became his servitor.
120. The fakir was a great scholar. He knew the *Quran Sharif*²⁴ like the palm of his hand. Many selfish people, genuine devotees and those desirous of 'parmartha',²⁵ all alike, started worshipping him.
121. He started the construction of *Idgah*²⁶. After some time he was charged with having defiled Veerabhadra.
122. Later the construction of the *Idgah* was stopped. The fakir was driven out of the village. He then came to Shirdi and stayed at the *Masjid* with Baba.
123. The fakir was a very sweet-tongued person. The whole village started worshipping him. The way he behaved with Baba, the people said that he had hypnotised Baba and bewitched him.
124. "Be my disciple", so said the fakir. Baba being of a sporting nature agreed to it. The fakir was pleased and took Baba along with him.
125. He got an obedient disciple like Baba. Jawahar Ali became the Guru. Both of them together decided to stay on in Rahata.
126. The Guru was not aware of the accomplishments of the disciple. But the disciple knew the shortcomings of the Guru. But, he never showed any disrespect and fulfilled the duties of a disciple.
127. He did not consider the propriety or impropriety of the Guru's orders, but carried them out meticulously. He did even the menial duties for the Guru such as carrying water.
128. And so continued the service of the Guru. The visits to Shirdi became occasional. When this happened, I will tell you what followed.
129. This went on awhile. He started residing in Rahata only. People thought he had left Shirdi and had completely gone under the fakir's control.
130. People thought that Jawahar Ali had captured Sai with his own yogic powers. But Sai's attitude was different. He wanted to destroy the bodily pride.
131. People will conjecture 'Where was there any pride in Sai?' But this behaviour was for the sake of the people, to set an example and this is exactly the purpose of his 'avatar'.
132. There were many loving devotees of Baba in Shirdi, who were greatly attached to Baba, and they thought it improper to stay away from Baba.
133. But Sai had completely surrendered to him (Jawahar Ali); and the villagers were grieved over the situation. They began to seriously consider how to get him back.

134. As gold and its glitter or the lamp and its light, so is the state of complete unity between the Guru and his disciple.
135. The group of devotees from Shirdi went to Rahata near the Idgah to try their utmost to convince Baba to return along with them.
136. But Baba told them to the contrary. "The fakir is very hot-tempered. Do not cross swords with him. He will never leave me.
137. You better leave from here. He will come back any moment from the village. He will abuse you. His wrath is terrible.
138. As soon as he returns he will get red hot with rage. His rage is awful. Oh, you go, go away immediately. Set on your way to Shirdi".
139. Now what turn will take place? Baba has given an opposite viewpoint. Just then the fakir returned unexpectedly and asked them thus:
140. "Have you come for the lad? What were you talking about here? You have a design to take him back to Shirdi? But don't take the trouble".
141. Even though he spoke so in the beginning, he yielded to the pressure of the villagers and said why not take me along and we will take the lad with us.
142. So the fakir also went along with them. He could not leave Baba and Baba also could not part from him. No one could understand how this happened.
143. Sai was the Incarnation of the Supreme Brahman. But Jawahar Ali was a fake. Devidas tested him and the cat was out of the bag in Shirdi.
144. Devidas had a good physique, lustrous eyes and attractive looks. He was ten or eleven years old when he first came to Shirdi.
145. At that tender age, with a loin-cloth round his waist, he came as a pilgrim and stayed in the Maruti temple.
146. Appa Bhil, Mhalsapati were his regular visitors. Kashiram²⁷ and others would give him alms. Thus his fame spread.
147. Twelve years before Baba came with the marriage party, Devidas had come and settled in Shirdi.
148. Appa Bhil was taught to write on the slate and made to learn the *Venkatesh Stotra*. Everybody was also made to learn it by heart. These lessons were taken regularly.
149. Devidas was very learned. Tatyaba²⁸ regarded him as his Guru. Kashinath and others became his foremost disciples and worshipped him.
150. The fakir (Jawahar Ali) was brought before Devidas and a debate regarding the *shastras* took place. The *Bairagi*

(Devidas) won over the fakir and the fakir was driven away from there.

151. After he escaped from there, he stayed at Vaijapur. Later, he returned after many years and bowed down to Sainath.
152. The misconception was cleared up that 'I am the Guru and Sai the *chela*'²⁹. Baba accepted him as before, since he had repented and was purified.
153. Such were the inscrutable ways of Baba. Till the time the fakir's illusion vanished, when it was destined to, Sai played upto it.
154. Sainath honoured the concept of the teacher and student relationship by practising it himself. He let him cherish his status as a teacher and accepted his own status as a student.
155. We should belong to somebody or somebody should belong to oneself. Anything different from this is not right. Without this the worldly ocean cannot be crossed.
156. This is the only lesson learnt from his behaviour. It is rare to find such confidence, intrepidity and courage. One who can follow this example, he will attain the acme of humility.
157. In such matters, ingenuity and intelligence are of no use. One who wants to achieve his own good should behave without pride.
158. He who has burnt away his bodily pride is the person who alone has used his body for its proper purpose. To achieve the ultimate good, he may then become anybody's follower or disciple.
159. The young and the old were amazed to see this dispassionate state of mind in a boy so young and fair. All the people adored him and marvelled at him.
160. The actions of a realised person happen according to his past *karma* but they are not a burden to him. He does not become the actual doer.
161. Just as the sun cannot stay in darkness, so the man of enlightenment cannot remain in a state of duality. For him the whole universe is the incarnation of his own self. He dwells in unity (*advaita*).
162. This story of Guru and his disciple's behaviour was narrated by Mhalsapati, a great devotee of Sainath. I have narrated it from beginning to end, as I heard it from him.
163. Let us end the narration now. The next one is more profound. It will be narrated in the proper sequence. Please listen with attention.
164. What was the earlier condition of the *Masjid*; with what difficulty it was paved; and, whether Sai was a Hindu or a Muslim - no one knows this for a certainty.
165. In the next chapter will come a detailed narration in its proper order, of Baba's yogic practices such as '*dhotipoti*'³⁰

and '*khandyoga*'³¹ and his taking upon himself the *karmic* sufferings of the devotees.

166. Hemad surrenders to Sai. This narration of his life story is due to his grace only; and listening to this meritious and holy tale will remove the ignorance.

May there be well-being. This is the end of the fifth chapter "The Re-appearance of Sree Sai" of *Sree Sai Samartha Satcharita* written by the devotee Hemadpant, impelled by Saints and virtuous people.

This is offered to *Sree Sadguru Sainath*.
May there be auspiciousness!

Notes:

1. Marriage party going in procession to the groom's or bride's residence.
2. Nine miles.
3. Sage.
4. The bowl of a hukka in which tobacco is placed.
5. Baton - it is the practice of ascetics to carry such a baton, especially if they belong to the Navanaths group.
6. Strip of cloth.
7. Kindred.
8. Very strict, rigid and learned.
9. Who had gone to Yeola, for Anandnath's *darshan*. They were Madhavrao Balwant Deshpande, Nandram Shivram Marwadi and Bhagchand Marwadi. It is said that Anandnath Maharaj unexpectedly and forcibly joined them on their bullock cart, going to Shirdi. This Anandnath originally hailed from South Konkan District, and belonged to the Kudaldeshkar Gowda brahmin sect. He had lived for a fairly long time in Bombay also.
10. Butti's *wada*, which is the Samadhi mandir.
11. Closeby.
12. Bhai Krishnaji Alibagkar.
13. AD 1912.
14. Hour - chosen astrologically.
15. Kashinath Govind Upasani Maharaj of Sakori.
16. Govind Kamalakar Dixit.
17. Sagun Meru Naik.
18. Detailed story is given in Sai Leela Volume II, Number I, Page 25.
19. An assignment by Government, of lands or revenues. This may be for maintenance of troops for public service or for the support of an individual or family.
20. Chandorkar.
21. *Langoti* or loin cloth.
22. Size of the rooms was not larger than the space between two columns or cross-beams.
23. Place for fakirs to stay. To-day, (1944), devotees wait in that area before participating in the Abhishek.

24. The holy book of the Muslims.
25. Spiritual knowledge.
26. Wall to mark off a place of prayer.
27. Shimpi, the tailor.
28. Taty Ganpat (Patil) Kote.
29. Disciple.
30. Cleaning of internal organs.
31. Severing and re-assembling organs of the body at will.



. The fakir asked Chandbhai Patil what was the saddle for and he answered that he had lost his mare. Then he told him “Go and search for it near the stream”. The horse was found immediately





Khandoba Mandir, Shirdi



When the youthful fakir got down from the cart, and was first seen by Bhagat (Mhalsapati), he went forward to him saying “Welcome Sai”. Since then he has been called by that name. (Ch.5, ovi 29)