

A Triad of Stories of Three Devotees

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.

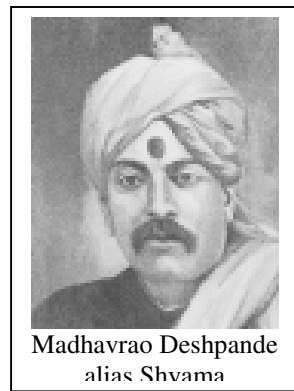
1. Hail! Hail! Sai! Supporter of the devotees! The Greatest of the Gurus who has shed light on the meaning of the *Gita*! Bestower of all *Siddhis*! May your Grace be upon me!
2. Sandalwood grows on the Malaya range of mountains¹ to counteract the heat of the summer or the clouds rain for the happiness of the people on earth.
3. Or flowers bloom in spring for the worship of the deities; or for the satisfaction of the listeners there arises a tradition of narration of stories or parables.
4. On hearing the *Saicharita*, the listeners and the narrator are both purified; the ears of the listeners are purified and so also the mouth of the narrator.
5. In the last chapter, how knowledge manifests on destruction of ignorance was narrated, with the meaning of the verse, commencing with the words '*Tadviddhi pranipatena*'.
6. At the end of the Bhagvad Gita, at the conclusion of the eighteenth chapter, in the seventy-second verse, Sree Krishna asks Arjuna:
7. "By the discourse that has been given upto now have your desires been removed?" This was the clear question - not whether he gained knowledge.
8. Similarly, Partha (Arjuna) reciprocated: "My desires have been scattered". He said: "I have not gained knowledge but my desires are destroyed".
9. The other name for desires is ignorance. They merely appear as two different words. There is no difference in their meaning. Those who are learned in the Gita know this.
10. "By the advice that you have given to me, my desires, that is, my ignorance has been destroyed," Arjun told Sree Krishna, in the beginning of the eleventh chapter.

11. In the present new chapter, I shall narrate the unique story about Kaka Saheb (Hari Sitaram Dixit) and how he was established in Shirdi.
12. Hear from the very beginning about his ties with Shirdi on account of his past birth, and his close association with Sai - and the principal reason which determined all this.
13. There are many stories about him, which are known to the young and the old. But all do not know how he happened to come to Shirdi, in the first instance.
14. This is a story of merits of earlier lives, which granted him God's Grace, and which later resulted in meeting the *Sadguru*, who blesses the disciples with Self Bliss.
15. In this chapter, I will narrate to the listeners a triad of stories of three devotees, who became famous. They will bring peace to the hearts of the listeners.
16. We may try hundreds of means or '*sadhanas*' to attain the spiritual goal but without the grace of the *Sadguru*, it is not possible to achieve the goal of life.
17. Listening to the sweet story on the subject will fulfil the longings of the listeners. Love for such stories will manifest and the desire for one's own welfare will increase.
18. This most purifying chapter will satisfy the devotees of a Guru. Listeners should hear it attentively, for their own well-being.
19. Hari Sitaram Dixit, was well-known as Kaka Saheb, with respect, to all the devotees of Sai Baba, and is remembered with love.
20. His earlier background is well-known, pleasing and interesting. Therefore, I respectfully narrate it to the ardent devotees. It will give happiness to those who are eager to hear his life-story.
21. He, who did not even know the name of 'Sai' till 1909, became a great devotee of Sai and was known as such to all.
22. Many years after his university education, Nanasaheb Chandorkar came once to Lonavala².
23. Dixit was his old friend, whom he met there after several years. They talked about their welfare, with each other.
24. Dixit told him about his accident in London, when his foot slipped while boarding a train and was injured. The trouble that he suffered from could not be relieved inspite of hundreds of remedies.

25. The detailed story about this injury came out in the natural course of conversation. It reminded Nana of the usefulness of Sree Sai Baba in such cases.
26. "Do you feel that you would like to get rid of your lameness for ever? If so, come for my Guru's '*darshan*'," said Nana to him.
27. Then, Nana believing it to be unique, narrated in detail about Sai's nature, glory and greatness, Sai being the jewel among saints.
28. "I draw to me my man from afar, even across the seven seas, like a sparrow with a string fastened to its feet".
29. This is Baba's usual assurance. Moreover Nana had given a long discourse. He said: "If you are not his man, you will not be attracted to him.
30. If you are not his man, you will not even have his *darshan*. This is one of Baba's significant aspects. Will you go there on your own?"
31. Be it so. Hearing all the description about Sai, Dixit felt a great satisfaction. Then he said to Nana: "I will take Baba's *darshan*.
32. Why talk about the pain in my leg! The whole body is perishable. Let the injury to my leg remain as long as it does. I am not worried about it.
33. I will go for your Guru's '*darshan*', but for the bliss of attaining liberation. I have no wish for small pleasures and I will not plead for them.
34. There is no happiness other than union with Brahman. That is the only priceless happiness. I will become a servitor of your Guru only for this invaluable bliss.
35. Let the lameness of my leg be. It does not distress me. But I would pray that my lame, fickle mind is brought around.
36. I have got very tired of making efforts but the mind does not become steady. When I make efforts to control it, it runs amok without my knowledge.
37. However attentive I may be in trying to control it, I do not know when it will escape. I am greatly amazed.
38. Therefore, Nana, with my whole heart I will take your Guru's *darshan*. I will pray to him to remove this impairment of my mind".

39. Sai was supremely eager for the spiritual attainment of such a devotee who was not interested in the pleasures of the perishable body but who longed for the ultimate bliss.
40. The election of the then Legislative Council was the topic of conversation everywhere. The people were engaged in this work, in many places.
41. Kakasaheb came suddenly to Nagar (Ahmednagar) to canvass for votes for himself, and was meeting friends for that purpose.
42. There was a chieftain there by the name of Kakasaheb Mirikar. Dixit had close family relations with him. He, therefore, stayed there with him.
43. According to the custom of those times, an exhibition of horses was arranged at Nagar. Therefore, people from all walks of life were engaged in work connected with it.
44. Balasaheb Mirikar, the *Mamlatdar* of Kopergaon, was present at Ahmednagar town for the exhibition.
45. After Dixit's work was completed, he came there. 'How would it be possible to go to Shirdi? Who will take me there?'
46. Once the work had come to an end, his attention was on the way to Shirdi. Dixit's intense desire was only for the opportunity to have Baba's 'darshan'.
47. 'Who will come with me? Who will take me before Baba and place me at his feet?' These were Dixit's dilemmas.
48. Once the work for the elections was over, Dixit was only worried about how he would go to Shirdi. He respectfully requested Mirikar.
49. Balasaheb Mirikar was the son of Kakasaheb Mirikar. They discussed among themselves as to who should go with Dixit.
50. If any one of them would accompany him, then there would be no need for another. Then who should definitely go with him, was being debated.
51. Man thinks of ordinary solutions; but God plans something else. For Dixit's journey to Shirdi, something unexpected happened.
52. On this side, there was this turmoil. On the other side, observe the agitation. Knowing the strong desire of the devotee, see how Samartha yearned with compassion!
53. While Dixit was driven by these thoughts and was seated, worrying about this, Madhavrao himself came to Nagar. Everyone was surprised.

54. The father-in-law of Madhavrao had telegraphed him from Nagar that his mother-in-law was gravely ill and he should come immediately with his wife.
55. As soon as he received the telegram, he prepared to leave after obtaining Baba's permission. Both of them went to Chithali station.
56. They caught the 3 o'clock train and both went to Nagar. They took a tonga and got down at the door.
57. At the same time, Nanasaheb Panshe and Appasaheb Gadre were also there, in connection with the exhibition and were passing by that road.
58. As Madhavrao was alighting from the tonga, they saw him unexpectedly. They were quite surprised. They could not contain their joy.
59. "Look at this! By good fortune Madhavrao, who is the sevakari of Vithoba temple, is here, from Shirdi! Who can be better than him to take Dixit to Shirdi?"
60. Then calling out to him, said: "Dixit Kaka has come to Mirikar's. Go and see him. Marvel at Baba's leelas!"
61. Dixit is our remarkable friend. You will get acquainted with him. He is very eager to go to Shirdi and your arrival will delight him."
62. Giving this message to Madhavrao, they gave the information to Dixit; whose anxiety was relieved on hearing it. He was extremely pleased.
63. When Madhavrao visited his in-laws, he found that his mother-in-law was better. So he rested a little. Then Mirikar sent for him.
64. Respecting the invitation, a little after sunset Madhavrao left to meet Dixit.
65. When Balasaheb introduced him, it was his first meeting. Both of them decided to take the 10 o'clock train, the same night.
66. After this plan was decided, see what an unusual thing happened next. Balasaheb removed the curtain over Baba's portrait
67. This was a photograph of Baba which was worshipped by Megha, a true and great devotee of Baba, with the conviction that Baba was the holy, three-eyed Shankar, incarnate.



68. Because the glass was broken, it was sent to Nagar with Balasaheb for repairs. That was how it initially left Shirdi.
69. This picture, having been repaired, was in Mirikar's drawing room, covered with cloth, as if it was waiting for Dixit.
70. Balasaheb was to return it after the conclusion of the horse-show. But there was yet some more time for that. Therefore, he entrusted it to Madhavrao.
71. Removing the cloth, he uncovered it. He gave it in Madhavrao's keeping; and said: "Go upto Shirdi happily, in Baba's company."
72. When he first cast a glance at that portrait, which was pleasing in all aspects, Kakasaheb was filled with joy. After prostrating before it with reverence, he began to look at it.
73. Experiencing this unusual incident, and seeing Sai Samartha's photograph unexpectedly, which was so pleasing and pure, Dixit's eyes were riveted to it.
74. He was greatly delighted that he, for whose 'darshan' he was longing, his portrait embodying his form, could be seen by him, on the way itself.
75. It was a strange coincidence that it was at Kakasaheb Mirikar's house, at the same time when Dixit was there, having come earlier from Shirdi.
76. It seemed that Sai *Samartha* had come at Mirikar's residence, under a pretext, to fulfil Dixit's heartfelt longing.
77. At Lonavala itself, the attraction for the Guru had taken place when he had met Nana and talked at length with him. It was the seed sown for the meeting.
78. Otherwise why should this portrait from Shirdi have come here at this time and remained covered for so long at this place?
79. So be it. After it was so decided, Madhavrao and Dixit, taking the picture with them, set out happily.
80. They both left for the station after dinner, that same night. They paid the second-class fare and bought the tickets.
81. Right at the stroke of ten, the sound of the train could be heard. They also saw that the second-class compartments were crammed with passengers.

82. The situation was such that both of them were greatly worried. The time was also short. What arrangement could be made and how?
83. Be it so. Now, because, of the overcrowding, both of them decided to return to their place and go the next day to Shirdi.
84. At that moment, Dixit saw the guard of the train with whom he had an acquaintance. He easily made arrangements for them to travel by the first class.
85. Then, sitting in the train, they started talking about Baba, to their heart's content. Madhavrao narrated the nectar-like stories. Dixit overflowed with joy.
86. Thus that journey was completed very joyfully. Time passed very quickly. The train reached Kopergaon. They alighted in a very happy mood.
87. At the same time, they unexpectedly saw Nanasaheb Chandorkar at the station. Dixit was full of happiness that they had met each other.
88. Nana too had come for Baba's '*darshan*' and was proceeding to Shirdi. All the three of them were amazed at this coincidence.
89. Then, the three of them hired a tonga and left on the way, animatedly talking. They had a bath in the Godavari, on the way, and reached holy Shirdi.
90. Later, after having Sai's '*darshan*' Dixit's heart melted and his eyes filled with tears. The water of Self Bliss spilt and over flowed.
91. "I too was waiting for you. Then I sent Shama to meet you, all the way to Nagar," spoke Sai clearly to him.
92. Hearing these words, every pore in Dixit's body was filled with joy; his throat was choked with emotion; his mind was full of happiness; and he was sweating profusely.
93. His body trembled; his mind was engrossed in Self Bliss; his eyes were half closed and he was immersed in a cloud of joy.
94. "To-day my eyes have served their purpose". Saying this he embraced Baba's feet. He felt truly blessed and the world could not contain his joy.
95. Later, years passed. His faith was firmly rooted at Sai's feet. He attained Sai's grace fully; and wearied his body in Sai's service.

96. To serve Sai well, he built a house or ashram in Shirdi and stayed there for many years. He spread Sai's fame.
97. In conclusion, whosoever longs for Sai is fulfilled by him. Sai is the abode of refuge for his devotees and the giver of ultimate joy to them.
98. There are myriad 'chakors' for the moon, but for the 'chakors' there is just one moon. Similarly, a mother may have many sons but for the son there is only one mother.
99. For the sun there are innumerable white lotuses, but for the lotuses there is only one sun giving them the light of the day. There is no dearth of devotees for you; but *Guruvar*, you alone are their father.
100. For the cloud there are numerous 'chataks' but for the 'chataks' there is only one cloud. Similarly, he has countless devotees but for them he alone is the mother and the father.
101. He respects the honour of those who surrender to him easily with devotion. He fulfils their desires with his efforts and might. This can be observed even presently.
102. All living beings in this world will meet their end at the hands of death. Sai made Dixit fearless of death by saying: "I will take you in a plane".
103. Dixit's end came about as assured by Sai's words. He died with the words of Sai's glory on his lips. It happened before my very eyes.
104. We were both sitting on a bench in a train next to one another, engrossed in the stories of Sai Samartha, when he seemed to take off suddenly in the plane.
105. He seemed to have unexpectedly seized the opportunity by placing his head on my shoulder. Dixit had suddenly attained a place in the plane and achieved heavenly bliss.
106. There was no contraction nor convulsion. There was no rattle in the throat nor was there any sharp pain. While his body was normal in all aspects, with all the faculties functional, his body became still.
107. The mortal life was cast away. His light merged with the Self. He established in his Real Form by flying away. His light became one with Brahman.
108. When he concentrated at Sai's feet, he had completely lost his ego. His behaviour was such that he was well content and had totally dedicated himself to the Lord.

109. In '*Shake*' 1848 (AD 1926), in the Hindu calendar month of *Jeshth*, on the *Ekadashi* day of the dark fortnight of the month,³ (i.e. the 11th day of the waning moon), Dixit attained union with the Lord, leaving behind the world of conditioned existence.
110. Call it death or say that his plane had arrived. He merged at Sai's feet. Everyone is aware of the truth of this story.
111. 'One needs to be free from such an obligation'! Anyone who believes this must be deemed to be totally devoid of devotion. There is nothing in this world that one can give as a gift in lieu of this obligation; it would not even happen in a dream!
112. If one thinks of giving the '*Chintamani*'⁴ one will only increase one's daily anxieties. If one thinks that the obligation is repaid by giving such an object, it is only a childish thought.
113. Well, if one offers the '*Kalpataru*'⁵ to the Guru and tries to please him, the Guru, however, is skilful in granting something which is unchanging; can that free one from all debts and obligations to the Guru?
114. Be it so. Instead of all this if one gives '*parees*'⁶ to the Guru, then the '*parees*' will turn into gold. But the Guru will make one savour the divine knowledge.
115. If one gives the '*Kamadhenu*'⁷ to the Guru, believing that in this way his obligation is repaid, one will only greatly increase one's own desires. The Guru is without any expectations and is a willing giver.
116. If one gives the wealth of the whole world to the Guru, in order to repay his obligation, can one repay it by illusory or '*Mayik*' objects when he has given the Real or '*Amayik*'?
117. If one offers one's body to the Guru, it is only a perishable object; if one offers one's life to him then know that too is illusory.
118. The Sadguru is the bestower of the Real things. By offering him illusory objects how can he be repaid? This is an impossible concept.
119. Therefore, with complete and singular faith, prostrate the whole body in salutation, place your head at the feet of the *Sadguru*, remembering the benefits and obligations he has conferred.

120. Constant and eternal remembrance of the benefits conferred by the Guru is the ornament of the disciple. He who tries to repay that obligation, that disciple loses his happiness.
121. Listening so far to this story, the listeners have a strong desire for more. Observing their eagerness, together with curiosity, I will narrate a small story.
122. The saints also express their brotherly love for other saints, in accordance with the norms of worldly people; or that they are very intent on bringing people together to adopt a particular way and want this creed to be known.
123. Or, Sai himself plays the part of those characters to achieve the welfare of his devotees and to teach them spirituality.
124. Listeners please hear with respect a short story illustrating this. They will then understand how saints understand other saints and their indication, without the benefit of words.
125. Once, on the banks of the Godavari, in the famous town of Rajahmundry, Sree Vasudeva Anand encamped. His family name was Saraswati.
126. He was greater than the great, highly omniscient, and a devout and orthodox follower of the Karma Marg. His fame was unending like the Ganga and reverberated even to the nether regions of the earth.
127. Hearing about him by word of mouth, one Pundalik Rao and others, residents of Nanded, who were devout, firmly decided to have his 'darshan'.
128. Anyway, later on that whole group left Nanded and came to Rajahmundry, on the banks of the Godavari, early morning, for the 'darshan' of the Swami.
129. As it was the auspicious early morning time, the whole group from Nanded, set out for the banks of the Ganga, for a bath, while chanting stotras and scriptures.
130. The group found Swami sitting there and bowed to him with eight-fold prostrations, with devotion. In the natural course of their conversation about generalities, Shirdi was mentioned.
131. When Sai's name was heard by him, the Swami folded his hands in salutation and said: "He is my brother, who is desireless. I have excessive love for him".

132. Picking up a cocoanut from there, he gave it to Pundalik Rao and said : "Bowling down at the lotus feet of my brother, offer this, whenever you go to Shirdi.
133. Convey to him my salutations and request him to have mercy and grace towards this humble one. Do not forget me and let your love for me grow uninterruptedly.
134. Whenever you go next to Shirdi, offer this to my brother, with reverence and without fail.
135. As a rule, we swamis are forbidden and do not bow to any one else. But breaking this rule, in the present context, can only be beneficent.
136. Therefore, when you take Sai's darshan, do not forget this matter. Offer this coconut at Sai's feet, without fail".
137. After hearing these words of the Swami, Pundalik Rao bowed at his feet and said: "I will act in accordance with the Swami's instructions.
138. I accept your instructions with profound reverence and consider myself blessed to be so entrusted". Pundalik Rao left from there, after surrendering whole-heartedly to the Swami.
139. When the Swami called Baba his brother, was it meaningless? Baba acted in accordance with the *Shrutis* being an 'Agnihotri', offering oblations to the fire in the morning and the evening.
140. The fire, which was called 'Dhuni' by the people, was always in front of Baba, and kept burning day and night. This was Baba's vow.
141. 'Agnihotra' and other such performances are prescribed for inner purification. Baba adopted this means to make the people follow a particular way and to achieve Brahmanhood.
142. Sree Vasudeva Anand Saraswati was an ascetic and also followed the same vow (being an *Agnihotri*). No wonder than that he called Baba his brother! Could he speak in vain?
143. Later, before even a month had passed, the opportunity arose for Pundalik Rao to set out for Sai's darshan, taking four friends along with him.
144. He took his baggage, a variety of fruits and carefully remembered to take that coconut. They all set out for Sai's 'darshan', with joy and unperturbed minds.
145. Later, when they got off at Manmad, there was still some time for the departure of the train to Kopergaon. As they were very thirsty, they went to a nearby stream.

146. As drinking water on an empty stomach is harmful for the body, someone brought out a small bundle of 'chivada' tied in the corner of a cloth, to eat as a light snack.
147. On putting just a pinch of the 'chivada' into the mouth, the 'chivada' was found to be very pungent. Without a coconut the 'chivada' was useless. The whole effort seemed wasted.
148. Then one of them said to them all: "I remember a stratagem. Break the coconut and mix it with the 'chivada'. Then, savour the taste of the 'chivada' ".
149. No sooner was the coconut mentioned, then one was found ready at hand. There was no delay in breaking it. Mixing it with the 'chivada', improved the taste. Thereafter, they drank that water.
150. The coconut was mentioned and there was one ready at hand. Nobody asked to whom it belonged. The hunger was so overpowering that they all forgot.
151. Be that as it may be. They sat in the train to Kopergaon and went forward to their destination. On the way, Pundalik Rao remembered that particular coconut.
152. Seeing that Shirdi was near by, Pundalik Rao was in a mental turmoil, realising that the coconut given by Vasudeva Anand had been mixed with the 'chivada' by mistake.
153. When he realised that the coconut was broken, Pundalik Rao was filled with fear and his whole body trembled. He had committed a sin against a saint.
154. He was most remorseful. What a sin he had committed? He had earned the curse of the Swami! 'My lamenting over it is useless.'
155. For the coconut to have been put to such a use was a great trap. Pundalik Rao's mind was stunned and he was nonplussed.
156. 'Now, what can I offer Baba? In what manner can I explain this to him? How can I show my face to him? I have lost the coconut, irrevocably'.
157. Pundalik Rao was very depressed thinking about having made a light snack of that which had to be offered at Sai's feet. He said: "This is an insult of a saint".
158. Now, when Baba asks for the coconut, all would have to hang their heads in shame, as they had made a light snack of it, at Manmad. This was the turmoil that all faced from within.
159. It would be a shame to tell the truth that they did not have the coconut with them that day. To tell a lie would not serve any purpose, as Sai Maharaj was omniscient.

160. Be it so. The whole group was filled with joy on taking Sai's 'darshan'. Eyes were filled with tears of joy and their faces reflected their bliss.
161. Now a days, we send wireless messages, day or night, and boast about it, taking pride in doing so.
162. For this, buildings have to be constructed and a lot of expenditure has to be incurred. The saints do not need these means. They send messages by telepathy.
163. At the time when the Swami had given the coconut to Pundalik Rao, he had already sent a message to Sainath by telepathy.
164. When Pundalik Rao was taking 'darshan', Sai Baba, on his own, said: "Bring me that article which you have brought from my brother".
165. Then, that dejected Pundalik Rao held Sree Baba's feet and said: "What shall I say, except to beg for your forgiveness.
166. I did remember the coconut. But to satisfy our hunger, when we went to the stream, all of us forgot.
167. There, when we made a light snack of the 'chivada' this very coconut was broken and mixed with it. Therefore, I will bring another coconut. Please accept it without hesitation".
168. Saying this, Pundalik Rao began to get up to get the fruit. Others saw Sai Maharaj hold him by the hand and prevent him from going.
169. "Unknowingly, I have broken faith. You are merciful, give me shelter under your fold. Forgive me, O Merciful One! I am utterly guilty.
170. I have disregarded the words of a virtuous saint like the Swami; and I have eaten the fruit which was to be offered to you.
171. This is a transgression against a saint. Is there anything to mitigate this sin? How impudent have I become!"
172. Then hearing about the incident as it had happened, Sree Sainath laughingly said: "Why did you take the coconut when you were not going to take care of it?
173. My brother had full faith in your words, firmly believing that you would give my article to me.
174. And what was the result of it? Is this your trustworthiness? My brother's desire remained unfulfilled. Is this how you work?"

175. He added: "The worth of that fruit cannot be matched by giving any number of others! Whatever had to happen, has happened. Why unnecessarily brood over it?"
176. It was only by my resolve that the Swami gave you the coconut and that fruit was broken by my volition. Why do you unnecessarily take the doership?
177. You are feeling guilty because you have an ego. Just be egoless. You will be free from all guilt.
178. Why is there pride in doing a good or meritorious deed? And why does one shirk away from a sinful one? The result of both is the same! Therefore, act without the sense of doership.
179. It occurred to me that you should see me. Therefore, the coconut was entrusted into your hands. This is the truth, verily, verily, verily.
180. After all, you are my children. The fruit that you have eaten is as good as being offered to me. Believe that I have definitely received it".
181. When Pundalik Rao understood this, then his mind calmed down with Sai's words and his anxiety dissolved gradually.
182. The loss of the coconut was only a pretext, for giving the advice to clarify the anxiety-ridden minds. Thus all of them who were full of pride became free of the ego and felt blameless, and guiltless.
183. The essence of this story is that those whose minds are free of pride are qualified to attain spirituality and can easily go across the ocean of existence.
184. Now listen to the experience of the third devotee which is sweet and novel. It is indicative of both Baba's immeasurable grandeur and greatness of authority.
185. In Bandra taluka, to the north of the township of Bandra, in Santacruz town lived the devotee Dhurandhar.
186. All the brothers had love and reverence for the saints. They had firm trust in Sree Ram. They had a singular faith in chanting Sree Ram's name. They did not like unnecessarily dabbling in the affairs of others.
187. They lead simple lives, and so did their children. Even the women in the family behaved in a faultless manner. Lord Vishnu (Chakrapani) was therefore, indebted to them.

188. Balaram was one of them. He was a devotee of Vitthal and a person of sacred celebrity. He was honoured in every princely court and he was liked by all.
189. This gem was born on this earth on 19th February 1878, to a mother who was a devotee of Sree Ram.
190. He was an ornament of the *Pathare Prabhu* caste, of a famous family and lineage. In the year 1878, he was born in Bombay.
191. He had a western education and was a qualified advocate. He was well-versed in philosophy and was well-known as a learned man, everywhere.
192. He was greatly devoted to the deity Pandurang and supremely inclined towards spirituality. Though his father's family deity was Ram, his own worship was for Vitthal.
193. All the brothers held good positions and their conduct was always righteous. As they came from a pure lineage, they had a pure culture. But Balaram was unexcelled.
194. He had the ability to put forward well-reasoned, substantive and appealing arguments; he had a simple and pure way of thinking; a sharp intellect but good and righteous behaviour. These were his virtues and they were worth emulating.
195. He had served his community and written and published an account of it. On completing the work that he had undertaken, he decided to attain spirituality.
196. In this field also he surpassed others and after completing the *Bhagvad Gita* and *Dnyaneshwari* became proficient in these texts. He became a man of repute in *Adhyatma*.
197. He was a great devotee of Sai. He became one with the Supreme Spirit in 1925, at a young age. Listen to a short biography about him.
198. On the 9th of June, 1925, after finishing his journey in this world, he merged in Lord Vitthal.
199. On an auspicious day in April 1912, the opportunity arose for the Dhurandhar brothers to have the saint's '*darshan*' in Sai's durbar.
200. Six months earlier, his eldest brother Babuji, along with Vaman Rao, had taken '*darshan*' and returned happily.
201. To have the same sweet experience as they had, all the others including Balaram went there to have the benefit of the novel '*darshan*'.
202. Even before their arrival, Baba openly said: "To-day, several people from my *Durbar* are going to come here".

203. Hearing about this loving remark, the Dhurandhar brothers were greatly surprised as they had not intimated anyone of their trip to Shirdi. How did Baba come to know of it?
204. Later, seeing Sai, they ran and embraced his feet. Slowly the conversation began and every one was happy and contented.
205. Besides, when he saw that the people had gathered, Baba spoke again: "See, these are the people of the *Durbar*, about whose coming I had spoken".
206. And, listen to what Baba said further. Every word is true. "Remember that we know each other since the last sixty generations".
207. Balaram and the brothers, all of them full of humility, stood before Baba with their hands folded and gazing at the feet of Sree Sai.
208. On having Sree Sai's *darshan*, Balaram and all the others felt enthusiastic and excessively devoted and loving. They considered that the trip was worth their efforts.
209. The eyes were filled with tears; the throats were choked with great emotion; they experienced horripilation over their bodies; and all the eight 'satvik' emotions filled them.
210. Seeing Balaram's state, Sainath was pleased. He began talking to all of them, relating loving stories and giving advice.
211. "He who worships me in the moonlit fortnight, when the moon is waxing, and offers to me love and all sentiments, is blessed.
212. He who with complete faith engages himself in the service of his Guru, the Lord is indebted to him always. No one can view him with evil intentions.
213. He who does not waste even half a moment and who has a liking for the worship of the Lord and the Guru, they will give him infinite or perpetual happiness and enable him to cross to the other shore."
214. Hearing such words, everybody's eyes were filled with tears of joy; their minds were filled with happiness; and their hearts were overpowered by emotions.
215. This garland of the words of Sai was worn by all with obeisance. All were filled with joy. It was the reason why they were all filled with devotion.

216. So be it. They went to the Wada later and rested after their meal. In the afternoon they went again and prostrated before Baba.
217. Balaram, with great humility, began pressing Baba's feet. Then Baba extended the '*chillum*' to him and made a sign to him to smoke it.
218. Then, considering the '*chillum*' as a '*Prasad*', though he was not in the habit of smoking it, Balaram took a few puffs with difficulty and handing it back to Baba, bowed to him with devotion.
219. It was a fortunate day for Balaram. From that day, his asthma was cured and he was well satisfied.
220. This asthma had not troubled him just recently. He had been suffering from it for full six years. Yet it was cured, as if a *mantra* had been whispered into his ear. The '*chillum*' had such power.
221. From the time that he took a deep-drawn pull at the '*chillum*' and returned it, after bowing with humility, the asthma disappeared. It did not recur, at all.
222. But one day, in between, Balaram got a cough which surprised everyone, as no one could understand its cause.
223. Later, when they went deep into the matter, it was discovered that Baba had left his mortal coil on that day itself and had given an indication to his devotee.
224. The day that Balaram got an attack of the cough was the day when Baba had surrendered his body to the earth and gave an indication of it.
225. From that day, he never again suffered from the cough till his dying day. Can anyone ever forget this experience of the '*chillum*'?
226. That was a Thursday and the day for the procession to the *chavadi*. Thereby, the joy was multiplied two-fold. It was truly a memorable day.
227. From eight to nine, in the night, before Baba, in the courtyard, bhajans were sung to the beating of various instruments such as the '*tal mridang*' etc. with great interest and elan.
228. The '*abhangs*' were sung at one place, while the palanquin was decorated at another. After the palanquin was ready, Baba then started for the *chavadi*.

229. Earlier, I have described the unique *chavadi* procession in chapter thirty-seven. It will be a repetition here.
230. Baba spent one night in the *Masjid* and the next in the *chavadi*. This routine of Baba was continued by him till the end.
231. To see the *chavadi* celebration, loving Balaram was filled with enthusiasm. Therefore, when it was time for the *chavadi* procession, all the Dhurandhars returned.
232. The men and women of Shirdi village accompanied Baba, shouting acclamations with zeal and started for the *chavadi*.
233. The horse, whose name was Shyamsunder, was covered with a cloth, woven with golden threads, and was ornamented. He lead the procession, prancing ahead.
234. Various musical instruments, such as the horn, large brass trumpet, and the 'tutari', played. The ornamented Shyamakaran, along with the palanquin and Sai were taken in procession. Sai walked along with the devotees, as some held an ornamental umbrella over him.
235. Some carried flags and paper decorations in their hands. Some held the ornamental umbrella over Sree's head. Some waved whisks and peacock feathers; and others holding torches surrounded them on all sides.
236. Taking the harmonious mridang, 'tal', 'ghol' and other sweet sounding instruments, a multitude of devotees walked on either side of Baba, doing bhajans.
237. Be this as it may be. When this beautiful procession came before the *chavadi*, Baba stopped and facing in the northerly direction made his ritualistic movements with his hand.
238. On the right hand, Baba's 'Bhagat' (Mhalsapati) walked holding the fold of Baba's garment; and on the left walked Tatya Patil holding a lantern.
239. Baba's complexion was golden-hued; and when the light of the lamps fell on it, it shone like yellow gold mixed with copper. The beauty of his face was like the light of dawn.
240. Blessed was the pure 'darshan' of that moment. Baba stood facing the north, in deep concentration, and it seemed as if he was summoning someone, as he partially raised his right hand.
241. From there, he was taken further upto the *chavadi* and made to take a seat with great honour. Beautiful ornaments and clothes were offered to him and *sandal wood* paste was smeared on his limbs.

242. Sometimes an aigrette of jewels worn in the *turban* was offered; sometimes a gem-studded ornament for the *turban*; sometimes a plume; sometimes a golden ornamented crown; sometimes a gold-embroidered cloak.
243. Necklaces of diamonds, pearls and emeralds were put around Baba's neck lovingly. Some adorned his forehead with a round mark of fragrant musk.
244. Some washed his feet and worshipped them; some applied saffron and other fragrances to the body and put betel leaves in his mouth.
245. They waved the five-wick lamp, filling it with camphor, over Baba. The beauty of his visage was beyond compare.
246. The luminosity surrounding Sai's face made him appear exactly like the image of Pandurang. Dhurandhar was stupified to see it.
247. Just as no one on earth can bear to see the flash of lightening in the sky, similarly the effluence of Sai's forehead, when it shone, blinded all eyes.
248. The 'Kakad Arati' used to take place in the early mornings. Dhurandhar and others went there. There too they saw the same lustre on Baba's face.
249. From then on, till he died, Balaram had complete faith at Sai's feet. It was definitely established and it never wavered even a little bit.
250. Hemad surrenders at Sai's feet. The book will be concluded in the next chapter. In the narration, there will be a review. Give me your attention for the last time.

May there be well-being. This is the end of the fifty-first chapter of *Sree Sai Samartha Satcharita* written by the devotee Hemadpant; impelled by Saints and virtuous people, called "A Triad of Stories of Three Devotees".

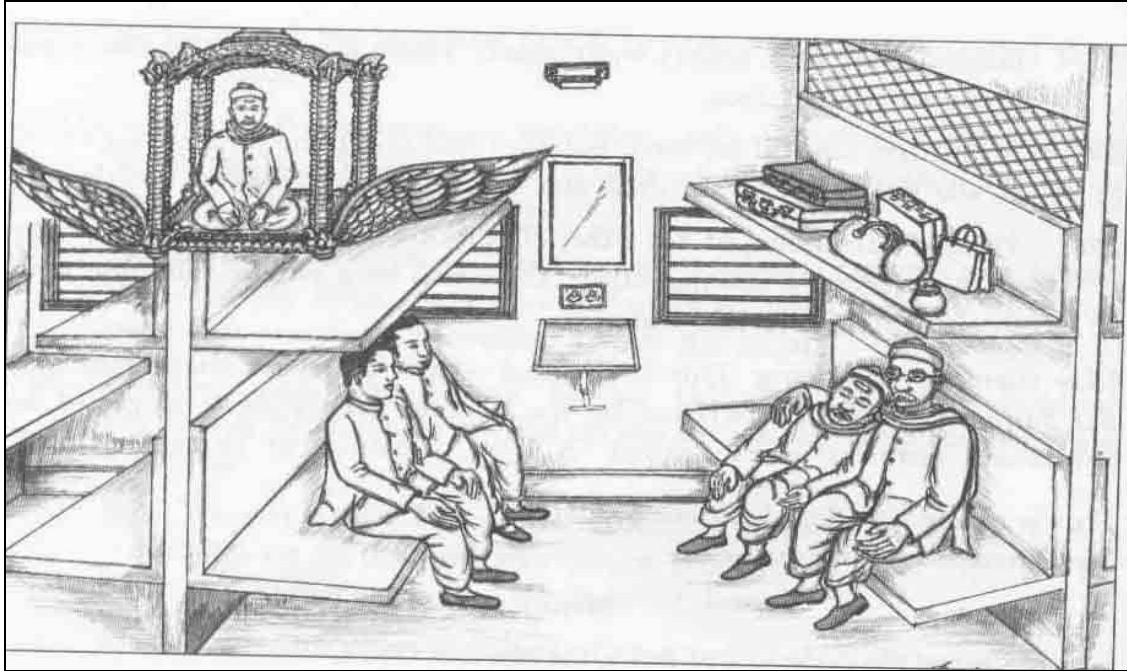
This is offered to *Sree Sadguru Sainath*.

May there be auspiciousness!

Notes :

1. West of the Peninsula of India, the Malabar Ghats.
2. There was a lot of property there, belonging to Dixit.
3. It was the 5th of July 1926.
4. The jewel that grants all desires.
5. The wish fulfilling tree.
6. The stone that alchemises iron into gold.
7. The wish-fulfilling cow.





Dixit's end came about as assured by Sai's words. He died with the words of Sai's glory on his lips. It happened before my (Hemadpant) very eyes. (Ch. 51, ovi 103)

We were both sitting on a bench in a train next to one another, engrossed in the stories of Sai Samartha, when he seemed to take off suddenly in the plane. (Ch. 51, ovi 104)



Picking up a coconut from there, he gave it to Pundalik Rao and said : "Bowling down at the lotus feet of my brother, offer this, whenever you go to Shirdi. (Ch. 51, ovi 132)