



Shraddha. Saburi.

45 11 Smart Street * Flushing, NY 11355 * (718) 461-0454 * info@omsaimandir.org * www.omsaimandir.org
Oct & Nov 2007

SAI SANDESH

The official monthly newsletter of

OM SAI MANDIR

A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION



Love All. Serve All.

Volume 4, Issue 10 & 11

Diwali & Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday Special Issue!



Happy Diwali!

Happy 82nd birthday to the ageless, formless Lord who has incarnated as Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Our humble pranams at his lotus feet.

LIFE SIZE STATUES OF SAI BABA HAVE ARRIVED!

Shri Shirdi Sai Baba and Shri Sathya Sai Baba's life-sized statues have arrived in New York! The containers are currently undergoing customs clearance and will be at the mandir as soon as the clearance process is completed. We will be e-mailing an official announcement as soon as the statues are installed in the temple.



THE DIVINE NAME IS MORE POWERFUL THAN THE DIVINE HIMSELF

BY THE SAI SANDESH TEAM

If there is anything more powerful than the All-Powerful, it is His divine name. It is no secret that countless seers, sages, devotees, and even ordinary individuals have tapped into the power of God's name to accomplish the impossible and, at times, alter the divine will itself. What could be a greater endorsement of this truth than Sai Baba's own words: "The Lord's name is so powerful, even mountains of sins can be burnt to ashes through its constant repetition."

The story of Ratnakar's transformation is a case in point. Ratnakar was a ruthless highway robber who would not hesitate to even murder his victims for a few pieces of gold. Blinded by a false sense of invincibility, he continued indulging in criminal activities until he was initiated into the mysteries of the divine name by his mentor Narada. The meeting with the guru had a powerful impact on Ratnakar's mind, and he immediately abandoned his infamous career to dedicate his life to the ceaseless repetition of Rama's holy name. Through constant contemplation, he metamorphosed into Valmiki, the divine saint who penned Ramayana.

Hanuman's life is another glowing testament of the glory of God's name. Throughout his illustrious life, Hanuman demonstrated how a devotee could perform superhuman feats by unconditionally relying on God. One example illustrates this point. Once, there was a disagreement between Sage Vishwamitra and Sage Vashishta. The two were debating about the greatest power in the universe. The former contested that Lord Rama's arrows were supremely powerful, while the latter argued that God's name was most powerful, even more powerful than God Himself. To test the validity of their theories, they proposed a test that was to be executed by Vishwamitra himself.

In those days it was customary for householder devotees to receive guests, especially holy ones, with great reverence. One failing this duty would often be the recipient of a curse or fall prey to unpleasant circumstances. Vishwamitra was aware of this and intentionally visited a devotee-king, Chandrabhanu, while he was in deep meditation. Since the king was in a trance, he failed to receive the saint reverentially. This infuriated the sage and he rushed to Lord Rama, who held holy ones in high esteem and went to great extents to appease them. Vishwamitra was aware of this fact and he tactfully made Rama take an oath that the one who insulted Vishwamitra would be killed by His infallible bow. True to His promise, Rama set out on a quest to kill the one who had offended the great Vishwamitra.

In the meanwhile, Sage Narada informed Chandrabhanu about the imminent danger. Frightened by the sure prospect of death, he sought Narada's counsel and requested him if there was any way to avert the tragedy. Narada advised Chandrabhanu to seek protection from Hanuman. He further suggested that Chandrabhanu should reveal the source of danger only after he had extracted a promise from Hanuman.

As advised by the sage, Chandrabhanu held Hanuman's feet and sought his protection. Hanuman took an oath in Rama's name and promised to protect the king even at the cost of his own life. The stage was well set. On one hand the Lord was bound by His oath, while on the other His most loyal and beloved devotee Hanuman was bound by an opposing oath.

To fulfill his promise, Rama sent His powerful army to kill Chandrabhanu but it was vanquished by the valiant Hanuman in a trice. Rama then sent his brothers and ministers. They, too, were defeated by Hanuman. Finally, Rama Himself came to the scene to see the one who had given succor to Chandrabhanu. He was surprised to find Hanuman, his most beloved devotee, protecting the one who stood against Rama. The Lord immediately ordered Hanuman to give up, but the latter, with great humility submitted that he had taken an oath in Rama's name and would never do anything to tarnish its glory. On explaining this Hanuman stood still, but every pore of his body was reverberating with Rama's name.

Rama then lifted his divine bow and let loose a foray of arrows, all of which miraculously turned into flower garlands decorating the neck of the valiant Hanuman. Vashishta explained the astonished onlookers that even through Rama's arrows were invincible, they were no match for His own name. It was then that everyone, including Vishwamitra, realized the power of God's name. Rama was extremely pleased with the devotion of Hanuman and blessed him profusely. To keep his beloved devotee's oath, the merciful Lord forsook His own and granted forgiveness to Chandrabhanu. Such is the power of the name. It can protect one from almighty God Himself, what power is there to fear then.

MIND BOGGLING MIRACLES OF SAI BABA: BABA GIVES MOON DARSHAN



Devotees rejoice!

The Lord of Shirdi and Puttaparthi revealed a small fraction of the divine glory by appearing in the moon on October 22, 2007. Witnessing the miracle was a treat for the eyes as Sai Baba's form could be clearly witnessed in the moon.

Augmenting the spectacle further were four bright rays of light emanating from the moon. Millions of devotees across the globe were able to experience this mind-boggling miracle.

Several media outlets covered the story generously.

OM SAI MANDIR'S ACTIVITIES

DAILY ARATIS

Kakad Arati: 8.00 A.M.
Madhyana Arati: 12.00 P.M.
Dhoop Arati: 6.00 P.M.
Sheja Arati: 8.00 P.M.

SPECIAL BHAJANS

Every Thursday: 7.00 P.M.-8.30 P.M.
Every Sunday: 2.00 P.M.-3.00 P.M.
SAHASRANAM, BABA'S 108 NAMES, ETC.: Daily
ANNADAN (FOOD SERVICE): Daily at the Mandir
ANNADAN (FOOD SERVICE) FOR HOMELESS
BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Every Saturday at 1 P.M. Call
718-461-0454

PUJA SPONSORSHIP

Archana: \$11
Abhishekam: \$51
Satyanarayana Vrata: \$81
Vahana Puja: \$15
Annadan: \$251
To sponsor pujas, call (718) 461-0454.

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 2007

Wed., November 07: Dhanteras
Fri., November 09: Diwali/Deepavali/Amavasya
Sat., November 10, 6.00 P.M. to Sun., November 11, 6.00
P.M.: Akhanda (24 hours) Bhajans for World Peace
Sat., November 10: Gujarati New Year
Sun., November 11: Bhai Dooj/Bhai Phota/Bhav Bij
Sun., November 18: Ladies' Day
Thurs., November 22: Thanksgiving Day
Fri., November 23: Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday
Sat., November 24: Sri Guru Nanak Jayanti
Sat., November 24: Kartika Poornima

Rudra Abhishekam - Daily

For the welfare of humanity, Ekadash Rudra Abhishekam is being performed daily (eleven times) from 8.00 AM to 11.30 AM. All are welcome to attend this landmark event.

Who is carrying the bag? Adapted from Oka Chinna Katha

Once, Iswarachandra Vidya Sagar was proceeding to a neighboring village to deliver an address. People used to gather in large numbers to listen to his lectures. A young officer, who wanted to listen to Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, got down from a train with a bag to go to the lecture hall.

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar also got down from the same train. The young officer was calling for a porter to carry his bag. Iswar Chandra went to him and said, "Why do you need a porter to carry this small bag? Can't you carry it yourself and save the money?"

He replied, "It is not in keeping with my dignity to carry my bag. I am an educated person." Iswar Chandra told him, "The hallmark of education is humility, not pride. If you cannot carry your own bag, how are you carrying your body? If, however, you cannot carry your own bag, I shall do so."

And Iswar Chandra carried the officer's bag. He acted on the motto, "Plain living and high thinking." The young man wanted to offer money to his 'porter'. Iswar Chandra told him, "To serve you is my reward".

The young officer left and was later proceeding to the venue of the meeting. There, people were offering garlands to Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar to welcome him to the meeting. The young officer realized that the man who had offered to carry his bag at the station was none other than the respected speaker of the evening, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar.

He felt ashamed that he had made such a great man carry his bag. He reflected: "What is his education and what is mine? I am like a glow worm before the Sun."

Devotees' Experiences

--Mr. Jitender Verma, Chandigarh

After my marriage to Rashmi on November 12, 2003, we visited Ooty, Kodaicanal, and on our way back we halted at Bangalore to visit our relatives. Since our return to Chandigarh was delayed by three to four days, our relatives, who are not devotees, suggested that we take darshan of Baba at Puttaparthi.

We visited Prashanti Nilayam on December 2003 and were fortunate to have Baba's darshan the following morning. The darshan had a miraculous effect on both of us and we felt instantly attracted to Him. We stayed there for a few days and returned on January 06, 2004.

After our return, I was constantly thinking about Baba. One night, when I was sleeping, I heard a distinct voice: "Hey, son." I woke up and rushed to the lobby-lo, I could see Baba everywhere in our house. I had not heard Baba's voice before but when I heard his discourse on Sanskaar TV, I was convinced I had heard the same voice the previous night.

On another occasion, we were at our relative's house for an all-night vigil. There, Baba appeared in His physical form and encouraged me and my wife to play the role of Lord Shiva and Parvati, a role that we were hesitating to enact. Baba added further, "I am Shiva and Shakti, do play the part."

Baba gave us a third revelation when I was half asleep one afternoon. In response to the doorbell, I woke up and rushed to the door. Before opening the door, I peeped through the window to see who was outside. I could see a beautiful red car parked in front of our house. It was dazzling with brass railings and on the rear seat was a king's throne. When I opened the door there the car had vanished.

I returned to my bedroom and fell asleep. This time, Baba came in my dream and told me, "I have come to take you to Parthi. Come with me." He was majestically seated in a red golf cart.

These experiences had a deep impact on our mind and me and my wife decided to visit Parthi. Despite severe resource constraints, Baba arranged money for the visit and we stayed at Prashanti Nilayam from November 18 till December 01, 2004. During this visit, we decided to spend the rest of our lives at Prashanti Nilayam and wrote separate letters requesting Baba to respond to our prayers. He did not take our letters, so we mailed them.

When we returned home, there was a surprise waiting for us. I had received an interview call from the General Hospital at Prashanti Nilayam. I returned to Puttaparthi on December 14.

When I came for the interview, Baba sent a word that I was too young and should remain with my family. He also assured me that I would be called a later stage. I was disappointed but felt happy at the thought that He had immediately responded to my letter.

When I returned home, Swami appeared in my dream and said, "I will call you to Prashanti Nilayam in 2014." Strange are the ways of Baba.

Mr. Jitender Verma is an audiologist/speech pathologist at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh.

SAI WISDOM

From time to time, the Divine power assumes numerous forms. In devotees, it shines as the Jnana-Agni (fire of wisdom). In non-devotees, it burns as Krodha-Agni (the fire of anger) or the Kama-Agni (fire of desire). Man today has this fire (of anger, etc) in his heart and has become a victim of fear and delusions. All other types of fires subside in due course of time, but these fires (of anger, etc.) never completely cease. They may flare up at any moment. How, then, are these fires to be extinguished once for all? Vairagya (detachment) and Prema (love) are the two requisites to extinguish these fires. It is only through Prema (love) that man can acquire peace.

Source: Thought for the day, Prashanti Nilayam, November 04, 2007

BEACON LIGHTS

KAKASAHEB DIKSHIT'S UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

BY THE SAI SANDESH TEAM

Surrender is a commonly used, seldomly practiced term. There is one devotee, however, whose unconditional reliance on Sai stands out as a beacon light for the rest of us. Hari Sitaram Dikshit (a.k.a. Kakasaheb) came in contact with Sai Baba around the year 1910. In the physical sense, Dikshit was introduced to Baba by Nanasaheb, but in the spiritual realm, it was Sai who had drawn Kaka to Him.

During his contact with Baba, Kakasaheb experienced numerous spiritual and miraculous phenomena that convinced him about Sainath's divinity and he gradually found himself surrendering to His feet. Through steady practice of naama smarana (constant contemplation of the divine name), what started as a tiny spark of devotion assumed the form of an uncontrollable fire that burnt all passions and worldly desires to ashes, and the person who emerged from the flame was a spiritual being experiencing Sai as everything and everything as Sai.

Kakasaheb developed such devotional zeal that he would rely on Baba for every important matter. When Dikshit's surrender reached the pinnacle, Baba gave him the opportunity to experience the fruit of unconditional surrender. Due to adverse circumstances, Kakasaheb, who was a lawyer by profession, found his practice diminishing precipitously. He was quickly losing the client base he had worked so hard to build. This was not a cause of concern, for he knew that his Lord was watching over him. After losing all income, there came a time when he had to repay a loan of Rs. 30,000 (a large sum in those days).

One night, Kakasaheb had a dream in which he was saying, "I know such and such individuals and with their help I can easily repay the debt." When he woke up, he chided himself for relying on mere mortals when his beloved guru Sai was there to protect him always. From that day, Dikshit decided to do nothing about the loan but sat calm and unruffled, knowing fully well that Sai Baba would rescue him-what perfect reliance! True to his faith, a strange incidence occurred. When the day of repayment was dawning, a young man came to Kaka with a sum of Rs. 30,000 (just what was needed). The man was the son of Kakasaheb's late friend and he wanted Mr. Dikshit's advice on the best way to invest the sum.

Kakasaheb, honest as he was, counseled the boy on different investment strategies and then gave an alternate suggestion that he could loan the amount to him on interest. Dikshit also explained that as his income had subsided

there was serious risk involved in the transaction. The boy was adamant, however, that the sum be taken by Kakasaheb himself as he trusted his word over anything else-it was Baba who had led the boy to Dikshit and rescued him at the "right time".

On another occasion, Sainath staged a unique drama to test Kaka's faith. There happened to be an old, sickly goat in the vicinity of Baba's residence. The Lord of Shirdi made a very strange request and asked devotees to cut the goat with one stroke. Many devotees in Shirdi were orthodox brahmins averse to any form of killing. They were shocked beyond description to find their spiritual preceptor demanding a sacrifice of this nature. Many fled from the place to avoid the predicament. Kakasaheb was present on the occasion and when Baba asked him to strike the goat, he immediately readied himself to perform an act he could not have done even in his wildest dreams.

Just when the axe was a few inches away from the goat's throat, Baba ordered Dikshit to stop. The goat was let go. This child of Baba had passed a severe test. The test was severe for a saintly person like Dikshit but he did not consider its pros and cons. He simply knew he had obey the command of his beloved Lord without questioning the intention. What perfect surrender. To obey his master, Kaka had set aside all philosophies and beliefs. The question that arises is why did Baba request the sacrifice of an innocent goat? The author interprets the goat to symbolize man's animal qualities, primarily the ones arising out of weakness and attachment to senses. Not only Kaka, isn't Sai asking all of us to sacrifice our animal qualities-lust, anger, greed, pride, jealousy, and attachment-at every step of our lives?

During life's journey we come across occasions where we find our faith and surrender being tested. During tough times, do we start questioning Baba and flee from Him or do we act like Dikshit and face what Baba has ordained for us?-knowing fully well that He won't let anything untoward happen and that He is there to rescue us at every step.

God knows what is best for us and has shaped our lives as a process of eliminating karma and evolving spiritually. He doesn't get elated to watch us suffer. Experiences in life are not designed to hurt us, but rather to help us evolve into spiritual beings (our true nature). By surrendering to His will, we allow this process to happen naturally and thus expedite our growth and evolvment.

OM SAI MANDIR
A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Om Sai Mandir is organized exclusively for charitable, religious purposes and is a non profit organization, exempt under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Contributions made to Om Sai Mandir are tax deductible and can be mailed to:

Om Sai Mandir
45-11 Smart Street
Flushing, NY 11355

or online: www.omsaimandir.org

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Have a suggestion, article, or idea for *Sai Sandesh*? Please e-mail our editorial team at saisandesh@omsaimandir.org

ADDRESS FORM (HELP US UPDATE OUR RECORDS)

First Name:

Phone:

Last Name:

Mobile:

Address 1:

Fax:

Address2:

Email:

City, State, Zip:

Please mail the address form to:

Om Sai Mandir

45-11 Smart Street

Flushing, NY 11355

Tel: (718) 461-0454

Email: info@omsaimandir.org

Website: www.omsaimandir.org