

Sai Pearls of Wisdom, Part 48-C

MIRACLES AFTER MIRACLES IN PUTTAPARTHI August 26th, 2023

**Om Sri Sai Ram
Prasanthi Sandesh**

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh

Sai Pearls of Wisdom welcomes you.

Many would recall having been gifted with visions related to Sai Baba of Shirdi. To the devotees Chinna Babaiah and Krishnama Raju, Baba had shown to Chinna Babaiah, the *Samadhi* of Shirdi Sai Baba and to Krishnama Raju, the *Jeeva Samadhi* of the disciple of Baba projected on a piece of white cloth.

“He showed us a dark place where a man was sitting inside a covered brick structure!” Krishnama Raju would recall.

Eswaramma would remember Baba telling her, “Listen! Shirdi Sai Ram is here!” She and everyone in the room would hear footsteps which would cease when the footsteps reached the chair where Baba sat.

Baba composed a number of songs and verses on Sai Baba of Shirdi, to be used for *bhajan* singing. The songs contained references to *Dwarkamai*, *Patha Mandiram*, *Udi*, margosa tree and other details of the milieu of Shirdi Sai Baba; and thus was strange to the devotees who assembled at Puttaparthi but very familiar to Shirdi devotees from Maharashtra.

In His playfulness, Baba once even showed stars in the sky at 2 o'clock one bright afternoon to Subbamma and others, in front of her house. Some even commented, “They are always there but we don’t see them! What big thing is He showing?”

On another occasion, Baba asked Subba Raju and others visiting Puttaparthi from Kamalapuram to lay their heads on His chest, and when they did so, they heard the enchanting melody of a flute. Baba told them that it was the melody of the celestial flute of Lord Krishna, a sound believed to have once brought even the Yamuna River to a standstill.

Baba would still occasionally complain of a householder atmosphere in the places where He stayed and suddenly (He) would disappear. Subbamma and others would organize a search in every hill in the vicinity. They would find Him sitting quietly on some rock overlooking the valley or in some cave-like hollow or crevice or on the sands of the river or on the other bank of the river.

The people attending Him were perplexed by these events. Some of them were afraid that He would go away to the Himalayas or that He would waste Himself in asceticism. People began to have the impression that He was strengthening Himself through yogic practises, much to the amusement of Baba.

One day when a party of devotees was accompanying Baba in a caravan of a bullock cart, He got down from His cart, and went into the hills and disappeared. The entire area was searched, but there was no trace of Him. Everyone was in great distress and Baba appeared after dusk, fresh and smiling, laying all anxiety to rest.

There is another incident concerning bullock carts that N. Kasturi writes about. Baba's sister Venkamma, who had been there as a witness and fellow traveller, would give a more detailed account of it: "We were returning in bullock carts from *Agraharam* where Swami had been invited. By the time we reached the forest, it was dark. Then Swami got down from the cart on some pretext. After some time, two children came to our cart and said that Swami had asked them to convey to me to allow a lady belonging to the Reddy community, who was coming from *Agraharam*, to travel in the cart. Then I told them, who was I to reject anybody sent by Swami! I cleaned the inside of the car and neatly spread a blanket for her.

I soon noticed a lady coming from a distance. She appeared to be hiding her face. She seemed to look very beautiful. I asked the cart driver to stop. After she came to the cart, I extended my hand to help her to climb into the cart, addressing her as '*Amma*.' The children laughed aloud and said, "It was not *Amma*, but Swami!" Swami asked me whether I really believed Him to be a lady.

Venkamma remained Baba's foremost devotee. She would recall an intimate experience that she had during this time. "I came to Puttaparthi with a book and with a picture of a collage of deities. I used to offer *Pooja* before the picture every day and read the small book. Seeing the picture once, Swami asked whether I needed a bigger one. He then went to Uravakonda to study.

On the night before His arrival to Puttaparthi as Sai Baba, I heard a voice calling, "*Ammayi! Ammayi!*" late at night. Thinking that Sathya had come, I went to the door, but I only found a paper roll lying outside. I unrolled it and found that it was a picture depicting the impression of Rama, Krishna, Shiva and Maruthi inside. I kept the miraculously-delivered picture in the shrine and began my day's routine.

At 9 in the morning, Swami came and asked me, “Did you scold Me for not being asleep or where you afraid that a snake or a scorpion had entered the house?”

I did not reply. He asked me to give Him back the picture. He then took out the picture from its frame and fixed this new one on it, and giving it to me, asked me to perform Pooja.”

Subbamma and Kamamma had many relatives living in the distant places. They could not resist telling them that a wonder boy, Bala Sai – as many called Him then, He had declared Himself as being the incarnation of Sai Baba of Shirdi, inviting them to come and see Him. Subbamma informed her relatives in so many towns in the vicinity – Bukkapatnam, Kuttagulla, Kothakota, Agraharam, Elluru, Kalluru and Anantapur, about Baba, opening the gates of Puttaparthi to the people of Bangalore, the big city 160 kilometres away, belonged to the erstwhile Mysore State.

Kamamma had written to her brother, P S Krishna Murthy, who was studying in Bangalore and was staying with us.

She wrote, “A *Bat-Raju* boy -- *Bat-Raju* is the community to which Baba belongs – a *Bat-Raju* boy has become Sai Baba and is staying in our house. He materializes things and cures diseases. Come and see Him!”

Kamamma’s brother, P S Krishna Murthy responded to his sister’s letter, bringing with him to Puttaparthi, his host in Bangalore, Chamarajpetta Narayana Sharma and his family. Narayana Sharma and his wife, Savitamma, were among the first, if not the very first residents of Bangalore to visit Puttaparthi. This was probably towards the end of 1943.

About the same time, Kamamma’s sister, Sarojamma, along with her husband Shyamanna and daughter Jagadamba also visited Puttaparthi. A family friend, Rama Murthy accompanied them. Interesting enough, Krishna Murthy, who accompanied the families of both Narayana Sharma, his host in Bangalore and Sarojamma, his sister, to Puttaparthi used to visit his sister Karnam Kamamma at Puttaparthi earlier as a boy, but he had not taken serious note of the young Baba then.

Of her visit, Sharma’s daughter Shantha, in the years to come, would recall, “My mother had many children who died soon after birth. She wanted to have a male child. So along with my cousin Sucharita, our guide Krishna Murthy and I, she went to visit Puttaparthi for Baba’s blessings. We went by train to Georgetown near railway station at Anantapur to my aunt Shankarlal Sitamma, who was Baba’s devotee. Along with her and her adopted daughter Harshalatha, we went to Bukkapatnam and reached Puttaparthi around 11 a.m. We stayed at Kamamma’s house for a month.

Baba said that my father would come later with someone else to Puttaparthi. Father was an orthodox Brahmin. It was impossible that he would visit Puttaparthi. My father,

however, did visit Puttaparthi along with Srinivasa Murthy, a student who was staying in our house before we left for Bangalore.

One day after his arrival, Baba took him to Chitravathi River bank with a few other devotees. *Bhajans* were held there. Afterwards, He asked everyone except my father to return to the house. He even sent back Srinivasa Murthy. Leading my father to the flowing river, Baba asked him to watch His reflection in the water.

My father first saw Sathya Sai Baba Himself, then only the halo of hair that surrounds His head, and then he had the rare vision of *Dasavataras* – the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu, one by one. The *Kalki Avatar* on horseback had the form of Baba Himself.

My father fell on Baba's Feet in spiritual ecstasy and pleaded that the final release be granted. Baba materialized a *Japa Mala* and told to him that He would not live much longer. Later at Puttaparthi, Baba told my mother that she would not have sons.

He said, "Consider Me as your son and I will take care of your daughter!"

Baba materialized a talisman which we took to a local goldsmith and had it coated in silver."

When the families of Shyamanna and Narayana Sharma left Puttaparthi, they extended an invitation to Baba to visit them in Bangalore city.

Shyamanna's son Ramaswami would narrate many years later how Baba healed his handicapped sister Jagadamba, "My sister Jagadamba dislocated her hip joint and could not walk. Besides, one of her eyes was small, very red in colour and would always discharge some secretion. She could not see with that eye.

Baba regularly applied *Vibuthi* or sand from Chitravathi River on the injured limb and fastened a bandage of jasmine flowers taken from garlands put around His photographs to her eyes. A complete cure was effected within eight days. Baba foretold her that she would get married and live long!"

A few years later, Jagadamba about to give birth, was hospitalized. One night, a nurse on duty had fallen asleep. Baba manifested Himself in the maternity ward and woke up the nurse. The nurse was furious and raised an alarm when she saw a man in the maternity ward. Baba told the nurse that in half an hour her patient would deliver and she was fast asleep!

Baba also woke up an allegedly holy man, Digambara Swamy, from his sleep of delusion. The Swamy had been an ascetic and had lost the use of both the legs. He went about without clothes. The little Shantha was at Bukkapatnam on her way to Puttaparthi. Digambara Swamy was a guest at a house near the bus terminus in Bukkapatnam that day.

Both she and Prof. Sri N Kasturi corroborate Digambara Swamy's visit to Puttaparthi. Even Karnam Gopal Rao of Puttaparthi would remember the incident.

"Swamy was taken from Penukonda to Bukkapatnam by bus and then only by bullock cart to Puttaparthi. He would constantly hold up his left hand on which the nails had grown very long. He jumped out of the bullock cart in front of my house. He could not walk properly, but would jump like a frog (when) he went about for food. He had taken a vow of silence and this ignited the curiosity of everyone. But Baba gave the ascetic a large towel and made him wrap it around his loins.

The young Baba then advised the ascetic, "If you have cut off all relationships with the society, as your nakedness indicates you have, then why do you not go to a cave in a forest, distant from human society? Why are you afraid? On the other hand, if you have craving for disciples, for name and the food available in cities and towns, why do you allow yourself to be mistaken for a man with no attachment?"

These words from the young Baba struck everyone with wonder and admiration, "Baba offered to help Digambara Swamy!" he said.