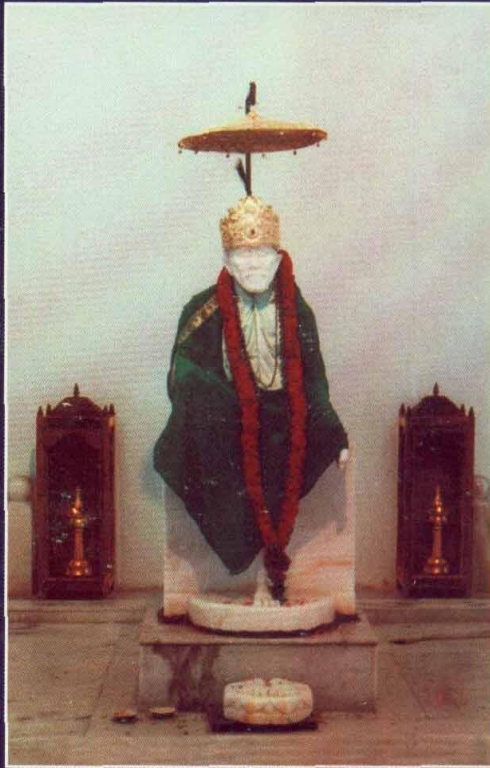


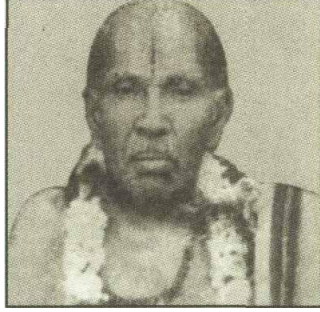
Shirdi Sai Baba's Sermons



Four Chapters On Baba By
Dashganu Maharaj

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**FOUR CHAPTERS ON BABA
BY DASGANU MAHARAJ**



The members of Sai Seva Sangh, Kano-Nigeria felt it necessary to have these chapters originally written by Shri Dasganu Maharaj in Marathi in a poetic form, to be translated in various languages for the benefit of non-Marathi devotees of Shri Baba. This booklet is an attempt to translate the original chapters on Baba by Shri Dasganu Maharaj.

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SHRI BHAKTA LEELAMRUT

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Chapter-31

Om Shree Ganeshayanamah.! I pray to Lord Ganesh 'I pray to Lord Umapati.!!! O Lord! I am praying to you in the evening ("pradosh kal"). I am your child and do not ignore me. You have chosen the most pleasant Kailas mountain as your abode. You appeared in the past as angry Veerbhadra when Daksha Prajapati insulted you. O Pashupati, you are always alert to protect your devotees. Why then are you ignoring me O Merciful Parvatiraman! May be you think this sinful ignoramus is not worthy of your grace and therefore do not appear before me. O Shoolapani, O Umanath, remember the hunter and forgive me as you have forgiven him. I am your child and pray, do not ignore me.

The devotees of the Lord, no matter what caste they were born in, become one with Narayan. They all belong to one caste only, just as there is only one life force in every heart and only one person, the Lord himself. How then can there be any duality? The devotees do not hold different opinions, nor do they take pride in any particular faith. In the past, great saints like Kamal and Kabir appeared on this earth. Did the Lord think of their caste? The Lord hungers for devotion, which he finds but rarely. He sells himself to the devotee who makes a bid for his grace with pure devotion. All devotees are dear to Lord Hari, no matter what caste or circumstances they are born in.

About twelve miles to the south of the Godavari near Kopergaon, is the village Shirdi. There appeared in that village a very pious Maharaj called Sai Baba by his devotees. Nobody knew where he came from. If anybody asked him where he came from or what his name was, the Maharaj would answer, the answer coming pat like rain after, thunder: "I belong to no place, I am Nirguna. But bound as I am by karma I got this form- this body of mine. The universe is my abode. Brahma is my father and Maya my mother, and they gave me this body." His heart, however, was always full of bliss. He knew the world is mortal. This Maharaj brought off a number of miracles. I cannot describe all of them here. Shirdi was a very small place in those days with just a few small shops dealing in groceries of everyday .

The Maharaj used to go round and get oil from the grocers, with which he lighted every evening a number of oil lamps in the mosque and in the temples - his daily 'Deepotsava'. One day, the grocers, tired of giving oil gratis, decided to refuse as a body. They lied to him saying they had no oil. Baba was surprised that the grocers found it so easy to tell him a lie.

People tell lies, degrade themselves and move away from the Lord, falling eventually under the weight of their own karma. A liar is among the worst of sinners. One who always tells the truth attains the Lord. Truth is the path to salvation. Even penance and japa cannot match it. Truth is the river of bliss. One should stick to truth.

The Maharaj said nothing to the grocers. He went back to the mosque and performed a miracle. He set the earthen lamps all round the mosque and put wicks in them. The grocers, who had followed him, stood watching. "How can the lamps burn without oil?" they said to one another. "The man must be down-right mad; he is thinking of lighting the lamps without oil. Can any sane man think of maternity for a sterile woman? Sure he is a mad man, a leader of the ignorant." Nanasahab Dengale, a Sai devotee, did not agree with them. He said to them, "You are all blind. Do not despise him like that. Shree Hari knows what powers this man has. If a diamond lies in a heap of stones, would you call it a stone? Keep quiet for a while and see what the Fakir does now. Don't make hasty statements."

There was a little oil in Baba's tin can just enough to light one small lamp. Baba put some water in it and drank the mixture.

He then filled the oil lamps with water and lighted them and lo and behold, the lamps burned, as with oil. Awed, Dengale fell at Baba's feet. The people of Shirdi seeing this miracle, began to wonder about Baba's powers. They said that God himself had incarnated in Shirdi. They came all together, fell at Baba's feet and said: We have sinned against you. Forgive us our sin. You are our dear mother and we your children. O merciful one, please do not be angry with us. You are Mercy, Knowledge, Virtue and Peace embodied in human form" Baba then said to them, "Listen to me carefully. Act in such a way that the *Lord* will be

pleased with you. Never tell lies. Be truthful always. Never deceive anybody. Spend your wealth on good causes according to your capacity. You will be benefited and meet Narayan in the end. Remember my words and act accordingly." Chastened, the people of Shirdi bowed down to Baba and went back happily to their homes.

Sai Maharaj was a great yogi. One cannot narrate all his leelas, which are beyond human comprehension.

Here is a leela described to Chitambar by Dengale (the Sai devotee referred to earlier). Baba's bed was a wooden plank measuring 15 cms by 150 cms. The plank was suspended from the ceiling of the mosque (where Baba lived) by means of old rags. The mosque itself was in ruins so that even the lizards had deserted it. The plank hung so close to the ceiling that no one could sit upright on it - one could sit on it only by bending one's body like an arch. The plank was so fragile that it would give way if one just stepped on it. On such a bed Baba used to sleep keeping oil lamps burning on either side. Those who did not believe this went to the mosque to see for themselves and found to their amazement that the report was true.

Word of the miracle went round and people began crowding near the mosque at night to see it but of idle curiosity or just for fun. This annoyed Baba and one day he broke the plank to pieces and got rid of the nuisance. Soon Baba's fame spread far and wide and people came in hundreds to the mosque so that he might bless them and fulfill their worldly desires. Shirdi became a place of pilgrimage like Varanasi because of Baba and became known all over. As the soil derives its importance from the flower in bloom, the socket from the diamond studded in it, a piece of cloth from the golden thread woven in it, so Shirdi became an important holy place because of Sai Maharaj.

Once Narayan Govind Chandorkar, known as Nanasahab went to Shirdi for Baba's darshan, accompanied by Ramdas Haridas from Wai, Bapu Nagarkar and Kangaonkar.

Ramdas Haridas was to perform a kirtan in Nagar the following day so he was impatient to leave Shirdi and told the others that they should leave with him

immediately "Enough of this darshan " he said. "Let's hurry up and catch the train to Nagar", Baba told Nanasaheb to stay a while, have his meal at Shirdi and then go to Nagar. Hearing this Nanasaheb became relaxed and set about making arrangements for food with Kangaonkar. Ramdas on the other hand, restless as ever said to Bapu Nagarkar, "I have to perform the kirtan in Nagar tomorrow. Enough of this mad fellow. It is all right for Nanasaheb; he has plenty of money . I'll have to beg in the streets if I follow Baba. I cannot earn a paisa here. Let's go to the station and catch the next train to Nagar".

They left accordingly leaving Nanasaheb and Kangaonkar in Shirdi. Sai Maharaj then said to Nanasaheb; "Look at these people. In their selfishness they desert even their companions. Remember Nana, to take with you only such companions as will stick with you till the end of the world. A man's companion must be like fragrance to the flower." After the two had their food. Baba said to Nanasaheb, " You may leave now but remember what I told you. There is still time for the train to arrive." Nana bowed down at Sai's feet and left for the railway station. There they found Bapu Nagarkar and Ramdas waiting for the train. They had no food and were feeling hungry. Seeing Nanasaheb, they hung their heads in shame. In reply to Nanasaheb's query, Nagarkar said ruefully, "Today the train is late by three hours. We hurried to the station disobeying Sai and here we are dying of hunger, enjoying the fruit of our disobedience. You did the right thing, while we made fools of ourselves."

Appa Kulkarni of Shirdi was a great devotee of Sai Baba. He was once charged with embezzling government money, may be because of his past karma. God alone knew whether the charges were true or false but people started whispering that Appa was a cheat. Appa was scared that he might be taken to court and tried. Soon, sure enough, he received summons from the Deputy Collector asking him to face a court of enquiry. Appa feared that he would never return to Shirdi once he left the place, so before leaving, he went up to Baba with folded hands and pleaded for help. "You are a Sadhu, a Satpurusha. You know whether the charge is true or not. I do not wish to say anything about it but please save me." He caught hold of Baba's feet and started weeping. He then

went on to say; "People say I am your Kalyan.(Kalyan was Saint Ramdas' closest disciple). If I were sentenced, your name would be tarnished, You are my father and mother, my sole refuge."

Moved by the Bhakta's earnest pleas. Baba said to Appa, "The Deputy Collector is at present at Nevasa on the banks of the river Pravara. There, in Nevasa, is present the Lord himself, to whom Dyaneswara prayed while writing the Dynaneswari (Bhawartha Deepika). Pray to him before you present yourself at the court of enquiry." Appa did accordingly, and what a wonder! He was acquitted of the charge of embezzlement and his honour vindicated. The next day Appa returned to Shirdi and told Baba everything. Baba said to him, "The Lord controls everything. He turns the impossible into the possible."

Narayan Krishna Penshe did not believe in Sai Baba but his wife -Mai did. She had a keen desire to go to Shirdi and have Baba's darshan. She pleaded with her husband to take her to the holy man of Shirdi but in vain. "My dear" said Penshe, "there is no holy man in Shirdi. There is only a mad Muslim fellow cheating the foolish people who consider him a saint. Don't insist on having the darshan of such a person. He is simply a beggar who lives off the alms obtained by begging from door to door. The lady was very much disappointed. However, once Penshe happened to go to Shirdi with his wife in the ordinary course of his official work, and while he was busy attending to his duties, his wife went and had Baba's darshan. She was filled with bliss on bowing to Baba. On her return home she told, her husband of her experience and urged him to go and pray to Baba instead of slandering him. Thereupon Penshe went to have Baba's darshan. Seeing him approach the mosque, Baba picked up a stone and shouted at him, "I'll hit you if you come forward. I am a mad low caste Muslim while you are a high-caste Brahmin. Beware of coming near. You'll lose your piety."

Hearing the echo of his own words, Penshe realized that Baba is omnipresent. He said to himself "We talked about him at home and yet he knew what had passed between us. He knows everything. He is present everywhere like air," Later Penshe sought the help of Appa Kulkarni and secured Baba's darshan.

A few days after this incident, Sai Maharaj casually said to Appa, "Thieves have come to our village. They are not the ordinary run of thieves. They do not steal anything tangible from the house. Their eyes are set on the most valuable part of one's wealth. What is more, nobody can catch them in the act of stealing. They will be attacking you first. Go and make proper arrangements ." Appa did not understand the meaning of these words. However, he hired some Bhils to guard his house and patrol the lanes.

At night Appa fell ill with cholera. He suffered from loose motions and vomiting. His body grew cold, his eyes sank deeper and deeper and his pulse became weaker. Seeing his condition Appa's wife got frightened, rushed to the mosque, fell at Baba's feet and started crying. She said to Baba that her husband was dying and asked for udhi to save him. Baba said in reply "Do not grieve".

Death awaits all those that are born. Birth and death are deeds of the Almighty. No one lives or dies here. If you see with the eye of knowledge, you will realize you are no different. When the clothes become old and frayed, you throw them away. In the same way, the soul, which is immortal casts off the worn out body. Do not therefore, ask for "udhi to patch up the old rags. Do not stop him from going. Let him leave. He has reached his life's goal. He will go to heaven. He is right now-changing the clothes before me ". Thus saying, Baba sent her home and Appa died soon after. The next day a couple of more people went down with cholera. The people of Shirdi were frightened and begged Baba to stop the scourge from spreading. Baba said to them. "Only seven people will die of cholera and after that Shirdi will be rid of the disease." Exactly seven people died of cholera in Shirdi. Baba's prediction came true to the last word.

Kondya Sutar was a devotee of Baba who loved Baba in his own special way. One day Baba asked Kondya to go to the Khalwadi (the place where the harvest is threshed) and put out the fire there. He said that the central stack of the harvest had caught fire. Frightened, Kondya rushed to the Khalwadi and made anxious enquiries but found no signs of fire. Returning, he complained to Baba saying that he had been put to unnecessary trouble and that his feet were scorched through walking in the hot sun. Baba replied, " Listen. My words are

never untrue. Look behind you and see the smoke for yourself. The harvest stacks lie close together in a heap but the central stack is on fire." It was a summer afternoon and a sprightly wind was blowing. Trees were breaking and roofs were flying. "Fire! Fire!" shouted the people of Shirdi as they rushed to Baba and begged him to save the harvest and thus save the people and the cattle of the village from hunger and death. Moved by their appeal. Baba got up at once and went to the 'Khalwadi." He poured water around the central stack which was on fire. He then said to the villagers. "Only this stack will burn. This one is the share of Agni. Do not try to extinguish the fire. No harm will come to the other stacks." Baba's words came true. By saving the rest of the stacks, Baba demonstrated his power over Agni. All the five elements are in fact under the control of holy men like Baba. In the evening people came for Baba's darshan, Nanasaheb among them, Baba said to Nana, "O Nana, look at these greedy people. Today the harvest of the Bhagchand (the owner of the central stack) burned down to ashes, and here he is moaning his loss. Gain and loss, birth and death are all under the control of God. These foolish people do not realize this. They dance with joy when they gain and start crying when they lose. The joy as well as the sorrow comes of a feeling of ownership but it is meaningless to claim ownership. The burnt-down stack did not belong to the Marwadi. It consisted of hay which came into existence from seeds borne by the earth. The cloud watered them and the sun kneaded them into shape with his own hands. Thus, the earth, the cloud and the sun are the real owners of the stack. All things in this world are produced in this manner. We certainly are not their owners. Nana, ask the Marwadi why he is weeping over the loss of something which was never his and worrying me in the bargain. What the Lord gives with one hand, he takes away with the other. In our ignorance we think we are the owners of things and this sense of ownership is the root cause of our joy and sorrow. Shethji, go home now in peace. You will make good your loss in some other business."

Everybody was pleased to listen to this discourse. Nanasaheb his face radiant with joy and peace, bowed down and said to Baba: "O Lord! You are like the moon while we devotees are like the chakor birds. You are the ocean of

knowledge. Kindly remove our ignorance. Tell me who is God. Where does he live? What should one do to meet him? If this world is unreal why should one get involved in it? Please explain these things to me." Baba said, "I shall explain everything to you some other time."

Ganesh Vishnu Berey, a district inspector in the department of agriculture, was another Sai devotee like Chandorkar. He went to Shirdi for Baba's darshan. As he bowed down, Baba told him to leave Shirdi immediately. "Don't waste even a single minute. *Drive* your tonga fast and reach Kopergaon as early as you can." Obeying Baba, Berey left Shirdi at once. Another tonga was following Berey's. The owner of the tonga suggested to Berey that he should ride slowly so that the two tongas could go together. Berey paid no attention to this request and drove very fast. He soon crossed the Godavari and reached Kopergaon station, where he learned that the other tonga had been stopped by highwaymen and its passengers robbed and beaten up. A grateful Berey prayed to Baba thanking him for saving him from this calamity.

Haripant was a devout Brahmin from Pune. He was kind-hearted and believed in good deeds. He was rich but childless. He wished to become an "agnihotri" but he could not do so as he was a widower. People advised him to remarry but Haripant would not listen as he was already in his fifties. "I would become a laughing-stock," he said, "If I were to marry at my age, I am just not worthy enough to be a father. That is all. If, however, any saint tells me to remarry, I may."

Sometime later, Haripant went to Shirdi. No sooner did he bow down to Baba than he said, "Haribau, get married soon. Lord Shankar will give you a child and fulfill your heart's desire." Having secured a saint's permission to marry, Haripant now wanted to consult an astrologer. He came to know of a famous astrologer in Nagar. Haripant consulted him and after getting the go-ahead from him. He got remarried with the blessings of Baba. Needless to say, he became a staunch devotee of Sai Baba.

I now bow down to Sai Baba. He is Grace and Knowledge personified and He fulfills the desires of his devotees. All our difficulties will be overcome if we but

remember Sai's feet. He is ever ready to shower his grace on us. Those who listen to this Sai Charitra will be saved by the Lord. In the next chapter I shall recount the advice given by Sai Baba to three persons. By listening to that one will gain all the four purusharthas. O dear devotee, listen to these childlike words of Das Ganu. Offer your forehead at the feet of Sai Baba and he will fulfill all your desires. If anyone recites Sai Charitra, his sins will be burnt down and he will receive the protection of Narayan. This is Baba's holy 'charitra' from Shree Bakta Leelamrit. AH you devotees, drink from it to your heart's content.

Chapter - 32

Shri Ganeshayanamah. Oh Lord of the Universe. You are idol of bliss. You are merciful, radiant and formless, but you do exist in all forms. Such is your uncomprehensible nature. I cannot understand it oh, my Mother. The Vedas, even, say, "Neither this nor that." The sons of knowledge like Bhrgu, Parashar and Vashishta could not explain your nature. I am just like a glow-worm in their comparison. Whatever may be the case, Oh Lord, please listen to my earnest prayers and enter my body and write this book.

Nanasaheb Chandorkar and Nimonkar, both Sai devotees, once went to Shirdi for Baba's darshan. Nanasaheb fell at Baba's feet and said: "O Sai Maharaj, I am sick and tired of this mundane life. The Shastras say that this world of ours is meaningless, an illusion. Help me. O brother of the helpless, to break the fetters that bind me to this mundane life, the more one looks for happiness in this world, the less one finds it. Misery seems to be man's lot. Wretched hope that springs eternally in us sends us from place to place.. I am sick and tired of it. I do not want to get involved in it."

Baba laughed at this and said: "Where do you get these crazy ideas from, Nana? You really are a simpleton. What you said about mundane life is true but you can not escape it as long as the body exists. Nobody can escape it, not even I". Our mundane life affects the body in various ways," continued Sai Maharaj. "Desire, envy, avarice, pride, hatred and anger are part of our mundane life; so are the senses of sight, hearing and taste. So indeed are our imagination and our bodily needs. They are all inextricably mixed: they are like a mixture the

component parts of which are inseparable, like a knot that nobody can untie. People say that one's wife and progeny are also of one's mundane life. You too believe so and find it difficult to get on with them. What with one's wife and children and other relatives like brothers, nephews etc, life is full of problems but you cannot get rid of these."

Nana said, "My previous lives were evidently ordained by the Lord but my concern is with my present one. I do not want any more of it bedeviled, as it is by too many problems, too many woes. Help me to rid myself of this." Baba laughed at these words of Nanasaheb and said. "You are responsible for this life as well. You are the one who caused it. Now, then, can you get rid of it? This body of yours is the fruit of the accumulated karma of the past. Karma is the root cause of all our miseries. All those that are born - whether men, birds or beasts -suffer from the effects of their previous karma. Unless one bums down the effects of one's previous karma, one cannot be rid of the body.

All people, rich and poor, and married ones, sanyasins and vanaprasthas exist because of the life force running through them; so do different kinds of animals like horses, bulls, jackals, tigers, rhinos, hyenas, dogs, pigs, scorpions, snakes, ants, fleas and kites. The same life force runs through all of them. Why, then, do these entities look different? Did you ever ponder this, Nana? If you do you will realize that the reason lies in their past karma.

The animals are different because of their previous karma, their innate characteristics depending on the species they belong to. Thus, tigers eat flesh and pigs eat excreta while hyenas dig out buried bodies and devour them. Kites and vultures feed on rotten bodies while swans eat the tender leaves of lotus plants.

Karma, determines not only the species - specific characteristics of animals but also what happens to some members of the species as distinct from some others of the species in their life-span. Thus, some tigers are lucky to roam free in the forest whereas others are destined to move from door to door at the bidding of their gypsy masters, chained and shackled. The dogs kept by the rich sit on soft mattresses while others roam about in the streets, lingering around

houses for a piece of bread. Some cows are treated to good grains, oil cakes and special fodder; some do not get even a straw to nibble and some others have to hang around refuse dumps for food.

Coming to men, some are rich, some poor, some lucky and some mere destitutes reduced to begging. Some have vehicles and horses and some have large houses or palaces to live in while some have to sleep naked in the open. Some have children, some remain childless, some are unlucky to see their children die young and some get heartily sick of their children."

Nana folded his hands and said, "I understand that but what puzzles me is this: why should there be pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow? There cannot be these if one gets rid of worldly affairs."

To this Baba said, "Pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow are illusions. They are not real, although people think them to be real. Thanks to his previous karma, one man feeds on delicacies; another feeds on dry bread; a third gets only stale food or worthless left-overs. Those who feed on stale food or worthless left-overs consider themselves unhappy, while those eating good food say that they have everything they need. The purpose of eating is to quench the fire in the stomach, no matter what one eats delicacies or left-overs. Similarly, the purpose of covering one's body, whether with delicate fabrics woven with gold thread or with rough garments made from the inner bark of trees, is to protect the body; nothing more. Thus, joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure are simply ways of looking at things. They are, as I said, illusions and you should not be deceived by them. Illusory as they are, these feelings cannot exist without a cause just as waves cannot exist without water or light without a lamp.

The six enemies like desire, avarice etc. are the underlying causes. These make one believe that the unreal is the real. When a poor man sees a gold bracelet on the wrist of a rich man, he feels angry. The anger in turn gives rise to envy, the desire to own something belonging to another. One must therefore defeat the six enemies. Once they are subdued they cannot disturb you with joy or sorrow. You need not destroy these enemies completely; you need only to

learn to employ them as your slaves, keeping them in check through knowledge or rational thinking.

"There is, however, one real joy and one real sorrow. Being caught up in the cycle of births and deaths is the real sorrow; getting liberated from the cycle is the real joy. All the rest is illusion.

"How then, should one conduct oneself in the world? Listen to what I say carefully. One must be contented with one's lot in life; one must not keep worrying over it. If riches come to you, accept them but be humble, like the trees which bend on being loaded with fruit. It is good to be humble, to be kind and polite but not to everyone. You should learn to tell rogues, who take advantage of the kindness of the rich, and be stern with them. Do not forget, however, that wealth is but the noonday shadow. Do not get puffed up with the power of wealth and harass others. Instead give in charity according to your capacity. One should never borrow and be extravagant. The world may be an illusion but your destiny is not: it is real. You need wealth to conduct your worldly affairs.

Wealth is essential but one should not get entangled in it. Do not be a miser. Be generous but not over-generous. Remember no one will care for you once your wealth is spent. Generosity combined with extravagance is dangerous; avoid it by all means. While giving in charity, consider how suitable is the recipient. Ask yourself: "Is he worthy of your help? Is he in real need? and only if the answer is yes, must you give. The sick and the disabled are worthy of your charity; so are orphans. All public welfare projects are deserving of financial help: so are scholars of merit. Try and help, if you can, poor and deserving women in labour.

"There are three types of feedings: mass feeding, regular feeding and occasional feeding. Mass feeding is feeding people in thousands. You may do this if you are very wealthy and your intentions good. When you mass-feed, you need not differentiate between caste or between good and bad people; all are worthy. Feeding in the name of the Lord also falls in this category. However, you should not undertake some feeding if you have to borrow and get into debt.

Regular feeding, on the other hand, calls for discrimination. Only way farers, mendicants, the worthy poor among students who live by begging their bread, and the hungry deserve to be fed regularly. "Then there is occasional feeding - feeding on occasions like weddings, festivals and the completion of the observance of religious vows. On such occasions you may invite your good friends and relations and feed them. These are the three types of feeding and the reasons behind them. The same holds good for the offering of clothing as well.

"Try to help those in distress whenever your purse permits. When in power, do not misuse it. Do not take a bribe while sitting in judgment on a case. Whatever responsibility is given to you, carry it out well and with due care. Do not dress overly and show off. Do not, without proper reason, insult anyone. Know the bad and the wicked and deal carefully with them. If you are blessed with sons, daughters, servants and maids, treat them all affectionately but do not take pride in these blessings, for such pride is the cause of the cycle of births and deaths. We must finish up with our past store of karma so that nothing is left for us to carry forward. Blessings like sons, daughters etc. are meant for this life only. Where, for instance, are the friends and relatives we had in our past lives? They ceased to be when the lives for which they were meant ceased to be. Desires, on the other hand, bind us from birth to birth and bring about the next birth. Do not therefore take false pride in your progeny, relations or friends. Only then will you get everlasting bliss. We go to a hotel to take shelter there for a short while. We do not get attached to such a temporary dwelling. The world too is but a temporary abode for us.

"Everybody should perform his duties and at the same time remember the Lord, who is full of bliss.

All children on earth were created by the one God but your own child is your responsibility. You must bring him up properly, educate him, give him some money and leave some wealth for him. Do not, however, take pride in his upbringing or education or the wealth you have left him. Do your duty and give the Lord the credit for doing it. Give the Lord the fruits of your duty too. This will help you to remain aloof and detached from worldly activities. Use your

intelligence and knowledge to differentiate the good from the bad, accept the good and discard the bad. Take up good projects and make all possible efforts to complete them. You must by no means be apathetic towards the affairs of this world. Do your duties proudly but cast off this pride as soon as they bear fruit.

"As long as life exists, one must take good care of one's body but one should not weep over death. After death nothing exists for you to cry over. Wise men are unmoved by death; it is only the foolish who give vent to their feelings in times of death. The body until its death is a loan from the five elements, which the life force repays. On full and final repayment of the loan, air mixes with air, fire with fire. Thus, the five elements go back to their respective places.

The body belongs to the earth and as such its loss is not a matter for mourning. Similarly the birth of a child need not be a cause for rejoicing, birth being as natural a phenomenon as death. One must simply stay calm, unmoved by birth and death, O Narayan! The earth bears the seed, the cloud waters it and the sun helps the seed to germinate. When the seed germinates, do the earth, the cloud and the sun rejoice and start dancing? Whether the sprout turns into a big tree or it dries up and withers is something that should cause neither rejoicing nor sorrow. If we act in this manner, how can there be any misery or cause for lamentation? The state of absolution is the absence of misery and lamentation.

Baba then told Nanasaheb that we would receive from him more 'upadesh" later. Nanasaheb was very pleased to hear this. His eyes moist with tears of joy and his body full of goose pimples, he caught hold of Baba's feet and said in a voice overwhelmed with emotion."O generous Sai: you have redeemed me. Your "upadesh" has washed away the dust of nescience that had gathered over me. I am deeply grateful to you." Nimonkar was equally overwhelmed. They both fell at Baba's foot and left for their respective homes.

Oh Seeta Bedrey, I told you about the ethical conduct which Baba related to Chandorkar. Anyone who regularly reads this chapter will never be hurt by worldly affairs. Oh devout readers, drink the nectar of ethical knowledge from this Bhakt Leelamrit. This is Das Ganus request to you. Submitted at the feet of Lord Harihar. May God bless us all. This is the end of the 32 chapter.

Chapter - 33

Shree Ganeshayanamah. Oh Lord, you are full of the three Gunas and also devoid of them. You are inside as well as outside the Universe. You are full of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss. You always bless the devotees. You are the beginning. You create the sound and you are the sound too. One cannot separate you from anything. You are behind every auspicious thing. Your form is benevolent. Since I am tied up to you, I need not worry about anything inauspicious. It can not even touch me.

After a few days, Chandorkar went to Shirdi for Baba's Darshan. He prayed at Baba's feet and requested him to kindly continue with his advice. Baba was pleased by this request and said. "Now, I will tell you how to act to reach the state of absolution (Mukta Sthiti) which follows the end of pleasure and pain.

One must keep a balanced mind and always consider what is good and what is bad and accept one's destiny. The natural happenings are one's destiny. Those things that are the results of one's deeds are not a part of one's destiny. Those who steal are punished. This is not their destiny. This is the fruit of their deeds.

A clerk kills his master and takes his place. This also is not a part of his destiny. Then, the crook, on becoming the master enjoys his wealth, moves about in cars, carts and on horse backs and says that he has become happy. He has, infact, sinned by betraying his master. This Karma is added on to his existing Karma. This will cause his rebirth. Wise people understand this, foolish ones can not. His position as a clerk, which he had earned due to his past Karma also remains as a balance for the next birth. Thus, he prepares himself for the next birth. How-can such a person avoid the cycle of birth and death? Death occurs on consumption of poison. This is not destiny. It is the fruit of one's deed. You see a number of graduates hold high positions, some go around the world and simply deliver lectures, some become Yogis, some run shops whereas some teach children in schools. All the above graduates have taken same efforts but

they follow different professions. You will now, understand that this difference is due to their destiny and is not the fruit of their efforts.

Listening to this, Chandorkar said 'Stealing makes one a thief and we say it is the fruit of his deeds'. Is it (profession) not his destiny?

Listen to Baba's reply to the query of the loving devotee. He said, Oh gentle Narayan, You are stretching your imagination and asking me silly questions. There are a number of real thieves but they are acquitted as there isn't any substantial proof against them. This is their destiny. One thief you find locked up in the jail whereas another is moving about free as a gentleman. Both are responsible for similar deeds but one is locked up and the other is free. Thus, the destiny has nothing to do with what the individuals do. However, the sin of the free moving thief will not go unpunished. This will be the cause for his next birth. I therefore, have to tell you to follow the ethical ways while accepting your destiny.

One must be in the company of righteous people only, avoid even the shadow of the wicked, bad and the undevout ones. One must not eat the prohibited food, should not get involved in disputes or make a false promise. Once you give your word, you should fulfill it without grumbling. Breaking one's promise takes one away from the Lord. If you are overtaken by bodily desires, enjoy with your spouse only. Do not give yourself to the desires by seeing somebody else's wife. Have pure enjoyment with your spouse but within normal limits only. A person with uncontrollable desires does not stand a chance to achieve absolution.

Kama is the mightiest of the six enemies. This one is of a different kind hence one must enjoy oneself with full control over Kama. Tie up the encumbrance of reasoning around its neck. Put Kama under control. Don't you ever be controlled by him. One who acts like this should be considered wise. Oh good devotee, limit the six enemies only up to the necessity of their use in your destiny. Have the desire for the name of the Lord, anger against unethical deeds, hope for the absolution, fascination for the ultimate object and hatred towards bad deeds. Win the Lord with devotion. Do not give way to pride. Listen to the

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glories of holy men, keep the mind clean, respect the learned and the parents. Mother is greater than thousand holy places. Father is worthy of worship. So bow down to him.

Love your brothers and take care of your sisters if you can afford to. Treat your wife with care but don't be henpecked. Consult her in household affairs only. Do not interfere with your son and daughter-in-law's affairs. Do not disturb their privacy. Do not joke with the children. Do not be friendly with the servants. Do not sell your daughter. Do not offer her hand to an old man for his wealth. The son-in-law should be a gentleman and should be suitable to the daughter. These are the principles to be followed while dealing with the world.

To serve one's husband is the Dharma of a lady. There is no other Dharma for the ladies. Husband is her god so, she should have a pure devotion at his feet and she should lead a blissful life. When the husband gets annoyed, the wife should remain calm and polite. One who helps her husband in daily affairs is really, a great lady, the goddess of the house. One who makes her husband suffer is indeed, a bad wife. She is not worthy of even talking to. Ladies should not leave politeness, should not talk to male strangers in solitude. She should not be alone even with her brother.

The body of a woman is a prey to immorality and hence, one should be careful. A goat is a prey of a wolf. So people protect it by keeping it fenced with thorns. This is the rule here too. The female body should be protected by the fence of religious vows. She should satisfy her husband's worldly desires and should be very alert about her children by telling them good stories so as to enable them to follow the path of morality. She should not envy the in-laws and should develop love for a co-wife if any. She should lead an exemplary life and take religious vow if she wants to and follow the instructions of the husband. If the husband dies due to past Karma, she should remain absolutely celibate throughout the life. If she is destined to be a widow, she should not sleep on soft mattresses or wear perfumes. She should try to please the Lord through a vow of fasting on an Ekadasi day and by taking a simple vegetarian diet.

Widows should always listen to religious discourses and should refrain from a diet which can inflame their desires. They should read the holy books, worship with full devotion, think about own religious upliftment and lead an ascetic life. These are the general, principles to be adopted by men and women. The state of being bound, to the cycle of birth and death. {Baddha Stithi) will, automatically, stay away if these principles are adhered to. Now pay attention to me. I am going to explain to you the properties of the state of being bound.

One who does not care for good and evil, who does not respect the Lord and the one, one who does not have good intentions is bound by the cycle of birth and death. One who is crafty, talks bitterly and is a great sinner is also bound. One who does not respect holy men, indulges in worldly affairs, does not think of charity, and is always arguing is certainly, bound. Oh Nana, one who does not repay loans, praises oneself and slanders the holy men and gentlemen is also bound. One who pretends to be a holyman and follows the path of immorality, one who slanders others to glorify oneself is also bound. One who betrays one's friends; who creates enmity with his own Guru, who does not believe in the Vedas is also bound.

One who reads a lot of holy books and recites a number of good sentences but cannot purify his heart is also bound. Such a person can not get absolution, he cannot keep good company and ultimately, he goes to Hell to suffer a lot.

Now I will explain to you the properties of a person who is desirous of absolution (Mumukshu). You must listen to me carefully with faith. One who is sick with the state of being bound, one who knows good from the bad and is keen on meeting with the Lord is a Seeker (Mumukshu).

If a person repents his past deeds can attain absolution even though he was a sinner. A person who is happy with his destined state, one who is afraid of sins, one who does not lie is a seeker. One who is sincere to God, who is polite to holymen and who follows the path of morality is a seeker. One who does not leave good company, even for a moment and whose tongue is busy with the name of Hari is a Follower (Sadhaka).

One who realizes that the worldly desires are poisonous, and who tries, every day to understand the Adhyatma Vidhyas is a follower. One who prays to the Lord in solitude should be called a follower. One who is overpowered with joy while listening to the name and acts of the Lord is a follower. One who does not allow the Lord to escape from his mind and the one who serves the holymen without caring for his own vanity is a follower.

One who considers praise and slander, honour and insult, people and the Lord same, is called a Siddha. One who is not affected by the six enemies, one who is through with his wishes, who considers others as saints, who has no place for suspicion or desire, who has no sense of duality is a Siddha. A Siddha knows that he is the Bramhan. He does not care for the body. He is devoid of pleasure and pain.

I have explained these four states to you. You must think over this. Everything, living and non-living, is a form of the Lord. There is nothing without Him. He is everywhere. Everything is filled with Him. Due to the Illusion (Maya), we cannot understand his existence. You, Madhav, Maruti, Pandharinath, Mhalasapati, Kashinath, Adkar, Haripant, Sathe, Tatya, Ganesh Beray, Venu, Bhalchandra and I are the parts of the Lord. Therefore, no one should hate anyone. One should not 'forget that the Lord is present in even.' person. Knowing this, a person reaches the state of being devoid of enmity. At this state, everything follows automatically. The human mind, then, is unrestrained. One must try to stabilize it.

A fly sits on everything but when it sees fire, it moves away from its direction. Similarly, the human mind is delighted with everything but at the sight of Bramhan (Knowledge) it turns its face away. Oh Narayan, unless this mind is united with the Bramhan, the cycle of birth and death cannot be avoided. One must free oneself from this cycle in this human birth because there is no better chance except in this birth. To stabilize the mind, one must perform Idol Worship though an idol is not the God. When such worship is performed, the mind is concentrated. Without the concentration of mind, it cannot be stabilized. After this, one should read holy books and think deeply and try to act accordingly.

Knowledge of the Soul (Self Realization) is the supreme amongst all the sciences. It is like the Mount Meru amongst the mountains. When one masters this knowledge, absolution walks to him and the Lord Hari becomes his slave. Though the steps for climbing the ladder of this knowledge are difficult. I will tell a simple way for you. Maruti Kaka, Haripant, Beray and other devotees, too, should follow with you to achieve absolution. You must act according to my advice which I gave you and Nimonkar in the past. Everybody should surrender to the Lord and no one else. Have Siddha Darshan regularly with good faith. Due to this merit you will be fully conscious at the time of your death. At that time, with full concentration, think about the Lord only. Think of your own Deity and meditate on Him. When your life ends in this meditation, you will get absolution (Samipata Mukti). As Bannu from Bodhegaon has recently achieved absolution, Adkar and Venu will also achieve it by self realization.'

So saying Baba placed his hand over Chandorkar's head. I pray to Sai Maharaj. Chandorkar folded his hands and bent down at Baba's feet politely and said. "Oh Lord of the Universe. Oh Merciful. Oh my father and mother, you are my sail boat to cross the ocean of obstruction to absolution. You have taken us to the other side of this ocean by giving the Divine Knowledge to us - the ignorant ones. Please shower your grace upon us. Baba assured them, "You are all my devotees. You need not worry-. I always remember you.

The Lord will give you a pleasant abode. He will fulfill all your desires very fondly. Remember, these are My Words.'

Oh Seeta Bedre. know the greatness of Baba. Come along for Baba's darshan. We shall bow down at his feet. Though we are not worthy, even, of his devotee's torn shoes, Baba, the Mother of the orphans (spiritually) will save us. Baba's devotees.

Chandorkar, Haripant and others have gathered today. Baba has arranged a feast for them.

Knowledge, devotion and desirelessness are the dishes he has offered them and he is asking them to have as much as they want. Baba tells his devotees to take whatever they can digest. Let us stand at his door like dogs.

Oh, Seeta Bedre! He will throw us a piece. That piece will be sufficient to satisfy ourselves. Rush there Oh Sita! We may not get such a golden opportunity again. Oh readers, you will get the credit of performing one hundred Ashwamedh Yajnas by simply reading this chapter only once.

These three chapters on Sai are like the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and the Saraswati in prayag. Take a dip into it says Ganu.

This Shri.Bhakta Leelamrut is narrated truthfully as per my intelligence. Let this save the devotees.This is Das Ganu's prayer.

SHREE SANT KATHAMRUT

BY SHREE DAS GANU

CHAPTER - 57

Shri.Ganeshayanamah . Oh Lord Lambodar your form is the Truth. Oh Generous One, you are the Origin. Please hold my hand and help me write. Oh Listeners, please listen to this Sant Kathamrut -a book comparable to spring. The stories of the saints are the mango trees here. They have the branches of miracles performed by the saints. The poetic arrangement is the foliage of the tender leaves and the advice given by the saints is the fruit. I beg you to become a cuckoo and enjoy the sweet juice of the fruit. This book is the Manas Sarovar.

The stories of the saints are the fully bloomed water lillies. The pure honey of advice is contained in them. Oh Listeners, enjoy this honey like humble bumble bees. I have narrated the life of Sainath of Shirdi in Chapter 31,32 and 33 of Bhakta Leelamrut. He is the Kalpatam (The Divine Tree). He is the ship to cross the ocean of the mundane world, he is very generous. He is the ocean of mercy. He loves his devotees.

Sai's devotees went to Shirdi at the time of Dhanu Sankraman in the month of Pausha. Listeners may think that the Dhanu Sankranti is not as important as the Makar Sankranti. Why should, then, the devotees choose a less important day for the Darshan? On Dhanu Sankranti. people offer the Naivedha to the Sun and take their meals at sunrise. A similar situation is here too. I shall try to explain it to you.

The worldly miseries froze the devotees with cold. They donned themselves with the warm clothing of devotion and rushed to see Baba -their Sadguru. Shirdi is the mountain from where rises Sai the Sun. Sai's grace is the dawn. The devotees bathed themselves in the Ganga of faith and went for his darshan. The Lord, then, offered them a meal prepared from Self realization. This is Dhanurmas in Shirdi and hence the devotees gathered in Shirdi in anticipation of the meal. Narayan, the son of Shri.Govind born in the family of Chandorkar Haripant, a pious devotee and a firm believer in the teachings of the Vedas. Beray, Nimonkar, Laxman Maruti and other great devotees gathered there. All of them sat in the mosque and were as glad as the children are to see their mother. Chandorkar folded his hands in reverence and said, "I asked you a question. Baba. but you did not answer it then. Please tell me why you are annoyed with us and then, explain to us who the God is and where He lives.

Maharaj said. "Nana, anger does not stay in my heart. You are all my children. Whom do I get angry with? Of course, you have the right to show the false anger with me. Had Shri.Venkusa been around, I would also have had shown this kind of false anger expressed to him. Anyway. I have given two discourses to you earlier. You must remember the advice therein and listen to me. If you assimilate the knowledge I have given you earlier, it will equip you with four instruments. When a devotee is equipped thus, then only, the knowledge of Bramhan is related to him for self realization. The ways followed to procure the desired are known as the instruments here. Concentrate on my speech. I will relate those four instruments to you. Remember the subject is very deep.

The first one is the proper understanding of the real and the unreal. This is called Vivek, the reasoning. Second is Vairagya the asceticism. The third is the group of six consisting of Shama, Dama etc. The fourth is the desire for Absolution.

Listen to the definition of Reasoning. This deals with the permanent and temporary things. One must have realized that the world is an illusion and Bramhan is the truth. A lot of pure Chaitanya. The visible world is simply, an illusion. Oh Narayan, one cannot believe in it but one experiences its existence.

There is no place in this universe devoid of this Chaitanya. One cannot find a single thing devoid of this. My son! It does not have any colour or form. Do not forget this, this is called Bramhan. It is worshipped by Gnanies who are called the realized ones in this world. The Chaitanya contains millions and millions of animals, plants and insects. It is the prime cause for the very existence of the universe and the shapes of these life forms. The Chaitanya envelopes everything. It is without pain. It is truth, knowledge and bliss embodied. We are also not different from it.'

Nana folded his hands and prayed, 'Baba, I have some difficulty in understanding, here. You said the Bramhan is devoid of pain and it envelopes everything. It is blissful too. My Mother, you said everything contains this Bramhan. I, however, find that the world is full of miseries and pain. It is also infinite. I do not see any properties of Chaitanya in it. How can a born-blind see beauty? How can Real Chaitanya live in an illusory thing? If the Soul itself is the life force, then its unity does not exist at all because there are many souls. The pleasure and pain of one soul do not affect others. How can we? Then say that all of them contain the same Chaitanya? Since the bodies are different I feel that the souls are also different.'

Baba said, Nana, you make a mistake, here. Now listen to me with full concentration. If we mix red, white, black, yellow, blue, green, violet and crimson colours separately with water and keep these mixtures in different glasses, can the water be different? It gets red colour with red and yellow with yellow. If we separate the colour from the mixture, the colour of the water will not be visible again. In the same manner, after the union of the soul with heart, experience of miseries and pain are caused. Bodies of the animals are different but there is no difference in their souls. All of them have the same soul. Pleasure and pain are the properties of the heart (body). The body, however, is necessary for the soul. Understand this, My Child.

Now, I will analyze this topic so that you will understand it well. My child Narayan, the Chaitanya has three qualities. They are spiritual (Parmarthic), customary (Vyavaharic) and illusory (pratibhasic). They are similar to the three

states of the body viz. childhood, youth and old age. The souls who have reached the state of spiritualism are considered as holymen. Those who understand the difference between the right and the wrong and follow" the Shastras are called customary. Those who consider illusion as the truth are called illusory. They are covered with nescience, Nana.

You see an emperor, his officers and his messengers. All of them are due to the existence of the empire. They are all different. The emperor enjoys elephants, palanquines, different vehicles etc. He controls others at his will. His officers have to act according to his orders. Their wishes are dependent on those of the emperor's. The messengers have to execute his orders. Their own will is limited here. The subjects are under the envelope of the power of the emperor. Everything, the emperorship, messengership and also the subjecthood, are all dependent on this power. This power, however, is different from all of them. When the emperor dies, the power of the empire does not cease to be. We can easily understand the different aspects of this power. He who becomes one with the power becomes the emperor, though the power is independent, everything happens when one is supported by it. Nana, you sit in the chair (of the Secretary) due to the power of the empire. Your peon who swings the fan over your head does so due to the same power. Both of you are there (in the office) due to the same power but you perform different duties. The emperor fully enjoys this power. A part of it is enjoyed by the officers. The peon enjoys even a smaller part of it. The subjects, too, enjoy under its aegis. Thus, the spiritual souls become one with the Bramhan and enjoy complete bliss.

Upon this Nana asked very politely, How can one divide the formless power of the empire into different parts? Once we name the different parts, its nature of being formless vanishes (Hence it contradicts the assumption).

Baba said. "A very good question, Nana! I am very glad you asked it. The power of the empire, certainly, cannot be divided. We, however perceive its divisions (parts). Same is the case with the Chaitanya which appears to be infinite but one perceives its parts. Though one cannot divide it into parts the recipients enjoy it partially according to their abilities. The space occupies small

and big pots, utensils and the sky. The containers may have different capacities to fill the space. Does it, then, mean that the space is divided? Nana, understand this. This is the case here too. This is how the soul is. I have explained to you the nature of the Soul.

Whatever we see around us is the trick of the Maya (illusion). This universe is formed by the union of the Maya and the Bramhan.”

Thereupon, Narayan asked, "Who is this Maya? Who created her? What is her nature? You have explained to me that the prime cause for the universe is the Chaitanya. The universe is not different from it. Where does then, this Maya come from?"

Maharaj replied to this. 'Listen to me carefully. I will explain to you how Maya came into being. The very power of the Chaitanya, She had adorned the Chaitanya entirely. You cannot separate them as sweetness cannot be separated from treacle (jaggery). One cannot separate the light from the Sun. The union of these two has created the Universe.

My son this is the case here too. The Sun makes itself known due to its radiance. This similarity exists between Maya and Bramhan. Maya, however is limited but Chaitanya is infinite. Both of them are permanently ancient. Maya is the primal matter and Chaitanya is the soul. Dnanraja (Dnaneshwar) has discussed the soul and Maya in the Amrutanubhav (The Dnaneshwari). I will therefore not repeat it. I will only introduce that spiritual cave to you.

Those who enter that cave stay in there for ever in lasting bliss. They do not come out of it. The soul is the root cause of everything. Maya is the effect. This Maya is very important, Oh Narayan! Maya gives rise to ego which makes one feel one's individuality. When Maya engulfs something one loses the sense of truth. Maya has two qualities. Maya covers everything that exists. What does not exist, Maya makes it appear as if it does. Those are the two things, Maya does. She, thus, confuses everybody. A labourer dreams that he has become a king. Here, his existence as a labourer is, first, covered by the Maya. Though there is no kingship, Maya creates the illusion. Thus, Maya covers the Bramhan and projects a different picture. In fact, this universe does not exist. There is only one

true thing and that is the Chaitanya. However, due to the Maya, it appears as the universe. The properties of the universe appear to be true though the universe itself is all illusory. This is what causes inauspiciousness. Therefore you must remove the veil of the Maya and see the Chaitanya with the help of the knowledge. You will find that you are everything yourself. When water loses its turbidity, one sees clear water. Similarly, when the turbidity due to the Maya is removed, the Chaitanya will re-appear clearly. You must worship that reality, Oh Narayan! I have to tell this to everybody.

The soul is the reality. The main purpose of the spiritual knowledge is to explain this principle. You must realize this soul and achieve the absolution in this birth only.

On listening to this sermon, everybody was completely satisfied. They started prostrating before the Lord. Oh children, assimilate what Baba told lovingly to Vaidhya Sathe, Chandorkar, Berey, Nana, Nimonkar, Maruti Laxman and Noolkar. All the devotees said, 'Amen' and prostrated before Baba again and again. How can there be the darkness of ignorance where the Sun of knowledge shines?

Oh Sai Maharaj! please accept this child. Please allow Das Ganu to sit by the cool shadow of your grace. Sai Maharaj -the cloud of knowledge showered this nectar in this Shri.Sant Kathamrut. Ganu is requesting you to enjoy this nectar. This is the end of the fifty seventh chapter.

The end of the 57th Chapter from Shri.Sant Kathamrut by Shri.Das Ganu.