

11. Other Episodes from Sai Satcharitra

Live Experiences of the Tarkhad Family with Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi

Dear readers, I once again feel that the episodes in this chapter are mainly for those people who have gone through Sai Satcharitra. Of course others will also find it undoubtedly interesting enough. There are many instances as depicted in Sai Satcharitra when my father was present (there) in Shirdi, and he had narrated them to us from time to time which I am going to put forward to you all. I am sure many devotees who were present there at that time must have experienced the same. However, I consider myself to be lucky, to hear them directly from my father, and as they were stored in my hard disc, I now blow it up before you, for your personal knowledge. I sincerely hope you will pardon me in case I falter anywhere.

"Granting Mukti (salvation) to Tiger"

This incident took place in the year 1918. My father used to distinctly recollect this because that happened to be his last visit to Shirdi when Baba was alive. After this incident I think a week later Baba took Maha Samadhi. On that day, as usual Baba's Darbar in Dwarkamai was on and suddenly outside Dwarkamai there was a big commotion. All were anxious to know what was happening there. Four Darveshis (fakir) were carrying a full-grown Tiger who was tied up in chains; in a bullock cart. They had brought the bullock cart near the entrance of Dwarkamai and parked it. One of the Darveshis entered the Dwarkamai and pleaded to Mr. Madhavrao Deshpande (close devotee of Baba) stating that the Tiger is their source of income. They carry the Tiger from place to place and exhibit his show to people and the earnings are spent on their livelihood including that of the Tiger. But the Tiger had taken ill and while passing through Shirdi they had learnt that a great Saint Sai Baba is lived there. They also learnt that Sai Baba possessed miraculous powers and was able to cure living beings simply by his divine looks. They therefore, thought of showing the ailing Tiger to Baba provided the permission was granted to them. On checking with Baba, he granted the permission to bring the Tiger inside Dwarkamai. Darveshis took all precautions and brought the Tiger, who was walking slowly. He came close to the steps of the platform where Baba would normally be sitting. He looked at Baba and then put both his front paws forward and bent himself as though he was bowing and offering Namaskar to Baba and then suddenly gave a big roar. The sound of the roar was so loud and terrifying that it almost shook entire Dwarkamai. On giving that loud roar the Tiger fell flat on the ground and was motionless. The four Darveshi rushed forward to check the Tiger and they realized that it was dead. They declared to Baba that the Tiger was dead and now what should they do with its dead body. Baba advised them to bury the dead Tiger outside Lord Shiva's Temple near the statue of Nandi (bull). All the people of Shirdi had gathered to witness the burial ceremony of the dead Tiger. My father who had witnessed the entire episode live and in great detail felt that there was some kind of exchange between Baba and the Tiger and only after that the Tiger had passed away. My father waited for the right opportunity to enquire with him as to what exactly transpired between him and the Tiger. Baba then smiled and told my father "Hey Bhau that Tiger was in deep agony and he was requesting me to relieve him out of that agonizing pain as he could not bear it anymore. I felt pity on his miserable condition and

hence I prayed to the Lord to grant him salvation. My Lord is very kind and he responded to my prayers and granted him salvation. That Tiger is free for ever from this cycle of birth and rebirth." My father was totally astonished to hear this explanation from Baba. My father told Baba that till then he had seen him showering blessings on human beings but for the first time he had witnessed him showering blessings on a wild animal like the Tiger. Of course this last visit to Shirdi was unprecedented for my father which I will narrate in the next chapter

Control over Rain God

In Sai Satcharitra there is an incident, when there was an unprecedented rainfall in Shirdi. My father was also present over there. He was one of those lucky ones who had seen the battle between two superpowers. He used to always say that Sai Baba had acquired the "ASTHASIDDHIS" (the eight superhuman powers) and he used to Practice them whenever he was called upon to overcome the crisis faced by his devotees. Of course the nature's superpower would respect him and respond favorably to his SOS call because Sai Baba Himself was the Incarnation of God on this Planet Earth.

Those were the rainy days and since afternoon it was raining. As the evening approached the rains were getting heavier. Dark clouds had gathered in the sky. Gusty winds started blowing. There were clear signs of a thunderstorm approaching. The skies were getting lit with flashes of lightening followed by sounds of thunder. The storm was very active and entire Shirdi village was getting lashed with severe rains. Water was getting accumulated everywhere and all villagers along with their cattle started gathering in Dwarkamai as they had never come across such a severe downpour and thunderstorm. My father could not be an exception. He also came to Dwarkamai. He was reminded of the incident in the Bhagwat Gita when Lord Krishna had to lift the entire Govardhan Mountain and give shelter to all living beings and offer them reprieve from the unprecedented fury of the nature. That was the day in Shirdi when the natives needed someone like "Govardhangiri" who could only rescue them from that grave situation. Of course all were worried and waiting for Baba's blessings to fall upon them. There were no signs of storm clearing and soon Baba's patience was over. He got up from his seat, picked up his "SATKA"(small baton) in his hand and came down to the gate of Dwarkamai. He stood there in the open, a severe lightening had flashed in the sky and Baba hit the ground with the Satka and roared loudly saying please go away from here (JATES KI NAI? To be precise in Marathi). The intensity of that roar was so high in decibels that the entire place started trembling as though a tremor had hit Shirdi. Once again a severe stroke of lightening and Baba's hitting the ground with Satka asking for the rain God to move away from Shirdi. This happened thrice. It was a clear battle between the two Giants and soon the storm was coming to terms with Baba requests of reprieve. The lightening stopped, the rains receded and the winds slowed down. In about an hour's time everything was peaceful once again. The skies were clear and Baba asked everyone to return to their homes. My father resorted to his evening duty of lighting the Petromax Lamps. He was itching for the right moment so that he could ask Baba about the battle. Then came the moment and he asked Baba whether he is also in a position to rule over the nature. Baba replied saying "Bhau whenever my devotees are in distress I pray to the Lord of the Universe to shower his mercy upon them. The Lord comes to my rescue extends his help to me." Of course my father could not forget the sign when Baba was standing in the middle of the rains and roaring back to the Rain God to move away from Shirdi. Baba was looking like the Lord himself in a hostile mood.

Command over Fire Power

Once "DHUNI", the sacred fireplace started by Baba in Dwarkamai burning fiercely. Baba had already predicted the day of his departure from this world, hence I think it must be the day of "VIJAYADASHMI", popularly known as Dassera. It was evening time. Baba had stationed himself at his usual sitting place opposite the Dhuni in Dwarkamai. My father was also present there. Every evening he would come to Dwarkamai, sit there and observe the interesting happenings if any and proceed with his duty of lighting the Petromax Lamps. That day Baba suddenly got up, went near Dhuni, moved some wood pieces and started murmuring something while pacing up and down in Dwarkamai. This was very unusual and my father felt that something strange is likely to happen. Here I must state that even in those days there were many devotees of Baba who were anxious to know the religion of Baba by birth i.e. whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim. In any case he was in human form so he must have taken birth from a human body, in which case whether his parents were Hindu or Muslim was the question? Of course my father cannot be an exception to the rule.

Baba was slowly turning into an angry mood. He started abusing people who had assembled over there. Here the fire in the Dhuni was also raging higher and higher in the same proportion of Baba's angry mood. Entire Dwarkamai was lit up with the light from the firewood. By now Baba was charged with rage. He removed the cotton cloth tied to his head and threw it in the Dhuni. Suddenly the fire flames rose higher. Baba's long hairs became free. After a little while Baba removed his Kafani and threw the same in the Dhuni. The fire flames rose still higher so much so that people feared that the Dwarkamai would catch fire. Baba's anger was reaching its zenith. He stood in front of the People in that angry mood and in a fraction of a second he removed his Langot"(loin cloth) and threw the same in raging Dhuni. He had thus become "DIGAMBER"(nude) and he stood in front of the people in that form. He then shouted at them and told them to look at his body and decide for themselves and ascertain whether he was Hindu or a Muslim. What a way to give proof of oneself Now I am going to narrate to you what my father had seen at that time. My father used to say that Baba had acquired a very fiery posture. His eyeballs had turned red hot like burning coal and rays of light were emanating- from every pore of his body and his entire body was hidden behind that glow of spiritual ball of light. The light rays were so powerful that my father had to close his eyes. Needless to say that he could not make out the identity of Baba's religion. All present in Dwarkamai were stunned, Baba's shouts were continued. The flames from Dhuni were reaching very high and throwing enormous amount of light. Outside there was severe lightening and thunder. Then Mr. Bhagoji Shinde, one close devotee of Baba a leper (Baba used to allow him to press his legs) came forward and with great courage tied the new "LANGOT"(loin-cloth) around his waist. Then Baba cooled down to normalcy. He lifted his "SATKA" and came close to the Dhuni. He started hitting the flames with the Satka and was saying "Ugi...Ugi.means calm down, calm down. With each stroke of Satka the flames lowered in height and soon everything was back to normal. Then people got the courage to make Baba wear a new Kafani and his hairs (JATA) were tied with new piece of cloth. Although it was very late but devotees venerated Baba and carried put the evening Aarati as usual. Of course what impressed my father most was that Great Godly Body of Baba emanating light and his powers of having command over the fire. Baba-has selected Vijaya Dashami day with a purpose. He had given indication to his devotees that this will be the day when he will bid bodily good bye to this world. Later in the year 1918 on the Vijayadashmi day Baba took Samadhi.

Dear Sai devotee readers after knowing this I think we all should bury the hatchet of anxiety about Baba's religion and simply worship him with utmost devotion and 100 percent faith, for

SAI means "SAAKSHAT ISHWAR"(GOD) who has no religion and is all pervading omnipotent and omnipresent.

Bathing of LORD SHIVA by Megha

One staunch Sai devotee who had permanently stationed himself at Shirdi was Mr. Megha. He was a very ardent follower of Lord Shiva and Baba knew about it. Baba had therefore gifted him the Lingam of Lord Shiva so that he could perform his daily pooja of his Lord. Baba also loved Megha intensely, which made him to attend his funeral procession in Shirdi. Baba joined the procession and went on showering flowers over his dead body right up to the cemetery and also shed tears like a normal mortal showing his grief and love for his true devotee.

Of course Megha use to reckon Baba as his Lord Shankar and Baba had therefore allowed him to draw the Trishul on his forehead as was desired by Megha. On one Mahashivratri day Megha developed a fervent desire of giving a bath to Baba with Gangajal i.e. water from river Godavari. He was therefore nagging Baba to allow him to do so well in advance, as he knew that Baba would not permit him to do so easily. Finally after a lot of persuasion Baba agreed to take a bath from Megha.

On receiving the permission Megha was very happy. One day earlier Megha informed his acquaintances and invited them to witness the ceremony. My father was one of the invitees. Earlier night Megha left Shirdi with a Kalashi (metal vessel) for getting Gangajal from river Godavari that is around 11 km away from Shirdi. But for an ardent devotee like Megha, distance was no bar and he was back in Shirdi before noon with the Gangajal. After the noon Aarati Megha requested ' Baba to come for the bathing ceremony. Baba told him that he was only joking about taking the Gangajal bath, as such for a Fakir like him such acts are not permitted. Baba suggested to him to pour the sacred Gangajal over the Lingam of Lord Shiva in the Shiva Temple in Shirdi. Then Megha told him that he is bathing the Lingam daily and he reckons Baba as his living Lord Shiva and Mahashivratri being the most auspicious day for all Shivabhaktas Baba should not disappoint him. As Megha was very adamant Baba told him that he would allow him to pour the water only on one condition. Baba explained to him that Ganga emanates from Lord Shiva's head and hence Baba will bend forward and then Megha should pour the water over his head only. Megha though reluctant agreed to abide by this condition. Then Baba got up from his seat and they proceeded to Lendi Baug. There was a special stone on which Baba used to take bath, he sat on it, bended his head forward and signaled Megha to proceed. Megha started pouring water over Baba's head very slowly but he was not satisfied with that kind of bath, he decided to act as he had contemplated in his mind all these days. He suddenly emptied the bucket with the remaining water on all over Baba's body saying "Hara Hara Mahadev." He was very jubilant and started dancing with Joy, as he thought he had fulfilled his desire completely. But this did not last long. Soon he realized that although he had poured water all over Baba's body, only his head was wet and rest of his body including "is Kafani was as dry as ever. Megha was astonished to notice that and he could not believe. Then Baba told him "Hey you know Ganga flows out of Lord Shiva's head and does not touch rest of his body." My father was watching this fun along with other invitees. He realized that Baba wanted to impress upon Megha that his word is final and no one can dare to disobey him. Also Baba wanted to ascertain to Megha that he is his Living Lord Shiva. My father by then had fully understood Baba's various acts. According to him Baba over period of time had developed typical devotees around him. Through their mystical acts he use to impress upon people the presence of Lord and his mighty powers which people

must learn to respect through their faithful devotion. To name some of them were Megha (Lord Shiva), Nanavali (Lord Hanuman), and Dasganu (Lord Vithoba). In fact Dasganu Maharaj in one of his Aarati says SHIRDI MAZHE PANDHARPUR SAIBABA RAMAVAR (My Pandharpur is Shirdi and my Vithoba is Sai Baba). My father use to say that sometimes in jovial mood Baba would say that "Hey Bhau I am none other than Goddess Laxmi and while sitting in this Dwarkamai I would never utter a lie." In his entire life span he called upon himself as messenger of God and never God himself. Of course whatever he would utter would take place unfailingly. My father use to recall Baba saying that "Hey Bhau, after I depart from this humanly body, you will see that people will flock to Shirdi like Ants to sugar. Today you visit Shirdi any day of the year you will get the proof of Baba's statement made years ago.

Source:

https://www.saibabaofindia.com/live_experiences_of_the_tarkhad_family_with_sri_sai_baba_of_shirdi.htm