

7. Facing Death in a Cloudburst in Shirdi

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

Dear Sai Devotee readers, I presume that you must have paid a visit to Shirdi at least once. The present Shirdi and the Shirdi of yester years when my father used to visit, there is a vast difference. During that time when you enter Shirdi from Kopergaon end there was a rivulet, which you were required to cross to enter Shirdi village. Most of the times of the year the rivulet was dried up, only during monsoon season one would find it actively flowing. Currently one would find a small bridge over it on the main road. In those days villagers use to perform their morning duties on the banks of this rivulet. As such there were lot of shrubs and the place was appropriate before the sunrise, as there was hardly any traffic on the road.

Those were the rainy days when my father was in Shirdi. He was in the habit of getting up early and after performing morning duties he would attend the Kakad Aarati. On that eventful day he got up early and proceeded to the bank of the rivulet to perform his morning duties. It was drizzling so he carried an umbrella and torch with him. During his course of morning duty he heard someone shouting from the other bank of the rivulet. Initially he ignored the shouts. He tried to locate the person but due to darkness he could not see anyone. Soon he realized that the person was shouting and asking to runaway from the bank. He was shouting in Marathi and saying that "LONDHA ALARE ALA PALA." My father did not understand the meaning of LONDHA. (A torrent) as such his education was in English medium and it was difficult for him to understand the colloquial Marathi. However he could sense that the person was warning everybody to run away from the place. He hurriedly finished his morning duty and stood up and lighted the torch to find out what was going around. Soon he realized that a huge column of black colored water 15 to 20 feet in height was coming towards him. There was a cloudburst, which had taken place during the night at a far away place resulting into sudden floods in the rivulet. He realized that his end was near and he shouted saying "BABA MELO MALA WACHAVA". (Baba I am dying and please save me.) He closed his eyes and just stood still in that place, all the time chanting Baba's name. After some time he realized that he had not been swept away and he was still alive. He opened his eyes and what he saw was believable. The column of water was divided into two parts and Pushing past him without touching him. He was standing still in that gushing water. He was scared to death and the entire time chanting Baba's name (NAMASMARAN). After some time the water level receded and when it was down to knee level the water touched his body Now he was in knee deep water. He could see around him branches of trees, shrubs, catties etc were passing through that floodwaters. He thanked Baba there and then as he realized that only Baba could have Saved him from that sure death situation. He then slowly walked back through those knee-deep waters. He came to their place of stay and took bath. Needless to mention that he had missed Kakad Aarati that morning. He informed his mother what he had undergone that morning. She advised him that as Baba had pulled him out of the jaws of death, he should immediately go and thank him for saving his life. He immediately paced up to Dwarkamai and as he was climbing the steps with pooja material in his hand Baba talked to him in raised voice, "Hey Bhau today early morning why were you shouting for my help and are you afraid of death?" My father fell at his feet and told Baba that he knows everything and an ordinary

man like him is bound to get scared with the sight of sure death in front of him. Baba then lifted him by holding him from his shoulders and said " Hey Bhau get up. I bring you to Shirdi not for dying. Please remember you will not die like this so easily, as you have to perform lot of constructive work in future."

Dear Sai devotee readers, I know it is difficult for common people like us to comprehend such experience. Then came a thought-provoking event in my life, which I will describe it to you now.

It was the month of June 1962 if I remember correctly. There was a great movie running at New Talkies (today's Globus Theatre) in Bandra. The name of the movie was "TEN COMMANDMENTS." This film was produced by Cecille Be Demille, one of the most renowned producers of Hollywood. The movie had broken all previous records in Regal Theatre at Colaba and the New Talkies at Bandra was renovated with 70 MM screen and stereophonic sound system. I saw the film and realized that the miracles shown in the film matched with the miracles seen by my father during his association with Sai Baba of Shirdi. After lot of persuasion I convinced my father to come with me to see the movie. May be after a long span of 30 to 35 years he was to enter a theatre to watch a film. He saw the scenes, the divine light. Moses comes across when he visits the mountain and when Moses take all his Jew people leaving the terrain of Egypt and come on the shores of Red Sea and prays to the Lord and the Sea water divides into two parts giving them way to escape from the wrath of king Faroha. My father was delighted to see that picturisation and tears of joy welled and were flowing through his eyes. When we came out of the theatre he confirmed to me that the Shirdi Sai Baba possessed the same type of supernatural powers and he very much resembled the character of Moses as shown in the film Ten Commandments. He went on to add saying "Viren at least now you have some reason to believe what unprecedented experiences I have gone through in association with Sai Baba of Shirdi."

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