

Preface to Part III

The task undertaken in this biography is to sketch how Baba's influence spread out like a tiny banyan seed into dimensions which fill up forests. The way in which this force, obviously a divine force, is being worked is mostly hidden and cannot be completely grasped by any one. But persons can have with some bhakti and effort a rough idea of the main lines of march. The most important way in which the influence of a divine spirit expands is the very magnetism it exerts. The magnetic Baba with his wonderful qualities and power to save his devotees from every harm, including the danger of death and to provide all things necessary for one's temporal and spiritual welfare, naturally attracts the various pieces of steel called devotees to Himself. In some cases, no doubt, the attraction is based upon rinanubandha, but whether due to that or not, the force is exerted and persons are pulled to the wonderful dynamo. Baba said, 'I draw my devotees to Me from thousands of miles even and they come to Me first under one pretext or another, i.e. for the purpose of getting one worldly gain or other, and after their needs are satisfied to some extent at least, they adhere to Me and their welfare here and hereafter is looked after'. Most bhaktas that we have noticed in Part II were drawn (Upasani Baba and Khaparde) for specific temporal gains, but they stuck on and became very good adherents of Baba. In the case of a few, it is not the temporal gain that attracts. It is something within, something unintelligible, just like love at first sight of a pure girl and a pure bachelor. There is something that attracts and, things being favourable, the love grows stronger and stronger, and what was once a thin silk line becomes as strong as a ship's cord. In the case of Mahlsapathy, we have already noticed that his attachment began with his great love for all holy ones and his noting that Baba was very high in his purity and lofty nature and was respected by even the locally residing saints like Devidas and Janakidas. So he began to worship Baba and the more he worshipped, the more he loved, Baba returns the love of his devotee ten-fold and a hundred-fold. If the devotee takes one step towards him, Baba takes ten steps towards him. If the devotee gives him one rupee, Baba

LIFE OF SAI BABA

gives him ten rupees in return, and what is more valuable than rupees or earthly goods is that Baba shields him with all his wonderful power and saves him from harm by using his *Prathibha* (omniscience) or *Antarjnana*, noting what dangers are present in each place and what dangers await a devotee at what hour. Thus the devotee perceives that the only God that he is going to see and get the benefit of is this living Sai and gets powerfully attached to him. Baba used to say to Mahlsapathy 'You go; I am with you. There are thieves (snakes) near your house. Take a lamp.' Mahalsapathy found that every letter of Baba's statement was truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Baba used and uses his wonderful *Prathibha* or *Ritambhara prajna* for the benefit of the devotees whom he drew and draws calling them his own children. Each one of these devotees gets magnetised by Baba's dynamo and in turn attracts others without any propaganda or preaching. Mahlsapathy got thoroughly ennobled, and fit for Sadgati. For he said at the time of his death, 'I am going to heaven', and he passed away in perfect peace and purity substantiating the truth and correctness of his statement. The example of Mahlsapathy must have influenced hundreds and thousands of persons who came to Baba, and saw Mahlsapathy and Baba, though Mahlsapathy was not a propagandist or a preacher. Similarly other lovers of Baba sacrificing their all to him, their avocations or life, their property, their soul, and their all to him and loving him with an ardour which knows no limits, have become powerful propagandists without their knowing that fact. People saw how they prospered under Baba's care, and flocked in numbers to Sai Baba in the flesh or to his Samadhi knowing that he still lives after his Samadhi and still guards and provides for all his bhaktas. Hence, in showing the development of the Sai movement, the most proper course would be not to give a short account of the chief lovers of Baba. The total number of lovers of Baba would be innumerable, and having enjoyed his protection, any ordinary human being must overflow with gratitude and love, and myriads were in that condition. But we should select here just a few whose contact was particularly noticeable and who therefore may be now regarded by any sensitive reader as being the magnet through whom the original Sai Baba

LIFE OF SAI BABA

dynamo is drawing him to itself. The chief of these lovers and the earliest is Bayyaji Bai, the wife of the Patel of Shirdi village. When Baba first visited the place, this Bayyaji Bai was unaccountably attracted to Baba's service. She found that Baba was pure and without knowing anything about his future siddhi development, went on attending to his wants and supplied him with food. Even when he was rambling away from the hamlet into jungles not minding the time for meal, this pious and loving Bayyaji Bai would run out in quest of him, look for him under tree after tree and after finding him, place his meal before him and wait patiently till he ate it. Baba in those early days was given to much of Adhyatma or introspective study and devotion. Earthly wants did not bother him. He would go on thinking and thinking. From his later statement we find that he was thinking of Allah or the "fakir". By this term he would denote his Guru and his god, for the two were blended into one for him. It is by that wonderful concentration, all powers developed in him. As is stated in Srimad Bhagavata, Skanda XI, Chapter XV, "What power is impossible for him who perfectly concentrates on God and thereby merges in Him?" So, when Baba was neglecting his own body, this lady ran up and served him out of pure love and not with a view to obtain any material gain. That is the true test of love, namely, getting deeply interested in and attached to a person without caring for any benefit by way of return, but the law of justice, law of God, as represented by Baba also, is that self-sacrificing love, especially in serving persons absorbed in God, never goes for nothing. Srimad Bhagavata XI (17) 44 says—

Samuddharanti ye vipram seedantam matparayanam

Tan uddharishye na chirat apadbhyo nouriva arnavat.

This means (Krishna says) : 'Those who support fully a God-absorbed man in his troubles (physical), then I (Lord Krishna), will support and lift up from all dangers and calamities, just as a boat saves a man fallen into the ocean'. So Baba did support and lift up Bayyaji Bai and her family with wonderful consideration, sympathy, and love. For instance, her son Tatya, about whom more will be mentioned later on, became rich by Baba's grace. All his troubles were averted. But it is not the anticipation of coming benefit that moved Bayyaji Bai. It was pure

LIFE OF SAI BABA

unadulterated love for the sake of love. This love descended from the mother to her son Tatyapa Patel. The phenomenon appears to be most unaccountable, but Baba furnished the key for this unaccountable and powerful cord of love of Bayyaji Bai. Baba said, This is my sister in previous janmas, and she has always been supporting me.' Therefore, this unaccountable and powerful love was due to the fact that it is a continuation of unseen but powerful vasanas of previous births. The Bhagavad Gita says:-

1. *Purvabhyasena tenaiva Hriyate hyavasopisah.*

This means, "man is drawn by the tendencies of his previous lives even against or in spite of his own will".

2. *Tatra tann buddhi samyogam labhate Pourvadehikam.*

This means, "The ideas and tendencies of one of birth linger in one in the next". Bayyaji Bai was drawn by her previous vasanas to Baba. In the case of the other lives that we are going to discuss hereafter, we may take it that mostly it is the unseen vasanas operating from the distant past in former lives that accounted for the love. Bayyaji Bai's deep love, as we said already, has been the seed of a whole forest of lovers springing therefrom. Bayyaji Bai followed the bent of her nature and served Baba and passed away. But as will be seen from the following account of her son that love was continued and developed through her son, who attracted the attention of and became the medium of love for numerous others.

LIFE OF SAI BABA 5

ABOUT HH PUJYASRI B.V. NARASIMHA SWAMI MAHARAJ:	6
BABA'S LOVERS	7
R. B. PURANDHARE	8
SRI SANTARAM BALWANT NACHNE, DAHANUKAR	25
DAMODAR SAWALRAM RASANE	38
Mrs. TARABAI SADASIVA TARKHAD	45
M.B. REGE	52
RAO BAHADUR S. B. DHUMAL	64
H. V. SATHE	73
G. G. NARKE	82
SRI NARAYAN ASHRAM, SANNYASI OF WAI	93
KUSA BHAV	96

LIFE OF SAI BABA

RAO SAHIB YESHWANT JANARDHAN GALWANKAR.....	100
SRI RAO BAHADUR MORESWAR W. PRADHAN.....	102
BABA'S CONTACT WITH MUSLIMS.....	110
CHOTE KHAN	117
ABDUL.....	124
ABDUL RAHIM RANGARI	129
ABDULLA JAN	131
ADAM DALAI.....	136
B. V. DEV.....	136
P. R. AVASTE	141
CHAKRA NARAIN	148



This image of Sai Baba was unexpectedly delivered at the residence of G.R. Dabholkar, author of Shri Sai Satcharit during Holi festival in 1917 in accordance with Dabholkar's dream.

LIFE OF SAI BABA

Volume – III

by

LIFE OF SAI BABA

His Holiness Pujoyasri B. V. Narasimha Swami Maharaj
(Founder-President, All India Sai Samaj (Regd), Chennai-600 004, India)

Publishers:

All India Sai Samaj (Regd)
Mylapore, Chennai-600 004
Tamilnadu, India.

Acknowledgement:

Shri K. Ramaswamy, Past President,
All India Sai Samaj (Regd), Chennai.

About HH Pujoyasri B. V. Narasimha Swami Maharaj:

HH Pujoyasri B. V. Narasimha Swami Maharaj came from an orthodox Brahmin family. He did his Law from Madras Law College and set up his legal practice at Salem, Tamilnadu. He soon rose to great heights in his profession and was in the forefront in the freedom struggle. While attending a Pithru Shraadh ceremony in his home, Swamiji suffered a rude shock when his two children drowned in the well outside. The terrible tragedy made Swamiji give up all family and worldly connections and he became a wandering traveller, bent on knowing the ultimate Truth in Life. His quest took him to the ashrams of various saints and sages, spending a few years with Sri Ramana Maharishi, Sri Meher Baba and finally to Sri Upasani Baba of Sakori in search of, as he termed it a precious 'Kohinoor' – the Supreme manifested in a saint who could satisfy his spiritual quest! Sri Narayana Maharaj whom Swamiji met in his travels near Poona, had assured him that he would get the 'grand jewel' that he was after. Prompted by Sri Upasani Baba one of the foremost disciples of Shri Sai Baba, Swamiji visited Shirdi and it was from the tomb that Supreme, in the form of Shri Sai Baba bestowed on him Grace and gave his Sakshatkar, Swamiji had found his grand jewel 'the Kohinoor'!

Thereafter Swamiji spent his life in writing, building temples and meeting people in the service of Sri Sai Baba. In 1953 he started writing the "Life of Sai Baba", the crest jewel of all his publications. "The Life of Sai Baba" is an immortal classic, an immense work of 1,000 pages in four volumes weaving a vast tapestry of detailed analytical and authentic Life of Sri Sai Baba.

LIFE OF SAI BABA