

Part 1 - Chapter 20 - Bhau Is Not A Beast Of Burden

Shirdi Che Sai Baba - Dr. Keshav Bhagwant Gavankar

CHAPTER 20

BHAU IS NOT A BEAST OF BURDEN

Raghuvir Bhaskar Purandare, from Bandra, Mumbai, was a devotee of Sai Baba. Baba had given him the name 'Bhau'. He decided to go to Shirdi when his younger daughter was seriously ill. Her mother actually was not in favour of going as she thought it would affect the illness adversely. But finally he carried out his decision. He was accompanied by his wife, mother, daughters, his brother and his nephew. On reaching Shirdi, they immediately went to Dwarkamai for Baba's darshan. They were sitting at the back but Baba asked Bhau to come forward and to massage His feet. Baba offered him Chillum, but he refused to smoke. It happened for quite a few times, he turned down Baba's suggestion. All other devotees present were angry with Purandare, as he was going against Baba's wish, which was not good.

In the evening Purandare again went to Baba, when many people were present there. Baba again offered him the Chillum and said, "Those angry devotees were right. They are not mad. You should think and then behave". This time Purandare accepted to smoke. Some other day, Baba said, "Bhau, buy a plot and construct a house".

Purandare had to again neglect Baba's suggestion. He was in severe financial crisis. He was not in a position to even think about buying land or building a house. So he did not give any response to what Baba said. Baba turned to Fakirbaba who was sitting by his side, and remarked, "See, people do not pay any attention to what I say. They are engrossed in their own worries. You go and ask that Rambhau whether he is convinced and ready to do what I am telling".

Fakirbaba tried to find out who Rambhau was. There was nobody with that name. He went back to Baba and told about it. Baba said, "If there is no Rambhau, then ask Vishwanath". Fakirbaba again took a search and told Baba, "There is no one here, with the name Vishwanath".

Then Baba pointed out to Purandare and said, "Ask this Brahmin". Purandare lowered his head on Baba's feet and requested, "Sorry, Baba, but doing what You say is out of my capacity. I cannot buy a land and build a house".

Baba calmed him in reassuring tone, "I will make it possible, whatever seems impossible to you. I will get it done". Still Purandare had doubts in his mind. Knowing this Baba cheered him up saying, "I will give you lots of money. More than your needs. Then you will be able to deposit it aside. I will make you happy. I have already purchased beams for your house. Now just say yes".

Purandare's refusal somehow dissolved and said, "Baba, when You are there and Your blessings are with me, I have no fear. But only You will have to do it; because... You know everything".

Baba smiled and took the responsibility. He said, "Allah Malik Hai" Baba put His hand in His pocket and took out fistful of paise and gave it to Purandare. It counted to six annas in all.

Purandare's mother wanted to go to Nasik. When asked for permission, He said, "Why hurry? Go in the afternoon". In this way Baba postponed their departure from Shirdi for eleven days. When Purandare asked for permission on twelfth day, He detained them saying, "Do not travel with empty stomach. Have a lunch and then go". Again they unloaded the luggage from the cart and ladies got engaged in preparation of lunch. After the Aarti, Purandare's mother requested Baba, "Baba, please look after him (Purandare); he is Your child".

Baba comforted her with the words, "Mother, why do you worry? I will never forget My Bhau (Purandhare) even if he is a thousand miles away from Me. Without him I have never eaten anything and will not do so in the future. You are his mother, but have you raised him? No; Allah is there. Since My childhood I am close to him, with him and behind him. Go; do not worry at all. Allah will look after his welfare. Take this Udi and go".

After a month or so, one of Purandare's friends came to him with a proposal of buying a piece of land in Bandra. Purandare was not in a position to spare money for land. But Sai-Samarth-Leela is inscrutable. Purandhare went to his another friend for help. Surprisingly, the friend readily agreed to give money and said that Purandare could return the amount according to his convenience. He did not do any paper work like a promissory note, etc.. On completion of the formalities. Purandare took the possession of the plot. But he could not think of construction for want of money.

Whenever he went to Shirdi, Baba would insist on building a house. In December 1912, he again went for darshan. Baba was in 'morning Darbar' i.e. there was a congregation of people, in Dwarkamai. Nanasaheb Chandorkar, Hari Sitaram Dixit and others were there. Baba put a complaint before them, "See, this man; Bhau. He does not follow My orders. He neglects Me as if a brute is talking to him. Am I a Brute?

Nanasaheb inquired with Purandare, "What has Baba told you?" Purandare told him the whole story and clarified without hesitation that he had no financial capacity to spend for building a house. Nana asked Baba, "If You give us an order, all of us who are here, will share the expenses and build a house (wada) for him".

Baba compassionately said to Nana, "My Bhau is a simpleton and naive person. People trouble him. They just fry him. But he is such a good hearted man that he bears it without blaming anybody. He does not even talk to them in singular. How long should I see this? I have ample money. I want to give him that. But he is not ready to listen to Me. Why should he demand money from others? I will give him. Now he must listen to Me". Everybody was stunned by Baba's words.

There was a Ram Navami festival in Shirdi. Purandare, Advocate Ganpatrao Nandedkar were sitting on the stairs of Dwarkamai. About 20,000 people must be there. Shirdi town was packed with crowd. If a dish were thrown in any direction, it would not have fallen to the ground. All were eager for Baba's darshan. Group by group people were allowed to go inside for darshan. Suddenly, Baba rushed from inside in frantic rage and directly came to

Purandare. He started shouting at him,

“You send the people to kill Me. You do not let Me sit in the masjid, nor in the Chawadi”. Then He caught Purandare by his nose and kept on pushing him out of the crowd. He had His ‘Satka’ (wooden stick) in one hand. Helplessly Purandare started running. Baba was behind him. Then He picked up stones and started throwing them on the door of the grocer, Andu Wani. He kept babbling, “Where will you go? You cannot escape from Me. I will catch hold of you and bury you in Dwarkamai. I will not leave you like that”

Next day, Purandare was standing near the stairs and was organising the crowd as if nothing had happened the previous day. That time Baba was in a happy mood. But He again scolded him in the evening. Purandare and H. A. Pandit were busy in fixing a bracket on the ceiling meant for supporting a bell. Baba then, was coming back to Dwarkamai, finishing His daily walk to Lendi Baug. On seeing Baba, the people who were holding the rope tied to the bell, ran away. They were sure that Baba would beat them. But the two, Purandare and Pandit, who were standing high up to work near the ceiling, could not run or do anything else. As people had left the rope they had to take the whole burden of the big bell, which did not allow them to move. Both were praying to Baba in their minds. Baba came closer and stood leaning on the pillar. Worriedly He said, “These children of mine are dying; still nobody is coming to their rescue”.

At the very moment they could fix the lever of the bell in proper place and the burden of the heavy bell was released. They felt the weight lighter. Baba was standing and watching them; they got down. With fear in mind both prostrated at Baba’s feet. For a moment Baba frowned at them but then He lovingly said, “Do not behave like mad persons. Why should you take such a risk? If you would have died; then? You have seen, how people ran away. How shall I come to your rescue every time? There is only Allah who will care for poor people like us. Only Allah, no one else. Now go, and take rest at wada. Do not go out”.

In the night, there was a meeting in the Chawadi. After the meeting Purandare had a severe headache. Baba was distributing Naivedyam to the devotees present there. Purandare took a part of it for Baba. He was again displeased with Purandare and started abusing him. Neglecting it he fearlessly kept the dish near His bed. He said to Purandare, “You have become too audacious and arrogant. You do not allow Me to sleep or sit in Dwarkamai or in Chawadi. You try to equate yourself with Me. Take away this dish; otherwise I will throw it off”.

Purandare calmly requested, “Baba, please accept the Naivedya. Then only other people will eat”. Baba was furious. “Do not trouble Me any more. You can have it and ask others also to eat go”. “Baba, will You have it in the morning?” He asked humbly. Baba answered, “I told you to take it away. I do not promise anything for tomorrow”. The dish was kept covered in the cupboard. Purandare’s headache was worsening.

Next morning, Fakirbaba said to Baba, “Malik, Purandare is so much suffering. Because of headache he could not sleep. Please do something for him. He is doing hard work even under the hot sun”. Baba said, “He is having extra energy. He does not allow Me to sit in Chawadi or masjid”. “But Baba, whatever he does, he does it for You. The whole day he is in Your service. Please give him some medicine, at least”. Fakirbaba pleaded.

Baba said, “Allah will make him alright”. But the headache continued. Then Kakasaheb Dixit also requested Baba; “Baba, please relieve Purandare from pain. Day and night he is crying

out in pain". When Kakasaheb came back from Baba, he saw that the headache had become unbearable. He said to Purandare, "Now let us go to Baba. He will do something for you".

All of them went to Baba. Bapusaheb Jog, Fakirbaba and Kaka were accompanying Purandare. But Baba did not allow Purandare to even sit down. He started abusing with the satka (stick) in hand. With disappointment Purandare got up and went to RadhaKrishna-Aai. She tried to soothe him by covering his forehead with cologne water strips. But it was in vain. Six days he somehow sustained the sufferings. After two days Baba gave him Udi and blessed him by keeping His divine hand on his head. He also said, "Allah achcha achcha karega" (Allah will make you alright). Then taking Baba's permission, Purandare returned to his house in Bandra. When he was leaving Baba reminded him, "Build a house (wada) as early as possible. I want to come there".

After coming to Bandra, Purandare undertook the construction work though he had no relief from his constant headache. Two months passed. But he did not go to any doctor or medical practitioner. Such deep faith he had in Baba and His Udi. He thought, "Baba wants to finish my "Sanchit Karma" (Prarabdha). That is why He is giving me suffering. He is also giving me enough strength to bear it. Whatever He does is for my own good".

With all this, he had a terrible frustration. He wrote to RadhaKrishna-Aai, "I cannot endure the pain any more. Ask Him to either relieve me or let me die. I shall come there (to Shirdi), serve Him and wait for my death".

RadhaKrishna-Aai conveyed message to Baba. He then gave some Udi alongwith some 'Bhuki' (a powder medicine) Dr. Pillay and asked him to send it to Purandare. Baba also supplied an envelope. He asked Pillay to write the instructions, "Apply this Udi, and inhale the medicine". Pillay, then wrote a letter and conveyed Baba's blessings. "Do not worry! You will be alright. Allah is there after you. Why fear when He is there? To fear is a characteristic of women. Do not groan like women".

Purandare Kaka applied the Udi and inhaled the medicinal powder as per the instructions. Immediately he got sneezes. And then he had a sound sleep. Next day he woke up at 10:00 in morning. He was almost cured of the ailment. But still a trace was remaining. It remained there till the construction of the house was complete. But the headache was not so severe and could easily ignore it.

Purandare informed Baba about the completion of the house building. He asked Baba as to when he should enter the house. He preferred to enter before the rainy season. Baba granted the permission saying, "On the coming Thursday you will enter the new house and I will be there accompanying you".

Accordingly, the house warming ceremony was fixed on Thursday. Purandare had a slight headache. But neglecting it he finished his daily rituals like worship and Aarti. Then taking the photo frame of Baba in his hands and singing Bhajans (songs of glory of the God) they started for the new house. To his surprise, Baba was walking with him all the way. He was there till the moment he kept His photo in the decided place. Then he vanished miraculously. The religious ceremony of house warming was carried out. Since that very day, Purandarekaka got a complete relief from his long troubling headache. He was cured forever. It was all because of Baba's grace, Baba wanted him to buy a land and build a house. He got it done from him through His grace. Then He finally relieved him from the pain.

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