

Part 1 - Chapter 21 - I Have To Protect My Child

Shirdi Che Sai Baba - Dr. Keshav Bhagwant Gavankar

CHAPTER 21

“I HAVE TO PROTECT MY CHILD”

Supreme form of love is Mother's love. God looks at His devotees with motherly love. Before a child calls its mother when it is hungry, the mother becomes more anxious to feed her child. God also yearns to meet His devotee. When an infant sucks milk from its mother, it becomes one with her. Again, to enjoy the taste of milk it becomes an infant. A cloud drinks water from the sea; then again it becomes one with the sea. Imagine a cube of ice in a glass of water. One thinks that it is separate from water. But slowly it merges into water and its separate existence gets dissolved to become one with the water. God and His devotee are one, in the same way.

Raghuvir Bhaskar Purandare had surrendered to Baba in their very first meeting. He was serving in Railway Department at Bandra, Mumbai. He was a middle class person. He could not offer costly material things to Baba. Whatever he had, he offered at the Lotus feet of Sai Baba. He was a determined and a loving person. Whenever possible, He would go to Shirdi. For him, Baba was his mother, father and everything.

Once he went to Shirdi without prior planning. So he could not take anything as an offering. He thought he would buy some mangoes on the way; but somehow he could not. Empty-handed he went to Baba, Who asked him, “Who else has come with you?”

“No one, Baba; only I have come”.

“Ok; you said, you would bring mangoes for Me. Then give Me”.

“Baba, I did not get good quality fruits. So I did not buy”.

“Doesn't matter” Baba said, “Mangoes will come tomorrow? We will have them tomorrow”.

Next day, really a parcel came by post. At that time Kaka Purandare was busy fencing the Lendi Baug with barbed-wire. Baba sent a word to him through Bapusaheb Jog and told him to fetch hundred rupees from Rambhau. Kaka said “Ok”, but did not go anywhere. Again he received a message from Baba, “Go and bring Rs. 125/- from Vishwanath”.

He requested Bapusaheb to explain his difficulty to Baba. “I am unwinding the coil of wire; so I cannot leave it and come. If it is left half done, it will entangle and create a mess for me”. Baba again sent Bapusaheb to him saying “Ask Kaka to bring Rs. 150/-. Bring him with you or do not come”. It was 1:30 in the afternoon and it was a very hot sunny day. Bapusaheb came to Kaka and said, “Take Rs. 150/- and come alongwith me. I will not retur came to Dwarkamai unless you accompany me”.

He convinced Kaka that Baba did not want him to work in the hot sun. That is why He is insisting. Secondly, the parcel was in the name of Kaka. Knowing this too, Kaka completed the remaining work of fencing and went with Bapusaheb.

When they reached Dwarkamai, Baba asked, "What did Kaka say, Bapu?"

Bapusaheb replied, "See, he is here. Now, You can ask him". Baba said, "Bapu, Kaka (Bhau) has gone mad. He does not sleep at night or rest through the day. What should be done: I have to protect him. He is My child, My baby".

Then Baba asked Purandare Kaka, "Have you taken lunch?" He answered in affirmative. Baba further said, "Then sit calm and quiet. Do not go out in the hot sun and eat some mangoes."

Kaka refused. "Baba, these mangoes are not for me. No one would send it for me. I don't know how the parcel came in my name. It must be for someone else."

Baba said, "I am not ill mannered, I cannot take away that which does not belong to Me. I am saying these mangoes are yours. Come on, eat now".

Thinking that Baba would be angry, Purandare opened the parcel. He took out the two mangoes and stretched his hand towards Baba, Who said, "You eat first. Give it to Fakirbaba also".

Kaka was still not ready, "Baba, unless You have it, I am not going to eat. Otherwise, let me go for my work. I have left it halfway. There is nobody in my house, who will send it for me. I don't understand all this". Kaka was in tears. Baba consoled him saying, "Why do you cry? These mangoes are for you only. Believe Me".

Baba himself squeezed two mangoes, gave one to Fakirbaba and He tasted the second and gave the same to Purandare. Kaka ate that fruit as 'Prasadam' Baba asked him to take the basket (parcel) to Ramakrishni. Accordingly he delivered the basket of mangoes to Ramakrishni and came back to Dwarkamai. Upto five o'clock in the evening he was sitting with Baba, who compulsorily detained him. Baba did not want him to work in the harmful hot sun. Kaka then asked for permission to go to Aai (RadhaKrishna-Aai). He said, "No" to Kaka and told him to bring snacks from Ramkrishni. He did so, after that Baba did not allow him to go elsewhere.

Next morning, Purandare was on his way to Baba, who had already left for Lendi Baug. People were prostrating and taking darshan. Baba was in cheerful mood. But as soon as He saw Kaka, He flew into anger. He ran towards him threatening to beat him. He kept on shouting. "Wait there! Don't come near Me. You neither allow Me to sit in Dwarkamai nor in Chawadi. You are vexing Me too much. Your eyes are very very bad". He still wanted to show His aversion. He turned to Kakasaheb Dixit and said in irritated tone, "Kaka, get me a dagger; I want to remove his (Purandare's) eyes. Then I am going to drive him out. He is exasperating Me too much".

Purandare had a different kind of darshan of Baba. Dixit tried to comfort Purandare saying, "Do not get annoyed at Baba's words". He invited hi breakfast. Instead of being angry at Baba's pinching words Purandare was laughing to himself. Only he knew why! Kaka (Purandare) then went RadhaKrishna-Aai. She told him that the palanquin was kept in open Chawadi; and its four tassels had been stolen. Both were, therefore discussing as to where it should be safely kept. Kaka said, "We will erect a sade of metal sheets and keep the

palanquin in it, under lock and key. When needed it can be taken out and put back in the same place”.

Aai approved of that idea. She said, “Take the permission of you Mother Sai; and implement your idea immediately. Do it tomorrow. Once you leave Shirdi, no one else would do it”. Just then Kakasaheb Dixit all came there. He too supported the plan. He said he will seek Baba’s permission. When Aarti was over, Kaka Dixit took Baba’s consent and informed Aai about the same. She said, “My Tai (Purandare Kaka) is always busy at work. Tai comes to Mother Sai for peace but does not get leisure time. But Mother looks after her and protects her (him).” (She used to call Purandare Kaka as Tai, elder sister).

Dixit again invited Kaka for dinner, “You are coming, no?” Kaka replied with a question, “Who will say no to Baba’s Prasadam?”

Next day the work of tin sheet room was started, when Baba had left Lendi Baug. Fakira, Dixit’s servant, was there to help Purandare. He collected the pieces of tiles. Kaka cleaned and levelled the clay floor. While cleaning he found scorpions under each and every clod. But fortunately Kaka and Fakira were saved. Kaka then fixed the tile pieces properly. The tin room was being made just by one of the walls of Dwarkamai. Kaka had to make three holes in the wall for fitting the wooden shafts which would support the top sheets. He had completed two and the third hole was in progress, when Baba came directly to that spot. On seeing Baba, all who were the curious observers ran away. Fakira also disappeared. Only Kaka Purandare was left there. He was standing on easel-like ladder. Besides, there was a metal sheet on his head. The two clay holes were freshly plastered, therefore, not hardened enough to sustain the weight of sheet. Baba flew into anger to see Kaka working. He caught hold of his neck and came forward to beat him with a brick. Somehow Kaka stepped down the ladder. His neck was still in the hand of Baba, who was shouting at Kaka, “So much you are troubling Me See, I will kill you. Now go away, go out of My sight. Will you go or not?”.

Kaka said calmly but firmly, “Unless I complete this room for palanquin, I will not go. I am not causing any damage to Your masjid. But I have to make holes for fixing wooden shaft. I am going to complete that”. Baba said angrily, “Are you equating yourself with Me? I will see what to do about it. You have become over enthusiastic”. After some moments He was changed. He said, “OK, Do as you wish. We will find out new suitable place (for palanquin). You can go now”.

Then Baba washed His feet and went to Dwarkamai. Sitting there He was continuously abusing to no one in particular. By the grace of Baba, the work was completed. All the devotees gathered and the Aarti was offered. Then they went for lunch. Though the work was completed, Kaka was still standing here. Baba saw him and said to Fakirbaba, (in complaining tone) “See, he (Purandare) is still not coming for lunch. I am hungry. But he has no concern. My people are waiting. He is showing indifference”.

Baba asked Fakirbaba to call Kaka. Kaka was scared. Baba got up and caught his hand. Calmly He ordered, “Now go and have lunch. All are waiting. Why do you trouble them? You are troubling your wife, your children and Me also. Ok, now go and eat. Carry on with your work in the evening”. Kaka put his head on Baba’s feet in prostration. Baba then put some Udi on Kaka’s forehead and kept His blessing hand on his head. “Keep up this steadfast faith. Allah will shower His grace upon you. Your desires will be fulfilled. My Masjid Mai (Dwarkamai) will respond to our prayers”.

Kaka had his lunch, took the rolled betel leaf and immediately came back. abasaid to Fakirbaba, “He does not want to rest. He should have gone to Bapusaheb, to listen to the ‘Pothe’ (reading of sacred book). But he is bent upon damaging My masjid and Chawadi. He has stolen money from masjid. Don’t think of him to be a gentleman. But Allah is there. No one is superior to Allah. Now you will see, I will drive him out shortly”.

Fakirbaba said, “Baba why are You scolding Purandare so much? Day-and-night he works for You. He is at Your service whenever You call him. Actually, You too become restless to meet him. You constantly keep remembering him when he is not here. Then why do You get so angry with him when he is here?”

Saying so Fakirbaba went away. Purandare had noticed that there was a scarcity of scented flowers in Shirdi. Only wild flowers were used for Baba’s worship. He always felt very sad about it. Once he brought some saplings of scented flowers from Mumbai to Shirdi. He carried heavy luggage of four earthen-pots. He thought if those saplings were grown in Shirdi itself, there would be fresh scented flowers available everyday for Baba’s worship. Kaka’s friends, H. A. Pandit, Moreshwar Pandit and Daji Pandurang Vartak were accompanying him. All of them alighted at Kopergaon railway station. By chance Hasan was present there with his horse-cart. He brought them to the town from the far away station. Though no vehicle like bullock cart was available in the town, Kaka had decided to carry the heavy load himself. His friends were there to help him. They put the luggage on their heads and started walking. When they reached the banks of Godavari river, they saw three horse-carts coming from Shirdi town. The cart drivers were of acquaintance to Purandare. They agreed to take Kaka and his friends to Shirdi town. All of them took holy bath in the river, and one more horse-cart came towards them. Then they reached RadhaKrishna-Aai’s house. Keeping the luggage there, they went to Dwarkamai to attend Aarti. Bapusaheb Jog was there, making the preparations for Aarti. Baba said with anger, “Why have you come here? Go to your Aai”.

Neglecting His anger Kaka and his friends took darshan. Baba asked, “Have you come alone? Are you staying for 4/5 days; or going immediately:”

Kaka replied, “I will stay as long as You allow me to stay”.

Baba said, “Let’s see now, and give me some dakshina”. Aarti was then commenced. After Aarti, Baba gave Udi to all of them and abused Kaka saying “Don’t you remain at peace in Mumbai? Why do you yearn so much to come here and see Me?”

Kaka did not answer. Baba gave them permission to go to RadhaKrishna-Aai. She had made all preparations for food. She said to Kaka, “Now finish lunch and then ask your MotherSai about the management of the saplings”. Do it at the earliest, or they will soon dry up.

According to her suggestion all of them went to Baba for asking His permission. As usual Baba was in a rage. He was purple with anger. For nearly, an hour Kaka was standing below the stairs of Dwarkamai. Then he went near Him and softly asked, “Baba, have brought some seedlings. Shall I plant them? I intend to plant them on the side of the path from Chawadi to Sathe-Wada. The path will get covered and there will be a shade for protection from sun. After this I am planning to plant climbers over the arch of Lendi baug and in a little garden near it. Actually there is scarcity of flowers in Shirdi. That is why I wish to do all this. By Your grace Shri M.A.Devhare has given me saplings of good quality. So please allow me to go ahead; also, bless the plants so that they will blossom soon and give good quality and quantity of flowers”.

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