



CHAPTER XI

Sai as Sagun Brahma – Dr. Pandit's Worship – Haji Siddik Falke – Control over the Elements

Let us now, in this chapter, describe the manifested (Sagun) Brahma Sai, as to how He was worshipped and how He controlled the elements.

Sai as Sagun Brahma

There are two aspects of God or Brahma : (1) the Unmanifested (Nirgun) and (2) the Manifested (Sagun). The Nirgun is formless, while the Sagun is with form, though, both denote the same Brahma. Some prefer to worship the former, some the latter. As stated in the Gita (chapter XIII) the worship of the latter is easy and preferable. As man has got a form (body, senses, etc.), it is natural and easy for him to worship the God with form. Our love and devotion do not develop, unless we worship Sagun Brahma, for a certain period of time, and as we advance, it leads us to the worship (meditation) of Nirgun Brahma. So, let us start with Sagun worship. Image, altar, fire, light, sun, water, Brahma are the seven objects of worship; but Sadguru is better than all these. Let us, on this occasion, bring to our mind the form of Sai, Who was non-attachment Incarnate, and Who was a resting-place for His devotees. Our faith in His words is the Asan; and our Sankalpa (determination to accomplish the Puja) is the abandonment of all our desires. Some say that Sai was a Bhagwad-bhakta (devotee of the Lord), others say He was a Maha-bhagwat (a great devotee); but to us He is God Incarnate. He was ever forgiving, never irritable, straight, soft, tolerant and content beyond comparison. Though, He looked embodied (as having the form), He was really dis-embodied, emotionless, unattached and internally free. The Ganges on its way to the sea, cools and refreshes the creatures affected with heat, gives life to the crops and trees, and quenches the thirst of many. Similarly, saints (Souls) like Sai, while they live their own, give solace and comfort to all. Lord Krishna has said that the saint is My soul, My living image, I am He or He is My pure form (Being). This in-describable Shakti or Power of God, known as Pure Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, incarnated in the form of Sai in Shirdi. The Shruti (Taittiriya Upanishad) describes Brahma as Pure Bliss. This, we read or hear daily in the books, but the devout people experienced this Brahma or Bliss in Shirdi. Baba, the Support of all, required no prop or Asan from anybody. He always used a piece

of sack-cloth for His seat, which was covered with a small mattress by His bhaktas and had a bolster, placed by them, rest as His back. Baba respected the feelings of His devotees and allowed them to worship Him as they liked. Some waved Chamar or fans before Him, some played on musical instruments, some washed His hands and Feet, some others applied scent and Chandan, some gave betelnut with leaves, and some others offered Naivaidya. Though, He looked like living in Shirdi, He was present everywhere. This all-pervasiveness of His was daily experienced by His devotees. Our humble prostration to this all-pervasive Sadguru.

Dr. Pandit's Worship

One Dr. Pandit, a friend of Tatyasaheb Noolkar, once came to Shirdi for Baba's darshan. After saluting Baba, he sat in the Masjid for some time. Baba asked him to go to Dadabhat Kelkar. He went to Dadabhat, by whom he was well received. Then, Dadabhat left his house for Puja and Dr. Pandit accompanied him. Dadabhat worshipped Baba. Nobody, until then, dared to apply sandal paste to Baba's forehead. Only Mhalsapati used to apply it to His neck. But, this simple-hearted, Dr. Pandit, took Dadabhat's dish containing Puja-materials and taking sandal-paste out of it, drew a Tripund, i.e., three horizontal lines on Baba's forehead. To the surprise of all, Baba kept silent, not uttering a single word. Then, Dadabhat, that evening, asked Baba, "How is it, that, though You object to the sandal-paste, being applied by others to Your forehead; You allowed Dr. Pandit to do so?" Baba replied that Dr. Pandit believed Him to be the same as his Guru, Raghunath Maharaj of Dhopeswar, known as Kaka Puranik and he applied the paste to His forehead, as he was doing to his Guru. Hence, He could not object. On enquiry, Dr. Pandit told Dadabhat that he took Baba as his Guru Kaka Puranik and realized Him as the same hence, he marked the Tripund on Baba's forehead, as he did on his Guru's.

Though, Baba allowed the devotee to worship Him as they pleased, still some times, He acted in a strange way. Some times, He threw away the Puja-dish and was wrath Incarnate, then, who could approach Him? Some times, He scolded the devotees; at times, He looked softer than wax, a statue of peace and forgiveness. Though, He seemed to shake with anger and His red eyes rolled round, still, He was internally, an ocean of affection and motherly love. He would call out His devotees and say, that He never knew, when He was ever angry with them. If it was possible that mothers could kick their children and the sea turn

back the river He too could neglect the devotees' welfare; that He, the Slave of His devotees, always stood by them, and responded to them, whenever they called upon Him and that, He always longed for their love.

Haji Siddik Falke

There was no knowing, as to when Baba would accept a devotee. That depended on His will. Siddik Falke's story is to the point. One Mohammeden gentleman, by name Siddik Falke of Kalyan, after making pilgrimage to Mecca and Madina, came to Shirdi. He lived in the Chavadi, facing north and sat in the open court-yard of the Masjid. For nine months, Baba ignored him and did not allow him to step into the Masjid. Falke felt disconsolate and did not know, what to do. Somebody advised him not to be disappointed but to try to approach Baba through Shama (Madhavrao Deshpande), a close and intimate devotee of Baba. He told him that as they approach the Lord Shiva through his servant and devotee, Nandi, so should Baba be approached through Shama. Falke liked the idea and implored Shama to intercede for him. Shama agreed and on a convenient occasion spoke to Baba about him thus, "Baba, why don't You allow the old Haji to step into the Masjid, while so many persons freely come and go, after taking Your darshan; why not bless him once?" Baba replied, "Shama, you are immature to understand things. If the Fakir (Allah) does not allow, what can I do? Without His grace, who will climb into the Masjid? Well, go to him and ask him, whether he will come to the narrow footpath near the Barvi well." Shama went and returned with an affirmative answer. Again Baba said to Shama, "Ask him, whether he is willing to pay Me the sum of Rs. 40,000/- in four instalments". Shama went and returned with the answer, that he was willing to pay even forty lacs. Again Baba said to Shama, "We are going to cut a goat in the Masjid, so, ask him, whether he would like to have its meat haunch or testicles of the goat." Shama returned with the answer that the Haji would be happy to receive a small crumb from Baba's Kolamba (mudpot). Hearing this, Baba got excited and with His hands threw away the earthen jars and Kolamba, and straightway advanced to the Haji and lifting His Kafni up in arms said, "Why do you brag and pose yourself as an old Haji? Do you read Quran like this? You are proud of your pilgrimage to Mecca; but you do not know Me." Being thus scolded, the Haji was confounded. Baba, then, went back to the Masjid, purchased a basket of mangoes and sent them to the Haji. Then again, Baba went to the Haji, and taking out Rs. 55/- from His pocket, gave them in Haji's hand. Thenceforth, Baba

loved the Haji, invited him for meals and the Haji, thereafter, came into the Masjid, whenever he liked. Baba gave him at times some rupees and thus, the Haji was enrolled in Baba's Darbar.

Baba's Control over the Elements

We shall close this chapter, after describing two incidents, showing Baba's control over the elements. (1) Once, at evening time, there was a terrible storm at Shirdi. The sky was overcast with thick black clouds. Winds began to blow with great force, clouds roared and lightening began to flash and rains started pouring in torrents. In a short time, the whole place was flooded with water. All creatures, birds, beasts and men got terribly frightened, and they all flocked to the Masjid for shelter. There are many local Deities in Shirdi but none of them came to their rescue. So, they all prayed to Baba – their God, Who was fond of their devotion, to intercede and quell the storm. Baba was much moved. He came out and standing at the edge of the Masjid, addressed the storm in a loud and thunderous voice, "Stop, stop your fury and be calm!" In a few minutes, the rains subsided, the winds ceased to blow, and the storm came to a stop. Then, the moon rose in the sky and people went back home well-pleased. (2) On another occasion at noon the fire in the Dhuni began to burn brightly, its flames were seen to be reaching the rafters above. The people who were sitting in the Masjid, did not know, what do do. They dared not to ask Baba to pour water or do anything to quench the flames. But Baba soon came to realize, what was happening. He took up His Satka (short stick) and dashed it against a pillar in front, saying, "Get down, Be calm". At each stroke of the Satka, the flames began to slow down, and in a few minutes the Dhuni became calm and normal.

This is our Sai, an Incarnation of God. He will bless any man, who will prostrate and surrender himself to Him. He, who will read the stories of this chapter daily, with faith and devotion, will soon be free from all calamities not only this, but always attached and devoted to Sai, he will get very soon God-vision, all his desires will be fulfilled and being ultimately desireless, he will attain the Supreme. Amen!

Bow to Shri Sai – Peace be to all