



CHAPTER XII

Sai Leelas – Experiences of (1) Kaka Mahajani (2) Dhumal Pleader (3) Mrs. Nimonkar (4) Mule Shastri (5) A Doctor

Now, let us see in this chapter, how devotees were received and treated by Baba.

Saints' Mission

We have seen before, that the purpose or object of Divine Incarnation is to protect the good and destroy the wicked. But, the mission of the saints is quite different. To them the good and the wicked are the same. First they draw the evil-doers and set them on the right path. They are the Agasti¹ to destroy the Bhava-sagar (the ocean of worldly existence) or the sun to destroy the darkness of ignorance. The God dwells in the saints. In fact, they are not different from Him. Our Sai is One of these, Who incarnated for the welfare of the devotees. Supreme in knowledge and surrounded with divine aura, He loved all beings equally. He was unattached. Foes and friends, kings and paupers, all were same to Him. Hear His Leelas! For the sake of devotees, He gave His stock of merits and was ever alert to help them. But, the devotees could never approach Him, unless He meant to receive them. If their appointed time did not come, they did not remember Baba, and His Leelas could not reach their ears. Then, how could they think of seeing Him? Some men desired to see Sai Baba, but they did not get any opportunity of taking His darshan, till His Mahasamadhi. **There are many such persons, whose desire for Baba's darshan was not thus satisfied. If these persons, believing in Him, listen to His Leelas, their quest for darshan will be, to a great extent, satisfied by the Leelas.** Even if some persons went there by sheer luck and took Baba's darshan, were they able to stay there longer? No. Nobody could go there of his own accord and nobody could stay there longer if Baba did not wish so. They could stay there, so long as Baba permitted them to stay, and had to leave the place, when asked to do so by Him so, everything depended on Baba's divine will.

1. Agasti – A renowned Hindu saint

Kaka Mahajani

Once, Kaka Mahajani went to Shirdi from Mumbai. He wanted to stay there for one week and enjoy the Gokul Ashtami festival. As soon as he took Baba's darshan, Baba asked him, "When are you returning home?" He was rather surprised at this question, but he had to give an answer. He said that he would go home, when He ordered him to do so. Then, Baba said, "Go tomorrow!" Baba's word was law and had to be obeyed. Kaka Mahajani, therefore, left Shirdi, immediately. When he went to his office in Mumbai, he found his employer anxiously waiting for him. His Munim, i.e. the manager, suddenly fell ill, hence, Kaka's presence was absolutely necessary. He had sent a letter to Kaka at Shirdi, which was redirected to him at Mumbai.

Bhauasaheb Dhumal

Now, listen to another story. Once, Bhauasaheb Dhumal was going to Niphad for a case. On the way, he came to Shirdi, took Baba's darshan and wanted to proceed to Niphad immediately. But, Baba did not permit him to do so. He made him stay at Shirdi, for a week or more. In the meanwhile, the magistrate at Niphad suffered intensely from pain in his abdomen and the case was adjourned. Mr. Dhumal was then, allowed to go and attend to his case. It went on for some months and was tried by four magistrates. Ultimately, Mr. Dhumal won the case and his client was acquitted.

Mrs. Nimonkar

Mr. Nanasaheb Nimonkar, Watandar of Nimon and Honorary magistrate, was staying at Shirdi with his wife. Mr. and Mrs. Nimonkar were spending most of their time in the Masjid with Baba and serving Him. It so happened, that their son fell ill at Belapur and the mother decided, with Baba's consent, to go to Belapur and see her son and other relatives, and stay there for a few days, but Mr. Nanasaheb asked her to return the next day. The lady was in a fix and did not know, what to do, but her God Sai came to her help. While leaving Shirdi, she went to Baba, Who was standing in front of Sathe's wada, with Mr. Nanasaheb and others, and prostrated at His Feet and asked His permission to go. Baba said to her, "Go, go quickly, be calm and unperturbed. Stay comfortably at Belapur for four days! See all your relatives and then

return to Shirdi!" How opportune were Baba's words! Mr. Nanasaheb's proposal was overruled by Baba's decree.

Mule Shastri of Nasik

An orthodox Agnihotri Brahmin of Nasik, Mule Shastri, who had studied the six Shastras and was well-versed in astrology and palmistry, once came to Shirdi to see Mr. Bapusaheb Buti, the famous millionaire of Nagpur. After seeing him, he and others, went to see Baba in the Masjid. Baba bought various fruits and other things from vendors with His own money and distributed them to the people present in the Masjid. Baba used to press the mango on all sides so skillfully that when Baba sucked it, he got all the pulp at once in his mouth and could throw away the seed. Plantains were peeled off by Baba and the pulp was distributed to the devotees, while the skins were retained by Baba for Himself. Mule Shastri, as a palmist, wanted to examine Baba's palm and asked Him to extend His hand. Baba ignored his request and gave four plantains to him. Then, they all returned to the Wada and Mule Shastri bathed, wore fresh clothes and started his routine duties, viz. Agnihotra etc. Then, Baba as usual started for Lendi and said, "Take some Geru (i.e. a red miry substance, used to dye clothes in saffron-colour), we shall today don saffron-coloured cloth. None understood, what Baba meant. Then after some time, when Baba returned and preparations for the noon-Arati¹ were being made, Bapusaheb Jog asked Mule Shastri, whether he would accompany him for the Arati. He replied that he would see Baba in the afternoon. Baba sat on his seat, was worshipped by the devotees and Arati commenced. Then, Baba said, "Get some Dakshina from the new (Nasik) Brahmin." Buti himself went to the Wada to get the Dakshina and when he gave Baba's message to Mule Shastri, he was sorely perplexed. He thought in his mind thus, "I am a pure Agnihotri Brahmin, why should I pay Dakshina? Baba may be a great Saint. I am not His dependent." But, since a great Saint, like Sai baba was asking for Dakshina through a millionaire like Buti, he could not refuse. So, leaving his routine unfinished, he started with Buti for Masjid. Thinking himself holy and the Masjid otherwise, he remained at a distance, and after joining his palms threw flowers at Baba from there. Then, lo! all of a sudden, he saw not Baba but his late Guru Gholap Swami there. He was wonder-struck. Could this be a

1. Arati – Prayer

dream? No, it was not, as he was wide awake, but how could his late Guru Gholap be there? He was speechless for some time. He pinched himself and thought again, but could not reconcile to the fact of his late Guru Gholap being in the Masjid. Ultimately, leaving aside all doubt, he went up, fell at his Guru's feet and then, stood there with folded hands. Other people sang Baba's Arati, while Mule Shastri chanted loudly his Guru's name. Then, casting off all pride of caste and sacredness, he fell at his Guru's feet and closed his eyes. When he got up and opened his eyes, he saw Baba asking for Dakshina. Seeing Baba's blissful form and His inconceivable power, Mule Shastri forgot himself. He was extremely pleased, his eyes were full of tears of joy. He again saluted Baba and gave the Dakshina. He said that his doubt was removed and he saw his own Guru. On seeing this wonderful Leela of Baba all the people, including Mule Shastri, were much moved and they realized the meaning of Baba's words, "Bring Geru, we shall don saffron-coloured clothes." Such is the wonderful Leela of Baba.

A Doctor

Once a Mamlatdar¹ came to Shirdi, with a doctor friend of his. The doctor said that his Deity was Ram and that, he would not bow before a Mohammedan and so, he was unwilling to go to Shirdi. The Mamlatdar replied, that nobody would press him to bow down. So, he should come and give the pleasure of his company. Accordingly, they reached Shirdi and went to the Masjid for Baba's darshan. All were wonder-struck to see, the doctor going ahead and saluting Baba. They asked him, how he forgot his resolve and bowed down to a Mussalman. Then, the doctor replied that, he saw his beloved Deity, Ram, on the seat and he therefore, prostrated himself before Him. Then, as he was saying this, he again saw, Sai Baba there. Being dismayed, he again said, "Is this a dream? How could He be a Mohammedan? He is a great Yogasampanna (full of Yoga) Avatar."

Next day, he made a vow and began to fast. He absented himself from the Masjid, resolving not to go there, until Baba blessed him. Three days passed and on the fourth day, a close friend of his, from Khandesh, turned up; and with him, he went to the Masjid for Baba's darshan. After the salutation, Baba asked him, whether anybody had gone to call

1. Mamlatdar – Revenue Officer

him that he had come. Hearing this vital question, the doctor was moved. The same night he was blessed by Baba and he experienced Bliss Supreme, in his sleep. Then, he left for his town where he remained in the same state for a fortnight. Thus, his devotion for Sai Baba increased manifold.

The moral of all the stories mentioned above, specially, that of Mule Shastri, is that, we should have firm faith in our Guru and on none else.

More Leelas of Sai Baba will be described in the next chapter.

Bow to Shri Sai – Peace be to all