



CHAPTER XVI & XVII

Quick Brahma-gnyan

These two chapters relate the story of a rich gentleman, who wanted Brahma-gnyan, quickly from Sai Baba.

Preliminary

The last chapter described, how Mr. Cholkar's vow of small offering was completed and accepted. In that story Sai Baba showed that, He would accept with appreciation any small thing, offered with love and devotion but if the same thing was offered with pride and haughtiness, He would reject it. Being Himself full of Sat Chit Anand (Pure Consciousness, Knowledge and Bliss) He did not care much for mere outward formalities, but if an offering was made in a humble spirit, the same was welcome and He accepted it with pleasure and avidity. In fact, there is no person more generous and benevolent than a Sadguru, like Sai Baba. He cannot be compared to the Chintamani jewel, the Kalpataru (the celestial tree which fulfils our desires) or the Kamadhenu (the celestial cow which yields, what we desire), they give us only what we desire, but the Sadguru gives us the most precious thing, that is inconceivable and inscrutable the reality. Now let us hear, how Sai Baba disposed of a rich man, who came to Him and implored Him to give him Brahma-gnyan.

There was a rich gentleman (unfortunately his name and whereabouts are not mentioned), who was very prosperous in his life. He had amassed a large quantity of wealth, houses, and lands, and had many servants and dependents. When Baba's fame reached his ears he said to a friend of his that he was not in want of anything, and so, he would go to Shirdi and ask Baba to give him Brahma-gnyan, which if he got, would certainly make him more happy. His friend dissuaded him, saying, "It is not easy to know Brahma and especially so for an avaricious man like you, who is always engrossed in wealth, wife and children. Who will in your quest of Brahma-gnyan satisfy you, who does not give away even a paisa in charity?"

Not minding his friend's advice, the fellow engaged a return journey Tonga¹ and came to Shirdi. He went to the Masjid, saw Sai

1. Tonga - Horse drawn carriage

Baba, fell at His Feet and said, "Baba, hearing that, You show Brahma to all who come to you, I too have come here all the way from my distant place. I am much fatigued by the journey and if I get Brahma-gnyan from You, my troubles will be well-paid and rewarded." Baba, then, replied, "Oh, My dear friend do not be anxious, I shall show you Brahma. Many people come to Me and ask for wealth, health, power, honour, position, cure of diseases and other temporal matters. Rare is the person who comes to Me and asks for Brahma-gnyan. There is no dearth of people asking for worldly things but people interested in spiritual matters are very rare, I think, it is a fortunate and auspicious moment, when persons like you, come and ask Me for Brahma-gnyan. So forthwith, I show to you with pleasure, Brahma, with all its accompaniments and complexities."

Saying this, Baba started to show him Brahma. He made him sit there and engaged him in some other talk and thus, made him forget his question for the time-being. Then He called a boy and told him to go to one Nandu Marwadi and get from him a loan of Rs. five. The boy left and returned immediately, saying that Nandu was absent and his house was locked. Then, Baba asked him to go to Bala grocer and get from him the said loan. This time also the boy was unsuccessful. This experiment was repeated again twice or thrice, with the same result.

Sai Baba was, as we know, the living and moving Brahma Incarnate. Then, some-one may ask, "Why did He want the paltry sum of five rupees, and why did He try hard to get it? In reality He did not want this sum at all. He must have known fully that Nandu and Bala were absent, and He seemed to have adopted this procedure as a test for the seeker of Brahma. That gentleman had a roll or bundle of currency notes in his pocket and if he was really earnest, he would not have sat quiet and be a mere onlooker when Baba was frantically trying to get a paltry sum of Rs. five. He knew that Baba would keep His word and repay the debt, and that the sum wanted was insignificant. Still he could not make up his mind and advance the sum. Such a man wanted from Baba, the greatest thing in the world, viz. the Brahma-gnyan! Any other man who really loved Baba would have given to him Rs. five at once, instead of being a mere onlooker. It was otherwise with this man. He advanced no money nor did he sit silent but began to be impatient, as he was in a haste to return and implored Baba, saying. "Oh Baba, please, give me Brahma-gnyan soon!" Baba replied, "Oh my dear friend did you not understand all the procedure that I went through, sitting

in this place, for enabling you to see Brahma? It is in short this : For seeing Brahma, one has to give five things, i.e., surrender five things, viz. **(1) five Pranas (vital forces), (2) five senses, (3) mind, (4) intellect and (5) ego. This path of Brahma-gnyan or self-realization is as hard as treading on the edge of a razor.**

Sai Baba then gave a rather long discourse on the subject, the purport of which, is given below :

Qualifications for Brahma-gnyan or Self-realization

All persons do not see or realize the Brahma in their life-time. Certain qualifications are absolutely necessary.

1. **Mumukshu** or intense desire to get free. He who thinks that, he is bound and that, he should get free from bondage and works earnestly and resolutely to that end and does not care for any other thing, is qualified for the spiritual life.
2. **Virakti** or a feeling of non-attachment with the things of this world and the next. Unless a man feels disgusted with the things, emoluments and honours, which his actions would bring in this world and the next, he has no right to enter into the spiritual realm.
3. **Antarmukha** (introversion) Our senses have been created by God with a tendency to move outward and so, man always looks outward and not inward. He, who wants self-realization and immortal life, must turn his gaze inwards and look to his inner self.
4. **Catharsis** – (eliminating all base ideas and emotions) – Unless a man has turned away from wickedness and stopped from doing wrong, and has entirely composed himself, and unless his mind is at rest, he cannot gain self-realization even by means of knowledge.
5. **Right conduct** – Unless a man leads a life of truth, penance and insight, a life of celibacy, he cannot get God-realization.
6. Preferring **Shreyas** (the good), to **Preyas** (the pleasant) – There are two sorts of things, viz. the good and the pleasant; the former deals with spiritual affairs, and the latter with mundane matters. Both these are open to man for acceptance. He has to think and choose one of them. The wise man prefers the good to the pleasant, but the unwise, through greed and attachment chooses the pleasant.
7. **Control of the mind** and the senses – The body is the chariot and

the self is its master, intellect is the charioteer and the mind is the reins, the senses are the horses and sense-objects are their paths. He who has no understanding and whose mind is unrestrained, has his senses unmanageable, like the stray horse of a charioteer, does not reach his destination (get self realization), but goes through the round of births and deaths; but he who has understanding and whose mind is restrained, has his senses under control, like the good obedient horse of a charioteer, reaches the destination, i.e. the state of self-realization, whence he is not born again. The man, who has understanding as his charioteer (guide) and is able to rein his mind, reaches the end of the journey, which is the supreme abode of the all-pervading, Vishnu (Lord).

8. **Purification of the mind** – Unless a man discharges satisfactorily and dis-interestedly the duties of his station in life, his mind will not be purified and unless his mind is purified, he cannot get self-realization. It is only in the purified mind that, Vivek (dis-attachment to the unreal) crop up and lead on to self-realization. Unless **egoism** is dropped, avarice got rid of and the mind made desireless (pure), self-realization is not possible. The idea that “I am the body” is a great delusion and attachment to this idea is the cause of bondage. Leave off this idea and attachment therefore, if you want to reach the goal of self-realization.

9. **The necessity of a Guru** – The knowledge of the self is so subtle and mystic that, no one can, by his own individual effort ever hope to attain it. So the help of another person – teacher, who has himself got self-realization, is absolutely necessary. What others cannot give with great effort and pains, can be easily gained with the help of such a teacher; for he has walked on the path himself and can easily take the disciple, step by step on the ladder of spiritual progress.

10. And lastly, **grace** of the Lord is the most essential thing. When the Lord is pleased with any body, He gives him Viveka and Vairagya and takes him safe beyond the ocean of mundane existence, “The Self cannot be gained by the study of Vedas, nor by intellect, nor by learning. He whom the Self chooses, gains it. To him the Self reveals its nature,” says the Katha Upanishad.

After the dissertation was over, Baba turned to the gentleman and said, “Well sir, there is in your pocket the Brahma in form of fifty-times of five (Rs. 250/-) rupees, please, take that out.” The gentleman took out from his pocket the bundle of currency notes, and to his great surprise, found on counting them, that, there were 25 notes of 10 rupees each.

Seeing this omniscience of Baba, he was moved and fell at Baba's Feet and craved for His blessings. Then Baba said to him, "Roll up your bundle of Brahma*, viz. currency notes. Unless, you completely get rid of your avarice or greed you will not get the real Brahma. How can he whose mind is engrossed in wealth, progeny and prosperity, expect to know the Brahma without removing his attachment for them? The illusion of attachment or the love for money is a deep eddy (whirlpool) of pain, full of crocodiles in the form of conceit and jealousy. He who is desireless, can alone cross this whirlpool. Greed and Brahma are asunder as poles, they are eternally opposed to each other. Where there is greed there is no room for thought or meditation of the Brahma. Then how can a greedy man, get dispassion and salvation? For a greedy man there is no peace, neither contentment, nor steadiness. If there be even a little trace of greed in mind, all the Sadhanas (spiritual endeavours) are of no avail. Even the knowledge of a well-read man, who is not free from the desire of the fruit or reward of his actions, is futile and can't help him in getting self-realization. The teachings of a Guru are of no use to a man who is full of egoism and who always thinks about the sense-objects. Purification of mind is absolutely necessary, without it all our spiritual endeavours are nothing, but useless show and pomp. It is therefore, better for one to take only what he can digest and assimilate. **My treasury is full and I can give anyone, what he wants, but I have to see, whether he is qualified to receive My gift. If you listen to Me carefully, you will be certainly benefitted. While sitting in this Masjid I never speak any untruth."**

When a guest is invited to a house all the members of the household and other friends and relations, that happen to be present are entertained along with the guest. So all those, that were present in the Masjid at that time could partake of the spiritual feast, that was served by Baba for the rich gentleman. After getting Baba's blessings, one and all, including the gentleman, left the place quite happy and contented.

Special Characteristics of Baba

There are many saints, who leaving their houses, stay in forest, caves or hermitages and in solitude, in order to get liberation or salvation for themselves. They do not care for other people and are always self-absorbed. Sai Baba was not of such a type. He had no home, no wife,

* ब्रह्मगुंडाळे

no progeny, nor any relations, near or distant. Still He lived in the world (society). He begged His bread from four or five houses, always lived at the foot of the (Neem) tree, carried on worldly dealings and taught all the people how to act and behave living in this world. Rare are the sadhus and saints, who, after attaining God-vision, strive for the welfare of the people. Sai Baba was the foremost of these and, therefore, says Hemadpant :

“Blessed is the country, blessed is the family and blessed are the chaste parents, where this Extraordinary, Transcendent, Precious and Pure Jewel (Sai Baba) was born.”

Bow to Shri Sai – Peace be to all