



CHAPTER XXXVI

Wonderful Stories of

(1) *Two Goa Gentlemen* (2) *Mrs. Aurangabadkar*

This chapter relates the wonderful stories of two gentlemen from Goa; and Mrs. Aurangabadkar of Solapur.

Two Gentlemen

Once, two gentlemen came from Goa for taking darshan of Sai Baba and prostrated themselves before Him. Though both came together, Baba asked only one of them to give Him Rs. 15/- as dakshina, which was paid willingly. The other man voluntarily offered Rs. 35/- which was rejected by Baba, to the astonishment of all. Shama, who was present, asked Baba, "What is this? Both came together; one's Dakshina you accept, the other's though voluntarily paid, you refuse. Why this discrimination?" Baba replied, "Shama you know nothing. I take nothing from anybody. The Masjidmai (The presiding Deity of the Masjid) calls for the debt, the donor pays it and becomes free. Have I any home, property or family to look after? I require nothing. I am ever free. Debt, enmity and murder have to be atoned for, as there is no escape from them." Baba then continued in His characteristic way as follows :

At first he was poor and took a vow to his god that, he would pay his first month's salary, if he got a job. He got one for Rs. 15/- p.m. Then he steadily got promotions. From Rs. 15/- he got Rs. 30, 60, 100, 200, and ultimately Rs. 700/- p.m. But in his prosperity, he forgot completely the vow, he took. The force of his Karma has driven him here and I asked that amount (Rs. 15/-) from him as Dakshina.

Another story : While wandering by the sea-side I came to a huge mansion and sat in its verandah. The Brahmin owner gave me a good reception and fed me sumptuously. He showed me a neat and clean place near a cupboard for sleeping. I slept there. While I was sound asleep, the man removed a laterite slab and broke the wall, crept in and scissored off all the money from my pocket. When I woke up, I found that Rs. 30,000/- were stolen. I was greatly distressed and sat weeping and moaning. The money was in currency notes and I thought that, the Brahmin had stolen it. I lost all interest in food and drink and sat for

a fortnight in the verandah, bemoaning my loss. After the fortnight was over, a passing Fakir saw me crying and made enquiries regarding the cause of my sorrow. I told him everything. He said, "If you act according to my bidding, you will recover your money. Go to a Fakir, I shall give his whereabouts, surrender yourself to him, he will get your money back; in the meanwhile give up your favourite food, till you recover your money." I followed the Fakir's advice and got my money. Then, I went to the sea-shore, where a steamer was standing but I could not get into it, as it was over crowded. There a good-natured peon interceded for me and I got in luckily. That brought me to another shore from where I caught a train and came to the Masjidmai.

The story finished and Baba asked Shama to take the guests and arrange for their feeding. Then Shama took them home and fed them. At dinner, Shama said to the guests that Baba's story was rather mysterious, as He had never gone to the sea-side, never had any money (Rs. 30,000/-), never travelled, never lost any money and never recovered it, and enquired from them, whether they understood it and caught its significance. The guests were deeply moved and were shedding tears. In a choked voice they said that Baba was Omniscient, Infinite, the Supreme One (Para Brahma) without a second. The story He gave out is exactly our story. What He spoke has already taken place in our case. How He knew this, is a wonder of wonders! We shall give all the details after the meals.

Then after the meals, while they were chewing betel-leaves, the guests began to tell their stories. One of them said :

"A hill-station on the ghats is, my native place. I went to Goa to earn my living by securing a job. I took a vow to God Datta that if I got a job, I would offer Him my first month's salary. By His grace I got a job of Rs. 15/- and then I got promotions, as described by Baba. I did forget all about my vow. Baba has just reminded me of it in this way and recovered Rs. 15/- from me. It is not Dakshina as one may think it to be; but a repayment of an old debt and fulfilment of long forgotten vow."

Moral

In fact, Baba never begged for any money, nor allowed His Bhaktas to beg. He regarded money as a danger or bar to spiritual progress, and did not allow his Bhaktas to fall into its clutches. Bhagat Mhalsapati

is an instance on this point. He was very poor and could hardly make both ends meet. Baba never allowed him to make any money, nor gave him anything from the Dakshina collection. Once a kind and liberal merchant, named Hansraj, gave a large amount of money to Mhalsapati in Baba's presence but Baba did not permit him to accept it.

Then the second guest began his tale. "My Brahmin (cook) was serving me faithfully for 35 years. Unfortunately, he fell into bad ways, his mind changed and he robbed me of my treasure. By removing a laterite slab from my wall where my cup-board is fixed, he came in while we were all deep asleep and carried away all my accumulated wealth, Rs. 30,000/- in currency notes. I know not how Baba mentioned the exact amount. I sat crying day and night. My enquiries came to nothing. I spent a fortnight in great anxiety. As I sat on the verandah, sad and dejected, a passing Fakir saw my condition and enquired of its cause, and I told him all about it. He told me that an Aivalia (Saint), by name Sai lives in Shirdi, Kopergaon taluka. Make vow to Him and give up any food, that you like best and say to Him mentally that "I have given up eating that food, till I take Your darshan." Then I took the vow and gave up eating rice and said, "Baba, I will eat it after recovering my property and after taking Your darshan."

Fifteen days passed after this. The Brahmin of his own accord, came to me, returned my money and apologized, saying, "I went mad and acted thus; I now place my head on your feet please forgive me." Thus everything ended well. The Fakir that met me and helped me, was not seen again. An intense desire to see Sai Baba, whom the Fakir pointed out to me arose in my mind. I thought that the Fakir, Who came all the way to my house, was no other than Sai Baba. Would He, Who saw me and helped me to get my lost money, ever covet Rs. 35/-? On the contrary without expecting anything from us, He always leads us on the path of spiritual progress.

I was overjoyed when I recovered my stolen property and being ignorant, I forgot all about my vow. Then when I was at Colaba, one night, I saw Sai Baba in my dream. This reminded me of my promised visit to Shirdi. I went to Goa and from there wanted to start for Shirdi, by taking a steamer to Mumbai en route. But when I came to the harbour, I found that the steamer was crowded and there was no place. The captain did not allow me but on the intercession of a peon, who was a stranger to me, I was allowed to get into the steamer which

brought me to Mumbai. From there I came by train. Surely, I think that Baba is all-pervading and all-knowing. What are we and where is our home? How fortunate we are that, Baba got our money back and drew us here to Himself? Shirdi folks must be infinitely superior and more fortunate than we; for, Baba has played, laughed, talked and lived with you for so many years. I think that, your store of good merits must be infinite. Sai is our Datta (Lord Dattatreya). He gave me a seat in the steamer and brought me here, and thus gave proof of His omniscience and omnipotence."

Mrs. Aurangabadkar

A lady from Solapur, the wife of Sakharam Aurangabadkar, had no issue during the long period of 27 years. She had made a number of vows to gods and goddesses for an issue but was not successful. She then became almost hopeless. To make a last attempt in this matter, she came to Shirdi with her step-son Vishwanath and stayed there for two months, serving Baba. Whenever she went to the Masjid, she found Baba surrounded by devotees. She wanted to see Baba alone, fall at His Feet and open her heart and pray for an issue; but she did not get any suitable opportunity. Ultimately, she requested Shama to intercede with Baba for her, when He was alone. Shama said to her that Baba's Darbar was open, still he would try for her and that the Lord might bless her. He asked her to sit ready with a coconut and joss-sticks in the open courtyard at the time of Baba's meals, and that when he beckoned to her, she should come up. One day, after dinner when Shama was wiping Baba's wet hands with a towel, the latter pinched Shama's cheek. Shama feigning anger said, "Deva, is it proper for You to pinch me like this? We don't want such a mischievous God, Who pinches us thus. Are we Your dependents, is this the fruit of our intimacy?" Baba replied, "Oh Shama, during the 72 generations that you were with me, I never pinched you till now and now you resent my touching you." Shama replied, "I want a God who will always love us and gives us new dishes to eat. We do not want any reward from You, or heaven, etc. Let our faith unto Your Feet be ever awake." Baba, "Yes, I have indeed come for that. I have been feeding and nursing you, and have got love and affection for you."

Then Baba went up and took His seat. Shama beckoned to the lady. She came up, bowed down and presented the coconut and joss-

sticks. Baba shook the coconut, which was dry. The kernel within rolled and made a noise. Baba said, "Shama, this is rolling, see, what it says." Shama, "The woman prays that, a child should similarly roll in her womb. So, please give her the coconut with Your blessing."

Baba, "Will the coconut give her any issue? How foolish people are to fancy such things!"

Shama, "I know the power of Your words and blessing, Your word will give her a series of children. You are wrangling and not giving real blessing."

The parley went on for a while. Baba repeatedly ordered to break the coconut and Shama pleaded for the gift of the entire fruit to the lady. Finally, Baba yielded and said, "She will have an issue." "When?" asked Shama. "In 12 months," was the reply. At this the coconut was broken into two parts, one was eaten by the two, the other was given to the lady.

Then Shama turned up to the lady and said, "Dear lady, you are a witness to my words. If within 12 months you do not get any issue, I will break a coconut against this Deva's head and drive him out of this Masjid. If I fail in this I will not call myself Madhav. You will soon realize what I say."

She delivered a son in a year's time, and the son was brought to Baba in his fifth month. The couple, both husband and wife, prostrated themselves before Baba, and the grateful father (Mr. Aurangabadkar) paid a sum of Rs. 500/-, which was spent in constructing a shed for Baba's horse 'Shyam-karna'.

Bow to Shri Sai – Peace be to all