



CHAPTER XLVI

Baba's Gaya Trip – Story of Goats

This chapter describes Shama's trip to Kashi, Prayag and Gaya; and how Baba (in the Form of His portrait) was there ahead of him; it also describes Baba's reminiscences of the past birth of two goats.

Preliminary

Blessed, Oh Sai, are Your Feet, blessed is Your remembrance and blessed is Your darshan, which liberates us from the bond of Karma. Though Your Form is invisible to us now, still if the devotees believe in You, they get living experiences from You. By an invisible and subtle thread, You draw Your devotees from far and near to Your Feet, and embrace them like a kind and loving mother. The devotees do not know, where You are, but You so skillfully pull the wires that, they ultimately realize that, You are behind them to help and support them. The intelligent, wise and learned folk fall into the pit of the Sansar on account of their egoism; but You save, by Your power, the poor, simple and devout persons. Inwardly and invisibly, You play all the game but show that You are not concerned with it. While You do things but pose Your-self as a non-doer. Nobody ever knows Your life. The best course, therefore, for us is to surrender our body, speech and mind of Your Feet, and always chant Your name to destroy our sins. You fulfil the wishes of the devotees and to those, who are without any desire, You give Bliss supreme. The chanting of Your sweet name, is the easiest Sadhana for devotees. By this Sadhana, our sins, Rajas and Tamas qualities, will vanish; the Sattwa qualities and righteousness will gain predominance and along with this, discrimination, dispassion and knowledge will follow. Then, we shall abide in our Self and our Guru (who are one and the same). This is what is called complete surrender to the Guru. The only sure sign of this is that, our mind gets calm and peaceful. The greatness of this surrender, devotion and knowledge is unique, for peace, non-attachment, fame and salvation etc., come in its wake.

If Baba accepts a devotee, He follows him and stands by him, day and night, at his home or abroad. Let the devotee go anywhere he likes, Baba is there ahead of him in some form, in an inconceivable manner. The following story illustrates this.

Gaya Trip

Some time after Kakasaheb Dixit was introduced to Sai Baba, he decided to perform the thread (Upanayan) ceremony of his eldest son, Babu, at Nagpur. At about the same time, Nanasaheb Chandorkar decided to perform the marriage ceremony of his eldest son, at Gwalior. Both Dixit and Chandorkar came to Shirdi and lovingly invited Baba for these functions. Baba asked them to take Shama, as His representative. When He was pressed to come in person, Baba told them to take Shama with them and said, "After doing Benaras and Prayag we would be ahead of Shama". Now, mark these words for they show Baba's all-pervasiveness.

After taking the permission of Baba, Shama decided to go to Nagpur and Gwalior for these functions and ceremonies, and then to Kashi, Prayag and Gaya. Appa Kote made up his mind to accompany him. They both went first to Nagpur for the thread ceremony. Kakasaheb Dixit gave Shama Rs. 200/- for his expenses. Then, they went to Gwalior for the marriage ceremony. There, Nanasaheb Chandorkar gave Shama Rs. 100/- and his Vyahi (relative), Mr. Jathar gave him also Rs. 100/-. Then, Shama went to Kashi, and then to Ayodhya. He was well received in Jathar's beautiful temple of Laxmi-Narayan at Kashi (Varanasi or Banaras) and in the Ram-Mandir at Ayodhya by Jathar's manager. They (Shama and Kote) stayed for 21 days in Ayodhya and two months in Kashi (Benaras). Then, they left for Gaya. In the train they felt little uneasy on hearing that, plague was prevailing in Gaya. At night they alighted at Gaya station and stayed in the Dharmshala. In the morning, the Gayawala (the priest who arranges for the lodging and boarding of the pilgrims) came there and said, "The pilgrims have already started, you better make haste." Shama casually asked him, whether there was plague in Gaya. "No," said the Gayawala, "Please come without any fear or anxiety and see yourself". Then, they went with him and stayed in his house, which was a big and spacious Wada. Shama was pleased with the accommodation provided to him; but what pleased him most, was the beautiful big portrait of Baba, fixed in the central and front portion of the building. On seeing this portrait, Shama was overwhelmed with emotion. He remembered Baba's words, viz. "After doing Kashi and Prayag, We would be ahead of Shama," and burst into tears. His hairs stood on end, his throat was choked and he began to sob. The Gayawala thought that, he was afraid of plague prevailing there, and therefore, was crying. But, Shama enquired from him, how he got Baba's

portrait there. He replied that he had 200 or 300 agents working at Manmad and Puntambe, for looking after the convenience of the pilgrims to Gaya and from them he heard about Baba's fame. Then, about 12 years ago he went to Shirdi and took Baba's darshan. There, he was attracted by Baba's portrait, hung in Shama's house and with Baba's permission, Shama gave it to him. This was the same portrait. Shama then remembered, this incident. The Gayawala's joy knew no bounds, when he learnt that the same Shama, who obliged him before, was his guest now. Then, they both exchanged love and service and were most delighted and happy. The Gayawala gave him a royal welcome. He was a very rich man. He sat in a palanquin; and made Shama ride an elephant and attended to all his comforts and conveniences.

The moral of the story is this that : Baba's words came out true to the letter, and unbounded was His love towards the devotees. But, leave this aside. He also loved all creatures equally, for He felt that, He was one with them. The following story will illustrate this.

Two Goats

Baba was, once, returning from Lendi, when He saw a flock of goats. Two of them attracted His attention. He went to them, caressed and fondled them and bought them for Rs. 32/-. The devotees were surprised at this conduct of Baba. They thought that, Baba was duped in this bargain, as the goats would fetch Rs. two each or at the most Rs. 3/- or 4/- each, i.e., Rs. 8/- for both. They began to take Baba to task for this but Baba kept calm and cool. Shama and Tatyia Kote asked Baba for an explanation. He said, He did not care to store money, as He had no home or family to look after. He asked them to purchase, at His cost, 4 seers of 'Dal' (lentil) and feed the goats. After this was done, Baba returned the goats to the owner of the flock and gave out the following reminiscences and story of the goats.

"Oh Shama and Tatyia, you think that, I have been deceived in this bargain. No. Listen to their story! In their former birth, they were human-beings, and had the good fortune to be with Me and sit by My side. They were uterine brothers, loving each other initially but later on, they became enemies. The elder brother was an idle fellow, while the younger one was an active chap and earned a lot of money. The former became greedy and jealous and wanted to kill his younger brother and take away his money. They forgot their fraternal relations, and began to quarrel with each other. The elder brother resorted to many devices to

kill his younger brother, but all his attempts failed. Thus, they became deadly enemies and finally, on one occasion the elder gave a deadly blow with a big stick on the latter's head, while the latter struck the former with an axe, with the result that, both fell dead on the spot. As the result of their actions, they were both born as goats. As they passed by Me, I, at once, recognised them. I remembered their past history. By taking pity on them, I wanted to feed them and give them rest and comfort, and for this reason I spent all the money, for which you blame Me. As you did not like My bargain, I sent them back to their shepherd." Such was Sai's love for the goats!

Bow to Shri Sai – Peace be to all