



CHAPTER XLV

*Kakasaheb's Doubt and Anandrao's Vision –
Wooden Plank – Baba's bed-stead and not Bhagat's.*

Preliminary

We have described in the last three chapters Baba's passing away. His physical or finite form has, no doubt, disappeared from our view, but the infinite or spiritual form (Spirit of Baba) ever lives. The Leelas, which occurred during His lifetime, have been dwelt upon at great length, up till now. Ever since His passing away, more Leelas have taken place and are even now happening. This clearly shows that, Baba is ever-living and helping His devotees as before. The people, who got the contact of Baba, when He was living, were indeed very fortunate, but if any of them did not get a dispassion for the things and enjoyments of the world, and had not their minds turned to the Lord, it was their sheer ill-luck. What was then desired, and is still desired, is the whole-hearted devotion to Baba. All our senses, organs, and mind should co-operate in worshipping and serving Baba. It is no use, in engaging some organs in the worship and deflecting others. If a thing like worship or meditation is to be done, it ought to be done with all our mind and soul.

The love that a chaste woman bears to her husband, is some times compared to that, which a disciple bears to his master (Guru). Yet, the former falls far short of the latter, which is incomparable. No one, whether he be father, mother, brother or any other relation, comes to our aid in attaining the goal of life (self-realization). We have to chalk out and traverse the path of self-realization ourselves. We have to discriminate between the unreal and the Real, renounce the things and enjoyments of this world and the next and control our senses and mind, and aspire for liberation only. Instead of depending upon others, we should have full faith in ourselves. When we begin to practice discrimination we come to know that the world is transient and unreal and our passion for worldly things becomes less, and ultimately we get dispassion or non-attachment for them. When we know that Brahma, which is no other than our Guru, is the sole reality; and as It transcends and besets the seeming universe, we begin to worship It in all creatures. This is the unitive Bhajan or worship. When we thus worship Brahma or Guru whole-heartedly, we become one with Him and attain self-

realization In short, always chanting the name of the Guru and meditating on Him, enables us to see Him in all beings, and confers eternal Bliss on us. The following story will illustrate this.

Kakasaheb's Doubt and Anandrao's Vision

It is well-known that Sai Baba had enjoined Kakasaheb Dixit to read daily two works of Shri Eknath : (1) Bhagwat and (2) Bhavartha Ramayan. Kakasaheb read these daily, while Baba was living and he followed the practice, even after Baba's passing away. Once in Kaka Mahajani's house in Choupati Mumbai, Kakasaheb was reading Eknathi Bhagwat in the morning. Madhavrao Deshpande, alias Shama, and Kaka Mahajani were then present and listened attentively to the portion read, viz., the 2nd chapter, 11th Skandha of the book. Therein the nine Nathas or Siddhas of the Rishabha family, viz., Kavi, Hari, Antariksha, Prabuddha, Pippalayan, Avirhotra, Drumil, Chamas and Karabhajan expounded the principles of the Bhagwat Dharma to King Janak. The latter asked, all the nine Nathas, most important questions and each of them answered them satisfactorily. The first, i.e., Kavi explained, what is Bhagwat Dharm; Hari, the characteristics of a Bhakta (devotee); Antariksha, what is Maya; Prabuddha, how to cross Maya; Pippalayan, what is Para-Brahma; Avirhotra, what is Karma; Drumil, the incarnations of God and their deeds; Chamas, how a non-devotee fares after death; Karabhajan, the different modes of worship of God in different ages. The substance of all the exposition was that, in this Kali age, the only means of liberation was the remembrance of Hari's (Lord's) or Guru's feet. After the reading was over, Kakasaheb said in a despondent tone to Madhavrao and others : "How wonderful is the discourse of the nine Nathas on Bhakti or devotion. But, at the same time, how difficult it is, to put it into practice! The Nathas were perfect, but is it possible for fools like us to attain devotion as delineated by them? We won't get it even after several births, then, how are we to get salvation? It seems that there is no hope for us." Madhavrao did not like this pessimistic attitude of Kakasaheb. He said, "It is a pity that one, who by his good luck got such a jewel (Guru) as Baba, should cry out so disparagingly, if he has unwavering faith in Baba, why should he feel restless? The Bhakti of the Nathas may be strong and powerful, but is not ours' loving and affectionate? And has not Baba told us authoritatively that remembering and chanting Hari's and Guru's name confers salvation? Then, where is the cause for fear and anxiety?" Kakasaheb was not satisfied with Madhavrao's explanation. He continued to be anxious and restless the

whole day, thinking and brooding over, how to get the powerful Bhakti of the Nathas. Next morning, the following miracle took place :

One gentleman, named Anandrao Pakhade came there, in search of Madhavrao. The reading of the Bhagwat was then going on. Mr. Pakhade sat near Madhavrao and was whispering something to him. He was mentioning in low tone, his dream-vision. As there was some interruption in the reading by this whispering, Kakasaheb stopped the reading and asked Madhavrao, what the matter was. The latter said, "Yesterday, you expressed your doubt, now, here is the explanation of it, hear Mr. Pakhade's vision, explaining the characteristic of devotion and showing that, the devotion, in the form of bowing down to or worshipping of Guru's feet is sufficient." All were anxious to hear the vision, specially Kakasaheb. At their suggestion Mr. Pakhade began to relate the vision as follows :

I was standing in deep sea in waist-deep water. There, I saw Sai Baba all of a sudden. He was sitting on a beautiful throne studded with diamonds, with His Feet submerged in water. I was most pleased and satisfied with the Form of Baba. The vision was so realistic that, I never thought that, it was a dream. Curiously enough, Madhavrao was also standing there. He said to me feelingly, "Anandrao, fall at Baba's Feet." I rejoined, "I also wish to do so, but His Feet are in water, how can I place my head on them? I am helpless." Hearing this, he said to Baba, "Oh Deva, take out Your Feet, which are under water." Then, Baba immediately took out His Feet. I caught them without delay and bowed down to them. On seeing this, Baba blessed me saying, "Go now, you will attain your welfare, there is no cause for fear and anxiety." He also added, "Give a silk-bordered Dhotar to my Shama, you will benefit thereby."

In compliance with Baba's order, Mr. Pakhade had brought the Dhotar, and requested Kakasaheb to hand it over to Madhavrao, but the latter refused to accept it, saying that unless Baba gave a hint or suggestion for acceptance, he would not accept it. Then, after some discussion Kakasaheb decided to cast lots. It was the practice of Kakasaheb to cast lots in all the significant matters, and to abide by the decision, as given in the picked up chit. In this particular case, two chits, on one of which was written 'To accept' and on other 'To reject,' were placed at the Feet of Baba and a child was asked to pick one of them. The 'Accept' chit was picked up and the Dhotar was accepted by Madhavrao. In this way both Anandrao and Madhavrao were satisfied,

and Kakasaheb's difficulty was solved.

This story exhorts us to give respect to the words of other saints, but at the same time asks us to have full faith in our Mother, i.e., the Guru, and abide by His instructions, for he knows our welfare better than any other person. Carve out on your heart, the following words of Baba : "There are innumerable saints in this world, but 'our father' (Guru) is the Father (Real Guru). Others might say many good things, but we should never forget our Guru's words. In short, love your Guru whole-heartedly, surrender to Him completely and prostrate yourselves before Him reverentially; and then, you will see that there is no sea of mundane existence, before you to cross as there is no darkness for the sun".

Wooden plank Baba's Bed-Stead, and not Bhagat's

In His earlier days, Baba slept on a wooden plank, 4 arms in length and only a span in breadth with Panatis (earthen lamps) burning at its four corners. Later on, He broke the plank into pieces and threw it away (Vide chapter X). Once, Baba was describing the greatness or importance of this plank to Kakasaheb. On hearing this, the latter said to Baba, "If you still love the wooden plank, I will again suspend or hang up one in the Masjid for You to sleep at ease." Baba replied, "I won't like to sleep up leaving Mhalsapati down on the ground." Then, Kakasaheb said, "I will provide another plank for Mhalsapati too." Baba said, "How can he sleep on the plank? It is not easy to sleep on the plank. He who has many good qualities in him, only can do so. He who can sleep with his eyes wide open can effect that. When I go to sleep I often ask Mhalsapati to sit by My side, place his hand on My heart and watch the 'chanting of the Lord's name' there, and if he finds Me sleepy, wake Me up. He can't do even this. He himself gets drowsy and begins to nod his head. When, I feel his hand heavy as a stone on My heart and cry out 'Oh Bhagat, he moves and opens his eyes. How can he, who can't sit and sleep well on the ground, and whose Asana (posture) is not steady, and who is slave to sleep, can sleep high up on a plank?" On many other occasions, Baba said, out of love for His devotees "What is our's (whether good or bad), is with us, and what is other's is with them."

Bow to Shri Sai – Peace be to all