



CHAPTER L

*Stories of (1) Kakasaheb Dixit (2) Shri Tembe Swami
(3) Balaram Dhurandhar*

Chapter 50 of the original Satcharita has been incorporated in chapter 39, as it dealt with the same subject matter. Now, chapter 51 of the Satcharita has been treated here as chapter 50. This chapter gives the stories of (1) Kakasaheb Dixit, (2) Shri Tembe Swami and (3) Balaram Dhurandhar.

Preliminary

Victory be unto Sai, Who is the main-stay of the Bhaktas, Who is our Sadguru, Who expounds the meaning of the Gita and Who gives us all powers. Oh Sai, look favourably on us and bless us all.

The sandal-wood trees grow on the Malaya mountains¹ and ward off heat. The clouds pour their rain-water and thereby, cool and refresh all the people. The flowers blossom in the spring and enable us to worship God, therewith. So, the stories of Sai Baba come forth in order to give solace and comfort to the readers. Both, those who tell and those, who hear the stories of Baba, are blessed and holy.

It is a well-established fact that, though we try hundreds of means or Sadhanas, we do not attain the spiritual goal of life, unless a Sadguru blesses us with his grace. Hear the following story in illustration of this statement.

Kakasaheb Dixit (1864-1926)

Mr. Hari Sitaram alias Kakasaheb Dixit was born in 1864 in a Vadnagara Nagar in a Brahmin-family, at Khandwa (Central Province). His primary education was done at Khandwa, Hinganghat, and secondary education at Nagpur. He came to Mumbai for higher education and studied first in the Wilson College and then in the Elphinstone College. After graduation in 1883, he passed his LL.B. and solicitor's examinations; and then served in the firm of the Govt. Solicitors, Messrs Little and Co.; and then after some time started a solicitors' firm of his own.

Before 1909, Sai Baba's name was not familiar to Kakasaheb, but after that he soon became His great devotee. While he was staying at Lonavla, he happened to see his old friend, Mr. Nanasaheb Chandorkar.

1. In India

Both spent some time in talking about many things. Kakasaheb described to him, how while he was boarding a train in London, he met with an accident in which his foot slipped and was injured. Hundreds of remedies gave him no relief. Nanasaheb then told him that if he wished to get rid of the pain and lameness of his leg, he should go to his Sadguru – Sai Baba. He also gave him all the particulars of Sai Baba and mentioned to him Sai Baba's dictum, **"I draw to Me My man from far off or even across the seven seas, like a sparrow with a string fastened to its feet."** He also made it clear to him that, if he was not Baba's man, he would not be attracted to Him and given darshan. Kakasaheb was pleased to hear all this and said to Nanasaheb that he would go to Baba, see Him and pray to Him to cure not so much his lame leg, but bring round his lame, fickle mind and give him eternal Bliss.

Some time after, Kakasaheb went to Ahmednagar, and stayed with Sirdar Kakasaheb Mirikar in connection with securing votes for a seat in the Mumbai Legislative Council. Mr. Balasaheb Mirikar, son of Kakasaheb Mirikar, who was a Mamalatdar of Kopergaon, also came at that time to Ahmednagar in connection with a horse-exhibition there. After the election business was over, Kakasaheb Dixit wanted to go to Shirdi and both the Mirikars, father and son, were also thinking about a fit and proper person, as a guide, with whom he should be sent there. There Sai Baba was arranging things for his reception. Shama got a telegram from his father-in-law at Ahmednagar stating that, his wife was seriously ill, and that, he should come to see her with his wife. Shama with Baba's permission went there, and saw his mother-in-law and found her improving and better. Nanasaheb Panse and Appasaheb Gadre happened to see Shama on their way to the exhibition and they told him to go to Mirikar's house, see Kakasaheb Dixit there and take him to Shirdi along with him. Kakasaheb Dixit and the Mirikars were also informed of Shama's arrival. In the evening, Shama came to Mirikars, who introduced him to Kakasaheb. They arranged that Shama should leave for Kopergaon with Kakasaheb by the 10 o'clock night train. After this was settled, a curious thing happened. Balasaheb Mirikar threw aside the veil or covering on Baba's big portrait and showed the same to Kakasaheb. He was surprised to see that, He, Whom he was going to meet at Shirdi, was already there in the form of His portrait to greet him, at this juncture. He was much moved and made his prostration before the portrait. This portrait belonged to Megha. The glass over it was broken and it was sent to Mirikars for repairs. The necessary repairs had been already made, and it was decided to return the portrait

with Kakasaheb and Shama.

Before ten o'clock, they went to the station and booked their passage; but when the train arrived, they found that the second class was overcrowded; and that there was no room for them. Fortunately, the guard of the train turned out to be an acquaintance of Kakasaheb and he put them up in the first class. Thus, they travelled comfortably and alighted at Kopergaon. Their joy knew no bounds, when they saw there Nanasaheb Chandorkar, who was also bound for Shirdi. Kakasaheb and Nanasaheb embraced each other, and then after bathing in the sacred Godavari river, they started for Shirdi. After coming there and getting Baba's darshan, Kakasaheb's mind was melted, his eyes were full of tears and he was overflowing with joy. Baba said to him that He was also waiting for him, and had sent Shama ahead to receive him.

Kakasaheb then passed many happy years in Baba's company. He built a Wada in Shirdi, which he made as his, more or less, the permanent home. The experiences, he got from Baba, are so manifold that it is not possible to relate them all here. The readers are advised to read a Special (Kakasaheb Dixit) No. of 'Shri Sai Leela' magazine Vol 12, No. 6-9.

We close this account with the mention of one fact only. Baba had comforted him by saying that in the end "He will take him in air coach (Viman)", (i.e., secure him a happy death). This came out true. On the 5th July, 1926, he was travelling in the train with Hemadpant and talking about Sai Baba. He seemed deeply engrossed in Sai Baba. All of a sudden he threw his neck on Hemadpant's shoulder, and breathed his last with no trace of pain and uneasiness.

Shri Tembe Swami

We come to the next story, which shows, how saints love each other with fraternal affection. Once Shri Vasudevanand Saraswati, known as Shri Tembe Swami encamped, at Rajamahendri (Andhra Country), on the banks of the Godavari. He was devout, orthodox, Dnyani and Yogi Bhakta of the Dattatreya. One, Mr. Pundalikrao, pleader of Nanded (Nizam state) went to see him with some friends. While they were talking with him, the names of Shirdi and Sai Baba were causally mentioned. Hearing Baba's name the Swami joined hands with reverence and taking a coconut gave it to Pundalikrao, and said to him, "Offer this to my brother Sai, with my Pranam and request Him not to forget me, but ever love me." He also added that, Swamis do not generally bow to others, but in this case an exception had to be made. Mr. Pundalikrao

consented to take the coconut and his message to Baba. The Swami was right in calling Baba a brother, for as he maintained an Agnihotra (sacred fire) day and night, in his orthodox fashion, Baba too kept His Agnihotra, i.e., Dhuni ever burning in the Masjid.

After one month Pundalikrao and others left for Shirdi with the coconut, and reached Manmad, and as they felt thirsty they went to a rivulet for drinking water. As water should not be drunk on an empty stomach, they took out some refreshment, i.e., Chivda (flattened rice mixed with spice). The Chivda tasted most pungent and in order to soften it, as someone suggested, broke the coconut and mixed its scrapings with it. Thus, they made the Chivda more tasty and palatable. Unfortunately, the coconut turned out to be the same that was entrusted to Pundalikrao. As they neared Shirdi, Pundalikrao remembered the trust, i.e. the coconut, and was very sorry to learn that it was broken and consumed. He came to Shirdi and saw Baba. Baba had already received a wireless message, regarding the coconut from Tembe Swami, and himself asked Pundalikrao first to give the thing sent by his brother. He held fast Baba's Feet, confessed his guilt and negligence, repented and asked for Baba's pardon. He offered to give another fruit as a substitute, but Baba refused to accept it, saying that the worth of that coconut was far more than that of an ordinary one, and that it could not be replaced by another. Baba also added, "Now, you need not worry yourself any more about the matter. It was on account of my wish that, the coconut was entrusted to you, and ultimately broken on the way; **why should you take the responsibility of the actions on you? Do not entertain the sense of doership in doing good, as well as for bad deeds; be entirely prideless and egoless in all things and thus your spiritual progress will be rapid.**" What a beautiful spiritual instruction Baba gave!

Balaram Dhurandhar (1878-1925)

Mr. Balaram Dhurandhar, belonged to the Pathare Prabhu community of Santacruz, Mumbai. He was an advocate of the Mumbai High Court and some time Principal of the Government Law School, Mumbai. The whole Dhurandhar family was pious and religious. Mr. Balaram served his community and wrote and published an account of it. He then turned his attention to spiritual and religious matters. He studied Gita carefully, and its commentary Dnyaneshwari and other philosophical and metaphysical works. He was a devotee of Vithoba of Pandharpur. He came in contact with Sai Baba in 1912. Six months earlier, his brothers Babulji and Vamanrao came to Shirdi and took Baba's darshan. They returned home, and mentioned their sweet

experiences to Balaram and other members. Then, they all decided to see Sai Baba. Before they came to Shirdi, Baba declared openly that, "Today many of my Darbar-people are coming." The Dhurandhar brothers were astonished to hear this remark of Baba, from others, as they had not given any previous intimation of their trip. All other people prostrated themselves before Baba, and sat talking with him. Baba said to them, "These are my Darbar-people, whom I referred to before" and said to the Dhurandhar brothers, "We have been with each other for the last sixty generations." All the brothers were gentle and modest, they stood with joined hands, looking at Baba's Feet. All the Sattwic emotions, such as tears, choking etc., moved them and they were all happy. Then, they went to their lodging, took their meals and after taking a little rest again came back to the Masjid. Balaram sat near Baba, massaging His legs. Baba, Who was smoking the Chillim, advanced it towards him and beckoned him to smoke it. Balaram was not accustomed to smoking, still he accepted the pipe, smoked it with great difficulty, and returned it reverentially. This was the most auspicious moment for Balaram. He was suffering from asthma for six years. This smoke completely cured him of the disease, which never troubled him again. Some six years later, on a particular day, he again got an attack of asthma. This was precisely the time, when Baba took His Mahasamadhi.

The day of this visit was a Thursday, and the Dhurandhar brothers had the good fortune of witnessing the Chavadi procession that night. At the Arati-function in the Chavadi, Balaram saw the glow of Pandurang on Baba's face and next morning at the Kakad-Arati time, the same phenomenon - the same lustre of the Beloved Deity - Pandurang was visible again on Baba's face.

Mr. Balaram Dhurandhar wrote in Marathi, the life of the Maharashtra Saint Tukaram, but he did not survive to see its publication. It was published, later on by his brothers in 1928. In a short note on Balaram's life given in the beginning of that book, the above account of Balaram's visit has been fully corroborated (Vide page 6 of the book).

Bow to Shri Sai - Peace be to all