

Monday, April 27, 2009

She is My sister of Seven Births - Sai Baba

Every two and half years, Adhik Radha Purshottam named Holy month comes. Thus in this way, every nineteen years, Adhik Maas (month) comes along with Ashaadh Maas. Ashaadh month followed by Ashaadh Adhik Maas, named as Kokila Ashaadh.

In this month, married women worship Lord Shankar and Parvati. Women get up early in the morning and go to the river for bathing. The Vrat story of Kokila Vrat consists of a total thirty chapters, so women read one chapter per day and complete the whole story in one month. After reading one chapter, women listen to the cooing of the cuckoo (Kokila means cuckoo) and then only take one time meal and observe fast for rest of the day. Women do not partake any food until they hear the cooing of the cuckoo.

In urban areas to listen to cooing of cuckoo is a rare thing, so women go to a village or reside near a river bank and observe this fast. It is compulsory to conclude the fast in the same place where it has been started. Thus to observe this fast and to conclude it as per rules specified, women stayed in any village or on river bank for one month.

Main Story:

A lady named Chandrabai Borkar was Baba's ardent devotee. Her husband was a railway employee. In the year 1912, he was serving at Pandharpur railway station. In that year Ashadhi Adik Maas came and Baba advised Chandrabai, "You do Kokila Vrat, Lord Shiva will be pleased with you and He will take care of your family's welfare".

Adhering to Baba's words, Chandrabai chose a pure and clean place near the River Godavari in Kopergaon village. One fine day, when Chandrabai was doing Pradikshana in the Shiva temple after finishing Arti, a young Fakir came and stood before her. He said thus, "Maai Mala Guda Chi Poli Ani Lasan Chi Chatani Dyaa meaning O mother please give me jaggery chapati with garlic paste (garlic pounded with spices, salt)"

Chandrabai said, " We observe vrat of Chaturmaas - four months from July to October and so we do not consume onion and garlic during these four months. Moreover, I don't have any house of mine here. I am staying here to observe Kokila Vrat". The Fakir said with a smile on His face and without any sign of disappointment, "Dennar Pan Chaangla Naahi Denaar Pan Changlaa meaning Welfare be to the one who gives and also to the one who does not give".

After the Fakir left, when Chandrabai recalled that incident she felt that the Fakir had the same glow on his face which she saw on Baba's face in Shirdi.

She thought, "To conclude my Kokila Vrat I cannot go to Shirdi and offer anything to Baba, but when He came to me, I sent him empty handed!!! Who is more unfortunate than me? God came to my place and I sent him without giving Him anything". She became very restless at night and said to herself, "The night is not passing away quickly". She mentally started praying to Baba, "O my loving Sai Nath! Please pass away this black long night quickly, so that I can come to Shirdi to have your Darshan".

Somehow the night passed and she woke up early, quickly finished off her morning chores, prepared jaggery chapati and garlic paste for Baba and set off for Shirdi.

On reaching Shirdi, she saw that Baba was returning from Lendi Baag. She immediately fell at Baba's feet. She was very content with Baba's Darshan and her love flowed in the form of tears. After the noon arti was performed by Bapusaheb Jog in the Dwarkamai, Baba sent all devotees to their lodgings and homes and Chandrabai then offered jaggery chapati and garlic paste made out of love to Baba.

Baba said, "When I came to you to get my desired thing, you did not give me, now why have you come to me with these things?" Chandrabai said, "Ignorant being as I am, I could not recognize you but now I have come to you with your desired food".

Baba said to others, "She is my sister in my last seven births. Wherever I go she finds me and comes to me" and turned to Chandrabai and said, "Go, your Vrat will be fruitful". In this way Baba blessed Chandrabai.

Chandrabai realised that Lord Shiva had taken form of Sai Baba for completing Kokila Vrat and thus her joy knew no bounds. She concluded Kokila Vrat and returned to Pandharpur quite contented and happy.

<http://www.shirdisaibabastories.org/2008/04/holy-gujarati-book-sai-sarovar.html>