

Experiences of Sai Maharaj

Excerpts from a letter by respected Shri Ganesh Govind Narke to Shri Hari Sitaram Dixit dated 4/3/1918.

It was *Nath Shashthi* (death anniversary of *Sant* Eknath Maharaj) day before yesterday. That day after sending some devotees to a narration of *Sant* Eknath's life by an old lady, Baba told us some stories after mealtime, in which He mentioned *Sant* Kabir and *Sant* Namdev.

Later at dinnertime Baba suddenly flew into a rage and quarreled with Tatya. He took a '*Narsimha Avatar*' before touching any food. He told Dada, "Throw him out or else I am going down". He went to the '*Chaurang*' (short four-legged stool used for *Pooja*) and even picked up two big stones to hit Tatya. Tatya descended; but he was adamant about not letting Baba go to the *Chavadi* without partaking any fruits.

The bell clanged at 8.45 p.m. and devotees started collecting and singing *Bhajans*; but Tatya continued to sulk. The clock ticked past 9.30, then 10.30, and the place became crowded with men and women. The palanquin was ready, the horse was at the gate and the singing of *Bhajans* reached a crescendo. Baba silently got up from His seat and approached the *Chaurang*. He then calmly sat near the pillar, but did not utter a word. "Baba is going to delay the departure to Paithan" assumed the people and started singing and dancing in frenzy as though they were in Paithan itself. At 11 p.m., Dada asked for permission to go home. Baba said, "where are you going? Sit down!" In the end Tatya gave up; but Baba said, "I am not going." He told Dada, "Okay, you may leave, it is very late." He hurled abuses to those singing *Bhajans* to stop. He told Mhalsapati, "Let's go to the *Takya*!" Mhalsapati sent all the *Bhajan* singers away as per Baba's wish. He told Tatya to go. Everyone went home. Bapusaheb left. While we were still in the *Masjid* (myself, Khadke etc.), Sai took His seat and again got very angry and hurled abuses. Amongst the many names mentioned, yours was one.

Finally around mid-night, Baba said, "Let's go!" The bell was rung in a hurry. Tatya and Bapusaheb came and we all reached the *Chavadi* joyfully. People called it a *Sai Leela* of *Nath Shashthi*.

The next morning everybody was talking of nothing, but the happenings of the night. Tatya came up to the wall and said, "Baba, if you had told us properly that we had to go after mid-night, everybody would have happily sung *Bhajans* until then. We would not have gone against you." "What a sport!" "It's you and Bapusaheb who are great sportsmen." When people were returning from *Lendi Baug*, Baba asked, "Why were we late yesterday?" So be it. Everything is fine here.

Once, Shri Moreshwar Pradhan's son became ill. A Telangi Shastri, who was a Lord Datta's devotee, lived there. He did not like Shri Pradhan worshipping Sai Baba. He told him, "Leave Baba and surrender to Lord Datta and your son will be fine." Pradhan said, "Sai Baba is Lord Datta." Shastri Buva said, "If your son starts drinking milk within five minutes, I shall believe Sai is Lord Datta and if from tomorrow your son starts recovering his normal health, I will go for Baba's *Darshan* and offer Rs.125/- as *Dakshina*. The boy drank milk within five minutes and started gaining health from the very next day. When he recovered completely, Shastri Buva visited Shirdi, took Sai's *Darshan* and offered the promised *Dakshina*. Late in the evening Baba again asked him for Rs. 5/- as *Dakshina*. When Madhavrao asked, why He again asked for *Dakshina*, when he had already received Rs.125/- in the morning, Baba said, "He gave them to Lord Datta. When did he give me?"

When Sai was in the mood, He used to narrate stories to devotees around Him. Here are some:-

1. There was a son of a gardener - farm laborer (*Mali-Kunbi*). He came to the palace and grew up there. After twelve years, he started weeping for his parents. But, the Badshah consoled him, "there are many palaces here. You can stay in one of them." The boy started weeping again. So, the Badshah gave his daughter in marriage to him. She did not conceive, so he married a *Mali-Kunbi's* daughter; but he started lamenting once again. The Badshah tried to pacify him; but he left the palace. The Badshah then gave him some wealth since he was a great man. His name lives on.

The moral of the story is the Badshah loved him so much that he gave him a palace, and his own daughter. But, the strong desire to return to his parents (to succumb to worldly desires) was so great that he could not stay. The great Badshah gave him wealth but had he stayed he would have got the kingdom.

2. There were four brothers; two of them went to a village. They belonged to the *Mali-Kunbi* community. There was a young girl in the village. She belonged to Kabir. They signaled her to come and she went. They took her to their village. I was a small boy. I too went with them. People in their village made inquiries and threatened them; so the two of them took the girl to the mountains. I went after them. Later the girl delivered two babies. After some days her parents found her. The people said, "Take your daughter and kill these two!" The parents said, "our daughter now has children. Let her stay!"

3. There was a grocer. He filled three vessels with ghee. My old man was nearby. He said, "If you put these in front of me, I alone shall eat all the ghee." At that time the grocer's brother beckoned him for lunch. The grocer locked the vessels in the shop. He told my old man, "When I come back; I shall give you roasted gram (*Chana*)." I was near the old man.

There were two other kids. They kicked the dilapidated wall on the back side and it caved in. They finished the ghee from two of the vessels. At my old man's instance I

finished the third. When the grocer returned I told him about the ghee. He found that some gold and other things too were missing and took us to the police station. The real culprit was found and we were let off. We all suffered from dysentery, and passed ghee in our stools. My old man cured me. Later the grocer fed me for two years.

- **Ganesh Govind Narke**

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