

Sai Baba's Mahasamadhi

The day was Tuesday, the 15th of October 1918.

It was the last day for Baba's physical body. The sun had risen as usual. That day was **Vijayadashami** (Dussehra). Baba became bodily very weak. For ordinary persons, it would have been difficult even to get up and sit. But, Baba got up as usual and sat in his place. Devotees came for his Darshan as usual. Shama stopped some devotees from coming inside the mosque, as Baba was unwell and advised them to have Darshan from outside.

But Baba did not agree to this and asked all the devotees to come inside and have his **Pada Darshan**. The devotees did so. Baba put his Abhaya Hastha on their heads, blessed them and gave them udi prasad. For unknown reasons, even the close devotees of Baba who were always with him, fell at his feet one after another.

Baba gave them necessary advice as per their need. They took them as usual advice which Baba used to give, but failed to think that they were Baba's last ones to them while in physical body. **Baba asked Laxman Mama, who was an astrologer and devotee, to do God's Naamasmarana for some time.**

The time was eleven in the morning. Tatya vomitted blood frequently and went into unconscious state. His pulse also became weak. Ramachander Patil and Bala Shimpe feared that Tatya would die that day as per Baba's prediction. They brought Shama and showed him the condition of Tatya. Thinking that Tatya would die in a few moments, Shama came running to Baba. He explained the condition of Tatya to Baba and prayed him to come to Tatya's house immediately and save him. Baba consoling Shama told him not to worry and assured him that Tatya would escape death as soon as Ekadashi set in that day. But Shama again requested Baba to come once and see Tatya.

Then Baba told Shama, "**All of you have the tie of friendship only with Tatya. But for me there is also the responsibility for his welfare. I gave word to his mother Baija Bai at the time of her death, that I would look after Tatya equal to my life. The service rendered by that mother and the word given by me to her cannot be forgotten. So you do not worry at all. To save Tatya, I need not go there, and I can do it sitting here,**" After hearing this Shama calmed down.

The time was noon. Preparations were being made for noon Aarti. It appeared as if some divine light entered Baba. Aarti was started. Throughout the Aarti Baba's facial features were changing every moment. Those who looked at him had peace of mind and felt like looking at him continuously. During that period Baba appeared in different forms to the devotees present there. **He appeared in the forms of Maruthi, Vittal, Dattatreya, Rama and to Muslim devotees as Mecca and Medina. For one Christian devotee, he appeared as Jesus.**

For Booty he appeared as Sri Krishna playing the flute in the Wada built by him. One devotee brought his little son for initiating him to education by Baba, that being Vijayadashami day. To him Baba appeared as Vigneshwara and writing the Sanskrit alphabet "OM" showed it to the boy and blessed him. In this manner Baba, during Aarti time that day, had shown his divine form to the devotees as per their thoughts.

Aarti was over. The time was one hour past noon. Baba ordered all the devotees to go away quickly. With joy at Baba's divine Darshan, all of them went away to their houses and Wadas. Suddenly Baba had a severe cough and he vomitted blood. There, Tatya recovered and his pulse came to normal. Some new strength entered his body. He stood up and could walk also. He cried out of joy. He could not understand from where he got this new energy all of a sudden. The onlookers were also surprised. Before he recovered from his surprise, he remembered Baba. Thinking that Baba had given him another lease of life, he went running to the mosque.

By that time Baba leaned on Baija Appaji Patil and was telling him something secretly. Saying this, he warned him not to reveal this to others, otherwise, he would die. Tatya heard these last words. Baba was getting severe cough and was heaving. Whenever he coughed, blood poured out through his mouth and fell all over Dwarakamayi. Beforehand Baba had asked his devotees to be without fear and sent them for their meals. But a few devotees refused to leave Baba. Lakshmi Bai, Bhagoji, Appaji, Laxman, Bala Shimpe were sitting near Baba. When Tatya saluted Baba, he asked Shama to take Tatya and leave him in his house. Shama returned after leaving Tatya in his house. The time was two O' clock in the afternoon. Baba sent away the others also for meals.

Charity of Nine Coins

Lakshmi Bai Shinde and Bayyaji were the only ones remaining. She was near Baba's feet. Baba put his right hand in his shirt pocket twice, took out Rs.5 and Rs.4 and gave them as charity to Lakshmi Bai. **Baba explained the significance of these nine rupees as the nine qualities a devotee should have:**

1. Absence of egoism
2. Absence of jealousy
3. Untiring service
4. Absence of worldly desires
5. Complete faith in Guru
6. Peaceful nature
7. Desire to know the truth
8. Absence of envy, and
9. Absence of self-boasting and finding faults in others.

Unless a devotee improved these nine qualities, he could not have true devotion to reach God. Thus Baba taught to Lakshmi Bai even in his last moments.

Baba's Mahasamadhi

Dashami ended and Ekadashi came. The time was 2:30 in the afternoon. Baba told Bayyaji that he was leaving this world and his body was to be kept in Booty Wada, assuring him that from there, he would be protecting his devotees at all times. So saying, Baba leaned on the body

of Bayyaji. He did not fall on the floor, or his bed. He breathed his last giving charity and teaching Jnana to his children.

This is the way the king of yogis - Yogi raja - attained Samadhi.

Lord Shiva who is capable of commanding death, and who was born as human, invited death. The divine light which came out of the body of Baba, joined Gurudhan, Dwarakamayi and Venkusa, who were already in the form of divine lights (Jyothis) and all the four Jyothis combined into one as Sai's divine power.

It is again divided into four parts. One part went to Gurusthan. The second part went to Chavadi and settled there. The third part merged in Dwarakamayi, and the fourth part went into Booty Wada.

These four powers represent the four Vedas. These are the proofs of Sai Power, which can command, and control the whole world. The Sivasakthi from Kailas came and stayed in Shirdi. In this way Shirdi became a holy place. The body of Sai who exhibited supernatural powers and saved several devotees, was lying in Dwarakamayi.

The physical body of Sai Baba, lying in Dwarakamayi, cannot be seen again. So let us imagine ourselves to be in Dwarakamayi and touch the holy feet of Sai Baba and make our life meaningful.

The news of Baba's Samadhi spread throughout Shirdi and the neighboring villages in minutes. People came along with women and children to Dwarakamayi. They wept uncontrollably as Sai Baba, who was God to them, was no more. They became speechless when they saw the lifeless body of Sai Baba, and felt as if the entire world had come to standstill. There was not a single family either in Shirdi or the neighboring places, which had not experienced Baba's Leelas and greatness. They cried loudly, recollecting the good things Baba had done to them. Some fell down unconscious after seeing Baba's body.

Some were seen weeping and running in the streets. There is none who did not shed tears. They now understood the "Seemollanghana".

incident of two years back and how Baba had taken on himself Tatya's death and give his life to him. Several people were recollecting Baba's strange actions and words. Some said that Baba had indicated that he would be born again after eight years, in Madras State.

Some imagined that what Baba had told Appaji secretly must be about his future birth. Since he had warned Appaji not to reveal anything to others, he kept silent in spite of so many people questioning him.

After a few hours, the question as to what to do with Baba's mortal remains arose. Some Muslims requested that the body of Sai Baba may be kept in Samadhi, outside the mosque in the open space. Khushal Chand and Amir Shakkar also supported this. But the village Munsiff, Ramachander Patil took a firm decision that Baba's Samadhi should be in Booty Wada and nowhere else. This way two groups formed in Shirdi and began arguing over the matter. By

Tuesday evening, the Sub- Inspector of Police from Rahata, Chakranarayan, came to Shirdi. When he searched Baba's body he found seven rupees in his pocket. The whole night discussions and arguments went on regarding the location of the Samadhi.

In the early hours before daybreak on Wednesday the 16th , Baba appeared to Das Ganu in his dream and told him that the mosque came down, and the merchants were angry with him, so he left his body. He asked him to proceed immediately to Shirdi and cover his body with jasmine flowers.

Das Ganu, along with his disciples, started for Shirdi immediately. Pradhaan's wife at Bombay had a dream on the night of 15th. She dreamt of Baba's life was leaving his body and she cried that Baba was dying. Baba told her in the dream that one should not say dying in the case of saints, but say "**attained Samadhi**".

He again appeared in her dream on the 16th night and requested her to give him all the money she had in her box. Next day she sent all the money in her box to Shirdi for utilising for the last rites of Baba. The same night Baba appeared in the dream of Pradhaan's sister and asked her to send silk clothes to put on his Samadhi. She sent the clothes to Shirdi. In the early hours of Wednesday, Baba appeared in the dream to Laxman Mama Joshi and said, "Bapu Saheb, Jog is thinking that I am dead. **I only left my body and I am alive. Get up and give Kakad Aarti.**" Laxman Mama, who had full faith in Baba, went to the mosque taking with him the Puja items required for Kakad Aarti.

Even though the police and village servants tried to prevent him from entering the mosque, he forcibly entered inside and gave Kakad Aarti to Baba's body. Seeing his determination none could stop him. Bapu Saheb Jog gave the noon arathi. This was the last Aarti given in Dwarakamayi.

On Wednesday morning the Tahsildar of Kopergaon Taluk came and gathered the views of both the groups regarding the place of Samadhi and asked them to express their views in writing along with their signatures. The majority wanted that Baba should be laid to rest in Booty Wada. Even then, the Tahsildar had no courage to take a decision, but wanted to act according to the orders of the District Collector, Ahmednagar. But in the meantime, the other group reconciled to the situation and agreed for the Samadhi inside Booty Wada.

In the evening of Wednesday at 4:00 PM they wanted to bathe the body of Baba. When they tried to remove the Kafni (long shirt) the hands bent as usual. In ordinary cases the limbs cannot be bent as they stiffen. Baba's body was laid on a big table before Dwarakamayi, and potfuls of water were poured on the body with devotion. After that they spread a white cloth on the body. They put flowers, sandal and Akshatas (rice) over the cloth. For the last time everyone had the Darshan of Baba's body to their hearts content. A grave, 6 feet in length was dug in Booty Wada's underground structure, enough for keeping his body.

The body was taken into Booty Wada in procession to the sounds of various musical instruments. First, the broken brick of Baba was broken into smaller pieces and put in the grave, over that soft beds were spread. Dixit, Booty, Shama and Mahalasa pati slowly lifted the body. They thought that

in a few moments the body would be hidden from their view, gripped the devotees present there and all of them burst into tears. There was complete silence except for sniffings. Due to sadness, the devotees felt weak and all of them together could not lift Baba's body. A few of them got into the grave and from below caught the body and it was slowly lowered . The head side went down first . Someone cried aloud that Baba was going away. The devotees surrounding the grave tried to catch a glimpse of the body for the last time. The entire body was lowered and rested on the soft beds. Rose water and perfumes were sprayed on the body. When they started putting earth on the body, the people wept and rolled on the floor, crying.

Even God, if He is born on this earth, has to be buried under the earth. This is a fact.

Samadhi Temple

Booty's life was blessed. The Wada built by him became Baba's Samadhi. **At five o' clock in the evening, after the Samadhi, Bapu Saheb Jog and Laxman Mama gave Sandhya Aarti in Booty temple for the first time on 16 October 1918.** From that day onwards till date, four Aarti are given to Baba daily. Nanavalli, who was like Baba's life, watched the Samadhi from a distance. He stopped taking food from that day and died on the 13th day.

Das Ganu, after reaching Shirdi on Thursday morning, did sankeertan for two days near the Samadhi of Baba. In the name of Baba, he fed a large number of people. **Baba Saheb Bhate and Upasani Baba of Sakori Ashram performed the last rites of Baba.** Where Booty wanted to install the idol of Sri Krishna, Baba's Samadhi came up. This way Baba became Muralidhar. The Booty temple with Baba's Samadhi in it had become the holiest of the holy places, giving millions of devotees peace and happiness.