

THE STORY OF NITYANANDA AARATI  
as told to Kapish Joshi

Thank you for showing your love towards Bhagwan Nityananda's aarati. I have had great pleasure from hearing the history behind the arati from the person who wrote it for baba Bhagwan Nityananda.

In south Maharashtra there was Dattatreya's devotee, His name was was Bhaskar Mhaskar, as he was Bramhin priest, people called him Mhaskar Guruji. He had longing for Lord Dattatreya. To have His darshan, Mhaskar decided to read "Shree Guru Charitra" 108 times in Ganagapur. Ganagapur is a town in south India, in Karnataka State. In this town, the Third Incarnation of Lord Dattatreya stayed for 23 years.

So, Mr. Mhaskar went to Ganagapur to read the the Shree Guru Charitra. It is the autobiography of Shri Narshimha Saraswati. It is written in a poetic form. It has more then 8000 verses, and they are broken into 53 chapters. People read Shree Guru Charitra with devotion and love for Lord Dattatreya. By reading it many people have had Shree Gurudatta's Darshan. It takes 7 days to read whole Gurucharitra.

People follow strict sadhana rules out of devotion and respect for reading the glory of Lord Dattatreya. So, Mr. Mhaskar Guruji started to read the Guru Charitra. He finished 100 times in the span of 2 years, but still he did not have the Darshan of Lord Dattatreya. So he went in the temple and prayed to Lord Dattatreya that I want your Darshan, I have been reading your Charitra and you don't have compassion for me? But still no Darshan of Lord Dattatreya. He finished reading it 107 times. He got angry with devotion on his Beloved Lord Dattatreya. He said before starting to read it for last time, I want your Darshan. If you don't give me your Darshan, I will kill myself. He waited for three days, but he did not have even a dream of Lord Dattatreya. So he decided to stop eating food until the Darshan. 4 days passed and he did not eat. He got weak. He fainted. And he had vision of Lord Dattatreya.

Lord Dattatreya said to him "What are you doing here? If you want to see me Walking Talking (meaning real Dattatreya with physical body) Dattatreya, go to Ganeshpuri. I am alive there..... go to Ganeshpuri go.....

Mhaskar Guruji asked where is this Ganeshpuri? How to reach there? Who will take me there? Lord Dattatreya replied him in vision that just start your journey, I will guide you. Tomorrow, go to the railway station and sit in the train going towards Mumbai.

So accordingly, Mhaskar Guruji started his journey. He sat in the train. He did

not have money to buy a ticket, but trusting the words of Gurudatta, he started the journey towards Ganeshpuri. The ticket checker came 3 or 4 times in the train but did not ask him for a ticket. Mhaskar checked all people in the train. He travelled for almost 9 Hours, and then the train entered in Mumbai region. A few people in same train, near his seat, started talking about Ganeshpuri. They were talking in general. In Mr. Mhaskar Guruji's mind, he was just thinking of asking them how to reach Ganeshpuri, and at same time people started talking about the bus timing going to Ganeshpuri from Mumbai station. He asked them "Do you know where in Ganeshpuri Lord Dattatreya stays? Is this true?" but those people did not give him any reply.

Then he got down at Mumbai railway station, then went to bus station, got a bus for Ganeshpuri. and reached Ganeshpuri.

When Mhaskar reached Ganeshpuri, it was near about 2PM. He started asking people where is Lord Dattatreya? He did not know the name Nityananda. People said there is no Dattatreya in Ganeshpuri, but people told him there is Swami Nityananda in Ganeshpuri, then showed him the way to Kailas Bhuvan where Bhagwan Nityananda used to stay.

There was a huge darshan line. many people were there. On the other side, Bhagwan Nityananda said to some people around him "oh go outside, my devotee is waiting, he is wearing dirty cloths, white cap on head. Get him in, get him in." So a few young boys found Mhaskar and told him Bhagwan Nityananda is calling him. He got very confused that how come these young boys are knowing him. Then he came inside the room where Baba was sitting. As he came in the room Bhagwan Nityananda got up and put his hands on Mhaskar's shoulders. Bhagwan Nityananda said, "you want to see Datta, look at me." In Mhaskar Guruji's mind he started to think this is something problematic situation. He was very uneasy. Baba, knowing that, started to laugh. Bhagwan Nityananda said "You don't believe me that I am Datta. Look at me. Look at me." As Mhaskar started to look, he had darshan of Lord Dattatreya in Bhagwan Nityananda.

Then, Mr. Mhaskar Guruji held Bhagwan Nityananda's Feet. Then Bhagwan Nityananda gave him prasada and said to him to go to Nasik city and read the last 108th time Guru Charitra in Kala Ram Mandir. It is Lord Rama's Temple. Mhaskar said to Bhagwan Nityananda I don't have money to go there..... Bhagwan Nityananda ignored him and said "feed 1008 Brahmins as finale of the reading it 108 times." Mhaskar said again to Bhagwan Nityananda, I don't have money to go there and you are telling to feed 1008 Brahmins. Bhagwan laughed and said dont worry just go.

There were some people from Nasik who had come from Nasik, so Mr. Bhaskar

Mhaskar Guruji went with those people to Nasik. Then, when he was reading the Guru Charitra, people were offering money on Shree Guru Charitra Book. This was back in 1952 - the money offered was 2000 Indian Rupees. At that time it was so great deal to have that much money. So he offered food to bramhins after completion of reading the Guru Charitra for 108 times. He gave 51 rupees dakshina to all the bramhins who had came for Prasad.

Then Mhaskar returned to Ganeshpuri..... then Baba told him to go on a pilgrimage to Lord Dattatreya's main places.

Kuravpur town..... where Shripad Shri Valabha temple is there  
Ganagapur ..... Where Narahari aslo known as Shri Narshimha Saraswati  
Manik Nagar ..... where Manik Prabhu's Ashram is there  
Akkalkot ..... where Swami Samartha also known as Akkalkot Swami

then he want to Shirdi where Sai Baba Samadhi is there.

Where ever Mhaskar went in these temples, he did not see a statue of Dattatreya but he only was able to see it as Statue of Bhagwan Nityananda. He got full Faith for Bhagwan Nityananda as Dattatrey. When he came back to Ganeshpuri, Bhagwan Nityananda told him to stay in Ganeshpuri Town with his family, and also orded him to do seva.

One day, Bhagwan Nityananda called Mhaskar and said why don't you write poems on me? He said to Bhagwan Nityananda, me and poems its not possible. I am not educated. Bhagwan put his hand on Mhaskar's head and said "fill your heart with devotion you will get all knowledge to write," and next day Mhaskar wrote the JAY JAY AARATI NITYANANDA.

When he showed the aarati to Bhagwan Nityananda, he was dancing and was very happy. Bhagwan said to him "I bless you that after me, this arati will give joy in hearts of my devotees. Who will do my aarati for three times I will be specially present there ....."

After seeing Mr. Bhaskar Mhaskar writing the aarati, other people wrote Bhagwan Nityananda's arati also, but Bhagwan said Jay Jay will be my Arati.

This is what I have heard from Mr. Mhaskar Guruji him self.

Avadhuta Cintana Shree Gurudeva Datta!

Sadgurunath Maharaj ki Jai!