

Ruttonji's Meeting with Sai

I bow down to Sree Ganesh

I bow down to Sree Saraswati

I bow down to the Guru

I bow down to the Family Deity

I bow down to Sree Sita-Ramachandra

I bow down to Sree Sadguru Sainath.

1. Hail Sainatha, the greatest among all Saints! Hail, hail compassionate one, laden with virtues! Hail, the unchangeable and Supreme One! Hail, hail the boundless and Immanent One!
2. In your infinite mercy towards your devotees, upon whom you keep a watch, without their knowledge, you meet them under different pretexts, and save them from their difficulties.
3. You are the incarnation to uplift the devotees and to kill the demons, who are active in the night, in the form of passions, which are difficult to overcome.
4. Those who came for *darshan* in good faith were able to drink the nectar of self - contentment and were happy with inner bliss, swaying with love and happiness.
5. Such was Sai Samartha, the embodiment of virtues! I am an ordinary, poor and humble person. I prostrate at his feet with humility.
6. In the last chapter, the story was told about how malaria was cured by making the patient feed a black dog with curds and rice.
7. Terrible diseases like cholera and diarrhoea were cured merely by the waving of an admonishing finger, or by having rice gruel, or roasted peanuts.
8. Similarly, how the shooting pains in the stomach of one person, the ear ache of another and the severe tuberculosis of a third person were cured by means of a mere *darshan*.
9. How Bhimaji was completely happy by the grace of Sree Sai; and how he was indebted to Sai and totally surrendered to him.
10. In the same manner, this episode is also unique, amazing and mysterious. Knowing the eagerness of the listeners, I will present it.

11. If the listeners are not attentive, how will the speaker be inspired? How will the narration reach the climax and how will it be interesting?
12. What can a speaker do? He is completely dependent upon the listeners. The listeners make the story entertaining by being absorbed in it.
13. This being the life story of a Saint, it is naturally pleasing, in all respects. The eating habits of Saints, their everyday behaviour and even their casual remarks are enchanting.
14. This is not a life-sketch or biography. Sai Maharaj, the cloud of mercy, showered this because of his love for his devotees, as a means of remembering him and obtaining bliss.
15. Such are the stories of these great Saints, who talk about the worldly life but place one on the path of salvation. The stories deal with material and spiritual life, at the same time.
16. This must have been their underlying purpose that one should lead a happy life; but should always be careful and thus this body should be fruitfully utilised.
17. When innumerable merits are accumulated, a soul unexpectedly gets the life of a human being. Over and above, if a person is able to lead a spiritual life, he is most fortunate.
18. Even in such a life if he does not achieve fulfilment, his being born is useless and only an added weight on the earth. Can he be happier than a mere animal?
19. A human being, who does not know anything more than eating, sleeping, fear and sex, is no better than an animal shorn of tail and horns.
20. How great is this human life! It is the only way to achieve devotion to God and the four-fold¹ liberation. This is the only means of self-realisation.
21. Our existence in this world is of a duration no longer than a flash of lightning. How can people find moments of complete happiness when they are caught between the jaws of destiny?
22. Mother, father, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, cousin - they are like logs of wood which float in the current of a river.
23. They seem to be together for a moment. Then they scatter by the movements of the waves and go separately never to meet again.

24. He, who has not achieved self enhancement, has troubled his mother in vain. Without ever surrendering at the feet of saints, birth will be futile.
25. As soon as a being is born, he heads towards death. Therefore, if he believes that death will come at some later date then he is deceived.
26. One should always remember that death awaits you. This body is the fodder on which death thrives. Such are the ways of the world. Be on guard.
27. In the daily course of life behave with caution and you will achieve the highest objective in life without effort. Therefore, do not be lethargic in the world and do not be disinterested in making efforts.
28. Those who do listen to the stories of Sai with love, they will be effortlessly benefitted. Their devotion at Sai's feet will increase and they will obtain happiness and prosperity.
29. This collection of stories will remind those who are full of affection for Sai, of his lotus feet, at every step.
30. It describes that which is impossible to put into words; and that which is beyond the senses, it makes possible to enjoy. However much you may drink this nectar in the form of these stories, it is difficult to be fully satisfied.
31. The deeds of Saints are impossible to comprehend. Their glories are beyond description. Who is capable of fully putting them in words?
32. If these stories are regularly heard, Sai's image will perpetually remain before our eyes, our minds and our hearts; and we will remember him and meditate upon him day and night.
33. One would perceive him while waking or dreaming; while sitting, resting or eating. Wherever one goes about, either in society or in the jungle, he would seem to be walking beside him.
34. If thus he is with us day and night, one would be absorbed in divine contemplation; and when this happens every day, the mind will be one with the supreme energy.
35. Now, I will pick up the threads of my narration from the previous chapter. We will continue the narration. Please listen with respect.
36. One may eat the "*shira-puri*"² of faith and devotion, as much as one can but one will never be satisfied even if one eats till one is gorged.

37. So be it. Now, another story. Listeners, pay attention to it with respect. The efficacy of the *darshan* of a Saint will become firm in your mind.
38. Baba did not do anything outwardly. He did not go anywhere leaving his place. But he knew everything sitting at one place and would let it be known to everybody.
39. That eternal truth which dwells in the body pervades the whole universe. Sacrificing the body, experience the unity.
40. One who surrenders to that eternal truth becomes one with all. Know that. If one follows diversity, then one perpetuates the cycle of birth and death.
41. The intellect which regards everything as separate is actually due to ignorance. It needs to be purified by "*trishudhi*"³. However, the advent of the Guru purifies the mind and makes us realise our real self.
42. When one refrains from ignorance, that itself is the realisation of oneness. Even if there is the least sense of differentiation, how can there exist that oneness?
43. From Brahman to the immovable object, with any name, all are considered as non-Brahman due to false knowledge. Whereas in reality they are all full of Brahman.
44. One who by nature has profound knowledge of everything and is disinterested in the duties of the mundane existence, and from whom name and form have been obliterated, he is Brahman without limbs.
45. Due to misguided knowledge and illusion and the belief that Brahman is different, these fallacies take place and the mind is lured to the various clinging forms of nature. But when it has the right knowledge it becomes steady and becomes one with pure consciousness.
46. I am different and the people are different from me. He who does not think in this differentiating manner, for him everything is full of that pure consciousness and then nothing else remains.
47. One who considers it irksome to do the duties of the mundane existence and has eliminated the feeling of multiplicity altogether, this is reaching *Brahmahood*.
48. "I see myself everywhere. There is no place without me. I fill all space in all the directions. There is nothing else but me".
49. Hold fast to this conviction – and push away the misguidance of *Maya*. Veil your sight and realise that there is nothing save myself.

50. The listeners could raise a common doubt: "How then lies the difference in the self being the knower and Brahman the known?" What is the remedy for this?
51. Sense of differentiation has been proved to be caused by passion. Immediately it causes multiplicity; and that is the reason for birth and death.
52. As soon as the dark vision of ignorance disappears the whole universe also disappears. Everywhere the Reality of Self fills the vision and multiplicity takes flight immediately.
53. Pure water poured into pure water remains pure water and is indistinguishable - one from the other. The sense of differentiation does not remain.
54. Pieces of wood of different shapes, when put into the fire, they look the same. They lose their form and are indistinct, merging themselves in the fire.
55. Similarly, the knowledge that the Self is one needs no other proof. The Self abides in all beings fully, but it is without form.
56. The false illusion to the contrary is the cause of a confused mind, which leads to the painful experience of birth and death, leaving the being in an unsettled state of mind.
57. The *Siddha* abides within the perpetual bliss of self realisation, eluding the clutches of *Maya* and avoiding the vexations of name and form, concentrating on the Pure and Real Self.
58. Sree Sainath is the true example of this state. Blessed are those who were fortunate enough to get his *darshan*.
59. The moon reflected in the water appears to be surrounded by water but it is actually beyond the waters. Likewise, the Saints though surrounded by numerous devotees, are in reality separate from them.
60. Although surrounded by the devotees, there is no attachment to anyone. They abide always in the Self and do not at all care for the worldly ties.
61. Such are the great Saints and sages, that even God does their bidding. There is nothing which is unattainable for them in this world and nothing which is beyond their knowledge.
62. There are innumerable Gurus and disciples in this world, who give and receive, respectively, the teachings. But rare are the Gurus who give actual experience with their teachings.

63. Enough of this initial narration. Let us start with the main story for which the listeners are very anxious. Let them be benefitted by listening.
64. In the city of Nanded, in the Nizam's dominion, there was a famous Parsi merchant. He was popular and very pious. His name was Ruttonji⁴.
65. He had every material possession. He owned horses, carriages, farms and woodlands. The doors of his house were open to all and nobody was turned away, empty-handed.
66. In this way he seemed to be enjoying happiness, day and night. But, deep inside, he was caught permanently by a crocodile in the form of worry.
67. This is the law of nature that nobody can have undiluted happiness. Some way or the other, everyone has some anxiety.
68. A person may say boastingly that he is superior and the richest. He may walk upright with uncalled for pride.
69. Whenever there is anything without a blemish, it will be flawed at least by a small blot. Therefore, it seems that God does this with His own hands.
70. Ruttonji was endowed with wealth. He was hospitable to all; helped the weak and removed their miseries. He was always pleasant.
71. In this way, though the world thought that *Shethji* was happy, the pleasure of wealth was of no consequence for a person who had no son.
72. There was no dearth of daughters. There were twelve, one after the other. But how could he have the slightest of happiness? How could his mind be at rest?
73. Is there any beauty in a *kirtan* performed without love? What is music without harmony and rhythm? And what kind of a brahmin is he, who does not wear the sacred thread?
74. What profit is there in proficiency of all arts when there is no sense of discrimination? What is correct behaviour if it is divorced from mercy towards all beings?
75. How is there sanctity in one who wears *sandal* paste on his forehead, and *tulsi* rosary around his neck, if he mocks at Saints?
76. What use is pilgrimage without piety and repentance? What good is ornamentation without a necklace?⁵ What is a home without a son?

77. He was constantly worrying about whether God would grant him a virtuous son. This was a nagging anxiety.
78. Because of this *Shethji* was always depressed. He could not relish food or drink. He was always grief stricken and was worrying constantly.
79. "O God, wash off this blemish and make me flawless. Give an heir to the family. Save me from humiliation, *Prabhuraya*".
80. As he had immense faith in Das Ganu, he opened his heart to him, who in turn told him to go to Shirdi and his wish would be fulfilled.
81. "Go and take Baba's *darshan*. Bow down at his feet and tell him your heart's secret at length. He will bless you.
82. Go. Your well-being will be assured. Baba's deeds are inconceivable. Surrender to him completely. You will be benefitted".
83. Accepting this advice, *Ruttonji* took a decision. After some days, he arrived in Shirdi.
84. He went to the *Masjid* for *darshan* and prostrated at the feet of Sai. Seeing Maharaj, the store of religious merit, he was overwhelmed with a surge of love for him.
85. He opened the basket, took out the garland of flowers and lovingly put it round Baba's neck. The fruits he had brought as an offering were placed at Baba's feet.
86. *Ruttonji*, with great humility and highest respect, went and sat near Baba. Listen to his entreaty.
87. "I have heard that whenever people have insurmountable problems, they come to you for help and you immediately protect them.
88. Therefore, I have come here to meet you, with great hopes and seek a boon at your feet. Please do not turn me away, Maharaja".
89. Then Baba said to him: "You have taken a long time to come here. Give me whatever *dakshina* you wish. Then your objective will be fulfilled".
90. Whoever came for *darshan* and bowed at his feet, whether a Hindu, Muslim or Parsi, he would ask *dakshina* from him.
91. Even that was not a small sum. It could be a rupee or two, or fifty or hundred, or thousand or lakh or more depending on how much he could afford.

92. Even if it was given he would ask for more. If he was told there was nothing left, he would say take a loan; and when it was impossible to get a loan, he would then stop asking.
93. And he would say to the devotees: "Do not worry at all. I will give you plenty of money. Sit near me without any care.
94. In this world, everybody has somebody or the other; but nobody belongs to me. Allah and only Allah is mine.
95. If someone loves me more than life, I need such a person. If such a person gives me something, I give to him a hundred fold".
96. Even if there was a millionaire, Maharaj would order him to go to a poor man's home to ask for *dakshina* for him (Baba).
97. Sai did not distinguish between the very rich and the poor; the humble, the miserable, the indigent. One was as good as the other.
98. The person would obey his orders, bow his head and would go to the homes of the poor and beg on behalf of Baba, giving up pride.
99. The essence of all this was that, under the pretext of *dakshina*, Baba would teach humility to his devotees.
100. One may doubt why a *sadhu* needs money. But, in this respect, if you think properly, your doubts will be cleared.
101. If Sai has fulfilled all his wishes, why does he require *dakshina*? How can he be called desireless, when he asks for money from his devotees?
102. Why does he stretch out his hands when a hailstone or a diamond or a copper coin or a gold mohur are alike to him?
103. When he begs for food only for the appeasement of his hunger and has taken the vow of non-attachment, when he appears to be without expectation and totally disinterested, why then this desire for *dakshina*?
104. Why should a person stoop to begging for money at whose doorstep the eight *siddhis*⁶ stand to serve him with folded hands and the nine treasures⁷ are at whose command.
105. How can money matter to one who spurns the material objects and cares not even for heaven, but is lost wholly within the Self?
106. Those who are Saints, pious and holy, who are well-versed in scriptures, and whose life is dedicated to the welfare of the devotees, why should they need money?

107. Why does a *sadhu* need *dakshina*? He should be desireless. In spite of his being a *fakir*, he cannot escape greed and is always worshipping money!
108. At the first *darshan* he accepts *daskshina*. At the next *darshan* he asks for *dakshina*. While taking leave also he asks for *dakshina*. What is the meaning of asking every time?
109. Traditionally, in the beginning, drinking water is offered; then washing of hands and mouth is done; afterwards pan and betel nut are offered, followed by *dakshina*.
110. But Baba's system was strange. While the *sandalwood* paste was being annointed or the rice mixed with turmeric and other decorations were offered, he expected *dakshina* to be offered at that time.
111. As soon as the preliminaries of the ritual started, Baba would ask for *dakshina*. Therefore, at that moment, one had to give it up as if it was an offering to Brahman.
112. Now to clear this doubt, a lot of efforts are not needed. If you pay attention for a while, you will be satisfied.
113. Wealth should be accumulated for a good cause. But it is spent on trivial things and worldly passions.
114. Because of wealth good deeds can be performed. Because of good deeds real knowledge is gained. Selfishness is transformed into acquiring spiritual knowledge. This results in contentment.
115. In the beginning, for a long time, Baba did not take anything. He would collect burnt matchsticks and filled his pockets with them.
116. He would ask for nothing whether it be from a follower or a non - devotee. If a paisa⁸ or two were placed before him, he would purchase tobacco or oil from it.
117. He greatly loved tobacco. He smoked beedis or chillum. That chillum served him sincerely. It was rarely unlit.
118. Later on, somebody thought that how could he go empty handed for the *darshan* of a Saint. Therefore, he started accepting *dakshina*.
119. If anyone offered him one paisa he would put it in his pocket; but if he was offered two paise he would return it, as it is. This went on for a long time.
120. But after some time, Sai Baba's fame increased. Hordes of devotees started coming. Systematic worship started taking place.

121. Worshippers were aware of the conventions of *puja* and that without offering *dakshina* in the form of gold or flowers, a *puja* would not be complete.
122. *Dakshina* for *Guru Puja* is as necessary as a gift at the time of a king's coronation or at the time of "*pada-puja*" (*puja* of the feet).
123. It is said in the *Vedas* that those who offer *dakshina* attain the highest position (i.e. heaven). Those who offer gold coins attain salvation and wisdom and purity of mind.
124. It is also said that offering sandalwood paste brings sanctity, offering rice coloured with kumkum and turmeric brings long life; offering flowers and betelnut brings wealth and prosperity and great riches by *dakshina*.
125. The golden flower of *dakshina* is as important in *puja* as sandalwood, coloured rice, flowers and betelnut, for it bestows on the giver vast riches.
126. *Dakshina* is necessary at the time of *puja* of a deity as well as the worship of a *Siddha*. It is the custom of those who perform a 'vrat', at the time of its completion, to offer gold as a gift to the *Brahmins*.
127. The frantic activity of this world depends totally on money. It is also the means for covering up loss of reputation. Money is essential for that.
128. When uttering the *Vedic Mantras* "*Hiranyagarbha - Gharbhasta*" etc. at the time of worship of a deity, *dakshina* is sanctified, then why should it not be given when worshipping a Saint?
129. When going for the *darshan* of a Saint, each one behaves as per his own light. Every person has a different view point and it is difficult for all to agree upon one and the same thing.
130. Some go with a view to sing praises and pay their respects; some go to test a Saint; some think that a Saint is he who can read your mind and tell you.
131. Some pray for longevity; some want elephants, gold, wealth, property; some wish for sons and grandsons; some want perpetual power.
132. Baba's method of dealing with people was unique. If any came with the intention of ridiculing him those persons' wickedness would be destroyed and they would become humble and bow down at his lotus feet.

- 133.If they were not fortunate enough for that, then at least they would repent, loose all pride undoubtedly and would certainly get proof of Baba's powers.
- 134.All these were ordinary, simple devotees completely attached to the world. Their minds should be purified by making them offer *dakshina*, was what Baba willed.
- 135.The *Shrutis* say "sacrifice, charity, dedicated effort." One desirous of self-realisation should offer *dakshina*, because it is one of the easiest means of acquiring it. This is clearly said in the *Vedas*.
- 136.A devotee may be selfish or may be desirous of spiritual life - both kinds, if they desire that their objectives are fulfilled, should give *dakshina* to their respective Gurus for their own good.
- 137.Even *Prajapati*¹⁰ preached the same principle to his three progeny viz. gods, demons and the human beings, at the time of the completion of *Brahmacharya*, when they asked for *upadesh*¹¹.
- 138.He uttered the single letter "da" as *upadesh*. What was the meaning of it? He asked them and confirmed their interpretation. It was a strange *leela* between Guru and disciple!
- 139.The Gods understood it as "danta" to have restraint; the demons understood it as "daya" to be kind; the humans understood it as "dana" to be charitable. *Prajapati* said: "Well done, well done".
- 140.Gods are not a people apart. They are human beings only but with a different nature. They imbibe their best virtues within themselves and exercise restraint. Their character earns them their title.
- 141.Among humans only there are demons. They resort to violence, they are wicked and harsh, and are extremely avaricious. Such are the three kinds of human beings¹².
- 142.Greed is man's major vice. Even then, to save man from the deep, dark, pit of greed, Sainath, the ocean of kindness, stretches his arm and pulls them out.
- 143.In the *Taitariya Upanishad* (Adapted) and the *Ekadashi Shruti* many kinds of charities are mentiond. Listen to each one of them.
- 144.Give with reverence and faith. Giving without faith is futile. One should respect the commands of a king and the dictums of the scriptures and should give something out of a sense of decency.

145. At weddings and other social occasions, you must give gifts to keep up goodwill because it is a custom of society. Such are the preachings.
146. Baba also, as per this letter 'da' asked the same thing, from his devotees for their own good. "Be kind , be charitable, be restrained. You will get great happiness".
147. There are three vices of which to be without restraint is one. To remove the effect of these the only simple remedy is the one letter advice, which the teachers have been teaching to the students.
148. Passion, anger and greed are most inauspicious for progressing on the path of spirituality. It is very difficult to conquer them for which this is a very simple remedy.
149. Just as the *Shrutis*, so also are the *Smritis*. Such is their confirmation. I am giving here the quotation for the benefit of the listeners, so that they have better and firm understanding.
150. "Passion, anger and greed are the three doors to hell; and are the cause for the destruction of the self. Therefore, they should be definitely discarded¹³".
151. The very kind and great Sai asked for *dakshina* from his devotees for their own well-being and thus taught them to sacrifice.
152. What is the value of *dakshina*? What is spirituality if one is not ready to lay down one's life to carry out a command of his Guru?
153. Really, what reason did Baba have for asking for *dakshina* other than for the good of his devotees? His own life did not depend on *dakshina*.
154. He begged alms for food . There was no selfish motive behind his asking for *dakshina*. His only objective was that his devotees' minds should be purified.
155. According to the above mentioned quotation from the *Vedas*, *dakshina* was essential; and until that is given a *puja* is never complete.
156. Now let us bring an end to this section about *dakshina*. Its meaning is very clearly explained. There is no ulterior motive or greed in accepting *dakshina*, which was taken only for the benefit of the devotees.
157. Therefore, we will narrate further in details the unfinished story. Listen to Ruttonji's episode of *dakshina* and Sai's marvellous handling of it.

158. Listeners, listen with full devotion to this amazing story and see how Sai is unique and free from greed.
159. At the time of asking for *dakshina* from the *Shethji*, Sai mentioned an instance of the past, which *Shethji* could not recall and he was bewildered.
160. "You gave me Rupees three and fourteen annas earlier. That I know. Out of the amount intended for me, give me only the balance. Give that to me as *dakshina*."
161. This was the first *darshan* of Baba. Hearing these words of Baba, Ruttonji Sheth was amazed and tried to recollect.
162. 'I have not come to Shirdi before. Nor have I sent anything with anybody'. In these circumstances, notice his surprise at Sai Maharaj's words!
163. Such a thing had not happened. Ruttonji was embarrassed. He gave the *dakshina* and bowed down but could not resolve the enigma.
164. It was left at that. He told the reason for coming. Again he prostrated at his feet and sat with folded hands.
165. *Shethji* was very satisfied and said: "Baba, it is good that my last birth's good deeds have borne fruit and that I am able to have the *darshan* of your feet.
166. I am ill-fated, ignorant, and know not how to perform *puja*, rituals, sacrifice. Due to destiny, I have been able to take *darshan* of this sagacious person, knower of the past, present and future.
167. You know the reason for my unhappiness. O, compassionate one, please remove it. O, kind one, do not send this ardent devotee away from your feet".
168. Sainath felt pity for him. He Said: "Do not worry unnecessarily. Your misfortunes, henceforth, will start diminishing".
169. He gave him the *prasad* of *udi* in his hand and laid his boon-giving hand on his head. "Allah will fulfil your heart's desire", with these words he blessed the *Shethji*.
170. Then, Ruttonji took his permission to leave and returned to Nanded. Whatever had happened was described in detail to Ganu Das.
171. "I had a good *darshan*, as desired. My heart was full of joy. I have received his boon and assurance and have been blessed.
172. Everything went off fine. But I did not understand one thing. What was it that Maharaj said? I did not follow it at all".

- 173." 'You gave me Rupees three and fourteen annas earlier. That I know'. Explain to me clearly what these words of Baba meant.
- 174.What rupees and what annas! When did I give him earlier? I do not understand the mystery of it, because I went to Shirdi for the first time.
- 175.I cannot solve this mystery. I feel that this is an intriguing puzzle. It is beyond my comprehension. Can you please enlighten me?"
- 176.This is a mystery, Das Ganu thought to himself. What could be the meaning? He couldn't come to any conclusion.
- 177.After a lot of thinking he recalled an 'Aulia', who was called Mauli Saheb. He was reminded of him.
- 178.He was a Muslim. His behaviour was like that of a Saint. He worked as a coolie for his living, leaving himself to the mercy of fate.
- 179.If I give his life story in detail, it would be a deviation from our own subject. Besides, the life of this Mauli Saheb is known to everybody in Nanded.
- 180.At the time when the visit to Shirdi was decided, Mauli Saheb had casually come to *Shethji's* house, on his own.
- 181.There was deep mutual affection between them; so, he was offered fruits, refreshments, garland as was the custom.
- 182.*Shethji* was inspired to offer a light meal to Mauli; and Das Ganu thought, at that moment, of checking the expenses of the same.
- 183.He asked for the details of the expenses, added each and every pie and totalled it, which turned out exactly,
- 184.to be Rupees three and fourteen annas, neither more nor less. Every one was astonished that Baba had known this and had, as it were a receipt for it.
- 185.Sai Maharaj was a store of knowledge. Sitting in the *Masjid*, he was aware of everything - the past, the present and the future, wherever and in whatever country it may happen.
- 186.Unless Sai Samartha had become one with all beings, could it be possible for him to experience or to tell others, this kind of things?
- 187.Nanded is far away from Shirdi. There is a lot of distance between the two. Besides, these two Saints did not know each other. How could Sai have got this information?

188. Sai Maharaj is one person and Maulibuva some one else. This is a misconception of dualism. In reality, there is no difference between them.
189. Maulibuva's soul is the same as that which resides in every being. But he is blessed who knows the secret of oneness of soul.
190. Though the outer bodies are two, internally they are united. It is wrong even to use the words 'those two', for they were never separate.
191. They both had the same knowledge, same soul, same aim. Both were the essence of the one supreme energy and of the same nature.
192. There is a big distance between Shirdi and Nanded. But their minds were in unison. They had the same soul and as it were, the same body. Therefore, they exchanged the communication.
193. How marvellous are the Saints and Sages. They are, as it were, the wireless machines without the cables! Anything might take place anywhere in the world. They are aware of it from the beginning to the end.
194. Later, after a suitable passage of time, God blessed Ruttonji. His wife conceived. The tree of hope blossomed.
195. At an auspicious time, his wife delivered. The blessings bore fruit. A jewel of a son was born and Ruttonji was delighted.
196. His contentment could be described as that of abundant rains after many years of drought, because he had got a son.
197. Later on, the family tree bloomed. Branches spread out, in due course flourished and bore fruit with sons and daughters. Ruttonji was happy¹⁴.
198. Later on, also he went for Sai *darshan* with whose blessings his desires were fulfilled. He was truly contented.
199. Even though a mango tree blossoms fully during spring all the fruits do not ripen. Similarly out of the twelve children¹⁵, only four survived and lead happy lives in Nanded.
200. Ruttonji being of a gentle temperament, believed in cheerfully accepting whatever happens due to destiny. So he did not regret this at all.
201. Now the gist of the next story is that Sai pervades the whole world, both animate and inanimate. A person can truly have the experience of this, wherever he may be.
202. How the great Guru was pleased because of faith and devotion with a poor, helpless man from Thane, whose surname was Cholkar.

203. How this man came to make a vow to Sai, without ever having seen him before; and how his wishes were fulfilled and the experience he received from Sai.
204. Just as *bhajan* is no *bhajan* without love; reading a book without comprehension is no reading; so is praying to God without a sense of devotion. All these efforts are futile.
205. So is knowledge without experience like a forehead without the *kumkum tilak*. This is not a bookish statement but you can test it and prove it.
206. Why is this book about Sai's *leelas* being written? I do not know. Why am I so involved with it? It is written by Sai through me. Therefore, he alone knows the significance.
207. Besides, to write such a book, authoritative knowledge is required. But I am serving Sai and am only his subordinate. I am under his command.
208. Listeners are like thirsty 'Chatak' birds. Sai Samartha is the cloud of self - contentment, who pours showers in the form of his life story to quench the thirst.
209. Let my body completely prostrate in the dust of his lotus feet, at whose command this speech is inspired and whose life story it describes.
210. He is the inspiration behind the words. He is the one who tells his own story. Therefore, let my wayward mind rest at his feet.
211. Just as these '*bhajans*' through speech and body, so also my mind should constantly think about Sai, who is the source of unending happiness. I am a humble servant of Sai.
212. In reality, Sai himself manifests in the form of the narration of the life story and the inspiration. But, is he different from the listeners? Nay, the listener is also not separate from Sai!
213. Seemingly, it appears like a simple biography. But this whole drama is played by Sai. He himself becomes the actor and lovingly stages the powerful *drama*.
214. Unfathomable is Sai Baba's story. He makes the devotees undergo mysterious experiences. He has made me instrumental in writing and thus pleases his devotees and hordes of followers.
215. This not a story but a treasure trove of joy. It is the best, nectar like sweet meat for one's self which should be enjoyed with faith and devotion, by one who is exceptionally happy.

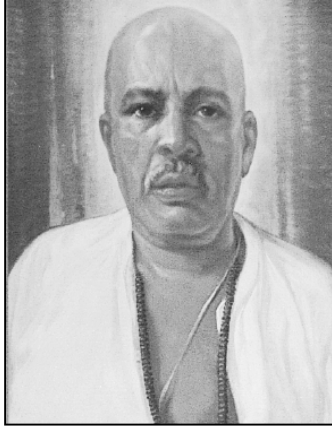
216. Wonderous and great is Guru's Grace. His greatness should always be remembered by us. Therefore, he has served the devotees by toiling over this book for their pleasure.
217. If this book is sung lovingly, the pleasures of listening will enhance and understanding the meaning and intent, enrich the devotees' love and devotion which will grow manifold.
218. If you listen to it day and night, the bonds of worldly attachment will be broken. The triple consciousness of the meditator, the object meditated upon and the meditation will disappear and the listeners will be full of happiness.
219. Hemad surrenders with singleness of heart at the feet of Sai, firmly holding them, "Let me not forget you even momentarily, but remain forever at your feet".

May there be well-being. This is the end of the fourteenth chapter, of *Sree Sai Samartha Satcharita*, written by the devotee Hemadpant, impelled by Saints and virtuous people, called "Ruttonji's Meeting with Sai".

This is offered to *Sree Sadguru Sainath*.
May there be auspiciousness!

Notes :

1. Absorption into the essence of Brahman; resemblance to God; nearness to God and residing with the Deity.
2. Sweet meat.
3. Corporal, oral and mental purification.
4. Ruttonji Shapurji *wadia*, a mill contractor.
5. Necklace of glass and golden bead, and a golden coin.
6. *Anima, Mahima, Garima, Laghima, Prapti, Prakamya, Ishitva, Vashitva* - super human powers to make oneself small, big etc.
7. The treasures of Kuber.
8. Money of small denomination.
9. Religious ritual for observance of a vow.
10. The Creator.
11. Advice or lesson.
12. As per *Brihadarnyak Upanishad* Chapter 5
13. *Shrimad Bhagvad Gita* Chapter 16, Verse 21.
14. How Rao Bhadur Hari Vinayak Sathe went to Shirdi has been described in Chapter 31 of *Bhakta Leelamrut* by Dass Ganu. At that time Maharaj had blessed him - "You get married and you will get a son." Accordingly Sathe got married. After some time, his wife conceived. But instead of a son, a daughter was born. Sathe was, thereby, very disappointed. Later on, his wife conceived a second time. Then also, he had a daughter. Naturally, Sathe was very saddened. But Maharaj's blessings were not futile. The third time Sathe's wife conceived and a son was born, and that son is doing well and flourishing with Maharaj's grace.
15. In *ovi 72*, it is mentioned that he had twelve daughters before the son was born. So there is some discrepancy here about the number of children.



Ganesh Dattatreya Sahasrabudhe
alias Das Ganu Maharaj