
The Narration of the Knowledge of Brahman

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. In the last chapter, I had mentioned that in this chapter will be described the qualities of Permanent Good and the Pleasant. Listen to it with respect.
2. "As light and darkness are inter-related to each other, still they are separate from each other, the Good and the Pleasant are similar to them.
3. One whose mind runs after the Pleasant, he deteriorates because of selfishness. The Good is restraint and the Pleasant is that which is without restraint.
4. The Good deals with pure knowledge only and the Pleasant is false knowledge. Wise men are never attracted towards the Pleasant; but the Good is disliked by the ignorant.
5. Till such time that wealth and women are available, the senses indulge in pleasures and no thought is given to self-denial or non attachment. The Pleasant is welcome.
6. The Good and the Pleasant are inter-mixed like water and milk. But the Swans of Manas lake drink only the milk.
7. Similarly, those steadfast by nature, wise, self-controlled and fortunate ones only hanker for the Good and shun the Pleasant.
8. But look at those dullards who are only keen about caring for their body, cattle, children, wealth, status and well-being! They acquire the Pleasant only.
9. Whether it be the Good or the Pleasant, even if both are understood in the right way, it is difficult to bring the Good into practice, even for a person who is independent in his thinking.
10. However, if both are available, it is difficult to select, and if ignorance wins over discrimination, then the Pleasant comes and embraces one.

11. In setting aside the Pleasant and accepting the Good is the real spiritual endeavour, just as the Swan separates the milk from the mixture of milk and water.
12. The Good and the Pleasant are both attainable by a person. But those dullards without self-control are incapable of discrimination.
13. Initially, one should definitely be able to understand wherein lies the Good. Afterwards if there are obstacles in the way, one would be able to avoid them entirely.
14. At this point, the human efforts to attain the four well-known goals of life¹ intervene and make their claims. But one must fight for the sake of the Good and make intense efforts.
15. Inconceivable are the whirlpools of the mundane existence which rotate incessantly, twenty-four hours of the day. Man suffers the harsh miseries of the three-fold tribulations².
16. Because of them (whirlpools of mundane existence), extreme miseries befall and man is harrassed or tormented. Then he tries to discover easy means of pleasure to avoid them.
17. The whirlpool of mundane existence is unbearable. How can it be stopped? Could there be a means to do so? He starts thinking thus.
18. With good luck, when these thoughts are born they motivate the goals of life. Then for the sake of his own good, he follows the right path.
19. False knowledge or illusion are existing from the very beginning. They are like the futile illusions created by the pearl, the silver and the mirage. They should be considered as erroneous conceptions and obstacles and, therefore, should be removed.
20. In a dream, if innumerable hail stones of gold shower and are collected with effort, thinking that they will prove useful in time of need, they disappear on awakening.
21. Knowingly and unknowingly, fate, destiny, passion, hope, desire or covetousness are always the obstacles - remember this! and uproot them at the outset.
22. That which even sunlight cannot penetrate, and from which the intellect returns defeated, and where the Vedas and *Shrutis* cannot get a foothold, the Guru leads you to it.
23. Passion and anger, these are the two emotions, which come in the way of true knowledge. They shatter the power of understanding, concentration and samadhi very skillfully.

24. If a flame and camphor come close together, is it possible for them to push away from each other? No sooner than they come together, the camphor starts burning due to the flame.
25. What is the use of such a person who is continuously wallowing in sin and in acts forbidden by the scriptures, even though he is a scholar, because he does not know what is right and what is wrong?
26. Similarly, that person who is always restless, perturbed from within, driven crazy by being caught in the clutches of the senses, cannot attain wisdom.
27. He, who is contented, calm and constant in his search for his True Self, and above all, obedient to his Guru is full of wisdom.
28. Whether he be a householder or a *Rishi*, if he knows his destination he should be the master of the chariot of his body. What is the use of a pedant?
29. There is no scope for just blabbering. Only learning is the essence. Oh, you! regard your body as a chariot and then sit still in it.
30. In the chariot of one's own body, make your intellect the charioteer and be the master yourself. Then you can sit at ease.
31. On these roads full of obstacles, in the form of pleasures of the senses, make the charioteer control the ten prancing horses of the sense organs by means of the reins, in the form of the mind.
32. If the horses try to run helter-skelter, the charioteer will hold the reins to control the horses. And once they are entrusted to him, you can rest at ease.
33. If the charioteer is skillful and expert, the horses will run properly. But if the mind in control of the reins is not independent, there is weakness.
34. Whenever the intellect accompanied by the sense of discretion, is in a position to guide the chariot, that person has full control over himself. One who can concentrate and whose mind is composed only can reach the supreme state of salvation and all others tire out on the way.
35. He will not be satisfied whose mind is restless. He has no entry in the realm of the supreme state of salvation and thus cannot avoid the cycle of birth and death.
36. Such is that supreme state but when can one find it? When all the doubts of the mind are cleared, it then appears before you on its own.

37. Here logic, deductions, popular talk or discussions are of no avail. Only by God's grace you can attain it. All other sciences of learning are futile.
38. This is the marvel in this case - that innocent belief succeeds in knowing it, while logical skills are futile and the logical mind is confused.
39. Those who acquire the perfect wisdom are of a different type, whose thinking and intelligence are of a different kind. Please understand that such a person who has the real knowledge is very different and he is the best person to impart knowledge.
40. How the precious body is wasted! Wealth and pleasures are like the afternoon shadows, short-lived. Understand that this is a powerful illusion created by God and surrender at the feet of the Saints.
41. Saints are like the vessel on the oceans of the world. You be one of the passengers. Who else is capable of taking you across to the yonder shore?
42. Self-control and detachment, if combined together, will take him across the worldly ocean without difficulty, even though he may be a dullard like a millstone.
43. The Lord has six divine perfections or attributes³. Detachment is the first and foremost. Those who are extremely fortunate, they only obtain it and others do not.
44. Unless the duties as fixed by the Shastras are performed, the mind cannot be purified. Till the mind is not purified, know that true knowledge is not possible.
45. Know, therefore, that only performance of your duty is the root cause for gaining knowledge. Fulfilment of the daily duties, occasional duties and those prescribed by the scriptures will cleanse the impurities of your mind.
46. In this way, in that purified mind, self-control and detachment take place; and also control of breath and body etc.⁴, which are the means of procuring that wealth, are at your disposal. Finally, with their help, one can be free of body while living in it.
47. He who discards the fruits of action and expectations with the help of full concentration of mind and surrenders to a Guru wholeheartedly, then the Guru accepts him.
48. He who has given up the pleasures of the world, who is a devoted follower, who has full faith and who has become wise due to the knowledge he has acquired, even to him there is no other way.
49. Even after that knowledge is obtained, if he does not behave in the right fashion, he will be neither here nor there,

neither on heaven nor earth - he will be suspended in between like a Trishanku.

50. The ignorance of the person is the cause of the very materialistic attitude. When there is the knowledge of the self in its true sense, it will lead to the state of detachment towards the material world on its own.
51. A person who is self realised is always devoid of ego. For him the worldly concepts of right and wrong, pious and ominous, good and bad are of no consequence.
52. In one, whose pride of material achievements disappears, detachment takes its place immediately - and that in itself is the ultimate state of being. Remember this perfectly well.
53. In the natural course of existence, there are friends and foes. But in the case of detachment it all seems foolish, because when one sees ME in all, how can there be friendship or enmity?
54. In comparison to the supreme happiness even extreme bodily agony seems insignificant. In such a case, therefore, who can crave for worldly happiness if one has acquired the supreme happiness?
55. Even though mountains of worldly miseries befall him, he will not be perturbed even in the least bit and will be firm like a rock of courage.
56. God gives the gift of detachment to him whom He chooses to bless. Then He couples it with the sense of discrimination and makes him cross the worldly ocean.
57. For the seeker of the Self, desirous of beholding his true Self as clearly as his reflection in the mirror, there is no other place except this world or the heavens. There is no third place for him.
58. If rituals and sacrifices are performed, the deities are pleased and they grant residence after death in the heavens. One may get the fruits of the actions but one cannot obtain the wealth of self-knowledge.
59. It is true that after great many austerities one becomes a *Gandharva*⁵, but the knowledge of the soul is very obscure. Therefore, those who are desirous of the true knowledge of the soul will opt for a long life on the earth.
60. Here the mind is purified; the intellect becomes clear like a mirror; and the purest form of knowledge of the self, which is threefold purification (mind, intellect and *atma*) is reflected.
61. In the other place, which is the heavens, it is possible to get the knowledge of the self but it is very difficult and it requires tremendous efforts to reach it.

62. Illusion entwines you like a serpent; and, as it were, completely squeezes the intestines. The illusion also embraces outwardly - who can be capable of avoiding it?
63. You have been watching us while sitting here. You possess fifty times more money (than rupees five) in your pocket. Take it out now. Let us see. Confusion⁶ is in your pocket".
64. When asked to take it out, the gentleman put his hand in his pocket and took out a packet, which consisted of twenty-five notes of rupees ten each and counted them.
65. The gentleman was ashamed in his heart of hearts and thought to himself: 'How well Maharaj knows the inner secrets!' He put his head at his feet and anxiously asked for his blessings.
66. Then Baba said at that time: "Now wrap up your fake Brahman. Till your greed is not destroyed, you will never realise Brahman.
67. He whose mind is attached to his family and possessions (sons, farm, animals etc.) how can he achieve Brahman till constant awareness of his wealth is not abandoned.
68. The greed for money is very difficult. It is a deep whirlpool of pain, full of crocodiles in the form of conceit and jealousy. Only a desireless person can swim across these difficult waters.
69. There is unending enmity between avarice and Brahman. How can he attain salvation and practice self-denial who has no time for meditation? A covetous man is a fallen man.
70. Where there is greed, there is no peace, no contentment, nor restfulness. All means (of achieving Brahman) turn to dust when avarice takes hold of the mind.
71. He who indulges in low, forbidden acts and stoops down to lowest behaviour, unacceptable to the *Shrutis* and the *Smritis*, and who is permanently leading that kind of life, can never have equanimity of mind.
72. Such a man is called whimsical. He is always engaged in wicked deeds, permanently wallowing in worldly pleasures and he never understands what is good or bad.
73. May be he has understood the nature of Brahman but if he is not detached from the fruits of his action, then his knowledge of the Brahman is futile and he is not self-realised.
74. If anybody approaches a Saint and asks for anything, a Saint first judges whether he is worthy of it and then grants him his desire accordingly.

75. One whose mind is engaged day and night in boasting about material achievements and seeking pleasures, for such a person the preachings of a Guru are of no use. For both, it is a sheer waste of time!
76. He who tries to penetrate the realm of divine life without the purification of his mind, his efforts appear like an exhibition of scholarship. It is all a futile effort.
77. Therefore, one should speak only what one understands; and should eat what one can digest otherwise unnecessarily there will be indigestion. Everybody knows this.
78. My treasury is full, I can give anything anyone asks for but I have to take into account the receiver's capacity. I give that which one is able to receive only.
79. If you heed all that I have said, you will be benefitted. Sitting as I do in this holy *masjid*, I never utter an untruth".
80. When one takes a dip with full faith in the river of the nectar of the words of Saints, one is purified both inwardly and outwardly and all the impurities are washed away.
81. Such is the greatness of Sainath, which when I try to describe there is no end! How can I compare him, who is incomparable? He is reached through pure love.
82. He is a mother to all - refuge of all the helpless and fatigued - the support of those dependent on him, as is a tree to a creeper. He also gives a cool shade to those who are poor and helpless.
83. There are many Saints who have given up the world. They keep silent, living in mountain caverns in solitude, and only care for their own permanent good.
84. Of what use are such Saints who are only interested in their own good or only their own spiritual advancement?
85. But Sai Baba was not that kind of a Saint. Though he had no relatives, friends, home, wife or son, he continued to dwell in the world.
86. He accepted negligible quantity of alms from five households and lived under a tree, night and day. Setting up his scanty possessions, he taught the ways of life.
87. Such great Saints are rare in this world who after attaining Self realisation strive for the good of the people.
88. Blessed is that country, blessed that family, blessed those pious parents, blessed that holy womb that gave birth to this gem.
89. Without efforts, this 'Parees'⁷ was found, but it was regarded as a mere stone and discarded by many. In Shirdi, this great devotee was not recognised for a long time by anybody.
90. It is like a gem falling in a heap of garbage, which urchins discover - play about with it freely and step on it, assuming it to be a stone.

91. Be it so. In this way, that seeker of Brahman was satisfied after receiving his blessings. It is the same case with all of us. We should give up this hard path.
92. As long as we enjoy outer pleasures like listening to sweet music, enjoying a soft touch, sweet fragrance and pleasing sights, there cannot be a control over the senses.
93. Unless the senses are under control and their very nature changes and turns within, the understanding of Brahman and experiencing it are impossible.
94. Initially one should be completely desireless⁸. Then one should surrender totally to a Guru. In this way, he who develops firm and full faith deserves the knowledge of the *Atman*.
95. When the five sense organs, like the ears etc, abandon their respective pleasures, then the mind will give up doubts and desires.
96. Thus, disregarding the difference and being free internally, the intellect will be relieved of its burden of taking decisions. That itself is the supreme state of mind and the unchangeable Brahman is also the same.
97. When the intellect will not need the help of the sense of discretion, the mind will come alive. That is Pure Consciousness and nothing else. Blessed is the man who can gain it.
98. When the sense organs turn away from worldly pleasures and are introverted, Bliss of Self is experienced and everything else will mean unhappiness.
99. It is camouflaged by the senses and passions. It is extremely minute. Thus this knowledge of *Atman* is difficult to perceive. It is the means of supreme happiness. It is very mysterious in nature and unintelligible.
100. He who is unconcerned about the present world and the other world till he reaches the stage of *Hiranyagarbha*⁹, know that he alone is emancipated and he only is annointed with *Brahmanpada*¹⁰.
101. The mind should be slowly and gradually turned back from sense objects and should be made to concentrate on the *Atman*. Knowledge of the *Atman* will thus be acquired.
102. Disinterested in the fruits of action in the present world and the other world, and unconcerned over the duality of happiness and unhappiness, only the intelligent people enjoy the divine experience.

103. Who can be happy in the torturous waters of the worldly ocean, engulfed by the flames of the fire of *Vadranaal*¹¹ and the three-fold miseries¹².
104. Therefore, for the sake of one's own upliftment, one should attain Sai's blessings. Read his stories, listen and meditate on them.
105. If you listen to this biography of Sainath, in the company of wife, son, family, friends and relatives, you will get the benefits of both the worlds. Baba's *leelas* are unique.
106. Only the fortunate and faithful listeners are able to listen to these stories. While listening, a feeling of lightness steals through them and leads to an all encompassing peace.
107. In the running waters of the stream of the life stories, the salt of actions and non-actions will dissolve and Sai's beautiful image will appear before the eyes, through listening.
108. By listening to his life story, sins will be destroyed. By listening to his life story, destiny will be fought. By listening to his life story, supreme happiness will be achieved effortlessly by the listeners.
109. By listening, the heart will become pure; by listening the cycle of birth and death will be avoided; by listening the listeners will achieve Brahman, which can be achieved by performing actions and offering the fruits to Brahman.
110. Such a person who desires to serve Sai, Sai will make him desireless and Sairama will give rest, peace and happiness to his own devotee.
111. Oh, listeners please read, listen, study or meditate on this book, part by part, daily or learn it or recite it.
112. 'Know thyself perfectly well. That happiness is Brahman'; is the famous quotation from the *Taittirya Upanishad*. This is transcribed to the devotees by Baba, who was well-versed in the *Shrutis*.
113. "Do not worry in the least. Remain always cheerful. Do not have any anxieties until death." Baba always preached this.
114. This chapter may deal with the explanation about Brahman; but the implication is that he who surrenders to Sai, his ship will be able to cross the worldly ocean.
115. One should give advice for the good of the people repeatedly and should oblige others. This motto, Baba followed and behaved accordingly.
116. Whether this is right or wrong, these arguments are subjective. In this book, the happiness of common people is stressed upon.

117. This is the purpose behind this book. Baba knows the cause and effect. Just as he knows the people's aspirations, he also knows their future.
118. Listen to the stories from the mouth of the Guru, experience his incomprehensible powers, try to retain and memorise as many stories as possible and also tell others.
119. If this beautiful life story of Sai is listened to with great respect, the sorrows and difficulties of the narrator and the listener will be destroyed and will bring to an end the days of suffering of all.
120. Experiencing his divine powers, who cannot be surprised, except the unfortunate one? His mere *darshan* calmed the beholders, making them bow at his feet.
121. Listen with full understanding and implications to the lucid stories of Sai. If such an opportunity of happiness is there who will miss it?
122. In the stormy waters of hope, there are whirlpools of son, wife and friends; crocodiles of passion, rage etc., and sharks¹³ in the form of various diseases.
123. At some times there is a temporary aversion for hours together. There is a mental conflict, an eruption; but the bond cannot be broken.
124. You should teach your own mind that you are yourself the pure Brahman, but you are bound to the body like a parrot¹⁴, clinging to the bar which goes around rotating.
125. You have been lured away by illusions and temptations. Therefore, you have forgotten your own true self. Be aware and realise your real nature immediately.
126. Delusion creates more delusion; and thus the illusion about bodily pride takes place. Try to understand that the concept of 'I and Mine' is like a mirage. Therefore, why don't you become detached?
127. Oh, you! Think well, whether you should get entangled in this notion of 'I and Mine' in this worldly existence. Oh, parrot! leave the bar and fly high above in the sky.
128. Where there is liberty there is bondage; and bondage is accompanied by liberty. Ignoring both these conditions, you should live in the purest spirit within you.
129. This is subjective knowledge. Happiness and misery is total ignorance. Therefore, abandon that knowledge and acquire true knowledge, which is the knowledge of the Brahman, and which is with you.

130. As long as the discrimination between 'You and me' exists, it is not possible to perceive your own good. Give it up and then look at yourself by throwing away selfishness.
131. If a person as wealthy as *Kuber*¹⁵, outwardly leads the life of a mendicant, he is not doing the right thing. It is a hypocritical behaviour and all due to false knowledge.
132. Regularly listen to the best of the scriptures; follow the advice of the Guru with faith; be always alert and lead a regulated life.
133. Those who follow this principle automatically follow the path leading to their salvation. Innumerable beings are thus liberated very naturally.
134. He, who constantly thinks, day and night, as to when he will be free of the bonds of this world, will be able to cut off this bond.
135. Securing as much solitude as one can, and bearing in mind that the worldly existence is ephemeral, one should always be engaged in studying and understanding the meaning of the *Atman*.
136. With mind full of devotion and faith, a disciple should completely and humbly surrender. Till such time, the Guru will not give the treasure of knowledge to him.
137. Serve the Guru with your whole being. Think of salvation and bondage, ponder upon the question of true knowledge and ignorance and leave the success only to the Guru.
138. Nobody else but a Guru can tell about the *Atman* and the Supreme Self. Guru also does not give even a particle of knowledge unless one surrenders completely.
139. If anyone else excepting the Guru imparts knowledge it will not be able to liberate you from the world; neither will it at all be possible of leading to the fruits of Moksha nor will it ever have the full impact on your mind.
140. Therefore, knowledge is not possible to be obtained without a Guru. All the learned men are aware of this that the capable feet of the Guru can solve the mystery of the Brahman and the *Atman*.
141. Without any hesitation give up your ego and pride, and prostrate yourself, bowing your head down at the feet of the Guru.
142. 'I am your humblest servant. I have always regarded your feet as my only solace'. Utter these words. Gather courage and have faith in him.

143. Then you should see his miracle. The ocean of mercy, in the form of the Guru, will be moved and will take you in his bed, swaying you lightly on the waves of kindness.
144. He will keep his hand of re-assurance on your head; will ward off bad omens; burn up heaps of all sins and anoint the forehead with '*udi*'.
145. This discourse about the meaning of Brahman to the seeker of Brahman was incidental. He gave the complete essence of the knowledge of oneness of *Jiva* and *Shiva*¹⁶ to all his devotees.
146. What need could *Maharaj* have, with his immeasurable wisdom and profound learning, to indulge in humour and cut jokes?
147. Such a doubt may arise. But, if you think carefully, there is only one satisfactory explanation. Listen attentively.
148. When you are amongst young children, talking with them, enjoying their lisping prattle, does serious talk ever take place?
149. Is there no love for them? On the contrary, ordinary words will not be able to describe that love. But, light talk and humour are the skillful ways of teaching.
150. Does a child know what is the hidden ailment which is troubling him? The mother only has to give him the necessary medicine and forcibly, if he obstinately refuses it;
151. Sometimes by coaxing, at times by glaring with angry eyes, at times by beating, and also sometimes with a loving embrace.
152. When the children mature one likes to dote on them. But the knowledge given to them has to be adjusted in accordance with the sharp or dull intelligence.
153. A sharp intellect can grasp quickly. Not even a second is needed to understand and assimilate the teachings. In the case of a dullard it is quite different. It takes a lot of efforts for him to understand and retain.
154. *Sai Samartha* was the store of knowledge. He imparts the wealth of knowledge according to the intelligence of the devotee and first decides about his capability and purity.
155. He was intuitive and at the outset itself he knew everybody in their entirety. He decided on the right means of teaching and the right kind of discipline in accordance with the capability.
156. Whatever a person deserves he decides before hand and works according to their capacities. *Baba* carries their responsibilities on himself.

157. Similarly, though we look old and respectable, before that *Siddha Sai* we are like children behaving childishly, always keen on enjoying humour.
158. Baba had an abundance of jokes. He leaves his devotees free of worry by offering that knowledge for which the devotee has a worry.
159. A person may be intelligent or a dullard. If he reads this, he would feel great joy. Listening to it, he will wish to listen to it more and more. Meditating on it, it will give contentment and bliss.
160. If a person recites it over and over again, its divine meaning will manifest itself. If he tries to meditate on it every day, he will have great pleasure and permanent happiness, without obstacles. Such is his unfathomable *leela!*
161. Luckily whoever has had a little experience of this, his body, speech and mind will become inseparably attached to Baba. Such is his inconceivable *leela!*
162. Hemad surrenders at the feet of Sai. One way of doing good to a devotee is to impart knowledge by use of humour. The seeker of Brahman was just an instrument.
163. The next chapter is even more absorbing than this. It will fulfil the wishes of the listeners. The secret desire of my heart was fulfilled, with lucid explanation.
164. How I approached Madhav, how I gave him Baba's message and how I received his blessings. Listen to all that from the beginning to the end.

May there be well-being. This is the end of the seventeenth chapter of *Sree Sai Samartha Satcharita*, written by the devotee Hemadpant impelled by Saints and virtuous people, called: "The Narration of the Knowledge of Brahman".

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

Notes:

1. *Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha.*
2. Corporal, Mental and Destined.
3. Glory, Wealth, Generosity, Fame, Knowledge and Detachment.
4. *Sham, dama, tapa, titiksha, shradha* and *samadhan.*
5. Celestial chorister.
6. A pun is made on the word Brahma, in Marathi.
7. A stone which can turn ordinary stones into gold.
8. Give up desire for wealth, progeny and fame.
9. Last stage of Yogic Samadhi.
10. The station of Brahman as attained by the austerities.
11. Fire under the ocean.
12. *Adhidaivik, adhyatmik* and *adhibhautik.*

13. Actually, a huge imaginary fish called Timingil is mentioned.
14. Bird-catchers use a device for catching the parrots, which begins to rotate as soon as the parrot sits on the bar. The parrot clings desperately to the bar in the false notion that this way he will be secure. If he lets go, he could fly away. But he hangs on and is caught.
15. Treasurer of the heavens.
16. The *Atman* and the Supreme Self.



Shri Sai Baba

(This portrait was sent by Baba to Saddu Bhayya on 8.02.1915)