

## The Incarnation of Sai Samartha

*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 previous chapter, it was narrated how Sai was neither Hindu nor Muslim. How profoundly fortunate is the fate of Shirdi, which is Baba's abode!
2. How Baba was just an ordinary young lad in the beginning. Later on, he turned into an eccentric *fakir*; how he tended a beautiful garden which was originally barren.
3. How, in course of time, on that very spot a *wada* was built; and Baba's daring practices of *khanda-yoga*, *dhoti-poti*, have also been described to you.
4. By wearying himself in the service of others, Baba endured how many afflictions. Sairaya! the refuge of all the devotees, how can I describe him?
5. Now listen to the greatness of human birth; the description of Sai's mendicancy; Bayjabai's service to the Saint; the marvel of feeding Baba.
6. How Tatyā, Baba and Mhalsapati – the three together, would sleep in the *Masjid* and how the Great One used to go to Kushalchand's house at Rahata.
7. Everyday the sun rises and the sun sets. Thus the years roll on. Half of life is spent in sleep and the remaining is not enjoyed peacefully.
8. In the childhood a person is engrossed in play; in youth in wooing women; in the later days old age enfeebles the body and one is always suffering from infirmities.
9. To be born and to grow strong in body; to breathe and to have a prolonged life; is this the only purpose of living?
10. The goal of human life is only to reach God, otherwise what is the difference between humans and animals, such as a dog or a pig or others?

11. The dogs too eat and survive and procreate abundantly, then what is the greatness of a human being, if both lead a similar life?
12. To eat and be merry, copulate – if these are the only ways of using the human body and only this is the goal of life, then that human life is meaningless.
13. If the whole life is spent in these four ways i.e. eating, sleeping, being constantly afraid and indulging in sex, then what would be the difference between the human and the animal? Oh, you decide, using discretion.
14. If this is the only fulfilment of a human body, then the life of a tree would not be less valuable. Even the bellows breathe and dogs maintain their body.
15. That man is independent, he is without fear, he is free and eternal – if this awareness is present, then it can be said that life is fulfilled.
16. That person is said to be knowledgeable who knows from where he has come, who he is and what is the purpose of human life and what is his mission. Without this knowledge everything else is futile.
17. Just as the wick of an oil lamp<sup>1</sup> is the same at the beginning and the end, but flickers and changes at every moment, similar is the state of the human body.
18. Childhood, youth and old age are the stages through which everybody goes; but how naturally they come and go is not understood by anybody<sup>2</sup>.
19. What is seen is destroyed the same moment. There are such innumerable stages, but seemingly they look one. Similarly, the body which is perceivable at one moment will not be the same the next moment.
20. The body is evil (horrifying). It holds dirt, excreta, gases, pus, saliva etc.; and, besides, death is hovering about every moment.
21. The human body is the home of germs and viruses, harbours various diseases, not long-lasting and ends within a short period.
22. It is an accumulation of flesh and muscles, the cage or skeleton of bones and skin, a carrier of the muck of foul-smelling urine and what is vomitted (mucous and phlegm) – actually it is an obstacle to the soul.
23. Skin, flesh, blood and muscles, fat, bone-marrow, veins, bones and gases – all go to make this body impure and its existence of a short duration.

24. Although so sinful, perishable and short-lived is the human body, it is only through this that the abode of purity of God can be reached.
25. The cycle of birth and death is continuous. Even the very idea of death is extremely horrifying. This life will pass away without any inkling.
26. Who has kept a count, day and night, of those who are born and who die! Those born with a boon of Markandya<sup>3</sup> also cannot escape destiny.
27. In case of such short-lived human life, the time which is spent in reading the scriptures and listening to the stories of God is fruitful, while the time spent otherwise is a waste.
28. It should be a firm conviction that this is the best thing to do in life. But nobody believes in it till one experiences this oneself.
29. But to experience this, one has to make a deep study. Then the soul which seeks permanent happiness will enjoy that wealth.
30. Even by the grace of God, if a man reigns over vast lands whose boundaries are the seven seas<sup>4</sup> and also has a good wife, son, wealth and prosperity, he is still dis-satisfied at heart.
31. One should keep permanent peace and happiness as one's goal of life and think about it. Serve all beings as God – this is the most beneficial faith in life.
32. The human body is made of skin, flesh, blood and bones. It is an obstacle in the way of *Parmartha*<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, leave the attachment to it.
33. Always consider it as your servant. Do not pamper it. Do not always succumb to its wishes, by which you will be, as it were, paving your way to hell.
34. Food and clothing should be only for its maintenance. You should care for it knowing it to be temporary, for the sake of the development of the soul and to escape the cycle of life and death.
35. Birth and death are nothing but calamities. Every moment is set towards destruction. What momentary pleasure is this which brings in its wake unhappiness throughout life.
36. Just as one sees the zig-zagging lightening, which is there for a moment and then disappears; the waves of the ocean which are also momentary; (similar is the body). Therefore, think.
37. The body, the house, the children and wife – all these will perish. But one never realises it even when one bids farewell to one's own parents, while carrying their biers on the shoulder.

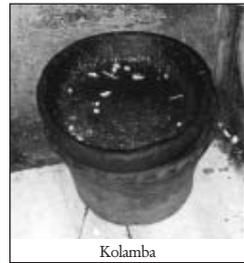
38. They are dead and the one in good health will die after them. One gets caught in the cycle of birth and death. But one does not think even for a moment by what means it can be controlled.
39. Life passes quickly in looking after the progress of the family. But time never forgets its duty and readily keeps count of the tenure of life.
40. When the last moment has come, then it does not wait even for a split second. Just as the fisherman casts his net and the fish gets caught, so life ends as it tosses about writhing at the touch of death.
41. By means of a store of good deeds from the past births and by accumulating good fortune, a person gets human birth. Therefore, every moment should be used well.
42. Even by making Herculean efforts, like Bhagirath<sup>6</sup> trying to hold the Ganges in his hair, it is not possible to obtain human birth. Because of destiny, unexpectedly, we are able to get it. It should not be wasted carelessly.
43. He is a fool who thinks that he will do good deeds in the next birth. There is no certainty that it will be so<sup>7</sup> once this life escapes.
44. There are many sinners who have this body. Their genes reach the organ of creation to take a new form according to their deeds.
45. There are many who are even more wretched and vile. They take birth in the movable class<sup>8</sup>; then become absolutely immovable<sup>9</sup>, according to their actions and their thoughts.
46. The way in which one has acquired knowledge, or has performed his deeds, he will get the body accordingly. Thus it is stated in the *Shrutis*.
47. “A person is born according to his knowledge” (wisdom). The benevolent mother *Shruti* says so. Therefore, according to his store of knowledge, a soul is born.
48. God’s *leelas* are beyond the intellect. It is impossible to know them totally. But that human being should be considered fortunate, who is able to know even a fraction of God’s ways.
49. Human life is acquired by utmost good luck; and to be born a Brahmin is more fortunate. By God’s grace to be near the feet of Sai is a rarer opportunity. To gain all these is rare.
50. Although there exist different forms of life, human life is superior to all. From where have we come? And who has created us? Such questions can be answered only by a discerning human mind.
51. The other species do not have the knowledge. They are born and they die. They do not understand the past, the present and the future and nor the existence of God.

52. God was, therefore, overjoyed after the creation of man, thinking that man, by means of sense discretion and non-attachment, would worship Him.
53. Evanescent man doing *sadhana*<sup>10</sup> (Spiritual Practices) will become eternal God. There is no other better means than the human body, to reach God through *sadhana*.
54. A snake-charmer is very shrewd. He does not perform before a layman or a novice. He expects the right audience which will appreciate his skill.
55. Similarly, after creating innumerable insects, animals, birds and plants, God was surprised and disappointed. He felt that His creation was meaningless.
56. In the infinite expanse of the universe, the sun, the moon and the innumerable stars were there; but there was nobody who wondered even for a moment about the Creator.
57. Not a single living creature had even given a thought to the motive behind the whole creation of the Lord.
58. ‘My whole creation is futile till such time as I have not created a being who will be sharp and intelligent and who will appreciate the prosperity and abundance of my creation’.
59. Having thus thought to Himself, God created man who with his sense of discretion would know His powers.
60. ‘My glory is limitless. My powers are incomparable. This creation is the result of my *Maya*. With wonder he will realise that all this is the sport of my *Maya*.
61. ‘He only will gain knowledge. He only will be able to concentrate on Me and realise Me; he only will be benefitted – then only will the creation be complete.
62. ‘The fulfilment of My creation lies in the great happiness of My spectators (men). Man will be grateful when he will realise My empire and that I am the whole and sole controller or holder of the reins.’
63. Life is not to be lived only for doing work, to fulfil one’s wishes to acquire wealth and for earning money. Until one survives, one should study the philosophy of life. That is the aim of life.
64. The knowledge of reality is oneness. That is also the knowledge of *Brahman*, as prescribed by the *Upanishads*. That is itself the worship of God. That is the real God for the devotees.
65. *Guru* and *Brahman* are not two separate entities. One who has realised the oneness, he (as it were) has practised devotion. This realisation is the easiest way to overcome *Maya*.

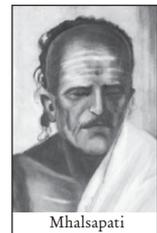
66. Those wise men who have faith, who have acquired knowledge and who are non-attached, who have realised that *atma-tatva*<sup>11</sup> which is experienced by them, know that they are really the fortunate devotees.
67. Those unaware of their own real nature, if without removing their ignorance, believe that they have achieved everything in life, then this is a tremendous obstacle (to their spiritual progress).
68. Knowledge and ignorance, both these elements are born of nescience. You should discard them, just as one removes a thorn by means of another thorn.
69. Remove ignorance through knowledge. Go beyond both knowledge and ignorance. Reach the stage of Pure Self-realisation. This is the only goal for a human life.
70. Pure knowledge will not shine lustrously unless the impure oil in the form of passion is exhausted; and the black soot in the form of ignorance and the wick in the form of ego<sup>12</sup> is not destroyed.
71. Whatever work a man has to perform, whether avoidable or unavoidable, and within the ambit of intelligence, should be certainly considered as duty.
72. If one does not have any other work, one should enjoy wealth and peace, or recite *Ramnam*<sup>13</sup> and be desireless and without worry.
73. The body, the sense organs, the mind and the intellect are all the hinderances of the *Atma* (soul). But by means of these, the soul is able to fully experience this world or existence. The soul itself is unborn and unattached.
74. Only outwardly the soul seems to enjoy, because by nature it is incapable of enjoyment. It is proved by the science of logic and by means of inferences etc.
75. Having understood this essence of life, entrust the intellect to perform all the duties befitting the *karma*. Let the righteousness of the intellect be left to it. One should act without seeking the fruits of action.
76. The performance of one's religious duties; being always engrossed in the meditation of the Inner Self – these are the aims of human birth, whereby inner satisfaction is obtained.
77. There is no other means as effective as human life to fulfil the four principle objects of life<sup>14</sup>. That man who practises these and becomes an expert will reach God.
78. Therefore, till the body is not decaying, try to acquire the knowledge of the soul. Do not waste even a moment of human life.

79. Just as the salt water from the ocean, when it falls down from the clouds <sup>15</sup>, turns sweet as nectar, similarly is the happiness of being at the feet of the Guru.
80. Similarly, the happy state attainable by human life cannot be realised without the Guru. When the Guru gives the necessary help<sup>16</sup> then only will the creatures be delivered.
81. Sacred *mantras*, the *tirath*, the deity, the brahmin, the fortune-teller, and the druggist – thus the seventh in this line is the Guru – all these need faith.
82. Success is achieved in proportion to the faith in all these. Depending upon the intentness of the mind, success varies.
83. For those who are bound to this world, the Saints create the desire for ‘*moksha*’ in their hearts; and for the persons who are seekers of *moksha* they are liberated. The Saints manifest themselves from the non-perceivable self only for the good of others.
84. Whatever is not achieved, through lectures or by reading *Puranas*, is easily understood from the behaviour of a virtuous person (Guru). His attitudes and example are his silent preachings.
85. It is rare to find a person who practises forgiveness, peace, non attachment, kindness, and obliges others, who is in control of his senses and who is devoid of ego.
86. That which is not achieved through reading books is achieved easily by observing the person who practises all the virtues prescribed by the *Shastras*. The sun alone can achieve that which the infinite stars cannot do.
87. Similar are the noble Saints, their numerous, simple<sup>17</sup> actions free those who are tied to the world and are a source of extreme pleasure.
88. One out of these is the great Saint Sai, full of divine attributes and perfections. But he lived like a *fakir* and was always engrossed in Self-Realisation.
89. Whose faith in equality was unshakable; who never uttered the words ‘me’ and ‘mine’; who was always kind to all living beings; he was the very embodiment of God on this earth.
90. He was not overjoyed by pleasure nor saddened by difficulties; for whom the rich and the poor were alike. Is this not something unusual?
91. He whose slightest movement of an eyebrow could make a pauper into a wealthy man in a moment, he roamed from doorstep to doorstep, with his *jholi* in his hand.

92. Blessed are those at whose doorstep, Baba as a mendicant spread his hand, calling “Oh, *lassie*, bring me a quarter of a *bhakri*”.
93. Taking the *tumrel*<sup>18</sup> in one hand and the *jholi*<sup>19</sup> in the other, he himself moved from doorstep to doorstep of the particular houses every day.
94. Vegetables, curry, milk and buttermilk, were all poured into the *tumrel* by the people. Look and wonder at this method of his eating!
95. For cooked rice, or *bhakri*, he would spread the *jholi*; the liquid items he managed to somehow collect in the *tumrel*.
96. How can the desire be born in his heart to taste the different kinds of food separately! How can he wish so, when his tongue has never known the passion for taste.
97. He is content with eating the food which falls in his *jholi*, as per the desire of the giver. He is not aware whether it is tasty or tasteless, because his tongue does not discriminate.
98. During the morning, he would beg alms in the neighbourhood daily; and, had his fill from it and was satisfied with it.
99. Even that was not done regularly. He would go whenever he felt like it. Sometimes he would go in the village and even beg twelve times in the day.
100. In this manner, whatever food he brought, he kept in a pot in the *Masjid*. Even the crows and the dogs would eat from it and he would never drive them away.
101. The woman who swept the *Masjid* and the front courtyard would take ten to twelve *bhakris* from the pot and go to her home. But nobody took objection.
102. The one who would not even dream of contemptuously driving away dogs, and cats, would he refuse the poor and the weak? Blessed is his life!
103. In the beginning, he was well-known amongst the people as the mad *fakir*. The one who filled his stomach by begging for food, how could he have any grandeur?
104. But the *fakir* was generous by nature. Never expecting anything in return and loving, outwardly he looked wavering but was inwardly steadfast. His behaviour was impossible to understand.
105. In such an ordinary (mean) village, there were some fortunate people who were kind by nature and who regarded him as a Saint.



106. Tatya Kote's mother, whose name was Bayjabai, would put some *bhakris* in a basket and carry it on her head and go into the woods in the afternoon.
107. She would walk for miles, searching in the woods for the mad *fakir*, trampling upon the thick foliage and bow down to his feet on finding him.
108. How can one describe the strength of her devotion! Dry or curried vegetables and *bhakri* she fed Baba with her hands, in the woods, in the noon or late afternoon.
109. This austere devotion of hers was also not forgotten by Baba during his lifetime. Keeping the past in mind he blessed her son with good fortune.
110. Both the husband and wife had great faith in the *fakir* indeed. The *fakir* only was their God; God lives in the faith of the devotee, does'nt He?
111. The *fakir* would be in meditation. Then Bayjabai would lay out the leaf<sup>20</sup>, serve the food from the basket, and make efforts to feed him.
112. "Fakiri is true kingship. Fakiri alone will last forever. Look how evanescent is wealth". Baba said this always.
113. Later on Baba abandoned the woods. He began to stay in the village and accepted food in the *Masjid*. Thus he put an end to the mother's troubles.
114. Since that time, this practice continued which had been started by both<sup>21</sup>. After them, Tatya continued the same.
115. Blessed are those Saints in whose hearts Vasudev<sup>22</sup> resides permanently and blessed are those fortunate devotees who enjoyed the bliss in their company.
116. Tatya was really fortunate. And Mhalsapati had profound religious merit. They equally enjoyed the privilege of Baba's companionship.
117. Tatya and Mhalsapati slept also in the *Masjid*. Baba's incomparable love was for both, equally.
118. East, West and North – their heads in these three directions – the feet touching each other's in the centre.
119. Stretching their bedrolls thus, they chatted about everything. If one began to doze off, the other one kept him awake.
120. If Tatya began snoring, Baba would get up suddenly, turn him around and press his head.



121. Taking Mhalsapati's help, they would hug Tatya, hold him close, press his feet and massage his back.
122. In this manner, for fourteen years, Tatya slept in the *Masjid* near Baba. Oh how lucky were those days, they had passed, the memory of which remained undimmed!
123. Leaving parents at home, Tatya slept in the *Masjid* with Baba, since he liked it. With what measure can we measure that love!? And who can evaluate that grace!?
124. Later on, the father died. Tatya got involved in the household. He himself got married and became a householder. Then he began to sleep at his own home.
125. May that be whatsoever. Faith should be complete – of heart and mind. This alone can give the experience of Sai. Uninvited he stands by his devotees. The devotees are surprised at this.
126. Similarly, there was a well-known gentleman of Rahata, named Kushalchand. He was a rich devotee of Baba and a merchant of the town.
127. The famous Patil, Ganpat Kote was a great favourite of Baba. So was the uncle of Kushalchand – an equally favourite person of Baba.
128. Though Marwari by caste, they<sup>23</sup> were very fond of Baba. They<sup>24</sup> met each other from time to time, and enjoyed the pleasure of these meetings.
129. By the will of God, after some time, the elder *Sethji* died. Even then Baba did not break the ties. In fact his love grew twofold.
130. Later on, Baba's love for Kushalchand increased. Till death, day-by-day, he thought only of his good.
131. Sometimes by bullock cart and sometimes by a *tonga*, Baba would go in the company of his friends, one and a half miles away to Rahata.
132. The village-folk would come forward with drums and wind instruments and Baba would meet them at the boundary. They would do obeisance with love to him.
133. From there, they would take Baba into the village ceremoniously, with great love, joy and music.
134. Kushalchand would then take Baba to his house. Thereafter, serving some refreshments, they would sit leisurely.



135. Then they would exchange nostalgic memories. And the happiness they mutually enjoyed could not be described.
136. In this way, after relaxation and after eating the fruits and refreshments, Baba would return with his entourage, in a contented mood<sup>25</sup>.
137. On one side Rahata stood – on the other Nimgaon. Shirdi was midway – a small village with a small population.
138. But from the centrepiece, he never moved physically except to these two villages, although he had the knowledge of all quarters.
139. Neither had he travelled nor had he seen the railways. But he knew the timings of the trains, their arrival and departure time-table.
140. To catch the train, the devotee would make all the preparations and then go to seek Baba's permission, when he would say : "What is the hurry?"
141. "Baba if I do not hasten. I will miss the train to Bombay and lose my job as my master would throw me out".
142. "There is no other master here. Why are you in such haste? Go and eat a little. Go after the afternoon meal".
143. Who is there who would dare to disobey those words! The young, the old, the wise and the learned knew this from their own experience.
144. Whoever followed his orders, never missed their train. But those who did not follow them, they faced the direct consequences.
145. One after another, the unique, innumerable experiences of such people, of different kinds, I will tell you, later on, in short.
146. Hemadpant surrenders at the feet of Sai and in the next chapter he will continue the same subject about how the devotees returned (from Shirdi) to their village and how Baba would give the orders.
147. Those who had the permission could leave and those who did not would stay. Those who disobeyed would suffer. This will be described in the next chapter.
148. And also about why Baba adopted the ways of a mendicant and why he ate the food that he begged for – for the sake of washing away of the sins committed daily, when animal life is accidentally destroyed. All this would be told later.
149. Therefore I pray at the feet of the listeners, and persuade them, every moment, to listen to the Sai-Charita, for the sake of their own good.

May there be well-being! This is the end of the eighth chapter “The Incarnation of Sai Samartha” of *Sree Sai Samartha Satcharita*, written by the devotee Hemadpant impelled by Saints and virtuous people.

This is offered to Sree Sadguru Sainath.

May there be auspiciousness!

#### Notes :

1. Light kept burning before a deity continuously during night and day, which is called ‘Nanda-deep’.
2. One is unaware of the subtle changes taking place within the body.
3. He was blessed with a very long life.
4. Like an emperor.
5. Ultimate spiritual goal.
6. An ancient king of the Solar dynasty, the great grandson of Sagara, who brought down, by the most austere penances, the celestial river Ganga from heaven to earth and from earth to lower regions to purify the ashes of his 60,000 ancestors, the sons of Sagara.
7. That he will have human birth.
8. Such as a bird or animal or insect.
9. Like a tree.
10. Good works and observance of the moral and ceremonial parts of religion, as secondary means of obtaining purity and emancipation.
11. Essence of the Supreme Spirit.
12. ‘I’ and ‘my’ ness.
13. The name of Ram or the Lord.
14. *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha* – living by the right conduct, acquiring wealth, having spouse and progeny and attaining salvation.
15. After due process of evaporation as rain.
16. Takes under his wings.
17. Outwardly simple for observers – but full of deep meaning.
18. Tin for collecting gravied food.
19. Four – cornered cloth used for collecting alms.
20. Which served as a plate.
21. Bayjabai and her husband Ganpat.
22. The father of Lord Krishna. He belonged to the Yadava branch of the solar race. Vasudev is also one of the many names of Lord Vishnu.
23. Kushalchand and his uncle.
24. Baba and the men from Rahata.
25. H.S. Dixit had an incident to relate in this connection:- One day, in the latter part of the day, Maharaj said to me that Kushalbhau had not come since many days. ‘Go with the tonga to Rahata and bring him. Tell him that Baba has called you’. Accordingly, I went with a tonga to Rahata and met Kushalbhau. He said: ‘I had napped after the afternoon meal. No sooner than I dozed that Maharaj appeared in my dream and said: ‘Come to Shirdi’. Therefore, I desired to go there but since my horses are not here to-day, I could not do so. Therefore, I have just sent my son to Shirdi.’ I responded: ‘That is why Maharaj has sent me with a *tonga*. My *tonga* is ready if you are willing to come.’ He, thereafter, came with me, with great pleasure.



How can one describe the strength of her devotion?! Dry or curried vegetables and *bhakri* she (Bayjabai) fed Baba with her hands, in the woods, in the noon or late afternoon. (Ch.8, ovi 108)



Bayjabai G. Kote Patil