

## The Bestowal of Sai's Grace and Favour

*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. This is the greatness of the stories of Sai. However much one hears them, there is no need for encouragement. The listeners themselves remember how the earlier story ended and remain very attentive to listen.
2. Where is the need of asking the listeners to pay attention to the story when they are already eager to listen with concentrated mind?
3. While singing the greatness of one's own Guru and listening about him, the mind will be purified. The repetition of his name with steady concentration, will result in the manifestation of the embodiment of bliss.
4. In the previous chapter was narrated how the *udyapan* of a vow was completed, according to the rituals, along with the indication of the reality of the dream (to Hemad).
5. Similarly, how Sai's picture arrived unexpectedly through someone and how it fulfilled my desire at the right time. Hear the story of that now.
6. On one *Holi* festival, Sai gave me a dream stating that he would come for a meal and how he fulfilled my desire.
7. I have already told that story in detail. But the marvel of how that picture came on time – listen to that today with respect.
8. The story was told by Alli Mohammed which I felt was greatly amazing. This was also evidently a *leela* which was very amusing.
9. It was he, who on that *Holi* day, just as we were sitting down for lunch in the afternoon, who brought it and made me joyous.
10. This is the reference to the earlier story. Now, listeners please hear the further narration attentively of Sai's holy story.

11. This entire story is excellent. The listeners are already attentive. The narrator is humble at the feet of Sai. Sai's story is unfathomable.
12. He was the very embodiment of benevolence. He wore out his body for that purpose. His nature was such that he had no enmity towards anyone and he always engaged in doing good deeds.
13. Whatever be the condition, good or bad, the body must do its duties as destined. But introvert your senses towards the Guru's feet with all the love.
14. Then, with excellent experience, observe how the Guru takes care of the welfare of his devotee, ceaselessly, with love for the Guru in your heart.
15. This state cannot be had for the asking. But what cannot be attained with great effort can come on its own with the worship of the Guru and with Guru's grace, easily.
16. Those who came to closely observe and with pride, they also returned leaving behind their ego deriving happiness from the pleasure of the *darshan*.
17. Sai had all the six great attributes which are the adornment of God – glory, wealth, munificence, knowledge, peace and detachment.
18. How great is our good fortune that Sai, the Cloud of Pure Consciousness, gives us *darshan* without worship, *puja* or other rituals.
19. It is said that "God resides where there is devotion". There is a lack of devotion within us, but this Sai, the great Saint has a compassionate nature towards the miserable.
20. So, now listen to the story which Alli told with attention. You will understand the profundity of Sai's *leela* and his powers.
21. One day while I was walking along a street in Bombay, I saw a shopkeeper who had pleasing pictures and portraits.
22. There were beautiful pictures of all kinds – of Saints, *Mahants* and *Aulias*. Looking at them, I was confused as to which I should see.
23. Then seeing one at a time, I liked this picture which was more pleasing than the others and moreover was of the one that I worshipped.
24. I already loved Sai. Seeing his picture in front of me, I felt like buying it immediately. So I paid cash for it.
25. Then I brought that picture home and hung it on a wall. I daily had *darshan* of it with joy, as I loved Baba greatly.
26. Three months before I gave it to you, I was not well and had gone to live with my sister's husband.

27. Noor Mohammed Peerbhoy was my brother-in-law. My leg was swollen and I had been operated upon.
28. As I was suffering on account of it, I stayed there three months. There was no one at my home during that period.
29. But the well-known Baba Abdul Rahiman, Moulana Saheb Mohammed Hussain, Baba Sai, Tajuddin Baba were in that home.
30. The pictures of all these and others were hanging on the wall, beautifying my home. But destiny did not leave them also.
31. Here I was in this state and even the pictures were caught in the bad period of Saturn for seven and a half years! I think that whatever has been created will face destruction inevitably.
32. This being the case, how Sai alone became an exception no one has been able to explain to me till this day.
33. When you listen to the whole story about this you will be amazed. You will understand Sai's oneness with the movable and immovable. His powers are inconceivable.
34. A small picture of Saint Baba Abdul Rahiman was with Mohamed Hussain, who was known as Thariya.
35. Many years ago he had given me a copy of it, which I gave to my brother-in-law, as he was his devotee.
36. It was lying for about eight years in the drawer of his table. When he came across it unexpectedly once, he took it to a photographer's shop in Bombay.
37. He enlarged the photograph to match the life-size Baba Abdul, so that he could take it as a gift for him, so that he would be filled with love.
38. He made some more copies and gave them all to friends and relatives, out of which he gave me one too and I hung it on the wall.
39. Then this extremely beautiful picture, Noor Mohamed became anxious to present it to Abdul Rahiman, when that Saint had many people assembled around him, with reverence.
40. Abdul Rahiman, on seeing the picture and realising his intentions, became extremely angry and got up to beat him.
41. Abusing him and treating him with indignity, he sent him away. Because of this, he became very dejected and it created a lot of anxiety.
42. He felt humbled, impoverished, sad and dejected. Not only had he lost a lot of money but also the Guru's grace. A difficulty had arisen.

43. 'Till this day I was endowed with the Guru's favours. But the same me has now become the cause of his anger'. Thinking thus and being in doubts, he began to immerse the pictures.
44. He said: 'From now onwards I will not keep the pictures of Saints in my home. I have lost my Guru's love because of them. Why should I do this work without any fulfilment?'
45. Further he said: 'If my Guru is annoyed with me because of this picture, it will get me into difficulties some time or the other. It is of no use to me.'
46. 'This is also image worship, which my Guru disapproves. Then why displease him? What is the purpose of this picture for me?'
47. 'A lot of expenditure has been incurred for collecting these pictures. But there is no alternative than to immerse them'.
48. Therefore, my brother-in-law thereafter carrying that picture himself went to the dock to immerse it, refusing to give it to anyone who asked for it.
49. He went right upto Appollo Bunder, hired a boat, went as far as he could in the sea, and finally immersed it.
50. So be it. He did not stop at that. He did the same thing at Bandra. He persuaded all friends and relatives to return the copies of the photo to him.
51. He said: 'Abdul Baba is angry. All those who have the photographs must return them, as they have to be immersed'. He requested all in this manner.
52. The one that was given to me too was taken back, also my brother's; and my sister's was also snatched away. In all, he got back six copies.
53. Then after taking all the six copies to the seashore at Bandra, at land's end, he arrived there with anger.
54. Calling a fisherman, he entrusted all the pictures to him to immerse them in the sea waters.
55. At that time, I was ill and suffering and was at his home. He gave me the same advice and said: 'These pictures bring difficulties.'
56. 'Therefore, when you collect all of them and immerse them in the sea, only then will you be freed from your sufferings. Know that certainly'.
57. Then I too called my *munim* (manager), handed over the key (of the house) to him and got all the pictures of the Saints; and handed them over to my brother-in-law to do the needful.

58. He called his gardener and asked him to immerse them immediately in the sea near the temple of Chimbai.
59. Two months after this, when I felt better and returned to my home, I was greatly surprised.
60. On the wall facing the door was hanging in its place the picture (of Sai) which I gave to you. Seeing it, I was greatly astonished.
61. How had the *munim* left this picture behind when he had brought all the pictures? So I immediately removed it and hid it in the cupboard.
62. I was afraid that if my brother-in-law saw it, he would immediately take it for an immersion into the sea.
63. It should not be kept in the house. No sooner than my brother-in-law would see it he would immerse it, with his own hands. Nor could I give it, with my mind free from doubts or suspicion to anyone else, who may not have been a devotee.
64. If I gave it to anyone without proper thought and it was not properly taken care of, I would always regret it and it would be a life long anxiety for me.
65. Therefore, I had to find a proper place wherever it would be safe – someone who would keep it at his home properly. I should hand it over to such a person.
66. When I was in this dilemma it seemed that Sai himself gave me a good idea to go to the Moulana's *darbar*. And I told the problem to Isamusa.
67. So I immediately went to Pir Maulana's *darbar* and told the whole story to the *Mujavar* Isamusa with respect, when he was alone.
68. We both came to the conclusion that it would be safe with you. Therefore, that same day both of us decided to act upon it.
69. This picture of *Samartha* Sai should be kept with you only. We should ourselves hand it over to you and then only it would be safe.
70. So, according to our firm decision, we presented the picture to you with reverence. But seeing that the lunch was about to be served, I returned hurriedly.
71. You did not have the time to listen to this long story at that time. So I decided to narrate it to you at leisure, and with that intention left.
72. It got postponed day after day, and nine years passed away. Today we have both met again unexpectedly”.

73. With this narration I was reminded about the earlier background. I related to him the marvel of my dream and the connection between the two was marvellous. Isn't this *leela* wonderful?
74. Now listen attentively to another story, about how Sai lovingly took care of his loving devotees.
75. Sai is very fond of those who have true love for spirituality. Removing all their difficulties, he enjoins them to bliss.
76. Balasaheb Deo had an interesting experience of this kind in fulfilling his vow. His wish was fulfilled and he was enjoined to *bhakti*.
77. There was no way out except to do service during the day for his livelihood. But at night, why should there be obstruction in his exertions for spirituality?
78. He had the desire since a long time to regularly read the *Dr̥yaneshwari*. But due to some difficulty or the other, he was not able to do so.
79. Just as he read one chapter of the *Gita* every day he wanted to read one chapter of the *Dr̥yaneshwari* but he could not do so without interruption.
80. When he undertook the reading of any other religious book, he could do so regularly; but as for the *Dr̥yaneshwari* which he greatly loved, it eluded him.
81. Once Deo took leave for three months to first go to Shirdi and then to his home at Poud for rest.
82. What happened there? There also he read other religious books regularly but his wish for *Dr̥yaneshwari* was unfulfilled as the opportune time did not come.
83. Whenever he took up the *Dr̥yaneshwari*, some doubts arose in his mind. So his reading became superficial and he could not create love for it.
84. What is the point in being distressed when he could not succeed in his resolution? He could not read even five stanzas every day.
85. He made a decision to read five stanzas every day. "I could not even do that much reading with joy and regularity.
86. "Therefore, I came to the conclusion that only when Sai created love for it and says 'read', that I will undertake the reading without any problems.
87. "I have faith in Sai. When Sai instructs me to do so, I will read the *Dr̥yaneshwari* then only. So I will wait with this firm decision".
88. So be it. Then, in the month of February 1914, Deo came to Shirdi

with his mother and wife to see the pomp of the *Gurupuja* on *Mahoday Parva*<sup>1</sup>.

89. Jog asked Deo then why he was not reading *Dñyaneshwari* regularly. Listen to his reply.
90. “I have a great love for the *Dñyaneshwari*, but I am not successful in reading it. Now, only when Baba tells me to read it, I will read it then”.
91. Then Jog told him a stratagem. “Get the *Dñyaneshwari pothi* and give it in Sai Baba’s hand. He will give it to you to read”.
92. “I need no stratagem. Baba knows my innermost thoughts. Why can he not fulfil my desire and clearly say ‘READ’?”
93. When he went for the *darshan* of the *Samartha*, he offered him one rupee. “Why one? Bring twenty,” said Baba to him, then.
94. He brought twenty rupees and gave them. At night he met Balakram. He inquired of him how he had secured Baba’s grace.
95. “Tomorrow, after the *arati* I will tell you the whole story”, Balakram assured him and Deo agreed to that.
96. Then the next day when Deo went to the *Masjid* for *darshan* he was asked for twenty rupees which he gave with pleasure.
97. Seeing that it was very crowded there, Deo went aside. Baba asked: “Where is he hiding in a narrow difficult place?”
98. Deo replied: “Baba, here, I am here”. Baba then asked him “Why did you give me only seven rupees?”
99. Deo replied: “I have given twenty”. Baba asked: “Whose money is it?” “Baba it is yours,” he replied. Baba said: “Why are you running away then?”
100. Come here, come close. Sit near by with a calm mind”. Deo followed the instructions, and sat there with a devoted heart.
101. The *arati* was done as usual. The assembled people returned to their homes. Balakram and Deo met again and the earlier question was again asked.
102. He asked him about his earlier life and Balakram told him everything from the beginning and how he was instructed in spirituality.
103. “Have you been told how to meditate? Please satisfy my desire,” entreated Deo.
104. As Balakram was about to start answering Deo’s question to satisfy his desire, Baba sent for Deo.
105. How extremely artful was Sai! He sent Chandru<sup>2</sup> to call Deo. Without wasting a moment, Deo came to meet Sree Sai.

106. It was afternoon. Sree Sai was seen, leaning both his hands on the wall of the *Masjid*.
107. As soon as he went, Deo bowed to him. Baba then asked him, "Where, with whom, and what were you talking?"
108. Then Deo replied: "On the upper storey of Kaka's house, I was hearing about your glory from Balakram and talking about it".
109. Baba ordered Deo: "Bring twenty-five rupees". Bringing the money immediately, he tendered them to Baba.
110. "How many did you bring?" Baba asked. Deo replied: "Twenty-five". Baba said: "Come, sit down" and Deo went with Baba to the *Masjid*.
111. Baba sat near the pillar and there was no one else in the *Masjid*. He said: "You have stolen my rags, without my knowledge".
112. "I know nothing about any rags", explained Deo. "Then, look for them somewhere here", Sai told him.
113. "Where are there any rags here" Deo asked at that moment. Baba got up saying: "You search for them. Stealing is a bad habit.
114. Some brat has taken them! Look! Look! They should be here!" Hearing this, Deo looked again but he did not find any.
115. Then raising his eyebrows, Baba looked here and there. With eyes fixed on Deo, Sai shouted at him.
116. "You are a liar! Who is here besides you at this time to steal the rags? I believe you are the thief.
117. Do you come here to steal, in this way? Your hair has turned from black to white but your bad ways have not gone!
118. I will hit you with an axe. I will cut you to pieces and kill you. Where will you escape from me? Wherever you are, I will come and kill you.
119. When you come to Shirdi from home, is it to steal? Take this back, which is yours. Bring back my rags to me".
120. Sai became red with anger. He abused him with a string of words, beginning with the mother and the grand mother. He became redder with fury.
121. Seeing that Sainath was furious, Deo stood still watching him with wonder and full of inner amazement.
122. Deo was near him and alone and felt that his turn had come to receive a beating. Or was this a beautiful vision of God? Believing this, he was choked with joy.
123. 'Will he take the *satka* in his hand now and will he beat me with anger? I am alone and in his hands now. Let him do what he wills.

124. But what is this mystery about the rags?’ Deo did not understand anything. “Go, go away to one place”! When Sainath said this, he moved towards the steps.
125. I am incapable of understanding this hidden meaning about the ‘rags’. If I receive Sai’s grace and learn about it, I will relate it to the listeners.
126. Within a quarter of an hour, Deo again faced Baba, when the abuses were still continuing. “Have you again come up?” Sai said.
127. “Go away again to the *wada*”! As Baba said this, Deo obeyed the orders, bowed at Sai’s feet and returned to the *wada*.
128. All that had happened and the manner in which it had taken place was described from beginning to end by Deo to Jog and Balakram.
129. Baba’s volley of abuses continued for nearly half an hour. After quite some time, Baba himself called for the people.
130. Deo also then came and sat in the midst of others. “The old man must have felt bad”, said Sree Sai later.
131. “What is the value of rags? Even then I have offended him by using abusive language. But he had committed a theft, so what was the remedy but to speak out?
132. So be it. God will see to everything and will benefit him. So, Bhau, will you give some *dakshina*?”
133. “How much shall I bring?” Deo asked. “Bring twelve rupees immediately”. When Deo saw he only had a currency note and no loose coins.
134. Deo told this to Baba. “Never mind I do not want it. In the morning you gave me twice and forgot about it”. Baba said.
135. Even so, Deo obtained the money and gave them to Baba, and bowed at Baba’s feet. Hear the words that ensued.
136. “What are you doing?” Baba asked. “Nothing”. When he got this reply, he said, “Read the *Pothi* regularly”. This is what he ordered Deo to do.
137. “Go and sit in the *wada*. Read it regularly. While reading explain the portion read to all with love and devotion.
138. I am sitting here ready to give you a whole *zari*-embroidered mantle, then why should you steal rags? Have you got in the habit of stealing?”
139. So be it. “The words of Sai to read the *Pothi* fulfilled my innermost desire and I was extremely happy.
140. Obeying the order, I then started from that day onwards reading the *Drīyaneshwari* regularly and also started explaining it.

141. Now I had got the desired orders. The worry of my mind in keeping my vow was removed. From now on, while reading the *Dṛīyaneshwari* there will be regularity in the work.
142. Now with my Guru's orders, *Dṛīyaneshwari* is also propitiated. Irrespective of whatever has happened in the past, I shall now be regular.
143. I am confident that with Sai's orders, and with the power of his instructions, I will be able to do the *parayan* of the *pothi* without any obstacles'.
144. "Baba! I come prostrated before you. I am totally surrendered to you. Take this child, under your wing. Get the *pothi* read by me".
145. 'I realised what was meant by 'rags'. What I had asked Balakram, constituted 'rags' and Sai had not approved of that and had, therefore, got angry.
146. 'Baba had not liked my questioning Balakram as to how he worshipped or how he meditated on *Parabrahma*.
147. As Baba was ready to answer any questions himself, why ask questions to one another? Therefore, I had been tremendously harassed.
148. 'Harassed' – that word itself is rude and impudent. He who was overflowing with love for the devotees did not even dream of harassing his devotees. Then the word and its use is wrong.
149. He did not harass but he taught me, that 'whatever is in your mind, all that has to be fulfilled by me and whatever is stolen will never be of any use'.
150. Though Sai appeared outwardly to be angry he was always calm within. He appeared angry outwardly but he was full of bliss within.
151. The anger that was shown outwardly was on account of affection. Within, he was in divine bliss. One must be fortunate to sing of the grandeur of that Sai's *leela*.
152. He who has an intense desire to achieve his objective believes that the volley of abuses is a shower of flowers and blessings, keeping one's mind fixed on one's own welfare.
153. Deo was not shaken on hearing the very abusive words which were offensive to the ears. He was full of love for Baba and he felt that only a shower of flowers had rained on him.
154. "Only the fortunate can enjoy the milk with which the cow's teat is gorged. The cattle louse, though near the teats full of milk, prefers blood due to its fate.
155. "The frog lives in the vicinity of the lotus flowers. The bee snatches

- the honey from the lotus, while unfortunately the frog eats only the filth. There is no limit to the bee’s good fortune.
156. “Similarly, you are fortunate. We are close to one another. Ask whatever you want and get your doubts clarified”, says Sai.
157. “Observe my obstinacy about the *pothi*. I did not open the *Dṛīyaneshwari* to read till the moment he said READ. And Baba fully fulfilled my desire”.
158. How the darling mother spoils the child, and fulfils his desires! This is the story of this sweet experience, which strengthens devotion.
159. Deo said: “He did not stop at merely directing me to read. Before a year passed, he gave me a dream vision. Listen to the amazing question, he asked me.
160. On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1914<sup>3</sup>, on Thursday morning, I got a boon of a dream.
161. Sai *Samartha* appeared in the dream to have come and was sitting on the first floor. He asked me if I understood the *pothi*, to which I replied in the negative.
162. Another question then followed. “When will you understand it then?” My eyes were filled with tears and hear the answer I gave.
163. ““Reading the *pothi* is mere worry unless you shower your grace and understanding it is even more difficult. Baba, I confess this clearly.”
164. Baba said: “While reading the *pothi*, you make too much haste. Read it, in my presence, sitting near me”.
165. When Deo asked what he should read, he was told to read *Adhyatma*. As Deo went to fetch the book, his eyes opened.
166. Deo awakened then. Listeners can imagine the state of his mind when he thought of the dream.
167. Who else would care to wait for a year<sup>3</sup> and then find out if the child is obeying the instructions strictly and regularly reading the *pothi* ? Who would take on such an unnecessary worry?
168. Has the discipline been followed? Has the lesson been regularly followed? Where and why is there any failure? Who else would show this concern?
169. What should the reader pay attention to? What should be given greater importance? Sai, the loving mother, alone can emphasise this.
170. The devotees experienced on many occasions such *leelas* of Sai *Samartha* and enjoyed the heavenly bliss. I have seen that with my own eyes.
171. Now, all you assembled listeners, being humble at the lotus feet of the Guru, hear the next novel story, at the proper time.

172. Remembering the feet of Sree *Samartha*, I come and prostrate with all true faith, which alone will remove all the sorrows of this world. Hemad surrenders with devotion.

173. Sai alone is my motivation. Sai alone is the supreme happiness of spirituality; Sai alone can fulfil me. This is my firm conviction.

May there be well-being. This is the end of the forty-first chapter of the *Sree Sai Samartha Satcharita*, written by the devotee Hemadpant, impelled by Saints and virtuous people, called “The Bestowal of Sai’s Grace and Favour”.

This is offered to Sree Sadguru Sainath.

May there be auspiciousness!

#### Notes :

1. A festival of joy. A good action that confers special merit upon the performance.
2. A leper devotee, who was near Baba at that time.
3. Deo got this dream within two months of his trip to Shirdi. The question of a year did not arise.



While singing the greatness of one’s own Guru and listening about him, the mind will be purified. The repetition of his name with steady concentration, will result in the manifestation of the embodiment of bliss. (Ch. 41, ovi 3)