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Faith in the goal

An extract from a divine discourse by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on October 3, 1981

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**When each desire is fulfilled
God is loved, adored and
thanked;
When no desire is fulfilled
God is denied, discarded and
dismissed!**

This *Kali Yuga* is praised in the scriptures as incomparably conducive to the salvation of man, for he can now attain the Highest through the mere thought of God and remembering His name.

So, of all the *Yugas*, this *Yuga* is described as the most holy, the most beneficent. *Dhyaana* (meditation) was prescribed as the means of liberation for men in the *Kritha Yuga*, *thapas* (penance) as the means during the *Tretha Yuga* and *archana* (ritual worship) for the *Dhwaapara Yuga*. But, for people of this *Yuga*, the simple remedy prescribed is just *Naamasmarana*, the constant

awareness of the Name. In spite of this, it is a pity that men do not care for this path and so render their lives barren wastes.

Unless you give up, you cannot acquire--- that is the rule of life. Even trivial things cannot be won without parting with something. One has to pay to secure the most precious of all gifts, the gift of the awareness of the *Aathma!* To earn this, one has to give up sensual pleasures, but is this too big a price? In fact, what is renounced is not pleasure at all. It is fraught with pain too. Can you not give up grief to earn joy, evil to earn good, diversity to earn unity, many to earn one?

One must strive for victory in the struggle against the whims and wiles of the senses.



One must focus all one's physical and mental resources to earn success; one must fill oneself with Divine Grace by

offering his strength and skill for Divine purposes.

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Purpose gives taste to living

Every activity has a goal, an end in view. Proceeding to the market, going to school--- each has a purpose. When such momentary and short-lived activities are motivated by goals, how can one pass 60 or 70 years of life on earth with no purpose guiding him and leading him on? Purpose gives taste to living. When *the pappu* (boiled lentles) on your plate lacks *uppu* (salt), you push it aside! But, you wade through years and years leading tasteless, insipid lives without *uppu* (God) added to *pappu* (Life).



When praised, man gets inflated, when blamed, he gets deflated. But for one who trusts in God, for the *Bhaktha*, these reactions are signs of weakness. Man must withstand both praise and blame, success and failure, pleasure and pain, like the Meru mountain peak. He must strive to be steadfast and unmoved. Once you collect desires, you become their slave; you will find no end to them. When they are attained, others assail you and still leave you discontented. Be aware of your innate Divinity and show these recurring desires their due place. *The Aathma* in you is unaffected by desire or defeat or victory. They are passing clouds. The Sun is not concerned with their comings and goings.

No one is unfamiliar with the Raamaayana. It describes the Dhandhaka forest, heavy with thick darkness and terrible with the resounding roar of wild beasts. It was infested with frightful gangs of *raakshasas* (demons). Suurpanakha was a demoness who roamed therein. Khara was a demon of the same nature. On some open patches of this jungle, *rishees* (sages) who were leading pure unselfish God-centred lives had their hermitages. And, into this forest came, as exiles, Prince Raama, Lakshmana, his brother, and Seetha, Raama's consort. They spent some days with great

sages like Agasthya and Sharabhanga. They found the ascetic Shabari also in her retreat. As a result, Raama destroyed the demons and restored peace in the region for the sages to perform their spiritual practices and rituals undisturbed.

Faith and surrender can ensure peace and joy

This is what the epic says. But, where exactly is the Dhandhaka forest? You need not look for it on any map or turn over the pages of history. It is the heart of every man. The evil feelings are the *raakshasas*; the good thoughts are the *rishis*. Raama is the personification of *viveka*, the discriminating faculty of the intellect. Seetha and Lakshmana are the higher levels of *consciousness---sujnaana* and *prajnaana*. Raama puts an end to evil feelings and

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promotes good thoughts. Raama is the Emperor of Ayodhya. That name means "Impregnable," "with no enemy," that is to say, no injurious or demeaning feeling or thought, can invade the heart when Raama is installed therein. Thyaagaraaja sang, "*Thelisi Raama chinthana cheyave manasa*" (Oh! Mind! Meditate on Raama with the full knowledge of what He represents).

When I speak, you hear the speech via the microphone through the loud speakers. You listen to the instrument, the loudspeaker, but I am the speaker. So, too, when your tongue utters the words, it is *the Aathma* that prompts and shapes the words. The owner sits in the car and travels.


The car, your body, has four wheels on the ground (*dharma, artha, kaama, moksha*---the four human goals virtue, prosperity, desire fulfilment and liberation) and they are filled with air. Faith is the air which makes your travel smooth. It has to be uniform in all the four wheels. The steering-wheel inside the car directs the outer wheels. The wheel is the 'mind'. The food and drink you take is the petrol for the car and its 'horn' is the tongue. You are journeying along the road of ups and downs (*Samsaara*) in this car. Recognise that God is the person at the wheel.

He will take you happily to the destination. Have faith in Him and be free from fear,

anxiety and agitation. Surrender to Him. His grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles. Faith and surrender are the manifestations of *bhakthi* (devotion). They can ensure peace and joy for you and all mankind.



At the present time, when we see all over the country confusion, fear and anxiety, each one must contribute his share of cool, calm Love to suppress the anger of fury. No Governmental authority can suppress it as effectively and as quickly as you can by love and brotherliness. The world can be saved only by the power of the Aathma inherent in every one; this has to be tapped by individual Saadhana, and by the Grace of God which can be won only through Love, Purity and Service.



ATMAJYOTHI – The Eternal Light of SatChitAnanda

By Shri Lakshminarayan Aithal

(Shri Lakshminarayan Aithal has served for over 3 decades in Swami's institution and is the former Principal of the Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva Institutions at Muddenahalli. Inspired by Swami's direct message to study the Upanishads, he first learnt Sanskrit and then studied the direct works of Adi Shankaracharya and Swami. Sincere perseverance led him to the reality of Aham Brahmasmi and He realized and experienced Swami's words: "I am God and so are you". He shares the import of the Upanishadic teachings with us in this series of articles.)



(From the previous two editions, we began a new series of articles in this section entitled Vedanta Praveshika: an Entrance to Vedanta. This is a guided discussion on the essence of Vedanta which shows us how to deliberate and reach the conclusion that we are actually Premaswaroopas and not the mind-body-intellect complex.)

To know the body and organs we have the means of the mind. The mind knows all these objects and there, the mind may be the I-object. Naturally, this doubt may arise. Actually, this doubt is not suitable one. This is because-

I AM NEITHER MIND, NOR EGOTISM.

- i) We think that ' I am stout, I am a white man, I am a youth, I see, I listen, etc.'
- ii) We know that: ' It is my body, my eye, my ear, etc. '
- iii) Body, etc. are the subjects of that knowledge and these subjects are separated from us.

For these reasons it is clearly understood that we are not body, etc.

Similarly, we tell ' my mind'; therefore, the mind is also separated from me. We can know this by an example of a microscope. A microscope is an instrument to see subtle objects. Similarly, the mind is an instrument. The organs of sense are external instruments(Bahihi-karanaani); and the mind is an inner instrument (Antah-karanam); and it means that the mind is an instrument of knowledge. An instrument is an inert object alone. We are living beings who use it. Not only that, the mind moves about here and there. When the mind is connected with the organs of sense, then only, we have the knowledge of external things. That is why, sometimes, though the eyes see or ears hear, we don't understand anything. We tell like this: 'What you have told? I have not understood clearly. I felt someone

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has come, it is not clear.' In that case, the mind of ours has gone somewhere; that is why, we don't have the knowledge of sound or the sight. Therefore, it is settled that the mind is separate; and I who am watching its movements, is different from the mind.

All right. We use to tell: 'I knew, I saw, I heard, etc.' - in these cases, don't we get the I-feeling? Is this I-feeling our real form? If this I-feeling is our real form, consideration of many people becomes the right understanding. They consider: 'I am the body and I know through the mind; I use the body and organs of sense. I am in this corner of the world.' If this I-feeling is the real knowledge; how do we compare this with the previous statement? That statement is: 'I-feeling is not the real knowledge; and I am the Supreme Lord who is eternally pure, and who is Awareness and who is Liberated. This is the real knowledge.' How do we compare these two statements? This objection is natural.

A relief for the objection may be given thus: We use this I-feeling in our daily activities. The I-feeling that appears is not our real form. The above mentioned inner-instrument itself appears in the form of 'I'. 'I am knowing this through the organs of sense'- this action of knowing is a change in the inner-

instrument. The Vedantins call this change as the mind. The inner-instrument appears in the form of me. This change of the inner-instrument is called egotism. I and mind are the changes of the inner-instrument. Therefore, as the mind is separated from us, so the egotism is also separated.

A few points should be noted to know that egotism is different from our own form. In the wakeful state, sometimes, as the mind is not perceived by us, so the egotism is also not perceived. Really speaking, we always involve in the external affairs and the I-feeling never appears unless we purposefully investigate the egotism. Those who set themselves for the investigation of the Reality alone observe "I-feeling and this feeling". And they alone separate themselves from these feelings. The rest of the people don't see the I-feeling. When we are absorbed in sleep we never even see the taint of egotism. Still, we don't consider that we don't have our own form in the deep sleep. Therefore, this I-feeling appears only in two states- wakeful and dream and the egotism is a means for our daily activities. It is concluded that egotism is separate from our True Form.

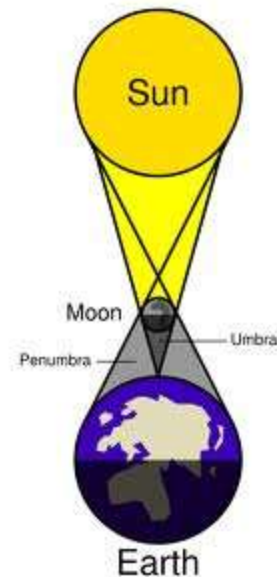
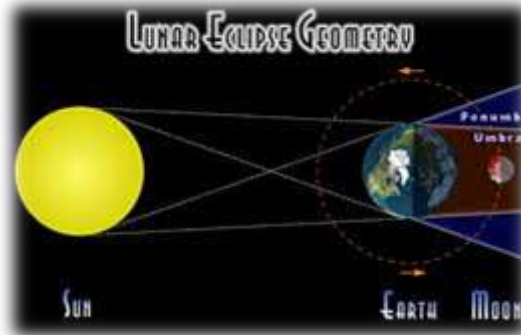
(This deliberation on how we are not mind, intellect or ego will be continued in the next few editions of Venugaanam.)

DIFFERENT STROKES- ASTROLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY:**ECLIPSES- MYTH AND REALITY****By KVRK Bhargav**

(Bhargav is a student of Swami who after completing his B.Tech in Textile Engineering graduated with an MBA from the the Sri Sathya Sai University in 2001. Ever since, he has had the great fortune of waiting for Swami's direct guidance. He has been blessed with many interactions with Swami and he pursues astrology as a hobby to understand how it complements and dovetails spirituality. He shares his insights on how the planets are not causes of fear; rather they all serve the common goal of prodding man towards his spiritual destiny of Self Realization)



Swami sitting majestically in the bhajan hall throne, waiting for bhajans to start, beckoned one boy and enquired, " Is there any special event tonight? The boy kneeling down with folded hands and replied, "I don't know Swami". Swami quickly rejoined commandingly, "Dunnapota! Tonight there is a lunar eclipse, spend the night in prayer, small spiritual sadhana at this time can give rich dividends." That night all students did combined prayers during the eclipse time as it was the command of the divine master.

**Solar Eclipse geometry**

steeped in mystery and many legends and myths have been born with them as the central theme. Let us try and unravel the mystery behind it.

Eclipses have fascinated man since time immemorial. Eclipses and their influence on collective human consciousness is always

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Eclipses, talking purely from astronomical point of view, are occurrences due to the relative placement of Sun, Moon and our planet Earth. Lunar eclipse takes place on a full moon day when shadow of earth falls on the moon obscuring it from our view. Similarly, solar eclipse occurs on a new moon day when moon comes between sun and earth.

Ancient sages and philosophers had perfect knowledge of eclipses and their exact occurrence due to the science of astrology. Astrologically the nodes of moon Rahu and Ketu cause the eclipses. An eclipse happens when the sun, moon and the axis of Rahu and Ketu overlap. In Indian mythology, a symbolism of a snake is used to represent Rahu and Ketu which gulp down the Sun and Moon during their respective eclipses.

The level of science was so advanced that our ancient vedic scholars were able to predict



Rahu Devouring the Sun

the exact occurrence, the duration and the effects of it on human beings with utmost precision. The modern science which generally deals with the physical and gross world has gained laudable expertise regarding the prediction and duration of eclipses. But when it comes to its subtle effects on human

personality, mental framework and collective human affairs it falls woefully short.

Sun in astrological terminology represents the soul and the digestive fire and Moon represents the mind and the body fluids like the lymph and blood. When there is an obscuring of these planets in the gross level they exert a considerable influence on their subtle significations. The reason for exponential increase in anti social activities during lunar eclipse speaks for the influence moon exerts on human mind. Vedic wisdom suggests that we should spend this time in doing prayers and meditation as this time is very conducive for spiritual uplift. There is also



Ida, Pingala and Sushmana nadis and the chakras

a strict regimen which has to be followed regarding diet. I recall one instance in my college days, when Swami specially sent word that the dinner session should be postponed from the usual 7:30pm to 10:00pm till the moon was released from the clutches of Rahu and Ketu. Subsequently, all the utensils were washed thoroughly and cooking commenced and we had dinner at around 10:30pm.

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A possible reason which I contemplate might be that the nadis Ida and Pingala which represent the lunar and solar energies in our body meet the central Sushmana nadi at the solar plexus (Manipura Chakra) and again at the brow chakra (Ajna Chakra), the two principal chakras in the body. During an eclipse the solar and lunar energies go little out of balance, mainly affecting the digestive fire at solar plexus at Manipura Chakra and the mind at the brow centre, the Ajna Chakra.

So our ancient wisdom suggests that we fast to exert minimum load on our digestive system and do spiritual sadhana to energize our mind with positive vibrations.

It is also said food items get contaminated, when the rays emanating during the time of



Darbha Grass

eclipse pervade the atmosphere. Herein lies the utility and value of Darbha grass. Darbha / Kusa grass grows freely in hot and dry places. It is said that a single Darbha grass kept in food items, protects the food from harmful affects of eclipse. Darbha grass is also used in many religious functions. It has even been proved scientifically that even X-ray radiation can be absorbed by Darbha grass. This grass should be freely used to protect foodstuffs during times of eclipse.

Let us now throw some light on the aspect of who should see and who should not see the eclipse. Every eclipse falls in a particular nakshatra of the zodiac. Individuals born in that nakshatra and those born in the corresponding triads of that nakshatra should avoid getting exposed to the rays of a particular eclipse. The triads are:

Aswini- Magha-Moola, Bharani-Poorva Phalguni- Poorva Ashadha, Krittika-Uttara Phalguni-Uttara Ashadha, Rohini-Hasta-Sravana, Mrigasira-Chitra-Dhanistha, Arudra-Swati-Satabhishak, Punarvasu-Vishaka-Poorva Bhadra, Pushya-Anuradha-Uttara Bhadra, Aslesha-Jyestha-Revati.

Eclipse falling in any one of the three forbades the individuals of all the three nakshatras to view it.

Regarding the prayers, the best and universal prayer is Gayatri mantra. One can even chant the mantras of their chosen deities and the mantras which an individual is initiated into by his preceptor. The practice of taking bath before and after the eclipse is also recommended by our pandits. This is a special time when one can achieve mastery over a mantra, known as mantra siddhi, due to manifold increase in the potency of any spiritual endeavour undertaken during an eclipse. Finally one more clarification is that the effect of the eclipse is felt only when it is visible to your part of the world.

Great astrologer Varahamihira says in his magnum opus Brihat Samhita on astrology, People knew how eclipses were formed.

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They knew that they were not formed by the snakes. The snake-connection is an allusion to drive home the message of conflict between spiritual (Ketu) and material (Rahu) wishes by

which our life is entangled with the snakes trying to gulp our soul (sun) and mind (moon)."

SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAAN- AN HONEST APPRAISAL

By Jayaprada Patel

Jayaprada Patel completed MCA from KIIT University, Bhubaneswar in May, 2011. Prior to this she has done her B.A Major in History from IGNOU study centre at Gangadhar Meher Autonomous College, Sambalpur. Currently she is working as a Data entry operator. She is passionate about education in its real sense which involves the ability to use one's knowledge, skills and abilities to further the development of society. She is also very keen to ensure that education should focus on ecological balance and love for nature. In this article, she rightly points out the flaws in our current academic system which lays emphasis on gathering information rather than acquiring life skills. She opines that economic development in totality is possible only when individuals apply their education to serve the societal requirements.



You might have heard of "Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan" – Education for All- Sab Padhen, Sab Badhen. But how much has this project been successful? I'm working in one of the poor states of India, Orissa, in an administration role. Here I see there are no required no. of teachers and lecturers available in the schools & colleges. Not all of them are getting sufficient salary to take interest in teaching the students. And also the standard of the teachers and students are the same. The teachers don't have that knowledge to teach the students. The children go to school, but what are they learning? They can't even write their names correctly. In our village college, where I am working, there is no regular classes been held. Some students

have just taken admission to pass the exam by copying and get a degree. For the mid-day meal in schools the food that is cooked is not of good quality nor are they cooked hygienically.

So what is the use of sending children to schools, if they learn nothing and there is no improvement? They know nothing but only mobile, TV, cinema, bike, cricket, and all sorts of unnecessary things. When those children will grow they will remain unemployed and do crime. Even now at this age they are engaged in theft and drinking alcohol.

One day a girl came with a small chain of silver to mortgage for money. Her mother had

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sent her to borrow money. My mother used to lend money on things and on that day she was not at home. She had been to my uncle's house. I refused to give that girl money as I didn't know who she was. I saw the getup of the girl. She was wearing a dirty frock. I thought why not do something for them. Only by sending them to school is not all. They don't have enough money for their livelihood; they live so shabbily and in unhygienic conditions. Besides formal education, why not engage them in some sort of occupation. No need to eradicate child labour, but give them those works to do which will be like fun and play to them and they would learn from it also. Nature can provide everything that you want. There are farm lands but they are used only for rice cultivation. Similarly we can plant trees like mango and earn from it.

Every child is not good in studies. Those who are good students and are willing to study they can progress and can get a job. But what for those who are dull in studies? The children's home will look more beautiful if there is a garden. Not like a garden to play but like a farm house where those children will plant fruit trees like mango, papaya, and those trees which don't require much care. By doing this the children will be close to nature and can understand its importance. Let children make friendship with nature. Our nation is primarily agro dependent; what will happen if all children only become office workers? Who would tend the fields and where would food come from? Even in Vedic age, children used to stay in ashram and besides study they were doing all sorts of household work in the ashram. It would be good to learn from some of these shortfalls of the Sarva Shiksha

Abhiyaan when we undertake the development of children.

I recall a story that my father used to tell me when I was younger. There was a prince and he wanted to marry a girl. The girl was not a princess. She was a poor girl but she knew some craft. The girl kept a condition. She told the prince that, alright you are a prince and can get whatever you want but tell me one skill that you have developed. What can you make? Do you know any craft? If you want to marry me then you have to learn some sort of craft. So the prince then decided to learn to make mats and then he got married to the girl. One day the prince went to the city alone and entered to a wine shop. The dacoits in the shop captured the prince. The prince was alone and he couldn't do anything. Days passed and the prince thought of an idea to get himself free from the dacoits. He told them that he knew to make beautiful mats. If they could provide the materials, he would make one for them. They could take it to the Raja and he would reward them handsomely. The dacoits agreed and brought all those materials. The prince then made the mat and in Arabic language which the dacoits did not understand, he wrote in the mat the place where he was kept. The dacoits took the mats and showed the Raja. The Raja read what was written in the mats by his son. The prince's wife also recognized that those mats could have been made by the prince only. The Raja sent his soldiers and killed all the dacoits and saved the prince. So the prince was saved by virtue of his intelligence and the skill of making mats that he learnt at the insistence of his wife. So, each one of us must know a skill to stand us in good stead in times

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of emergency. That skill can also help the family by providing an alternative source of income.

In my opinion, even in BalVikas, emphasis should be laid on children getting some form of skills training. If you teach children any sort of craft which they can do or they like to do, then it will be helpful for them. For girls it

should be made compulsory because nowadays it is very important that they should be financially independent.

As Swami mentions, that alone is true education which enhances character and makes one self reliant.

A JOURNEY WITHIN

By Sri Ram S.

Sri Ram. S is an MSc (Math) and MBA grad from Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. He was also the University Brass band leader, a mandir bhajan singer and one of the founders of the alumni Band Group known as Rhythmic Energy. Post studies he worked in the IT industry for over 6 years after which he moved on and is currently a practising Clinical Integrated Hypnotherapist working out of Bangalore. He has founded Sunshine Wellness Studio (www.SunshineStudio.in) that aims at using various modalities of hypnotherapy for healing.



Feel free to write in on your experiences and also if you have any further queries at info@SunshineStudio.in

Swami says that the test of devotion is the equanimity we exhibit when faced with difficult situations. We live in a world full of challenges which often present numerous opportunities to lose our calm and composure.

Yet, we are each gifted in a unique and important way. It is our privilege and our adventure to discover our own special light. Swami says that we all have the ability to harness our inner abilities and know the answers that we truly seek. These answers lie

in the voice of the conscience and when we follow it, life becomes simple. This section is devoted to harnessing that inner power and realizing our true potential as Divine beings. In this edition, we discuss White Light Mediation which is a means to achieve the peace and calm within to find these answers.

The other method is called Emotional Empowerment Technique (EET) which helps to provide immediate relief from pain and discomfort. EET is a unique procedure to help attain the bodily and mental calm and release

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negativity. The steps for both of these are discussed below.

White Light Meditation

- Imagine yourself standing in an open space (wide open space, no objects or trees or anything next to you)
- Look up toward the sky and you find a beautiful Source of White Light.
- From this Source of White Light a ball of white light starts coming towards you.
- Intend that this ball of white light contains in it the most powerful healing energies of the Universe, Divine unconditional love and the Wisdom of your Higher Self (Soul).
- The white light enters through your heart chakra (into your heart); You feel a very soothing sensation in your heart when this happens.
- In an instant the white light spreads through your entire body (the soothing sensation spreads throughout your body).
- The white light now expands further outside of your body becoming bigger and bigger until it has become a huge sphere that encompasses you and all your energy bodies as well. (Think of a ball of white light in the center of which you are standing)
- The edges of this white light sphere crystallizes into a very strong protective shield that protects you

against any negativity from ever entering into your space (intend this).

- Place both your palms on your chest and imagine this white light moving back and forth from your heart to your palms. Rub your palms against each other and place them on your third eye (forehead), over your eyes and rub gently over your face.
- As you do this, 'integrate' and slowly open your eyes when you feel comfortable.

Emotional Empowerment Technique (Process):

- Before you start EET process, on a scale of 0 to 10 (0 being NO discomfort and 10 being MAXIMUM discomfort) ascertain where the discomfort stands.
- EET: Close your eyes, say, "Even though I am feeling <describe pain or feeling> Still I choose to Love and Accept, Heal and Integrate that part of Me" three times. Take deep breaths through your nose and exhale through your mouth releasing all negativity or pain; repeat 7 times.
- Check level of discomfort on scale of 0 to 10 again. Repeat process if not yet at 0 (or until you wish you stop)
- As you do this process repeatedly, it is very likely that your mind will also bring up the root cause of the issue as a flash in your mind.

We shall continue our discussions in this series. Look out for the next sequel in this series on **"A Journey Within"** in Venugaanam.

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SATYAMEVA JAYATE – TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

By B. Aravind



B. Aravind graduated from Swami's university in Puttaparthi with an MBA in 2007 after his M.Sc in Chemistry. A brilliant student throughout his academic life, he also got a Gold Medal in B. Sc Chemistry at Brindavan and was among the toppers in school at the plus Two level. Aravind is a bubbly individual and is passionate about photography, writing and music. Its difficult to miss Aravind running about following Swami and taking photographs of our Lord in Parthi. Currently, he works for Radio Sai in Prashanthi Nilayam. In this article he eloquently narrates his experience as a student when Swami crystallized his faith in the power and ultimate victory of truth.

A very interesting episode occurred during my school days. Today, when I look back on it in retrospect, I see that it shows the immaturity of a child's thinking and the maturity of Swami's love! This happened when I was in my 11th standard (1998) when I had taken the combination BPC (Bio Science, Physics and Chemistry).

Before I narrate that episode, let me tell you about the mandir lines. Everyday, we would go to the mandir (for darshan of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba) from the hostel in ordered lines. And to ensure that everyone has equal chances of getting physically close to Swami, each day different classes would go first. For instance, if the first day, the order of the lines was classes VIII, IX , X, XI and XII, the next day the order would be IX, X, XI, XII, VIII and so on, in a cycle. Sundays were special because we would go even for the morning darshan as it was a holiday. The Sundays had a special rotation system of its own with the

cycle changing every week! And this whole thing would be manned by teachers.

That was fine as far as equality of classes was concerned. But what about the order of students within a class? There was an unwritten rule (made by the boys, of the boys and for the boys!)- anyone who could get ready with a wash, shave and vibhuti dot on the forehead could rush down to the assembling point after (and only after) the bell for lines would ring. The order of the boys in different rows would then get determined as 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and so on. If anyone was not neatly shaved and washed or missed the vibhuti dot, he would be disqualified and his position confiscated by the next boy in the order. At times, this would force us to go to classes after a complete wash up. This was especially true for the post-lunch sessions on the days when our class would be first.

On this particular day, we were having our Chemistry lab sessions. As a class we had

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disappointed the teacher concerned and he was in an irritable mood. It was also the day when our class would be first in the lines and there was a nervous energy all around. We were all the students of the Science section. There were students of the Commerce section too from our class and so our silent hope was that our class would be let out earlier than theirs. (You see, there were so many levels of competition to be overcome to get first into the lines!)

With 10 minutes to go, all of us began to automatically wash the glassware and start winding up for the day. It was a tough task and in the hurry to finish fast, a few beakers cracked and broke. Needless to say, this irritated the teacher even more. None of us have ever paid any laboratory fees and all the chemicals and glassware are provided to us with love by Swami. While other labs have breakage charges, there are none in our labs. So, naturally, the least that is expected of us is to maintain these gifts of love with care.

I too was washing away furiously in a hurry, taking care that no glassware breaks. Finally, within a minute of the final bell, all the glassware had been washed and arranged in the shelves. My legs were waiting with pent up energy for the rush to capture a front spot in the lines. As fate would have it, the teacher began to inspect the washed glassware and he located one beaker that had remnants of the organic chemicals that had been used. He immediately picked it up and asked "Whose beaker is this?"

I realized that it was mine. And I was caught between the horns of a dilemma. Immediately

the little white angel on my right and the little red devil on my left began their traditional conversation!

"Just keep quiet. There is no way he will find out it is your beaker. He will get frustrated and let go."

"No! That is not right. You know that it is yours and you should own up. Moreover, instead of letting go, he may punish the whole class."

"You raise your hand now and your chance to be front in the lines is gone! The chance to get physically near to Swami is too great to be left for the sake of a chemical drop on a beaker!"

"You know that the problem is not as skewed as the devil is putting it. Remember that more than the nearness, the dearness to Swami matters. And by following the truth, you will please Him."

"Satyameva Jayate (Truth alone triumphs) is a motto for the aeons gone by. It is not relevant now."

"Truth is for ever and it always triumphs. You speak the truth and you will be rewarded. That is for sure. "

"Tell me! Whose beaker is this?", the voice thundered again.

I immediately raised my hand and said, "I am sorry sir! That is mine."

The teacher's eyes immediately seemed to calm down. He said, "All can leave now." Even as I prepared for the sprint, he said, "Aravind. Stay back." I was punished. I was given a load of glassware to wash and then alone could I leave for the mandir. I was

immediately fraught with disappointment and sadness. It then erupted as anger within me.

“I thought that speaking the truth will save me. It only put me in deeper problem. Forget the front lines, I doubt whether I will even be in time for darshan!”

As I angrily continued the washing, I failed to notice that the teacher had punished himself too - by not going to the mandir till I was done. I was too busy with my own ‘misfortune’ to think about him. My mind continued to speak

“This *Satyameva Jayate* really seems to be relevant only for the past. I don’t care how, but if it is relevant even in the modern times, then Swami, I want you to bless me today. I want you to accept a handkerchief from me and smile at me. I don’t know how you will do it but you must do it if you want me to have faith in the truth.” I threw this as a challenge to Him. I felt slightly happy within because I was in a win-win situation. At a time when I was sure to be late for darshan, if Swami were to give me that chance of offering a handkerchief to Him, my day would be so special. In case that did not happen, I would have no problem lying myself out of future situations! (There! This is what I referred to as the immaturity of the



So many things depend on His smile

child.)

Finishing my punishment, I informed the teacher who was still waiting patiently for me. He too seemed sad. I felt that he deserved to miss darshan for he had made me miss mine. (Later, I found out that he was sad because he felt responsible for me missing my darshan and he was praying to Swami to wait till I arrived! Wow! The teachers here are some magical creatures of love!)

I went to the mandir and there was no music on. I was sure that darshan had been complete. I was shocked to find out that for some reason, Swami had not yet arrived for darshan! (This was very very rare those days. Swami was always on time!) And as I walked in to the students’ area, I saw one empty space right in the first line. How could anyone have missed it? I asked the boy seated there whether that space was reserved for someone and he replied in a negative. Once again, the immature thinking set in.

“Swami wants to make it easy for Himself to prove to you the importance of Truth. If I sit here, He will create vibhuti for some devotee and take the handkerchief from me. I shall not make it that easy for Him!”

Thinking thus, I gave up that space and went to sit in the portico outside the interview room. This was a region that was manned by two of Swami’s assistants and in case He created vibhuti here, they would offer the kerchief to Him. I wanted concrete proof of His response and as I did this, I could see the little red devil snickering at the little white angel. I felt a little guilty too, but I went ahead with my plan.

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What happened, completely bowled me over. I sat in the portico and the darshan music began. Swami arrived and completed His darshan rounds. He came to the portico and began to speak to some devotee. And at the end of the two-minute interaction, He began to swirl His palm to create vibhuti. He gifted the vibhuti to the devotee. I was a good 3 meters away from Him. But, out of sheer instinct, I had tugged the kerchief out of my pocket. However, I stayed put in my place and one of the two assistants went to Swami with a handkerchief.

Swami just looked away from him into my eyes. He smiled and stretched out His hand seeking the kerchief in my hand. Like a robot,

I got up from my place and went to Him. I gave the hand kerchief to Him. He wiped His hand, smiled at me and threw the kerchief back to me. I returned to my place in a daze.

Even as I sat, my senior beside me nudged me and said, “You are a ‘form’ boy man! He specially wanted you. Did you have some sort of a prayer-deal with Him?”

What could I say? I realized that a win-win situation for me was also a win-win situation for Him. His love is such that He wins if I win. One thing is for sure. I know that Truth Always Triumphs.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE – SAI KRUSHNA MANDIR- Children’s Home

With the Divine Blessings and grace of our Beloved Swami, the children’s home – Sai Krishna Mandir – is to be inaugurated on 23rd November, 2012. As part of this, the SKM construction team is working to ensure that the architectural drawings, foundation and construction are all

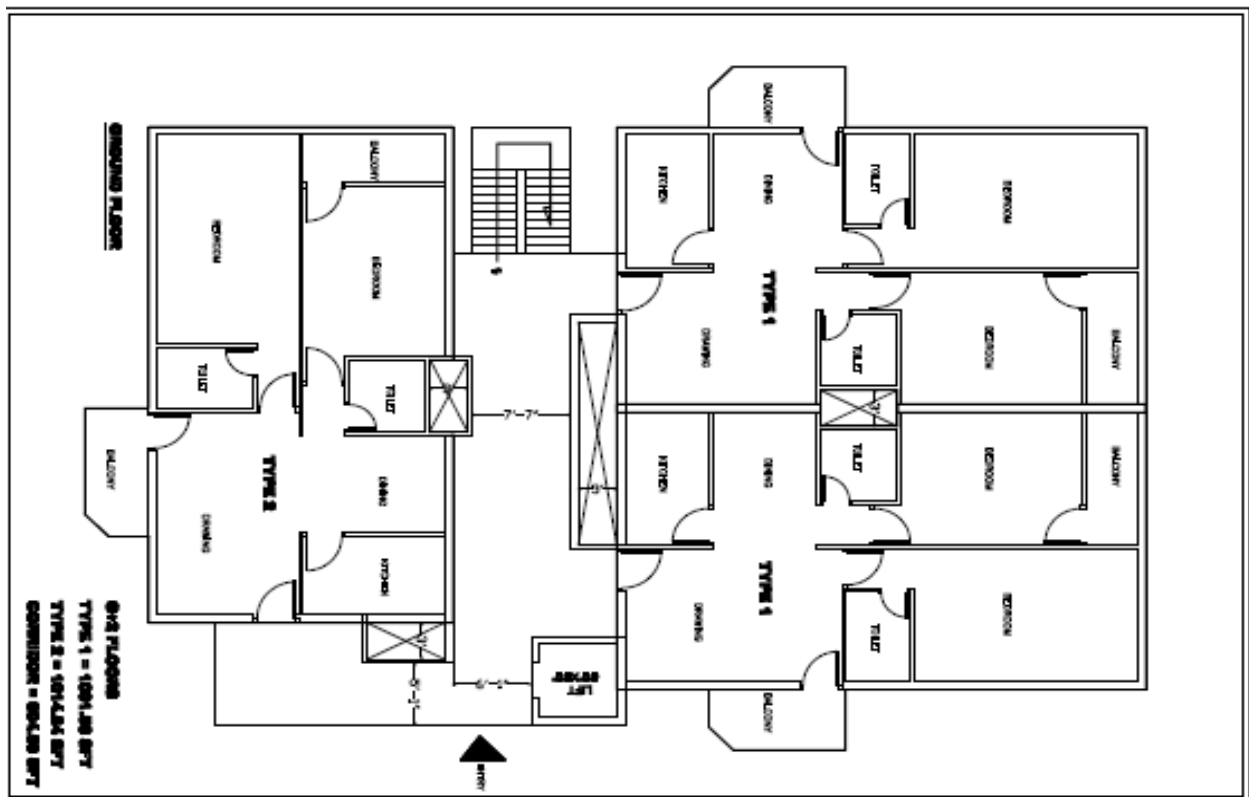


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moving along expected timelines. We are now in the process of engaging a civil contractor for

the completion. We are going slow and steady in this part of the process to ensure that the civil contract is handed over to a reliable and dependable contractor. After thorough analysis and considering the time and fund position, the SKM construction team has decided to do the entire construction in two phases. Phase 1 of Sai Krishna Mandir children’s home will involve a G+2



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type of residential accommodation for the children and caretakers. It will have the ability to house up to 30 people. Phase 1 would be completed in time for inauguration on Swami's birthday this year. Phase 2 would be the eventual children's home with the facility to house 120 children and about 10 caretakers. Phase 2 shall begin immediately after Phase 1, and the construction of Phase 2 will be aimed to be completed in one go. This additional time will also help to get us to a better fund position to complete Phase 2. Starting Phase 2 right away would not be advisable in terms of the cost implications of potentially starting and having to stop for requirement of capital. Once Phase 2 is complete the children would all be accommodated there and the current Phase 1 would be converted to an auditorium for children cum support

staff accommodation cum guest room. We are confident that, just as Swami's bounteous blessings ensured the procurement of the land, Swami's grace will crown our genuine intentions and He will continue to guide and bless the entire effort.

CHILDREN'S CORNER: SCHOOL UPDATE

Our children in the Sharavathi Kannada Higher Primary School are returning to school from the first of June. The teachers have evaluated the papers and the results have been announced. The performance of the children has been much better this semester. The school has secured a 91% result at the Class 10 level. In the month of May, the classrooms of the primary school were given a new look with whitewashing of walls, painting of blackboards and making the classroom more fun and informative with posters/ exhibits etc. The children will also be given text books,



Walls before whitewashing



Whitewashing and cleaning of rooms

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note books, pencil boxes, geometry boxes, tables books and other items of stationery completely free of charge. The School Management Team has devised a more comprehensive time table to incorporate periods for Bal Vikas, Physical Education, Craft work, Music and Teaching through Videos. This will help develop a more holistic attitude of the children which will enable learning and all round growth.

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Walls after being whitewashed



New books for children

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