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ALL ARE BOUND BY THE LAW OF KARMA

Everyone has to face the consequences of one's own karma. Who has made the bats to hang from the branches of a tree with their heads downwards? It is their fate. Likewise, nobody can escape from the consequences of karma.

(Telugu poem)

Every human being, insect, bird, beast or animal, nay, every living being in this world is bound by destiny. None can escape from the result of karmas, good or bad. It is natural for every living being to obey the laws of nature and the law of karma. For example, the bat hangs from the branches of a tree heads downwards. That is their nature. That is how they are born to live. Every human being in this world thinks that he is undergoing suffering, even though he had not done anything bad. He feels, "I have not done anything wrong! Why then am I undergoing this suffering?" But, the fact is otherwise. Whatever pleasure or pain undergone by a living being is certainly the outcome of the karmas (action) performed by it. Every human being performs karma and enjoys its fruit as a consequence. Nevertheless, it is not clear to him till today whether it is a natural consequence of his actions or by any unknown reason. Not only the human being, even bacteria, birds, insects, beasts and animals are experiencing the consequences of their karma.

In support of this inevitable law of karma, I would like to narrate certain incidents that happened long ago. These incidents explain how certain births took place, just to demonstrate this truth. There used to be a great devotee by name Subbamma in Puttaparthi. She was very rich. She had no children. Whatever she had, she used to give in charity to one and all with a feeling, "I am only sharing my god-given wealth with my fellow human beings." She was leading a pious and noble life with a sense of equanimity. She had, however, one desire. She used to pray, "Swami! At the time of my departure from this earthly sojourn, You should quench my thirst by pouring a few drops of water into my mouth with Your Divine hands." I promised her that I would do so. Six years after I gave that promise to her, I had to go to Chennai once to fulfil My engagement in a devotee's house. That was the time of Second World War. Once in every hour, there used to be an air raid precaution siren and the streets would become empty in no time. I stayed there for three days and started My return journey straight to Bukkapatnam from Chennai in a car. Meanwhile, Subbamma fell seriously ill and was taken to Bukkapatnam from Puttaparthi. That was her parental home. There she died. Her relatives started making certain sarcastic remarks, "Sai Baba gave word to her that He would pour water into her mouth at the time of her last moments. Did He come? Where has He gone?" Subbamma's brothers and relatives made all arrangements for taking her body for cremation. In those days, it was not easy to procure firewood to cremate a dead body, especially in the villages. However, they procured some firewood and kept everything ready. While passing by the house of Subbamma, I noticed several people gathered there. I enquired, "Who is going to be cremated?" Washerman Subbanna was there. He replied, "Swami! Subbamma is dead." I enquired again, "Is it? When did she die?" "Three days ago, Swami", he replied. I went into her house where her body was kept. Her relatives were about to take her body out for cremation. Her sister saw Me and started wailing. She told Me, "Baba! She longed for Your arrival. She yearned that You should pour water into her mouth before she breathed her last. At last, she died without her wish fulfilled." I told her that there was no possibility of such an eventuality and asked her to fetch some water in a tumbler. I put a basil leaf in the water. I removed the cloth that covered her face. Ants were crawling all over her body. I gently called her name, "Subbamma!" She opened her eyes and saw

Me. She held My hands and wept. She enquired, "When did You come Swami?" I replied, "I came just now." I wiped her tears gently with a towel. I told her, "Subbamma! Look here." I then poured a few drops of the sacred water into her mouth and said, "Now, close your eyes peacefully. Subbamma drank that water from My hands and breathed her last. Thus, I kept My promise to Subbamma. While this strange phenomenon was going on, all her relatives and the doctors who attended on her were watching the happenings with awe. They could not believe their eyes. They were wondering, "How come! Subbamma died three days ago. There was no breath in her body. How is it that she opened her eyes now and spoke to Swami? Perhaps it is a divine miracle of Sai Baba." Subbamma was constantly worried during her lifetime that Swami was always on the move visiting several places and perhaps her last wish might not be fulfilled. But, I kept My promise made to her long ago. At last, the dead body of Subbamma was cremated by her relatives as per their family custom. She was a Brahmin lady. I started returning to Puttaparthi. A bullock cart was kept ready for My return. Myself and the brother of Griham Ammayi (Easwaramma) sat in the bullock cart and were returning to Puttaparthi. His name was Chandramouli (Swami's physical body's maternal uncle). We saw smoke emanating from the cremation ground where Subbamma's mortal remains were being consigned to flames. Chandramouli enquired, "Swami! You were with Subbamma's dead body till now. Why did You not wait till the cremation was over?" I told him, "Chandramouli! I am not a person who goes back on his word. I gave a word to Subbamma that I would be present by her side during her last moments and pour water into her mouth. That I fulfilled. I advised her to depart from this world peacefully. I kept My promise and I am now returning to My abode." Chandramouli felt very happy. In fact, Subbamma was held in high esteem by the entire village. She was the head of the village, being the wife of the Karanam. The entire property of the village was in her name. However, since she came into the fold of Swami, she had no other interest in life, except Swami. Right from early morning till she went to bed, she was constantly engaged in Swami's work only. On certain occasions I used to retire into the caves of the nearby hills without informing her. Poor lady! she used to go round the hills in search of Me. She used to pack *upma*, *dosa*, *vada*, *idli*, etc., in a tiffin carrier and come in search of Me. At last, when she could find Me, I used to enquire teasingly, "Subbamma! What did you bring for Me?" She used to reply, "Swami! I brought the items of Your taste." Then I used to tell her, "Give Me *dosa*." She then served *dosa* in a plate and handed it over to Me. I used to tease her further saying, "Subbamma! I don't like this *dosa*. Give Me *idli*, *upma*, *vada*, etc." Poor lady! She used to serve Me all those items. From morning till evening, she used to prepare a number of items and wait for Me. Yet, she was anxious to know what more did I need. Once I told her "Subbamma! You need not fear. I don't need anything. I have put so many questions to you asking for this and that to make your devotion and surrender known to the world." Subbamma then requested Me, "Swami! I am happy that I have been able to serve You food. I am also happy that You ate these items with love and affection towards me. I will be happy if You can kindly put a small quantity of this stuff in my mouth with Your Divine hands." Then, I took a small piece of *idli* from the plate and put it in her mouth with a little *chutney*. She felt extremely happy. Thus, Subbamma experienced great bliss in the divine proximity of Swami till her last breath. Chandramouli, who was a witness to My showering love and grace on Subbamma on a number of occasions, observed, "Swami! How compassionate You are towards the devotees! We don't have words to express Your love and compassion towards devotees, especially Subbamma." True! Words fail to describe Swami's love and compassion towards Subbamma. The devotion of Subbamma towards Swami surpassed

even that of Prahlada.

People had by now realised that Swami had fulfilled the promise given by Him to Subbamma. They felt that Subbamma's life was sanctified. Taking cue from her example, several elderly people used to visit Me with the request, "Swami! Please give a word that You will pour sanctified water into my mouth with Your Divine hands at the time of my departure from this world." I used to tell them, "My dear ones! All people cannot get this great boon. If you are destined to get it, you will certainly get it. I will come at the appropriate time and pour sanctified water in your mouth." Kondama Raju used to observe these people coming to Swami with such requests. He also developed a yearning for this Prapti (deservedness). One day, he approached Me and requested Me, "Swami! You are born in our family, in our lineage. You have upheld the honour and glory of our lineage. But, I also have a request to make to you. I wish and pray that my birth in our family should be sanctified. I therefore request you to please pour some holy water into my mouth with Your Divine hands during my last moments of life." I assured him that I would certainly fulfil his request. He felt very happy, for, he knew that once Swami had given His word, He would certainly stick to it. He lived for 112 years. Every morning, he would walk from the village to the New Mandir to have My Darshan. One day I asked him, "Why do you walk all the way from the village to the Mandir and back. There may be cattle on the way and if they attack you, you will fall down and get injured. Won't you?" He used to tell Me very boldly, "Swami! When You are protecting me and constantly standing by my side, which animal could attack me?" One day, early in the morning he came to the Mandir and had My Darshan. He returned home and lay down. After a while, he told Easwaramma to go near Sathyabhama Temple and see whether Swami was coming that side. She went there, returned and told him, "Yes, Swami is coming in His car." Swami had a small car then. Kondama Raju said, "Easwaramma! Get a tumbler of water and put a Tulasi leaf in it." She did accordingly. He held the tumbler in his hand and was waiting for Me. He knew that his end was near and that I had come there to keep My promise. None else knew this. Holding the tumbler, he said, "Swami! I am ready." I replied, "I am also ready." As I poured the water into his mouth, he passed away peacefully. Before passing away, he said, "What a great fortune it is to drink water from Your Divine hands before departing from this world! Even King Dasaratha who performed great penance and sacrifice, did not have such a fortune. My life is redeemed." Saying thus, he closed his eyes. With this incident of Kondama Raju, it was once again revealed to the whole world that Swami would certainly keep His word, come what may! The lives of Subbamama and Kondama Raju were thus redeemed. I manifest My Divine Leelas in many ways to fulfil My word. I go to any extent to fulfil My promise. However, some devotees act contrary to their words.

I was taken to Kamalapuram for higher education. The elder brother of this body, Seshama Raju was very intent on My pursuing higher education. Therefore, he took Me along with him to Kamalapuram and admitted Me in the school. In those days, I was struggling very much to prosecute the education due to paucity of funds. Often times I had to manage with empty pockets. Hence, I used to make use of My poetic skills to earn a few coins to meet My personal needs. In the same village, there used to be a businessman by name Kotte Subbanna. He used to run a provision shop in which some Ayurvedic medicines were also sold. Once a new Ayurvedic medicine by name "Bala Bhaskara" was introduced for sale in his shop. It was a new and very efficacious medicine. It could fetch him a good profit if popularised. He therefore, requested Me to shoulder the responsibility of making propaganda for his new medicine. I agreed to his request, but asked for some more information about the medicine.

Then, I composed a song about the efficacy of the medicine and gathered a few children of My age to go round the nearby villages with placards in their hands and sing the song composed by Me. The song ran thus:

There it is! There it is! Oh, children! come, come!
There is the medicine Bala Bhaskara;
Be it an upset stomach or a swollen leg;
Be it a joint pain or flatulence;
Be it any ailment, known or unknown;
Take this Bala Bhaskara for an instant cure!
If you wish to know where it is available:
There is the shop of Kotte Subbanna;
It is in that shop that you can pick it up.
Come here boys! come here!
It is an excellent tonic
Prepared by the famous physician Gopalacharya himself,
Come here boys! come here!

(Telugu song)

By the time we completed our propaganda tour of the nearby villages, all the stock of medicines in Subbanna's shop were sold out. He felt very happy. Then he called Me and offered a pair of knickers and a shirt stitched for Me. But, I flatly refused them saying, "Subbanna! I did not compose that song for the sake of new clothes. I don't need them. I won't touch them. Please take them back. If you thus offer some money or articles in return for My services, I will not even step into your shop." He realised My sincerity and strong feelings. From then onwards, he used to say, "Raju! I don't want anything in this world, except Your love."

Another incident had happened while I was studying in Kamalapuram. I attended a scout camp in a nearby village called Pushpagiri where a big fair was being held. I was away from the house for a few days and there was nobody to fetch water from a distant well for household purposes. Hence, the wife of Seshama Raju had to shoulder that responsibility. By the time I returned from the scout camp, Seshama Raju was angry that there was nobody in the house to help his wife. He was then drawing lines in a notebook with the help of a wooden ruler. As soon as he saw Me, he shouted at Me, "Hey! Come here. There is no one in the house to fetch water for the last few days. Your sister-in-law had to attend to that job also, besides her normal domestic chores." So saying, he took the ruler and beat Me angrily. The ruler broke into three pieces. My hand was swollen and it was giving Me a lot of pain. I did not give a reply nor revealed the incident to anybody. I tied a bandage Myself to My hand with a wet cloth. The next day, Seshama Raju's son died. He gave a telegram to Pedda Venkama Raju (Swami's father). Venkama Raju immediately rushed to see Seshama Raju. He started from Puttaparthi and reached Bukkapatnam and from there to Kamalapuram. The Griham Abbayi (Swami's father) enquired from Me, why I was having a bandage on My forearm. I tried to explain away very casually as if nothing had happened. I told him there was a slight pain due to a blister on the forearm and therefore I put a bandage on it. There was a lady belonging to the Vysya community in the neighbouring house, who used to make her living by preparing *dosas* and selling them. She tried to reason with Griham Abbayi saying, "What! Venkama Raju! I know you are sufficiently well-off so as to get Raju educated at your place. Why should you put Him to so much trouble by keeping Him under the care of His elder brother at such a distant place? You do not know how much suffering the poor boy is undergoing here. He has to fetch drinking water from a distant place carrying two big pitchers with the help of a Kavadi on his young shoulders daily." Thus, she narrated several incidents where I had to undergo physical strain and suffering. Griham Abbayi was deeply moved on hearing My plight and immediately called Me and said, "My dear son! You start immediately and come along with me. Let us go back to Puttaparthi." All the family members loved Me. He therefore lamented, "I have come to know that the injury to your forearm was due

to your elder brother's beating. I myself never beat You till date. You are undergoing so much suffering here. Come! Let us go back to Puttaparthi." At the time when this incident happened, Griham Abbayi made a comment which still rings in My ears even today: "Sathyam! If one is alive, one can make a living even by selling salt. I can no longer put You to such an ordeal. Can I not provide for Your living even with my meagre income?" So saying he shed tears. From then onwards, He did not send Me with anyone. My formal education stopped with the high school. I did not attend any college. Nevertheless, I have been continuing My Mission as a Sathya Bodhaka (Teacher of Truth), making Puttaparthi My headquarters.

I composed a beautiful poem depicting the glorious history of Puttaparthi, which reads as follows:

Encircling which town the sacred river
Chitravathi flows in all its pristine beauty;
Around which town there are beautiful
Mango groves symbolising auspiciousness;
Standing guard on the four sides of which town
are the deities of Parvati and Parameswara constantly protecting;
Firmly installed in the midst of which town is the
effulgent Lord Vishnu in all His splendour;
That world famous town is Puttapuram or Puttaparthi
with its fresh water tank built by Chikkavadiyar
standing as an everlasting monument
to the glory of Bukkaraya.

(Telugu poem)

I built a residential colony in commemoration of the great love and devotion Subbamma had towards Me and named it as Karanam Subbamma Nagar, which is next to Gokulam. I also purchased some cows and engaged some people to look after them. Some of these people were accommodated in a few of those houses in Karanam Subbamma Nagar. Thus, I made efforts to see that the name of Subbamma is remembered for ever by devotees.

A few years ago, I started a project by name "Deenajanoddharana Pathakam" to adopt some orphan children to provide food, clothing and education to them so that when they grow up they will be able to lead a life with honour and dignity. I am looking after these boys with all love and care. You must have seen these boys when they come for Darshan every Thursday and Sunday. I also built living accommodation for these boys so that they may stay comfortably in those houses. Besides their normal education, they are now acquiring proficiency in extra curricular activities also. Thus, there are so many service activities that I have undertaken right from My childhood. If they are all to be narrated now, it can go for hours together.

Dear Students!

I have great love for you. I wish that all of you should come up well and earn a good name. I love such boys who earn good name. In fact, I give Myself to such boys. I will give you whatever you want.

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