

**Sai Pearls of Wisdom,
Part 45-C**

**HARDSHIP, SPECULATION, ADMIRATION,
SCORPION BITE
May 26th, 2023**

**Om Sri Sai Ram
Prasanthi Sandesh**

Om Sri Sai Ram.

Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh, Sai Pearls of Wisdom.

Another interesting chapter in the life of Swami's boyhood opened in Uravakonda where He studied for some time. Admiration and speculation heralded His entry into the town, suddenly agog with the stories of the wonder boy! He was only a boy then, but the coming years were to reveal that Raju would behave in a manner much beyond His age!

And we also will come to know how respectful He was to His elder brother Seshama Raju. It's quite funny enough to know that His parents wanted Him to be a normal child, an intelligent boy, to study in the school, come up in life, and that He would become one day an officer with a responsible position. But the design of Avatar is quite different, known best to Him only!

He did not ultimately complete His studies, but left it mid-way in order to embark on His spiritual mission. And here in Uravakonda, He spent relatively very short period of stay. But here the glory of Avatar cannot be hidden for a long time! It unfolds from time to time!

The fame of Raju as an unusual student with mysterious powers had preceded Him from Puttaparthi to Kamalapuram and to Bukkapatnam, even the school at Uravakonda – something like a perfume that reaches to distances; something like sandal, the fragrance of which would be felt from long distance. Swami's fame has already been there before He stepped into that Uravakonda.

Uravakonda, where He studied, derives its name from a huge boulder – 100 feet high and shaped like a many-hooded snake. *Urava* means 'snake', *konda* means 'hill'. As has been said here, the admiration and speculation heralded earlier.

As I pointed out, He was highly respectful towards His brother, so much that He would not even look up while speaking to him; unlike the present day, it is enough if you don't pull their collar, talking to them recklessly in an irresponsible way. But He was very humble, affectionate, quite obedient to His brother. And so His period of study was quite short there!

Uravakonda is full of wells (in) so many places and so many temples! It is rather painful to note that Raju had to draw water for the family needs from the wells of old Uravakonda. It's so difficult to fetch water all along!

All these things are very well known to His parents. Just with a desire to educate Him, they permitted Him to go to Uravakonda. Parents left Him there and returned to Puttaparthi. And of course with brother Seshama Raju, along with Raju, His sister Venkama also stayed there in their residence.

After all, the residences in those days, of course even today, the poorer sections of the people will have such kind of accommodation. All rooms will look like railway train bogies, very close to each other!

Baba recalls His olden days and says this way. These are all the public statements given by Baba, my friends!

"Due to carrying water on My shoulders in big pots tied with ropes on either side of a bamboo stick, My shoulders became very hard. In spite of My doing such hard work, My aunt (meaning sister-in-law) used to beat Me without any reason, without any reason!" Now imagine what kind of torture that He underwent!

Further He had said – Baba says, "They never gave Me food on time!"

Once Raju's sister – sister-in-law meaning, Seshama Raju's wife, slapped Raju so hard that His cheek became swollen, swollen!

The hardship of carrying water had a telling effect on Raju. He was to remember the experience in later years when, as Sai Baba, He has masterminded the Sri Sathya Sai Safe Drinking Water Project for various districts of Andhra Pradesh. He experienced and expressed His Divinity by introducing successfully, completing victoriously Sathya Sai Drinking Water Project.

While leaving this place for Uravakonda, Raju took leave from His friends. One of His friends expressed His concern. The friend said, "When will I be back? When will we meet again and talk together?"

Then that friend said, "You want education; we want cultivation! Your brother has written. You go and study!"

That was the bond of love between Him and His friends. They could not be away from Him, nor (was) Swami prepared to leave them either!

It is at this stage, after a couple of days, a disquieting letter was received at Puttaparthi.

“It is Sathya!” the father said to his wife, “But it is nothing serious, only a scorpion sting perhaps! They could find no scorpion. It happened 3 days ago at dusk!”

“And listen, Seshama Raju writes that Sathya was in deep sleep for a whole day after, but He had no pain.”

Eswaramma was scared. After a sting of that nature, one is forcibly kept awake, forcefully kept awake – for fear that sleep would heighten the effect of the poison.

That’s what His parents came to know! But the brother is fully aware that stings were often fatal. Therefore, he prepared to leave at once.

Before he departed however, another message arrived with a second letter. This letter stated that Raju recovered consciousness and was in a bad shape. He would not eat or drink, and seemed unaware of what was happening around Him. He seemed to be somewhere else, conversing with invisible beings!

Eswaramma could not bear to hear more. She begged her husband to take her along and she muttered desperate prayers all the way. She asked for one boon that Sathya be normal! She no longer wanted Him to be unique, or even more intelligent than the rest. None had the balm that could calm her.

They applied all sorts of remedial measures, including the milk of a medicinal plant known to have healing properties, and they also sought the help of astrologers, priests, palmists, allopaths, homeopaths, naturopaths and even District Medical Officer, but to no avail! Raju was unperturbed. What happened in Uravakonda? It is only the scorpion bite!

On Shivaratri day after dinner, Sathya came up to Venkama and said that He wanted to go somewhere and that He would return after some time, and He asked her not to bolt the front door. But what happened? As said, Sathya did not return on time.

Just it was the time of very early morning. His sister felt (a) touch on her hand. When she opened her eyes, she saw Sathyam there in the front door. He had just arrived. When she asked Him where He had been all night, He softly asked her not to speak, lest their brother and sister-in-law come to know of His late arrival.

He said that they had gone to perform ‘*abishekam*’ to Lord Shiva.

“I have brought *prasadam*!” He said. So His concern, His activity was totally spiritual.

It may appear a kind of indiscipline for leaving the house without anyone's notice, but where did He go? For *abishekam*, worshipping Lord Shiva with sacred water!

Activities were full of spirituality, but He did not speak out anything of this! But when He was recovering from the shock, during that period of convalescence, His sister Venkama attended on Him.

But He always said, "No, nothing is needed for Me!"

But one day, He went into the bathroom and shouted, "*Abba, Abba!*" meaning a sigh and expression of terrific pain, and when she enquired, He said it was the scorpion that had stung!

With the help of a lantern light, they could not find the scorpion anywhere nearby. Venkama was mortally afraid as she had heard that it was fatal in Uravakonda to be stung by a scorpion. When she has asked Sathyam whether it was painful and burning, He replied in the negative and asked her to go to sleep.

Next day, great change was noticed in Sathya's face. So many changes thereafter!

They all have some messages to convey and for us to learn certain things about the unfoldment of Avatar.

Sai Ram! We will meet in the next session.