

## **ARE WE GUILTY OF LAZINESS**

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Most people know the ancient story of Sati Savitri. She was a princess. But her father was not able to find a suitable groom for her. So one day the father told his beloved daughter, “My darling daughter why don’t you yourself look for an appropriate groom?”

The princess Savitri set out with the minister Sattaman to look for a groom for her. While passing through a forest during their journey Savitri saw a handsome young man. His name was Satyavan, meaning truthfulness. He was the son of King Dhrumansen of Swal Kingdom. Satyavan too was fascinated with Savitri at the first sight.

Then, Savitri with her retinue returned to her palace with the joy of having found a suitable groom in the person of Satyavan. Savitri was the daughter of the King Ashwapati of Madram kingdom. When she approached her father with the news of finding an suitable groom, her father was meeting Maharshi Narad.

When Savitri told her father about Satyavan, her father the king wanted to know what Narad thought about Satyavan. “Satyavan is a very suitable young man in every way. But he will die within a year,” Narad said to the king.

Savitri remained adamant in her decision to marry Satyavan even after hearing Maharashi Narad that he would die with in a year. So the king Ashwapati granted the wish of his daughter and got her married to Satyavan.

Satyavan was staying in the forest. So Savitri after marriage went to stay with Satyavan in the forest leaving behind all the luxurious life of the palace. While living happily in the forest with Satyavan, Savitri realized that the day of Satyavan’s death is fast approaching. So she started three-day fast abstaining from all food and vowed her fidelity.

When Satyavan went to collect firewood in the jungle on the day of his death Savitri also went with him. When Satyavan was collecting firewood Savitri saw Yamadev, the God of death coming.

“Lord Yamadev, why have you come yourself to take the life of Satyavan? Is it not true that usually you send your disciple to take away the life of a person?” Savitri asked Yamadev.

“Yes. Satyavan is a very religious person. So I came myself to take his life,” said Yamadev.

Before Savitri could ask another question Yamadev took the life of Satyavan and began to walk away. But Savitri walked fast and caught up with Yamadev. Yamadev saw Savitri behind him.

“You please go back and perform the rites after death for the well being of soul of Satyavan. You followed him in life as long as you could in life,” Lord Yamadev told Savitri.

“I follow wherever you take my husband. That is my religious duty as his wife,” Savitri said.

When Yamadev found it difficult to send Savitri back he told her, “Ask any boon except the life of your husband”.

“Let the blind father of my husband get back his sight,” Savitri immediately requested Yamadev.

Yamadev quickly granted her wish.

But ever after getting the boon, Savitri was not prepared to leave Yamadev and go back. So Yamadev once again asked her to make a request for a second boon.

This time Savitri requested that her father-in-law Drumansen may get back his Kingdom Swal. Yamadev granted that wish also to Savitri.

But inspite of receiving two boons, Savitri was not prepared to go back. So Yamadev once again asked her to made another wish.

“May I have 100 children by Satyavan”, Savitri quickly asked.

Yamadev was totally taken aback by this request of the third boon by Savitri! Yet considering Savitri’s holiness, her vows and her total commitment to deep love for her husband, Yamadev restored the life of Satyavan and went back alone.

In this well known story from Hindu lore known as Purana, Savitri knew well that her husband would die within a year. Yet remaining firm in her decision she married Satyavan and began to fight against the destiny. In her encounter with fate, she got back the life of her husband Satyavan. Thus she took her life to a new plain of existence.

Our livers are also filled with happiness and suffering. But we often feel that our sufferings are much more than our experiences of joy and happiness. People become victims of many things like accidents, sickness, communal conflicts. All such things are human made. There are also natural calamities like flood, drought, earthquake which affect men and women deeply.

Many people suffer all such human made or natural calamities as their destiny. They submit to the destiny totally saying that on-one can go against destiny and they become sad and dispirited. They give up on life to live to the full. Savitri’s story of fight against destiny is an inspiring example for people who are disappointed with their destiny.

God has created men and women and put them at the head of the whole creation. He has blessed every human being with intellect and language as well as other means of communication. People are to work as the steward or the administrator of the whole creation. People can use the whole creation for the good of the entire humanity. But the human persons have no right to use or destroy the environment for their selfish ends.

We are neglecting our responsibilities to live our lives to the full when believing in destiny or upholding fatalism, we abandon our stewardship of the earth and of the whole creation. Let us take the example of serious diseases like cancer, tuberculosis and other such sickness. Some

people believe that such sickness are deadly and believing them fatal, they wait for death. But there are also people in our midst who fight the deadly sickness like cancer and tuberculosis and live long life with will power and meditation. They defeat such sickness because they are courageous to fight them.

I see that the belief in destiny make some people totally weak and helpless. They loose courage to carry on their life with enthusiasm and energy. Hence they are not able to achieve anything in their lives. Destiny tells them God is doing everything that they have no part in living their lives to the full. So what is the need for a person to work? But those people, who believe in their efforts to make their lives, fight the destiny and achieve success and make way for new accomplishment. Instead of submitting to destiny and becoming inactive courageous people like Savitri challenges the destiny and make their lives.

When we experience painful things in our lives and we become victims of unexpected suffering what is our immediate response? Do we blame the destiny? Do we become disappointed and dispirited believing that everything is God's doing. It is not rare to see people becoming discouraged and dispirited when they face painful suffering or sad events saying this is my destiny.

With wisdom and intellect we need to challenge the so-called destiny like Savitri did instead of blaming destiny for suffering and painful situations. Humanity is shown in facing the challenges squarely without being losing one's courage. God wants us to come successful in our struggles. That is why we say that "God will help those who help themselves".

I believe that a person herself/himself is responsible for her/his failures. People often leave half way instead of all the way to success and achievements. A person is to fight out of his failures. But some persons blame the destiny for failures and seek to be blameless. But such persons are often guilty of laziness. Such escapist persons eventually become the victims of their destiny!

But persons like Savitri believes in struggle and fight the destiny. In their struggle they work hard taking the responsibility on themselves. They do everything in their power.

In the end while doing their best they leave everything with faith and devotion to the goodness of God who desires the best for all men and women. In this way people can change their destiny and create their own desired destiny. (contact the author: [ciss@satyam.net.in](mailto:ciss@satyam.net.in))

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