

At the Trunk of Maple Sapling

By Sivananda-Usha



One spring morning a few years ago, the city's urban forestry team planted 5 maple saplings, spaced so nicely, for the grassy frontage area on the block. Not quite six feet tall, the sweet young planting in front of the house came with instructions: for the first month of its life in its new location, drizzle water from a hose directly at the base of its trunk for one hour each day. And so, it was done, ... and the leaves were showered gently, too, that it might feel refreshment in the springtime air.

Each day of the watering, and as the month progressed, it was noted that the other saplings were not being watered.

When the first month had passed, maple sapling was watered regularly. The summer progressed, and with it, very hot days arrived, ... and all along, it could be seen: how tangible the thirst of the other little trees, ... their lone struggle noted clearly, for they were not progressing in height, and their leaves were not the dark, rich forest green  color of the watered sapling, but rather of a yellowish, lighter green.

The water required for the others was far more than the bucket that could have been carried (though it was imagined) ... and the idea had to be abandoned.

Today, some six years later, the progression of the growth of the trees' lives is seen each springtime: the limbs of the other saplings are bare for some 3 weeks after the buds of the watered maple have bloomed; their height remains a couple of feet short of the watered maple; their leaves, each year, remain the same pale color; and this year, sadly, one is indicating that its life-force is ebbing, for two long branches are utterly bare in mid-summer.

O, the lessons at the trunk of maple sapling! — the young tree, having been given what is essential for its growth, upon application of the explicit instructions received, is thriving; how noted is the struggle of the ones deprived of perfect nourishment in formative years. What to say of a human being of Divine Heritage! - those nurtured from birth by the wisest guardians - who sit at the lotus-feet of the Master - with what is essential for body and soul, ... and the stunted growth of those who are not. How it fills one with great and reverential pause. The little maple sapling cannot awaken from its deprivation, unlike human being sapling, whom the Lord has never abandoned - He Who waits with opened and loving arms.