

THE FIVE ELEMENTS

The five elements directly affect the five senses. If we are not pure, the five elements will lose their purity. Therefore each one of us is responsible to bring harmony to the five elements. ***The feelings that are externalized on the worldly things pollute the five elements.***

This pushes man into the cycle of birth and death. Today, all the five elements are in complete disharmony. Due to the disharmony in the 5 elements, there are many earthquakes, floods, cyclones and forest fires. These cause immense destruction.

Element

Sensory Organ

Sensation

Space

Ears

Sound

Air

Skin

Touch-Sound

Fire

Eyes

Touch-Sound-Sight

Water

Tongue

Touch-Sound-Sight-Taste

Earth

Nose

Touch-Sound-Sight-Taste-Smell

SPACE

The first element in Creation is space. From space comes sound. In the human body, the organ of sound is the ear. Ears are for hearing. It is through the sense of hearing that speech comes. Deaf children also suffer from impaired speech. Our feelings and thoughts become vibrations whirling in the sky. Space is filled with vibrations. These vibrations are the cause for all that happens in the world; the good and bad. In the first age, Sathya Yuga, all thought only of God, Truth and righteousness. People led disciplined lives as they knew nothing of sin. Dharma stood on four legs.

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A mother teaches her child not to lie. The child does not now the meaning of telling lies and wants to know what it is. How does the mother explain? She says, "Lying means to tell that which does not exist." The child asks, "How to tell about that which does not exist?" The child

becomes confused. The nature of a child is to speak things as they are in truth. If you teach him not to tell lies, how will he understand? Again the mother explains, "If somebody asks about father, tell that he is in, this is truth. Do not tell that he is out, this is untruth." The child is more confused, "Father is here, why should I tell that he is not!" Like the child, the people in Sathya Yuga knew only truth, sincerity, love and devotion; this is because they were the first created men. They were born directly from the Divine. Their minds were not tainted by falsehood. Their good vibrations filled the sky, keeping the space pure.

During the Treta Yuga, Dharma lost one leg. Demonic beings filled with greed, hatred, jealousy and covetousness were born. Their thoughts made the space impure. This disturbed the sound that is born in space; thus the ears were affected. In Dwapara Yuga, dharma lost another leg. The impurities in the space at the time of Treta Yuga became the 'mothers' of evil qualities in Dwapara Yuga. Wickedness entered the people, evil deeds increased. Hence the space became even more polluted.

The ears started listening to evil. The sense of hearing was spoiled. Men were divided into two groups, the good and the bad. Many people were killed in the great war of Mahabharata. The wicked had joined ranks with the poisonous Duryodhana and Sakuni; the virtuous gathered on the side of the good hearted Pandavas. At the dawn of Kali Yuga, wickedness entered every human being; all have become evil doers. The space is even more polluted and even more dangerous.

The negative vibrations emanating from each individual has contaminated the purity of the atmosphere. Dharma stands on one leg. There is an upsurge of unrighteousness everywhere; space is fully polluted. Listening to untruth has become normal; it is this that has destroyed the sense of hearing. Each one of us is responsible for this devastation. If our thoughts are pure then the space will become pure.

Where are the pure ears given to us by God in the Sathya Yuga? Why have our ears become spoiled like this? You may say, 'I am born only now in this Kali Yuga. I was not born in Sathya Yuga'. You were born at the end of Sathya Yuga. We have been here age after age, life after life caught in the cycle of birth and death. Had we used our ears well, we would have attained liberation. Since we have not attained liberation, we are born again and again.

I am deeply distressed and think, 'I am born in this Kali Yuga. Why have my ears become defective? Had I lived a good life hearing good things, my ears would not be defective. What

mistake have I done?’ There are negative vibrations of desire, anger, lust, ego and jealousy floating in space. These vibrations attack our ears in the form of sound. Hearing of an object, we then develop the desire to possess it. When our efforts do not bear fruit, anger arises. Once we possess the object of desire, ego and jealousy ensue. All these are the consequences of hearing evil.

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Seeing Rama and Lakshmana, desire arose in the demoness Surpanaka. When her desire was not fulfilled, she became jealous of Sita. Surpanaka thought that Sita stood in the way of her desire. The demoness wanted to separate Sita from the brothers. She went to Ravana and described the beauty of Sita telling, “I tried to steal that beauty for you, but they cut off my nose and ears.” Thus, she inflamed the fire of lust in the mind of Ravana. Ravana imprisoned Sita. Many warned Ravana, “Do not commit this heinous crime. Do not anger Rama, He is an Avatar!” But Ravana’s ego did not allow him to listen to the advice of others; his entire clan perished. These were the consequences of hearing about the beauty of Sita. Ravana ignored the good, but listened to evil, which made the negative vibrations in the sky enter and destroy him.

This example shows how negative vibrations enter through the ears and affect man. ***Mind, intellect, ego and consciousness are all under the control of the element space. Lust, anger and ego which create negative vibrations pollute the sky. Like a contagious disease they spread and enter all. We should hear only good.***

If we take an oath that we should not hear any evil, there will be no one speaking evil. The pure vibration will again be filled in the sky.

AIR

Touch sensation relates to this element. Flowers blossom when the summer breeze touches them. We feel the cool breeze in winter and heat waves in summer. The touch sensation of the air makes us feel cool or hot. Another characteristic of air is sound. Sound travels through air. In the stormy season the sound of Omkar is heard at Mukthi Nilayam. This element air is connected with skin; it is through the skin that we experience the sensation of touch. This is the first sensation we feel; a new born baby knows the difference between his mother’s touch and other’s. Touch feeling is also the cause for birth, but when we touch God, it gives freedom from birth.



Air is polluted when something touches it. In the same way, touch feeling causes the pollution of attachments. People live by this sensation from birth to death. Touch soothes man in pleasure and pain. But all these are temporary.

Only by touching God, can we get permanent peace.

How to touch the divine ...through wisdom. One should remove ignorance realizing that everything in this world is illusion. Then alone wisdom will be born. Touching the divine with wisdom, gives bliss. In Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna tells Krishna that it is easier to harness the wind than to control the mind. If we tie our mind with the Lord, it will come under control and the outside will not touch us. Like a chaste woman, one should feel shy to touch other things. We should be very aware and sensitive to the touch of the world.

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Work, action, fear, shyness are the characteristics of the element air in the human body. Without the action or movement of air, human beings cannot live. People cannot do any work in the absence of air. Like this, without the touch sensation of the skin, we cannot be born. One can live life without the other sensory organs but not without the skin. He may be born deaf, dumb, blind or handicapped but one cannot be born without skin. Prahalada was able to feel the presence of the divine everywhere as he only touched God. In the same way, when we touch worldly things with desire, it causes rebirth. **The mind is faster than air, in a minute it can touch thousands of things with thousands of feelings. This touching pollutes the air.**

Shyness and fear are linked to the element air, the skin registers these feelings. Skin's nature is sensitivity to touch. This is seen more in women as the sense of shyness. We should feel shy when we utter falsehood. When someone hurts us, instead of hurting him back, we should help to correct and make him feel shy about his act. **Saint Thiruvalluvar says 'one should make the evil doers shy by doing good to them'.**

Shyness is an innate quality. This quality is important for women. In those days, women were shy to come in front of men. Women were like this in our family. We would not go to the street in the open. Before my marriage, I did not speak with other men except for the elders in the family. I was very shy.

From childhood I was afraid of things and people of the world. I was very sensitive and would cry often. I was afraid of the dark, the night time, death, old age and disease. This childhood fear made me think deeply; I wanted to escape from disease, old age and death. I thought about many ways, but in the end, I realized that attaining God is the only sure way.

Fear showed me God. It showed me the way to reach God along with the physical body. ***Fear defiles air but if we turn it towards God, it purifies air.***

Everyone has fear of old age, disease and death; they want to escape from these. They use vaccines against disease and try many ways to escape from old age. They are replacing old faulty eyes, they use hearing aids for defective ears, artificial teeth are in place of damaged teeth and dyes cover grey hair. These however, are no means of escape! The only way is to cling to God. We should attain God.

Every second of my life, I am exercising air's qualities like work, action and speed. All my actions centered on God and the touch feeling only for God, give me much strength.

Air has great power. The sons of the wind god, Bhima and Hanuman are powerful. Hanuman even lifted the Sanjeevini hill. The wind that blew on the Sanjeevini hill had the power to resurrect man. When baby Krishna was in the cradle, an asura came in the form of a storm. All the gopis and gopas were frightened and ran away. The asura stole Krishna. All went in search of him; at last, Krishna was found playing on the asura's dead body. The wind has the power to even lift the Lord!

Every second of my life, I am exercising air's qualities like work, action and speed. All my actions centered on God and the touch feeling only for God, give me much strength. My aspiration for attaining Swami gives me the power to lift Him. The Asura lifted God in air-form but was killed because he was evil. But my thirst for reaching God gives me the power and swiftness to lift Him and bring Him down from the heavens. It gives me the power not only to tie Him with myself but also to tie this world with Him.

If we purify our fear, shyness and touch sensation like this, then air will be purified.

FIRE

The first word in the Veda is Agni, fire. Fire's nature is to purify. It is used in yagnas where sacred mantras are chanted to propitiate the gods and goddesses. Man performs different yagnas, for different purposes. For example Putrakameshti yagna is performed for begetting children. Dhanvantri yagna is for removing diseases and Ayush homa for long life. Fire carries the prayers and acts as a messenger between man and God in these yagnas.



Fire burns all to ashes. It is the witness for all rituals and ceremonies. The marriage ceremony is performed with the sacrificial fire as witness. Vedic mantras are chanted, the bride and the groom walk around the sacrificial fire. However, the same marriages are broken in the court by making the couple stand in the witness box with the lawyers as the witness. This act pollutes the fire.

Fire is Truth. Fire bears witness to all who swear allegiance. A medical student gets a degree swearing to serve humanity. Contrary to this, he sells his medical knowledge, using his education to make money. In India, some students' give laks of rupees to gain admission into medical college; later on he reclaims his money, by breaking his oath. Thus, fire is defiled.

Lawyers also make an oath. Judges and lawyers, who should be on the side of truth, do not act in accordance with justice. When justice and honesty are corrupted, fire becomes furious. It shows its anger. The judiciary system, which should act like fire, burning falsehood, seems to support injustice. The symbol for justice is the scales. Has the balance needle been discarded, broken off and thrown away?!

Acts of unrighteousness make fire impure.

The teaching profession is sacred. Teachers have a great responsibility as students are entrusted to them. The future of a country is in the hands of teachers. They shape the character of its citizens. Children spend most of their time at school under the supervision of teachers.

Only if teachers are virtuous, can they impart good qualities to the students, otherwise only their bad qualities will come to children. Education without discipline is useless. When teachers stray from morality, fire loses its purity.

Politicians are elected as the people's representatives; after elections, they swear to uphold the laws of the land. Instead of serving their country, they serve their family and relatives. Due their selfishness, people follow the wrong path. Politicians should be the upholders of dharma, but they abuse their position and power. These acts of unrighteousness make fire impure.

Incorrect vision defiles fire. The eyes see what they should not. One should use ones vision for seeing good. The eyes fail to see honesty, justice and purity. Instead of seeing God, they see money, position, power and status. Fire stands for chastity. Men and women should not fall from chastity. When they stray from the path, the flame of chastity burns them. People of chastity have the power to burn those who want to touch them. Chastity is observing discipline through the five senses. People who live like this are verily fire. Nothing can touch them.

Man's actions are based on the way he looks at things. How he looks at his wife is different from how he looks at his mother. He sees his children differently from his friends. Sight differs according to the relationship, thus giving rise to different feelings. These feelings then function as thoughts.

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Sight then is the main cause for all. When sight is pure, fire is purified. If we make God our only relative, then sight will be pure. Then we will see only Him in all our relations. Swami is my only relative. Sight strengthens relationships. When a man sees a girl, attraction arises, he starts liking her. Without sight, her form cannot attract him; the form is connected to sight. A girl sees a beautiful sari and she wishes to buy it. A child sees a doll and wants it. When the eye sees the form, desire ensues. If there are no eyes, then the form will not be seen and desire does not arise. **The mind follows where the eyes go, giving rise to desire; desire pollutes fire.**

Some examples...

While walking on the streets of Mithila, Rama sees Sita; Sita also sees Rama. Though they immediately know that they are meant for each other. Both wonder, "Is it wrong to feel like this when we don't know anything about each other?" This confusion is soon removed by their belief that their sight will not stray from dharma. This purity of sight purifies fire.

After rescuing Sita from Lanka, Rama asked Sita to prove her purity by entering the fire; He did this for the sake of the world. Sita's flame of chastity burnt the fire. Thus fire proved the purity of her sight and that she did not see anybody other than Rama. Ravana's eyes fell on Sita. The evil in his vision polluted fire. This is why the fire became angry and burned Lanka.

We have seen how fire has been polluted because vision is impaired. ***Fire will only be purified when our sight is fixed on righteousness, like Rama and Sita.***

***It is God's rule everywhere
His grace in all
His glory, the waterfalls
The dawn, His compassion
You the sky's blue, Kanna!
Your form divine in hail and storm
Your form divine in oceans and mountains
Our bond continues through all creation.***

I wrote this song in my youth. This is how I saw the world. God's rule is everywhere. His grace is in everything. His glory is seen in the waterfalls. His compassion is seen in the dawn. If we stop breathing during sleep, we will die, but it does not happen. We should understand that it is due to God's compassion that we witness the daybreak. I see God in all His creation. This is the Truth.

Everywhere I saw Krishna. I saw His form in all the things. The form, which these eyes saw became mine. As I saw Kanna in all the forms, His divine form became my own, my only relation. This shows the connection between fire, eyes, and relationships; ***if this wisdom spreads to all in the world, then the element of fire will be purified***

WATER

How to purify water? Saint Thiruvalluvar has written,

***Outer purity comes from water.
Inner purity comes from Truth.***



We bathe to clean the external body. We use many kinds of soaps and shampoos. We rub and scrub to cleanse the body. This is for external cleanliness. ***Truth cleanses the mind. Speaking truth is inner purity. All that is spoken by the mouth should be true.***

While water cleanses all that is present outside, truth cleanses the inner. If we speak truth, it purifies water. If we speak untruth, it will pollute water. Without water, the world cannot function. The rains come due to yagna, sacrifice. The result of karma is yagna.

If we perform actions, as per the whims of the mind, it disrupts the cycle of rainfall. Due to this disruption, the weather is affected and seasonal rains fail. If we perform all work as sacrifice, we will be blessed with good rains. When speech is pure, water is purified. Untruth makes water impure.

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We must correct the impurity of the mouth. The mouth has two functions, speaking and eating. The food we eat should be pure. ***Pure food and sweetness in speech give spotless character.***

We should speak truth in a humble and polite manner; we should speak words that do not hurt others.

We should thank the god of rain by speaking truth and by offering all our actions to God. ***Living in union with God shows true gratitude.***

One more quality of water is to flow into an empty space. When we take a pot full of water from the river, the water immediately fills there. Water is pure and auspicious. We should have these qualities. We should live auspicious and pure lives. The Lord is Sivam, the auspicious One.

Another quality of water is to flow out. Water emerges from a spring and flows freely. We should live life like this, being helpful to others without any trace of selfishness. The mouth should be used to sing the glory of the Lord and spread truth and love.

EARTH

Earth is called Karma Bhoomi, land of action. We are born on earth only to settle our karmic accounts. The element earth is the nose in the human body. The nose is essential for life. It differentiates between good and bad smells and imbibes the air we breathe as the lifeforce. If we stop breathing, death follows.



The bone, skin, hair, muscle and nerves in our body are also related to earth. We get minerals like calcium, protein, fat and vitamins from the food that help in the growth and protection of the body. The body derives its strength from the food, which is grown in earth. What is the connection between this and the nose? The air we breathe enters the lungs and protects our life. We inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. The oxygen purifies the blood that enters the heart.

Our feelings are responsible for the creation of our lives. Good feelings inspire good thoughts and kindle us to do good deeds. If we purify our feelings, the earth will be purified.

Our feelings are responsible for the creation of our lives. Good feelings inspire good thoughts and kindle us to do good deeds. We think that our food is the reason for our health. Actually, it is our feelings that affect health. Feelings are important even for the functioning of the heart. If we purify our feelings, the earth will be purified. ***How to purify feelings? Do your duty in this world without attachment.*** Want God alone.

Desire and hatred, likes and dislikes are the reasons for birth. We should free ourselves from these fetters. We should not waste this precious human life.

The organs of action are connected with the element of earth. If they function as they should, earth will be purified.

My feelings for God, purify the five elements. My feelings enter each and everyone. Swami is using my feelings to transform the Kali Yuga into Sathya Yuga (Golden Age).