

## **Modern-day miracles in 11 minutes.**

I am summarizing the contents of a 2h 15m WhatsApp call from Sri Lanka (SL) that I received on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The call was from my eldest living blood cousin Givantha Arthasad born on October 14<sup>th</sup> 1953. His names were coined by his dad and has the meanings, 'praise' and 'provide'. Did the son Givantha Arthasad praise and provide and live up to the names his dad gave him?

Since early childhood he had many health issues. Prayers of his devoted parents combined with some medical procedures enabled him to get over these issues expeditiously. These and other similar incidents led him to be a devoted follower of our Lord Jesus Christ as he grew up.

On completion of his High School education, he concentrated on artistic endeavors using the talents he inherited from his relatives. He inherited wood carving and carpentry skills from his paternal grandfather, artistic ability from his mother and presentation techniques from his father. He completed one of his noteworthy achievements on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1979. That was the creation and exhibition of the first ever animated movie of an epic historical event dubbed in his mother tongue Sinhala. He made over hundred thousand hand drawn sketches to make the animated movie. As there were no Animation Cameras or Optical Printers in SL at that time, he fabricated these using his inherited skills and lenses from his uncle's discarded slide projector. The movie story was of the battle between the Sinhala King Dutugamunu of the Southern Kingdom of SL and the Indian King Elara who had captured the Northern Kingdom of SL. The movie showed how the two kings fought a hand-to-hand battle mounted on elephants and how the Southern King prevailed. The dubbed narration and the accompanying music were performed by reputed theater personnel.

On August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1980, the newly formed SL Film Corporation recruited him and sent him for training on Cinematography and associated technology at the 'Sender Freies Berlin' training institute of West Germany. Two years later, when Rupavahini, (the word means - picture conveyance) the first ever TV station in SL was inaugurated he was appointed its Technical Director. It was during the tenure of this prestigious office that the hypoglycemic syndrome of running blood glucose levels below 50mg/dl arose. Subsequently the retinae of both his eyes became detached and he almost lost his sight. Miraculous cure of these ailments

more with prayer than with medical procedures rendered him healthy, but immunocompromised. Givantha then made a remarkable decision to resign from this prestigious lucrative TV assignment and to dedicate his artistic and presentation skills to the glory of our Lord. His schoolteacher wife who herself was a deeply committed Christian supported him in making this life changing decision.

Givantha supported all the Christian Churches in SL and undertook assignments from other religious organizations as well. Both his own church the Methodist Church and the Roman Catholic Church still hold him in high esteem for the contributions he made. One of the four universities in SL at that time, the Jayewardenepura University recruited him to teach a course in Artistic Adventure. He was able to support his family by adding the allowances he received from these organizations to his teacher wife's salary. All his achievements qualified him to be granted six licenses by the state, on different aspects of Cinema and TV Production. The local press then fondly called him the 'Cinema Scientist Givantha Arthasad'.

When the Covid endemic spread over SL, Givantha's Medical Advisors warned him that he should be more cautious than others in avoiding congested public transport and gatherings as he was immunocompromised. How was the Cinema Scientist to continue to attend the assignments given to him by God? He would now be limited to making his presentations on his iPhone 5 which did not produce professional quality videos or studio quality audio. He talked about his concerns with his devoted family. At the family weekly Zoom Prayer Meeting on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, his wife's young niece prayed passionately pleading God to assist Givantha on executing His assignments. Before sun rise on one of the following mornings someone called Givantha on his landline and requested him to come to the front door. When he opened the front door the occupant of a white colored van opened the passenger seat shutter and handed over a bag saying it is for his use. The van then drove away. When he opened the bag, Givantha found a Rs.45,000 (\$225) worth Samsung Galaxy M12 cellphone that had five lenses and produced professional quality videos together and studio quality Audio. This circumvented his inability to visit professional studios to make God directed video and audio presentations.

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Givantha had a blackout and fainted. After a few minutes he somehow recovered. Several such episodes followed. He first went to his PCP who referred him to a specialist. He was then transferred from one specialist to another and was finally diagnosed that he was suffering from Atrium Fibrillation and required the installation of a heart pacemaker. The estimated cost of installing one was given as Rs.700,000 (\$3,500) plus Rs.100,000 (\$500) for follow up. He consulted several specialists who conceded with the initial diagnosis. How was the Cinema Scientist who was sustaining his family on meager payments he received from religious organizations fund such an expensive procedure? In desperation he consulted one of his church colleagues who happened be the retired Commander of the SL Navy. The retired Navy Commander was able to use his influence with the state authorities and to arrange the pacemaker implantation to be performed at the Military Hospital at no cost to Givantha.

On December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> 2021 he underwent a 24-hour Holter Monitoring Examination at the Military Hospital. On December 28<sup>th</sup> an Echo Cardiogram was performed on him. On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, the Holter Monitoring test technician called Givantha (Unlike in the USA where medical technicians are not allowed to give opinions of their findings to patients.) and asked him two questions; 1) There was signal failure of 1.7 seconds during the Halter Monitor test; did you feel faintish during the test? Givantha replied he felt a difference, but did not faint. 2) Did you get a pacemaker installed in your system? Givantha replied 'No'. On January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022, when Givantha went back to the doctor to receive the results of the tests he was surprised when the doctor said he agreed with the technician's comment that the "heart rhythm was normal as if a pacemaker had already been installed". Flabbergasted by the miracle God had performed on him Givantha went home to relax and enjoy the new year.

Still he was somewhat apprehensive as to what all these marvelous experiences was leading him to.

The SL TV Station, Rupavahini is to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The Directorate of the SL Film Corporation which administers Rupavahini, had therefore decided to award a monthly grant of Rs.5,000 to those who made significant contributions to Rupavahini and to the Cinema Industries of SL.

Givantha reported that he has already received the monthly grant of Rs.5,000 for the month of January 2022. The US based Trans World Radio Institute had its Asian Transmitting Station in SL. It was however not allowed to transmit into SL. It had therefore purchased 2 transmission hours per month from the Commercial Service of the SL Broadcasting Corporation to expand its activities and include a Sinhala Christian Message. After a thorough search for a suitable person to head this project, the most suitable person they found was Givantha. Givantha is to present a bimonthly 25-minute radio program explaining key concepts of Christianity embedded in the Bible and their technical explanations. Trans World Radio offered a payment of Rs.2,000 per program to Givantha.

God Almighty performed miracles in 2021 and 2022 so that Givantha may continue to uplift His 16.2 million Sinhala speaking children in SL. God all Mighty of Wisdom and Power, all Honor and Glory to You forever and ever!



Suranjith Peiris

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