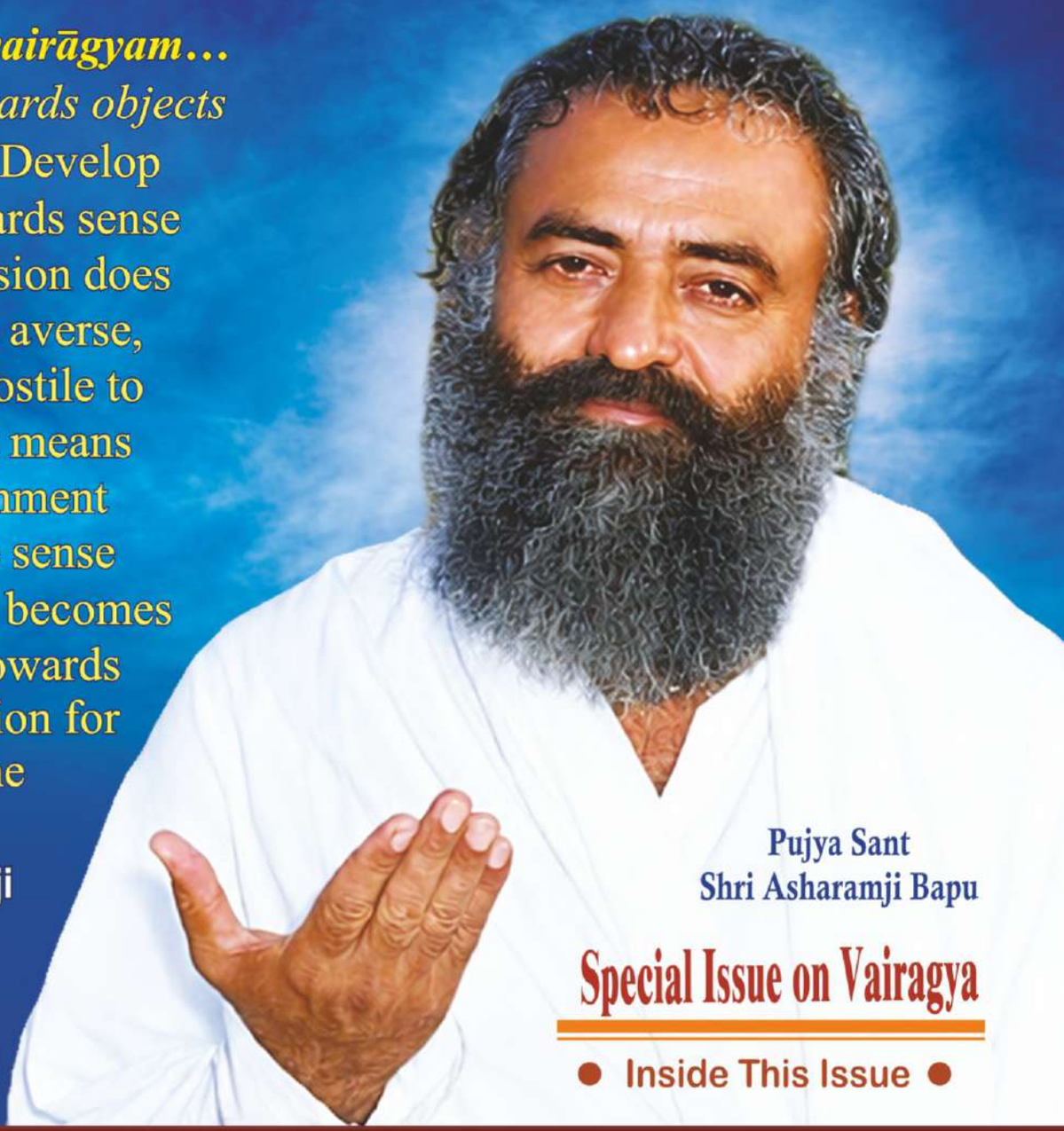
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Indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam…
Dispassion towards objects of the senses… Develop dispassion towards sense objects. Dispassion does not mean being averse, indifferent or hostile to them. Rather, it means removing attachment (*rāga*) from the sense objects. As one becomes dispassionate towards the world, passion for God arises in the heart.

– Pujya Bapuji



Pujya Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu

Special Issue on Vairagya

● Inside This Issue ●



King Bhartrihari, being detached from worldly objects due to his wife's deceitful conduct, abdicates his royal throne and takes *sannyāsa*



A husband and wife developed *vairāgya* on the very first day of their householder life



Witnessing the death of young bulls dangling on either side of a camel's neck, Manki's dispassion arose

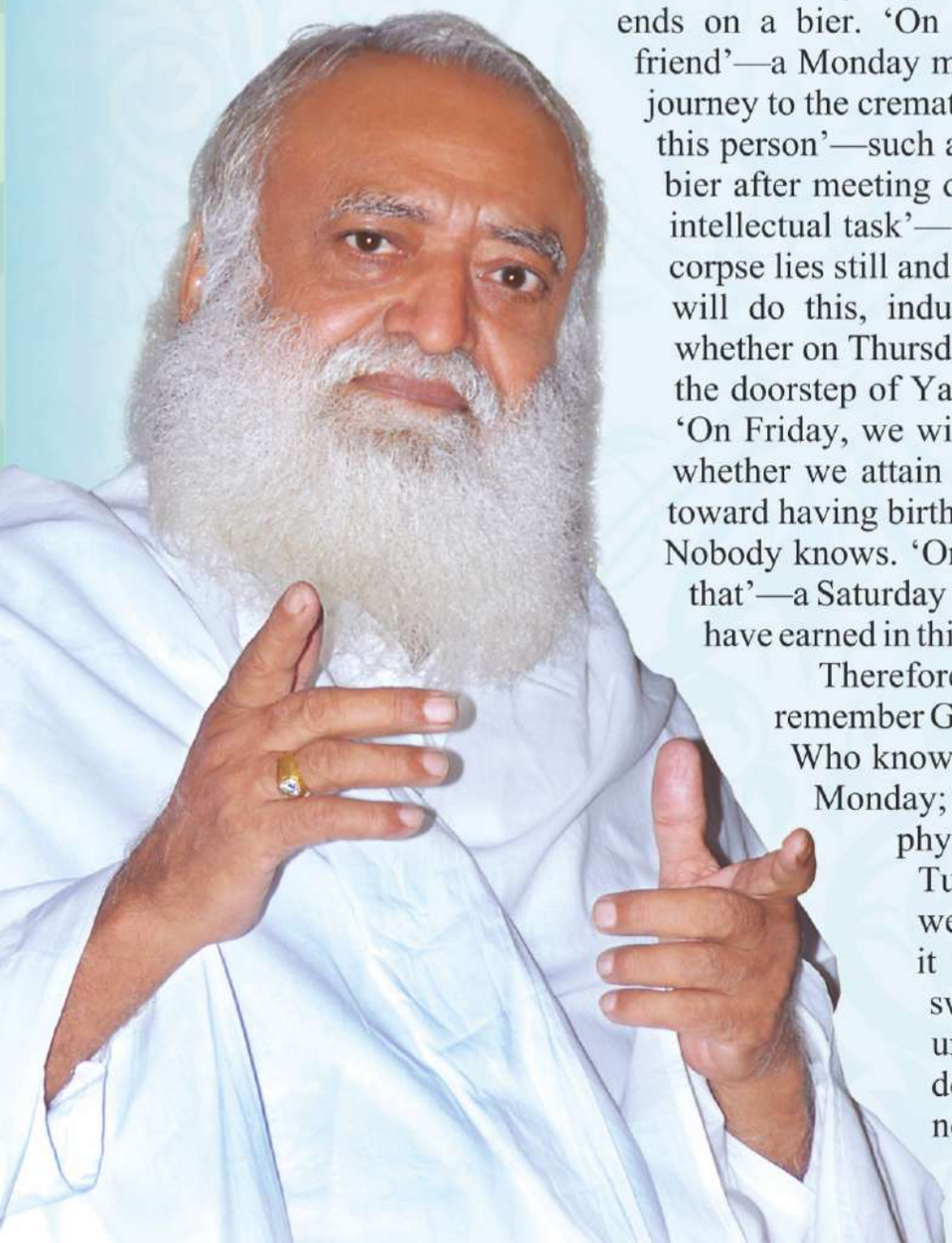
You Are Going to Die in 7 Days.

(From the Satsang Discourse delivered by Pujya Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu)

In the Bhagavad Gītā, Bhagavān Shri Krishna says,
'The self alone is the friend of oneself and this self alone is the enemy of oneself.'

When you set your mind on not-Self, you become your enemy and become a small (*jiva*). But when you detach your mind from not-Self and set it on the Self, you become your friend; you become Great, the Supreme Self. Nānak ji was not greater than you, Kabir ji was not greater than you, Mahāvira and Buddha were not greater than you, and even Shri Krishna was not greater than you—they were all your real *Svarupa* (Supreme Self). Yet, they became great. Why? It is because they established themselves in their real Self (*Ātma-Svarupa*), while you people establish yourselves in not-Self, which is not your Self. That is why you are undergoing deaths in the ocean of *saṁsāra*, and they crossed over the ocean of *saṁsāra* (emancipated from recurring birth and death!)

Whatever has happened has happened; whatever time has passed has passed. But now that you have understood this truth, remember that you are going to die within seven days. I tell you the truth: death is certain within seven days. Keep that death before your eyes: after all, how long I will live?



'We will enjoy a holiday tomorrow on Sunday; we will play and wander about'—yet a Sunday may arrive when our wandering ends on a bier. 'On Monday, we are going to meet our friend'—a Monday may arrive when we set out on our final journey to the cremation ground. 'On Tuesday, we will meet this person'—such a Tuesday may arrive when we lie on a bier after meeting death. 'On Wednesday, we will do this intellectual task'—it is possible that on a Wednesday, our corpse lies still and lifeless like an idiot. 'On Thursday, we will do this, indulge in luxury, do that'—who knows whether on Thursday we go to the doorstep of the Guru or the doorstep of Yama (the lord of death); nobody knows. 'On Friday, we will do this'—ah, on Friday, who knows whether we attain knowledge like Shukrāchārya or head toward having birth in a lower species like that of a swine? Nobody knows. 'On Saturday, we will do this; we will do that'—a Saturday may arrive when, leaving everything we have earned in this world, we are forced to depart forever.

Therefore, when you wake up in the morning, remember God (Supreme Self) and remember death. Who knows on which day I will depart? Today is Monday; who knows on which Monday this physical body will meet its end? Today is Tuesday; who knows on which Tuesday we may depart this life. I tell you the truth, it will be one of these seven days — I swear by God. You are sagacious; you understand. Therefore, if you keep both death and God before you, there will be no delay in your becoming great.

Until you Shake off this Delusion, You Will Not Get Freedom from Repeated Birth and Death!

– Pujya Bapuji

Lust Blinds a Person

When King Bhartrihari's *viveka* (spiritual discrimination) was awakened, he composed a work comprising one hundred verses and entitled it '*Vairāgya Śatakam*' (*A Hundred Verses on Renunciation*). Bhartrihari became so truthful that he exclaimed, 'O lust! O sensual desire! How utterly blind you make a human being!…' Feeling deep remorse as he reflected upon his past life, he lamented, 'A woman such as Pingalā had an emperor like me for her husband, and yet her heart became enamoured of a young manager of the royal stables, a horse-groom. She loved him, while that very horse-groom loved a prostitute. And that prostitute, in turn, harboured feelings of affection for me. Fie upon Pingalā! Fie upon that horse-groom! Fie upon that prostitute! Fie upon Kāmadeva, the god of desire—and fie upon me too! O lust! How utterly you bewilder a human being, robbing one of discernment and rendering one senseless!'

Pandit Hardayal of Punjab translated the Sanskrit *Vairāgya Śatakam* verse-to-verse into a vernacular. He was a grocer by profession, yet possessed a deep knowledge of the shāstras and was steadfastly devoted to the path of God. Bhartrihari writes, as rendered in this poetic translation: '***Svachchha satsang kīno***'—*'When I sought the company of the master established in Pure Consciousness...'* The Ātman, the Self, alone is absolutely pure (free from the stain of ignorance); all else is impure (perceived due to ignorance). Creation, preservation, and dissolution are impure. What is there in bones, flesh, the body, or the stomach that is truly pure? The individual soul (*jīvātman*) identical with the Supreme Self (*Paramātman*) alone is the pure essence (Truth absolute). When this truth was realised, Bhartrihari says, "'***Tab kachhu kachhu chīno***'—'Then, I understood a little of the truth.' What did I come to realise? '***Mūdha jāno āpako***'—'That I was an ignorant fool.' At that time, however, I used to think, 'Ah! How happy I am!' My brother had already told me about Pingalā's conduct, yet I disregarded his words and became captivated by her expressions and gestures."

Then Be Sure That Trouble is Beckoning You

If you derive happiness from anything apart from God, be sure that trouble is beckoning you. You may ask, "But, Bapuji, when we come to you, we experience happiness. Does that mean we are in danger?" Oh no! That happiness comes to set you free from the danger (of metempsychosis). Isn't it? You get happiness because you hear a vital fact (about Truth absolute) from me. This is the happiness of treading the path of *Sat*—Truth absolute. Even a great soul like Bhartrihari acknowledged his folly: '***Mūdha jāno āpako, vihāno mada tāp ko.***'—'*I recognised my own ignorance when the delusion that had tormented me was dispelled.*' 'I find happiness in this; I find happiness in that…'—all of it was delusion. He imagined that he derived tactile pleasure by caressing the queen, gustatory pleasure with the tongue by eating the delicacies prepared by the cooks, the joy of hearing panegyrics from bards and minstrels, and olfactory pleasure from fragrant oils and perfumes through the nose. But these were merely pleasures experienced through the senses, which are reduced to ashes when the body is cremated. Yet, due to my delusion, I regarded them as my pleasures!

Gita – the greatest of all shastras – Pujya Bapuji

Heartfelt greetings on Gitā Jayanti and Mokshadā Ekadashi! Cow's milk is for health and nourishing the intellect and the heart, and the Gitā is for attaining the knowledge of the Supreme Self.

Bhagavān Shri Krishna says, "The Gitā is My heart, the Gitā is My supreme essence, and the Gitā is the most powerful, imperishable knowledge of Me. The Gitā is My supreme abode. The Gitā is My supreme state. The Gitā is My most hidden treasure; the Gitā is My supreme Guru."

The Gitā is the only shāstra that has been translated into so many languages in the world. It is a small book comprising of just 700 verses. But regardless of a person's race and religion, it is beneficial for everyone. The keys to resolving all the knotty problems of life are hidden in the Gitā. Praising this scripture, the Gitā, Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa ji says,



20th December: Shrimad Bhagavad Gita Jayanti Special

गीता सुगीता कर्तव्या किमन्यैः शास्त्रविस्तरैः ।
या स्वयं पद्मनाभस्य मुखपद्माद्विनिःसृता ॥

"This divine song (Gitā) which emanated from the holy lotus mouth of the Supreme Lord Shri Krishna Himself, should be regularly sung and memorized. What is the need for studying other shāstras?"

(The Glory of the Gitā)

Regard the study of the Gitā as your duty and learn to grasp its essence. The Gitā teaches many sciences (*vidyās*). The Science of Equanimity (Sāmya Vidyā): Whatever circumstances may arise, maintain equanimity of mind. The science of Divine (Ishwariya Vidyā): The way to seek refuge in the Supreme Lord, the inner Self. The science of the oneness of the individual soul and Brahman (The Jiva Brahma Ekatva Vidyā): You make the mistake of considering the body as 'I' and have a desire to live. As you do not know your reality, you perceive yourself as separate from Brahman, the Supreme Being. In truth, the individual self (Ātman) and the Supreme Self (Paramātmā) are one.

Keep your spirits high:

In the Gitā, Bhagavān says, **Yudhyasva**— *"Engage in battle."* Unrighteousness (Adharma) is aggressive, whereas righteousness (Dharma) loves peace and solitude. Aggressive people launch attacks, and when someone is being crushed or even killed by their aggression, virtuous people, out of their love for peace, often say, "Let bygones be bygones, brother! May God grant them good sense." They leave everything to God and quietly remain aloof. As a result, the aggressors succeed, while righteous people remain helpless and exploited. The Gitā has shown the righteous way to protect them from such exploitation.

The question in the Gitā was not whether Duryodhana would win or the Pāndavas would win. Rather, the question was: Would unrighteousness (Adharma) win or righteousness (Dharma) win? If aggressive Duryodhana, symbolising aggressive Adharma, forces peaceful Dharma to take sannyāsa, then aggressive Adharma will become victorious. Shri Krishna's principle was that '*Dharma* should also be aggressive. Do not be suppressed by *Adharma;* rather, crush *Adharma*.'

The teaching of the Gita is '*Yudhyasva*'. When Arjuna spoke words of slight

Never Abandon the Path of God, No Matter How Hard Others Try to Dissuade You.

(Ambrosial Words of Pujya Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu)

When I was deeply engaged in devotional practice (*bhakti),* my family members would dissuade me a bit or raise objections. But even my brother's friends (officers and traders) would take me to a solitary place and try to persuade me, saying, "Why do you do this? You should cooperate with your brother a little and sit in the shop to manage the business. We also practice devotion. We have pictures of God (deities) in our homes as well, and we do this and that…" Many traders would even take me to their homes to offer me advice, hoping to reform me. There was a merchant named Fatehchand who once took me to his home and showed me his room of worship. He said, "I, too, perform *pūjā-pāṭha* (worship and recitations) and offer prayers. I'm not asking you to stop worshipping God, but, brother, you must mend your ways! Your brother complains that, of the two brothers, one is heading east—towards becoming a sādhu—while the other is heading west, towards business. Do not go towards the East when your elder brother is going towards the West; both of you walk in the same direction."

I replied, "I only want to go towards the East." He persuaded me a lot. A thought came into my mind: 'Why should I become unwise by receiving wisdom from a Nigura (who has no Guru) who cannot save himself from death? The wisdom imparted by my Guru is sufficient for me.'

I persevered in my *sādhana* and devotional practices. After receiving my Gurudev's grace, when I began delivering satsang-discourses, I am telling the truth, that merchant, Seth Fatehchand, would join the queue with other satsang-attendees to have my *darshan*. He would stand in the scorching sun for half an hour at a stretch, waiting for his turn. Then, while offering salutations to me, he would be overcome with emotion. Many other merchants and officers who previously tried to teach me, saying, 'Brother, what you are doing is not good…,' would come and bow their heads in reverence. Even my mother would say, "What is this? Your brother goes to the shop, while you remain seated in the room of worship until twelve o'clock. My son, by all means, practise devotion, but pay some attention to the business as well."

I sought refuge at my Guru's feet and after attaining Self-realization, in obedience to His command, I spent seven years in solitude. Later, when Gurudev instructed me to go home, I went to Ahmedabad. It becomes very difficult to live at home after living in solitude for so many years. How can a lion of the forest live in a cage?

I went to Vāḍaj to deliver a satsang discourse. Having grown weary of the urban environment, I went for a walk along the banks of the River Sābarmati. The moment I arrived there, I experienced something extraordinary within my heart. All around lay thorny shrubs and wilderness. I sat in the solitude of that jungle, at the very spot where the Moterā Ashram now stands. Later, when bricks arrived for the construction of a small hut there, my elder brother tried to instigate our mother, saying, "He does obey your behest. He quotes, ***'Mātridevo bhava, Pitridevo bhava'***—*'Regard your mother as a god; regard your father as a god.'* He also upholds the saying, 'You may forget everyone else, but never forget your parents.' Even after becoming Asharam, he continues to honour this tenet. He is my younger brother. He may not listen

Shri Rama ji's Departure to His Divine Abode

– Pujya Bapuji

(In the previous issue, you read that Kāla came to Lord Rāma and conveyed the message that the period of His reign was over. Meanwhile, with the arrival of Sage Durvāsā ji, Lakshmaṇa ji had to make a difficult decision between the protection of Ayodhya and the acceptance of his own death sentence, to uphold Lord Rāma's word. Shri Rāma's mind was torn between the devil and the deep blue sea and he became extremely dismayed and anguished. **Continued further…**)

Lakshmaṇa ji's Sacrifice for Dharma:

Rāmachandra ji respectfully summoned all the ministers, invited Guru Vasishtha, and apprised him of the entire episode. They all said, "If you violate your vow, it will defeat the basis of dharma. That (adharma) will make the subjects irreligious and unhappy, and by fulfilling the vow , Lakshmaṇa will die, but Dharma will be protected. Therefore, it will be proper to sacrifice Lakshmaṇa."

What a heart-rending moment it must have been for Rāma ji! Lord Rāma spoke with a heavy heart, "Lakshmaṇa! Go anywhere you wish, so that there is no obstacle in the path of Dharma."

Before Lord Rāma could tell him to leave, Lakshmaṇa folded his hands and said, "*Sādho*! How upright you are, O Lord! How noble you are!"

What propriety and conduct between brothers, between the master and his servant, between the king and his ministers, and between the Guru and his disciple! Lakshmaṇa ji went to the banks of the Sarayu, to cast off his body. He withdrew His senses into the mind, the mind into the intellect, and the intellect into the consciousness of the Supreme Self, and practiced concentration and prāṇāyāma. Just as a snake throws off its slough, so did Lakshmaṇa ji, the mighty warrior, the great servant and the devoted brother, renounce His body, without any hesitation. He concentrated his prāṇa into his Brahmarandhra ('the hole of Brahman', the aperture in the crown of the head through which the individual soul may leave its body upon death). Just at that time Indra took Lakshmaṇa bodily to the heavens, stealthily so that none could see him.

Time brings adverse circumstances even in the life of Lord Rāma, who steadfastly upheld Dharma at every step. Therefore, when adverse circumstances come into your life or mine, do not make them even more adverse by lamenting. Time brings changes in circumstances, and even those who resist change are eventually compelled to change.

When Bharata came to know of this, he arrived there. Lord Rāma said to him, "Bharata! Now take charge of the kingdom."

Bharata replied, "O Lord! I will not rule the kingdom of Ayodhya after bidding farewell to Rāma."

Rāma ji permitted him to follow Him and entrusted the kingdom to Lav and Kush. Then Rāma ji addressed the people of Ayodhya, "I am deeply grateful to you all. You have bestowed upon me the love and honour befitting a king and followed my commands. Now, I wish to take leave of you."

Hearing the words of his departure, the hearts of the residents of Ayodhya were overwhelmed with emotion, and they became tearful. They pleaded, "O Lord! We cannot live without You. Please take us with You." Lord Rāma replied, "I cannot disregard your command."

How magnanimous is Lord Rāma, who, being free from any desire for honour, bestows honour upon others! Reverential salutations at His holy feet!

When Shatrughna heard the news, he too arrived and earnestly requested Lord Rāma to also take him. Lord Rāma consented. Just



For Students



Even a Small Incident Can Enlighten Them

(From the Satsang discourses of Pujya Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu)

A man was sitting on the seashore, watching the surging waves. He noticed another man nearby who had placed his *dhoti*, *angochhā* (shoulder cloth), and towel on the shore before stepping into the ocean to take a dip in the surging waves. Hardly had the man dipped into the water when a powerful wave engulfed him and swept him away in its undertow. People rushed to his rescue, but after two minutes, all that they brought back was his lifeless body. The man, who had been sitting on the seashore, enjoying the sea breeze and delighting in the play of the waves, was struck by a profound question: 'Is this truly what life is?' He did not return from the seashore to his office, nor did he go home or make a phone call. He simply set forth—and kept walking, onwards and onwards—in search of a saint, in search of a spiritual guide like Hanumān, the bestower of Jnāna (Self-knowledge) and Vairāgya (dispassion), who could help him unite with Śrī Rāma, the Supreme Lord.

Witnessing the death of another, that man united himself with the immortal Rāma Consciousness, before his own physical death. Four people were discussing this very incident. One of them said, "Indeed, brother, when one is dyed in the hue of spiritual awakening, one is transformed completely! When one's puṇya (religious merit) comes to fruition, even the smallest incident can enlighten him."

The second man said, "One's life is transformed… We speak of these things, but we must also make a sincere effort to put them into practice."

The first man said, "I shall become such a sādhu (ascetic) that you will be left astonished!"

The second retorted, "Oh stop boasting! You talk about becoming a great sādhu—is becoming a sādhu a joke? I shall show you by becoming a sādhu!"

The first man retorted, "So, I am not going to become one, but you will show me by becoming a sādhu?"

The second man said, "Yes! Just wait and see—I shall become a sādhu!"

A third man intervened, saying, "Oh, stop it! You are indulging in useless talk. 'I shall become a sādhu'—many people have become sādhus!"

The first man said, "No, no! I will not become a sādhu who is a Spiritualist controlling spirits, exorcising ghosts, uttering spells, or begging for this and that. No! I aspire to become a true sādhu."

The fourth man said, "If you become a sādhu like Gopichand, you will come to know what becoming a true sādhu means!"

The first man replied, "That is precisely what I shall do—I shall become like Gopichand himself!"

The second man said, "And I shall become Bhartrihari, Gopichand's maternal uncle!"

The third man scoffed, "Forget it! Why do you keep chattering?"

The two men then set forth on their respective paths. One, taking Gopichand as his ideal, and the other, taking Bhartrihari as his ideal, began leading lives as ascetic sādhus. The other two friends said to each other, "It was we who encouraged them, and

Moments of Supreme Blessedness…

The Lamp of Discrimination Kindled Even in a Sensual Environment

(From the Satsang Discourses of Pujya Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu)

There once lived an affluent merchant who had an only son. He arranged the latter's engagement and subsequently his marriage while the son was still quite young. In due course, however, the divine summons came and both (father and the mother) passed away.

When the young man came of age, he took charge of the family business and all its affairs. He possessed immense wealth. After some time, he sent for his wife. It was the first day of their conjugal life—their entry into *grihastha-jivana*, the householder's life. The occasion was celebrated with music, singing, and festivities. Night fell, and the husband and wife entered the spacious chamber of their magnificent mansion. The chamber was fragrant with the sweet scent of *kewra* blossom and perfumed oils. A double bed strewn with flowers was inviting them. Both husband and wife possessed shapely and handsome bodies; they appeared as though Kāmadeva, the god of love, and Rati, his divine consort, had themselves entered the chamber. Their bodies were shapely, attractive, soft, and beautiful; yet, alongside their physical beauty, there was also a certain refinement of understanding. The husband sat upon the bed, and his wife sat beside him. Suddenly, his gaze fell upon a mirror framed in gold. The artists of that era had painted portraits of his father and mother along the two sides of the mirror. He continued gazing intently at the portraits of his parents, observing every detail. As he looked, tears started trickling from his eyes.

The intelligent wife observed that this was an occasion of immense joy. They were embarking upon the life of conjugal pleasures for the very first time, and everything around them was finely decorated for the celebration—and yet, her husband was weeping! She asked him, "My lord, what has suddenly come over you?"

He replied, "Nothing really... just remembered a small thing, nothing else." He thus tried to suppress the matter. But his wife was wise. She said, "Could some trifling matter really bring tears to the eyes of a valiant man like you? My beloved husband, your sorrow is my sorrow, your anxieties are my anxieties, your afflictions are my afflictions, and your grief is my grief—for I am your *ardhāngini*, your better half. Please, do not hide anything from me."

Upon her insistence, the young man wiped his tears. Then, gazing intently once more at the same mirror, he began to speak, "O Subhadre! O my beloved! As I look at the portraits of my mother and father seen on either side of this gold-framed mirror, my eyes become teary, wondering—when my parents were married and lived in this very palace, they must have enjoyed all the carnal pleasures that we are now preparing to indulge in. All the luxuries that we are just beginning to enjoy must have been enjoyed by them as well. At that time, they possessed greater wealth than we do, enjoyed more comforts and conveniences, and had greater physical strength and virility. Surely, then, they must have overindulged in these pleasures. Yet today

Foreign Celebrities Shared Their Miraculous Experiences of Ayurvedic Treatment



Some time ago, world-famous Canadian athlete Jonathan Toews shared his miraculous experience of the benefits of Ayurvedic treatment. He shared that in 2020, due to a Coronavirus infection, he developed Chronic Immune Response Syndrome, his entire body began to swell, and the functioning of his body tissues and organs started declining. Even after recovering from Corona, he continued to face this problem along with extreme fatigue and difficulty in breathing. To overcome this, he tried everything possible under modern medicine, but found no relief. Finally, in 2023, he resorted to Ayurveda and visited India for treatment. Consuming herbs like Tulsi and Giloy, along with Panchakarma detox, a vegetarian diet, and meditation—all these collectively strengthened his immune system and detoxified his body. Not only was his body revitalized, but he also experienced immense mental benefits. Since then, the Ayurvedic lifestyle has become an important part of his life.



The founder of the Arab Yoga Foundation, Nouf Marwaai, had become a victim of a life-threatening disease called 'Lupus', a chronic autoimmune disease. She said, "The doctors told me that they had no cure for Lupus and that I would have to live relying solely on medicine. Then I stumbled upon a book on Yoga, after which I started practicing Yoga (meditation, yogic practices, etc.) and adopted an Ayurvedic lifestyle, which completely changed my life. Even today, it is hard to believe that despite having a disease like Lupus, I am able to live without any medication and without any damage to my organs. I want everyone to receive the benefits of the beautiful tradition of Ayurveda and Yoga."

The reason for the unique efficacy of Ayurvedic treatment is that it treats the disease based on its root cause. According to the Tridosha theory of Ayurveda, many diseases that modern medicine consider incurable can be cured radically. Ayurveda also includes the wisdom of wholesome and unwholesome food (*Pathya-Apathya*) according to the season and one's body type (*Prakriti*), purification (*Shodhana*) and rejuvenation (*Rasāyana*) therapies, and the observance of *Sadvritta* (code of conduct for a healthy life). This protects the health of a healthy person, and health-promoting particles (cells) begin to develop even in the body of a diseased person. The knowledge of Ayurveda emerged from the heart of Lord Brahmā and has been nurtured by the tradition of our Rishis (sages); therefore, it connects physical health with spirituality. If someone has a disease that all remedies have failed to cure, our visionary sages have also given the beneficial advice of taking refuge in the Supreme Self—by whose Existence, all the rules of creation are governed—through the chanting of His name. Blessed is the knowledge of Ayurveda, and blessed are great souls like Pujya Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu, who have made the Ayurvedic lifestyle a part of the lives of countless people!

(Compiler: Mohan Sahu)

Life changing through Satsang- Wisdom and Antaryami's Inspiration

(From the Satsang discourses of Pujya Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu)

In a certain village, there lived a Brāhmin couple. They firmly believed that serving saints and sages as well as caring for cows, enhances one's good fortunes. They would feed fodder to the cows and provide meals to sādhus and saints. However, the expense gradually began to exceed the Brāhmin's earnings, and no one was willing to sell them anything on credit. One day, a band of sādhus arrived at their home. But there was no flour or rice, no ghee or cooking oil, and not even a lump of jaggery. The Brāhmin's wife went to a local grocer and pleaded, "We still owe you money, and we will repay it, but please protect me from disgrace today. Give me a seer (.9 kilogram) of ghee, two seers of rice, and a seer or two of sugar."

"What! So much money is already owed by you. I will not sell even an ounce of goods on credit to you. You are a poor Brāhmin woman, and you have no jewellery or ornaments that I could take from you in exchange. Otherwise, I would have had you surrender them right now. However, you are exceptionally beautiful; you are newly married, and so am I. My wife is dark-skinned and unattractive, and she has gone to her maternal home. If you promise to come to my house tonight, I will provide all the necessary provisions."

The Brāhmin woman was deeply chaste. She thought, 'It is not good that saints should leave my home hungry, and committing adultery is a grave sin.' She fell silent for a few moments. The Indwelling Lord (*Antaryāmi*) inspired her: 'Agree to his condition for now and take the provisions."

She said, "Yes, I will come tonight."

She took the provisions home, prepared the meal, and served it to the sādhus. When evening fell, she said to her husband, "This is what happened. The shopkeeper put a condition that I should promise him to visit his house tonight. I thought to myself, 'Rather than let the sādhus leave our home hungry, it is better to serve them and earn the religious merit of their service. The Supreme Lord, my Protector, is the very protector of saints and sages, and my husband, too, is saintly by nature. He has never committed adultery with any woman; then how can any man commit adultery with me?' Thinking thus, I gave the shopkeeper my word. Whatever be his intentions, please bless me that I may remain chaste."

Her husband replied, "Yes, the Lord is your Protector, isn't He? I have trust in Him. Go without hesitation."

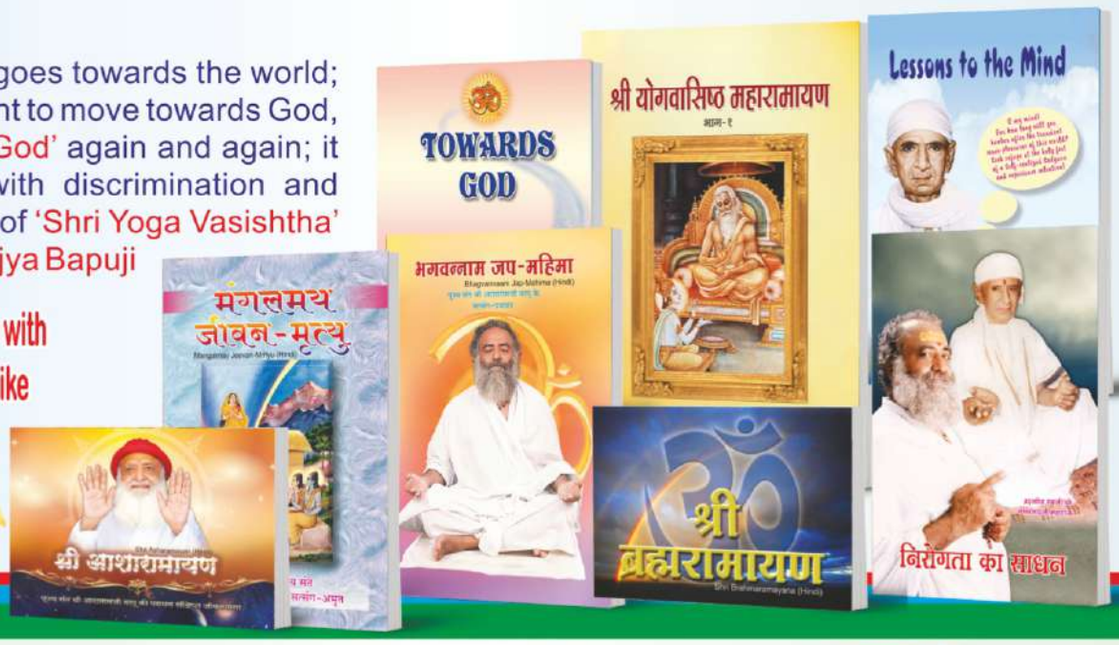
Such a husband, too, is rarely found. The wife was not only beautiful but also endowed with profound wisdom. She did not have a superstition that God dwells only in a temple or resides in *Vaikuṇṭha*, the divine abode of Lord Vishnu. Her intellect was not bigoted. God dwells in the heart of every being. One can think about God residing in *Vaikuntha* or any other world only with the presence of God within their heart. It is the presence of this *Antaryāmi*, the all-pervading Lord dwelling in every heart that lends existence to the image of God in a temple. The image in a temple is sculpted by human beings, but the indwelling Lord is self-existent, eternally present within all beings. She understood this profound truth, as she attended satsang discourses.

When the Brāhmin woman arrived, the grocer was delighted. He said, "I closed the shop early today precisely for this reason, and you have arrived. Come in."

"The mind naturally goes towards the world; it is an old habit. If you want to move towards God, read the book 'Towards God' again and again; it will endow your mind with discrimination and dispassion. The first part of 'Shri Yoga Vasishtha' also does the same." – Pujya Bapuji

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