

Purity

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Point of View
Beautiful faces are they that wear the light of a pure soul there; Beautiful hands are they that do deeds that are noble, good and true; Beautiful feet are they that go swiftly to lighten another's woe.

Monthly Journal of the Brahma Kumaris, Hqs. Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India

'Raksha Bandhan' by Brahma Kumaris Worldwide



Mr. Barack Obama, Hon'ble President of USA, being tied God Shiva's 'Rakhi' at the White House by Sister Lavanya Reddy of Seattle Rajyoga Centre.



Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, Hon'ble President of India, welcoming Rajyogini Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Addl. Chief of Brahma Kumaris, for tying the sacred 'Raksha Bandhan' at Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.

Let not past define future

Many people go through their lives carrying the burden of guilt or regret over past mistakes. For some, the weight is such that it crushes their sense of self-worth and they are unable to live a normal life, and go to their grave haunted by the wrongs they have done.

Most of us know, even if we do not remember it all the time, that every action has an equal and opposite reaction, and that we reap what we sow. This universal law warns us of the consequences of bad karma, but it also encourages us to do good karma. If one has done something bad, repentance cannot undo it. But one can learn from it and direct one's energy to doing good.

Positive and charitable actions lift our spirits and bring benefit to others. They keep the mind engaged in a healthy way, help one forge good relations, and, when done repeatedly, create a habit of doing good. Soon, a time comes when the good deeds outweigh past mistakes, and the person not only feels happy himself, but also becomes a source of support for others. This is how character transformation is effected.

There are several examples in history of people leaving behind an ignoble past and achieving greatness. St. Augustine is perhaps the most famous. A hedonistic partygoer who fathered an illegitimate son, he eventually heeded the pleas of his devout mother and became a Catholic priest. Today, he is regarded as a

Doctor of the Church, a title given to saints of particular importance.

No less remarkable was the transformation of St. Mary of Egypt from a prostitute to a hermit who fasted, prayed and lived alone in the desert for 47 years. Similarly, Angulimala, a serial killer, became a monk after an encounter with the Buddha, and Valmiki gave up life as a robber and meditated for years in penance before he went on to compose the epic Ramayana. He is now revered as 'Adi Kavi', or first poet, as he is said to have invented the 'shloka', the first verse, which defined the form of Sanskrit poetry.

These examples show that no one is beyond redemption, and each one of us has the potential for spiritual progress regardless of our background. As Oscar Wilde said, 'The only difference between the saint and the sinner is that every saint has a past, and every sinner has a future.'

This is one reason criminal justice systems in some countries make use of the principle of doing something charitable to make amends for a mistake, whereby those convicted of a crime are required to do community service fully or partially in lieu of other forms of punishment, such as imprisonment or paying a fine.

Even where such a provision does not exist, convicts get reduced punishment if they show true remorse or cooperate with the law enforcement agencies, and sentences



Mr. Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, being tied the sacred thread of protection, 'Rakhi', by Brahma Kumari Asha at the PM's residence in New Delhi.



Puri, Odisha: Swami Nishchalananda Saraswati, HH Shankaracharya of Puri, being tied the sacred thread of 'Rakhi' by BK Pratima.

are commuted if the convict has a record of good behaviour. Such measures aim to encourage reform, so that convicts emerge better persons from their experience of crime and punishment.

While one cannot change one's past, its negative influence on the present and the future can be eliminated by changing one's way

of thinking and behaviour. The key is to let bygones be bygones and turn over a new leaf. A mistake does leave a stain on the record of one's life, but repeatedly thinking about it is akin to making that stain darker. Instead, by taking to doing good one can create bright spots that will shine so that no one notices the stains.★

(Purity Features)

Photo Gallery

Wisdom first teaches what is right.

New Delhi: Mr. Rajnath Singh, Hon'ble Home Minister of India, being given 'prasad' by BK Asha after tying 'Rakhi'.



Shantivan, Abu: Paying homage at 'Prakash Stambh' on ninth anniversary of Dadi Prakashmani, former Chief of Brahma Kumaris.



Kathmandu, Nepal: Mrs. Vidya Devi Bhandari, H.E. the President of Nepal, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Raj didi.



Message of Raksha Bandhan
God completely protects those who undertake to protect themselves from vices.

Jaipur, Rajasthan: Mr. Kalyan Singh, Hon'ble Governor of Rajasthan, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Pooja. BK Sushma and BK Chandrakala are explaining the spiritual significance of 'Raksha Bandhan'.



Chennai, Tamil Nadu: Dr. K. Rosaiah, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Kalavati.



New Delhi: Mr. L.K. Advani, Senior BJP leader, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Savita.

Overcoming Depression

Depression is a common illness worldwide, affecting an estimated 350 million people. It is a common but serious mood disorder which involves persistent sadness and loss of interest. It is different from usual mood fluctuations and temporary emotional responses to challenges in everyday life. A person suffering from depression can experience a range of emotional and physical conditions. These include inability to sleep, changes in appetite and loss of energy. Especially when long-lasting and with moderate or severe intensity, depression can cause the affected person to suffer greatly and function poorly at work, at school and in the family.

There are many views today regarding the source of depression, those that involve an understanding of brain chemistry and of neurotransmitters being among the more popular. Yet, there remains a vast gap between the current way of treating depression clinically, chemically, and in terms of the body – and the way of treating depression as an energy related to the mind or consciousness. Depression is not caused by chemicals in the brain, but rather causes chemical imbalance in the brain. Depression is a state of mind wherein the affected human being has lost his/her connection with the original qualities of life, which are bliss, knowledge and eternity.

Usually people point out physical and social conditions as factors leading to depression – such as chronic illness, strained or failed relationships, a setback in business or work, and abuse during childhood. But the root cause of depression is deeper. It comes from lack of self-awareness that leads to a false self-image based on ego and results in all sorts of mental suffering and sickness. A depressed person is one who is overpowered by his negative thoughts and feelings. It is possible to come out of depression by learning to gain control over one's thoughts and emotions.

The physical body is the grossest layer of our soul-mind-body package; it is the vehicle of the soul. So even though we may experience symptoms through the physical senses, these are just expressions of a disruption of energy (an imbalance) on a subtler layer. The energy of the soul significantly influences the way in which brain chemistry and neurotransmitters work, and when changes are made to the flow or current, these can selectively improve the situation so that a new balance is achieved within the brain.

To counteract the restless energy of anxiety, we need to manage our energy at many levels. Daily practice of meditation, regulated meals and



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram: Rajyogini Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Addl. Chief of Brahma Kumaris, unveiling the plaque marking the foundation laying of 'Khushnaseeb Bhawan'. Also in pic. are Dadi Kamalmani, BK Brij Mohan and BK Asha.

Medication
or superficial
psychological
treatment cannot
help one overcome
depression. That
needs pure,
unconditional love.

activities, having a purpose in life that keeps us motivated, cultivating a sattvic lifestyle, and engaging with people to serve them in some way go a long way towards preventing and overcoming depression. A sattvic lifestyle includes mindfulness, self-discipline, spiritual practices like prayer, yoga and meditation, and cultivating qualities such as love, honesty, non-violence, compassion, contentment and selflessness. We also have to become aware of our relationship with the environment and all the ways we scatter our energy around – through multitasking, talking too much, rushing, constantly dealing with people, or feeding the mind with negative conversations or news.

Rajyoga meditation and spiritual awareness helps us to deal with the challenges of the changing times with equanimity and courage. We are not easily influenced or disturbed by other people's behaviour and negative situations. We remain stable in the seat of self-respect and in remembrance of God. We also learn to see fluctuating scenes of life with stability. We have faith that there is something beneficial in the big plan of life and God is guiding us with His wisdom to create a new world of peace and happiness. At present we see chaos and suffering



Mrs. Sumitra Mahajan, Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha, being tied the sacred 'Rakhi' by BK Sisters Anita and Shakuntala of Indore.

because we have become influenced by vices like greed, lust and anger. Vicious thoughts and actions result in misery and suffering. Depression, too, is a result of negative thoughts.

Medication cannot help one overcome depression, nor superficial psychological treatment. The only way to help people in depression is to give unconditional, pure love. Connecting the mind with God and experiencing His pure love heals the soul. This sort of love empowers the soul to take his fate in his hands.

Rajyoga is a path of self-mastery. When we understand that we are spiritual beings or souls that are playing a role through our body we can choose to use our mind and sense organs to create better thoughts and actions. Every human being or soul is filled with positive qualities.

Positive self-awareness helps us to think and act positively even in negative or adverse situations. Also, when we stay connected with God in pure remembrance, we gain power to overcome our doubts, fear and other weaknesses, and do the best in every situation. We regain our true self-esteem and begin to love ourselves, life and others.★

(Purity Bureau)

When you begin
to SEE GOOD
in EVERYBODY,
EVERYBODY
will begin to SEE
GOOD in you.



Thiruvananthapuram : Mr. P. Sathasivam, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, standing with BK Minni and BK Shinni after being tied 'Rakhi'.



Varanasi, UP: Shankaracharya Swami Narendranand Saraswati Maharaj, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Surendra.



Shimla : Mr. Acharya Deobrat, Hon'ble Governor of Himachal Pradesh, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Sunita.



New Delhi: Mr. Radha Mohan Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Sapna.



Jaipur : Mrs. Vasundhara Raje, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Sushma and BK Chandrakala.



New Delhi: Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad, Hon'ble Union Minister of Law & Justice, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Brunda.



Bhubaneswar : Mr. Naveen Pattnaik, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Geeta.



Guwahati : Mr. Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Alpna accompanied by BK Poonam.

Discovering unlimited happiness

Happiness has many flavours. There is one that gets spurred by humour, one that rejoices in outings, or takes pride in new feats but evaporates soon after. Its other version is more long-lasting, for it is based on true beliefs, good acts and things that give meaning to life. But the sweetest of them all is 'incremental happiness' – the joy of adding something substantially positive to what currently is, and of breaking free from inertia.

It is the enthusiasm gained from locating a beautiful destination through the telescope and the joy of walking towards it; the excitement experienced today when we depart to a tomorrow that is better than yesterday; and the delight of making new beginnings. Many famous stories revolve around a protagonist in the prime of his youth, for we relate to his dreams of good times ahead. Hope is a key ingredient that heightens the flavour of this recipe.

Happiness is not so much about the profit earned but the feeling of growth, anticipation of betterment and the smiles that surprises leave behind. Sellers attract their customers with free gifts and discounts because they know a bit of extra gain always enhances our joy. For a billionaire, his yearly turnover worth millions may bring little happiness until it shows a significant increase. In comparison, a festival bonus of a few thousand rupees can cheer up a humble employee far more because he needs and values the additional gain immensely.

Pearls of Wisdom

- ✓ Mercy among virtues is like the moon among the stars.
- ✓ Let your conversation be always gracious.
- ✓ Truth burns up error.
- ✓ Freedom is obtained by controlling desire.
- ✓ Unless we stand for something, we shall fall for anything.
- ✓ Justice is truth in action.
- ✓ God will never let the righteous fail.
- ✓ Wisdom is the supreme part of happiness.
- ✓ Never give in, except to convictions of honour and good sense.
- ✓ Take delight in honouring each other.
- ✓ By standing firm you will gain life.
- ✓ Encourage one another to build each other up.
- ✓ In goodness there are all kinds of wisdom.

There is a time in the world drama when total renewal of the world takes place — and that time is now.

Happiness is thus relative for everyone. For a prisoner, being set free would be the greatest celebration of his life, while free citizens may not appreciate their 'privilege' as much. For an overly obese person, shedding a few kilos would bring a sense of achievement, and a chronic patient may consider reduction in pain a source of relief. We can be happy even amid discomfort if the degree of our difficulty goes down or there is at least a hope of that happening.

It does not take too much to brew happiness if minimising our troubles means maximising our joys. Happiness lies in the eyes of the beholder, and he who spots it generously flies on the wings of optimism. His flight is higher than that of those more gifted than him and his spirit feisty even in the face of challenges.

The secret to incremental happiness is to maintain positive momentum in life and be passionate about creating newness. It is to remain gladly engaged in the now by planting fresh saplings and nurturing the old ones. We can hold our spirit in an ever-ascending state by leaping from one success to another. And success greatly depends on our victory over our internal kingdom – our mind and 'sanskars'. When our pace of progress is not interrupted by laziness, temptation, regret or addictive habits, we surge ahead with confidence.

Though all of us have our share of small and big increments in life, there is a particular time period when the whole world collectively experiences an unprecedented positive shift. That is the auspicious time of 'confluence', when the Iron Age is drawing to a close and the Golden Age is in the offing.

Just as the day declines towards the darkness of night with every passing second, but the positive transition – that is movement from darkness to light – takes place in the few hours around pre-dawn, it is the case with the world drama. While the world constantly ticks from a state of perfection to imperfection and, finally, utmost degradation, throughout the cycle of time, the exception is the Confluence Age.



Mumbai, Napean Sea Road: Mr. Vidyasagar Rao, Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Rukmani.



Chandigarh: Mr. Kaptan Singh Solanki, Hon'ble Governor of Haryana, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Uttara accompanied by BK Amirchand.



New Delhi: Mr. Arun Jaitley, Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Rama.

That is the time when actual renewal and replenishment of the world takes place, and everything moves towards a state of perfection.

At this point, while the future guarantees freedom from all suffering of the past and holds the promise of a blessed beginning of love and harmony, the present

offers the chance to make that dream a reality. This Diamond Age is the only period when souls can taste the unmatched bliss of *chadti kala* or perennial ascension of spirit and matter. It is the time conducive to the collective experience of incremental happiness. ★

(Purity Features)

Editorial

Where should the good people go?

Solitary, sidelined and nowhere to go – this is how a lot of us feel today while walking the path of goodness. As the shrewd and cunning steal the show, virtues like simplicity, honesty and humility seem to be outdated. Sermons on goodness are generally reserved for those in their twilight years. For the rest it's normal to pursue power and wealth by hook or crook.

Where truth is always fighting a losing battle, seekers of justice are compelled to give up hope after an arduous wait. The weak and poor are on their own because might is right. Relationships are need-based and have been reduced to a spectacle on social networking sites. The virtual world has taken over our reality and glossy visuals have hijacked genuine content.

Unable to make sense of such a hollow, self-centred culture, many today are at the end of their tether; some are even forced to take their life. Those who show the rare courage of standing by their principles are made to pay a price, abandoned, threatened or eliminated. It's been a while since we last witnessed the victory of good over evil. How long will it go on this way?

It is clear that the good and the bad cannot live together. As the world today is conducive to negativity, where should the good people go? Will they too be eventually swept away by the current of moral decline, or is there any hope for them?

As change is inevitable, nothing lasts forever. These difficult times too shall pass. In fact there's little time left for the empire of evil now. They say that when sin and suffering reach extreme proportions, they are at their end. So it is time for goodness to replace them, for a new world order to set in. Some more patience and we will be at the beginning of a new cycle of time.

The Bible speaks of a time when the meek will inherit the earth. According to Hindu scriptures, after the total degradation of values in the Iron Age, the cycle of time begins again from its superlative stage, 'Satyug'. There the lion and lamb drink from the same trough. This world of complete non-violence is in the offing. So the struggle of good people will end soon. In the Golden Age, they will no longer have to swim against the tide as all values will be in full bloom.

The present cloudy times will surely give way to sunshine, but not all will bask in it. Only those who stick to their virtues now, cleanse themselves of acquired falsity and revive their original spiritual sheen will be rewarded.

To make this journey, an effort maker should, first of all, be convinced of his own goodness. He must be rest assured that even the smallest act of kindness is a personal investment that will bring assured returns. He must keep the faith that nothing noble is ever wasted; it always adds a little joy somewhere. Above all, he must know that being good is the only way to feeling good within; it is the mantra for happiness and health.

Secondly, an effort maker must discard those thoughts, words and actions that bear allegiance to the old, corrupt world. Like a loyal soldier of the army fighting for righteousness, he must choose right over wrong at every turn of his life. For this he would need to first win over his own mind.

To gather the strength and enthusiasm to make this major transformation, an effort maker must make God His companion. Through this highest connection, he will be empowered to change old habits and adopt a positive lifestyle. The rays from the Ultimate Spiritual Powerhouse will heal his past, cleanse him of any negative residues and enable his pure core to emerge. By following this way of transformation consistently, a few committed guardians of goodness, under the guidance of the Almighty, will be able to turn the tables. They will be able to set in motion the new cycle of time and usher in the world of harmony.★



Ranchi : Ms. Draupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Governor of Jharkhand, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Nirmala.



Kolkata: Mr. K.N.Tripathi, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Kanan.



New Delhi: Hon'ble Mr. Justice A.K. Sikri of Supreme Court, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Asha didi.



New Delhi: Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Hon'ble Union Minister of Railways, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Lakshmi accompanied by BK Raghu.

Regaining paradise by conquering lust

Of all the tragic tales that have been known to humanity down the ages, the most tragic and moving tale is about how humans fell from divine grace and lost the paradise they had inherited from God. Yet it is this tragic tale that leads to the most heroic saga of hope, courage, faith and wisdom that helps human beings regain the lost paradise.

All religious writings, prophetic utterances, myths, legends and visions allude to a perfect time and place called heaven or paradise where human beings were God-like, divine, and existed in perfect bliss. There was no death, sorrow, disease, crime, poverty or pollution in that world.

More than anything else, all human endeavour is aimed at reclaiming that lost heaven, whether through religion or science. The human soul is made in the image of God, so every human soul is originally good.

Many religions talk of the original sin that man committed, for which humans were condemned to a life of toil, pain and death. 'Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit/ Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste/ Brought death into the World, and all our woe...' John Milton wrote in *Paradise Lost*. But what was the sin that man committed which brought us to this state of woe? Disobedience of God's law or divine code of conduct was the first transgression that divine beings made.

And this fatal transgression took place when their consciousness shifted from the soul to the body. When the divine beings ate the forbidden fruit of body consciousness lust overcame their mind.

In Hinduism, the residents of heaven or Satyuga i.e. deities like Shri Radhe and Shri Krishna, Shri Lakshmi and Shri Narayan are worshipped because they were completely viceless (*nirvikari*). Particularly, they were free from 'kama' (lust). Words like 'vikari' (sinful) and 'patit' (impure) specifically refer to the sin of lust.

Even in this age of Kaliyuga, people bow before celibate *sanyasis*. If a *sanyasi* breaks the vow of celibacy he loses all respect. Virgin girls are still worshipped in India during festivals like Navratri as they are seen as embodiments of *Shakti* (divine mother), but after a girl gets married it is customary for her to bow before everyone.

The most widespread and

Soul consciousness means to perform actions in the awareness of one's own divinity, and not in the state of body-consciousness.

intense worship these days is that of shaktis. While all other festivals are celebrated once a year, Navratri festival, when people worship nine shaktis or goddesses, is celebrated twice. Although virgins, shaktis like Durga, Amba, Saraswati, Santoshi and Sheetla are called Ma (mother) by devotees. *Sanyasis* call even a small girl as Ma in order to keep their thoughts about females pure.

Conquering lust is considered the highest qualification for attaining divinity. Those who attain victory over 'kama' are shown having a crown of light (halo) and are entitled to be addressed as His/Her Holiness. It is said that "kamajeet jagatjeet" (those who conquer lust conquer the world). The deities ruled the whole world in Satyuga because they had conquered lust.

In the Bhagvad Gita, lust is termed as the deadliest enemy of humans (*kama mahashatru*). In prayer, devotees beseech God to rid them of lust (*Main Moorakh Khal Kaami...*). In legal terminology, rape is called criminal assault. If such a thing happens in a place of worship, or is committed by a priest or preacher, it is considered the greatest sin.

A 'civil-eyed' person alone is truly civilized. In heaven all had civil or pure vision. They looked at the soul even though they had the most beautiful bodies, and no criminal assault through lust took place. The saying, "where women are worshiped, that is the abode of deities", truly applies to that era.

In contrast, the world today has become a *vaishyalaya* (brothel) where lust has enslaved almost the entire populace. It is being stimulated day and night by cinema, TV, nightclubs and obscene literature. Lust is so pervasive that people who indulge in lust have become blind to age, ethics, relationships and social norms.

There is mention of pure birth



Lucknow : Mr. Akhilesh Yadav, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Radha.



Raipur : Dr. Raman Singh, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Chattisgarh, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Kamla didi.



Patna : Mr. Nitish Kumar, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Bihar, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Sangeeta.

(*niyog*) in scriptures. Christ is known as the son of Virgin Mary. The birth of the Pandavas. Sita, Kabir etc. is also said to have been pure, i.e. without sexual conception. The process of birth in Satyuga was pure. Only later on, in Copper Age (*Dwapar Yuga*), when deities began to indulge in lust, did impure birth start and other vices began to rule their mind, and the world became hell.

In order to conquer the vice of lust we must remedy the root cause of our fall. When humans transgressed the fundamental spiritual truth that we are divine souls and not physical bodies, we lost all divine powers and began to

indulge in sensual pleasures.

Reawakening our consciousness to the original state of truth and purity by practicing soul consciousness and remembering God with a true heart will absolve us of all the sins committed by the soul in the state of body consciousness.

The road to hell is paved with good intentions; the road to heaven is paved with good deeds. – Anonymous

Soul consciousness means to imbibe God's qualities in the self and value them. Actions performed in this awareness express reverence for God and one's own divinity; mere knowledge or talk of goodness will not bring paradise.★

(Purity Features)

Focus

If you chase two rabbits, both will escape.

The main thing is to keep the main thing as the main thing.

Focus on what you want and not on what you want to avoid.

Successful people are average people with a focus.



Vijaywada: Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Shantha.



Mr. Pushpakamal Dahal (Prachanda), Hon'ble Prime Minister of Nepal, being greeted by BK Raj didi, Director of Brahma Kumaris Rajyoga Centres in Nepal.



Dehradun: Mr. Harish Rawat, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Manju.

New Delhi: Hon'ble Mr. Justice Amitava Roy of the Supreme Court, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Vijay.



Itanagar: Mr. J.P. Rajkhowa, Hon'ble Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, and Mrs. Rita Rajkhowa, being presented a memento by BK Junu after tying of 'Rakhi'.



New Delhi: Mr. P.J. Kurien, Hon'ble Dy. Chairman of Rajya Sabha, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Rama.



Bikaner, Rajasthan: Mr. Arjunram Meghwal, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Meena.



Khanpur, New Delhi: After giving spiritual message of 'Raksha Bandhan' the sacred thread of 'Rakhi' was tied to Dy. Commissioner of Police and 34 SHOs of South-East Zone by BK Asha and others.

Violence cannot lead to peace

Religious beliefs have for years exerted a strong influence on the perception, attitudes and mindset of the people, who have followed scriptures considering it to be the will of the Almighty. But the interpretation of scriptures on face value, without the application of intellect, has distorted truths and led to the formation of false and unrighteous belief systems.

One such confusion that remains is about the use of violence for good ends. In Bhagvad Gita, which is based on the principle of 'Ahimsa Parmodharam', violence is abhorred as evil and the begetter of all sins. However, the same scripture depicts wars between devtas and asuras. It is depicted that while it was always the asuras who waged wars, devtas took to violence and bloodshed for the protection of goodness in the world. In the end devtas always emerged victorious.

It looks like the use of violence for meeting righteous ends is justified. This belief system has been the root cause of all wars waged in the name of humanity. Considering it to be just, armies even ask for the Almighty's blessings, before they take on their 'enemy'. Wars have caused a chain reaction, and one of the evils that has emerged from it is the unending arms race. Nations are acquiring more and more deadly weapons with the aim to 'secure' their own country.

The understanding that violence is allowed for the protection of one's idea of right has taken horrific forms in people's personal lives. Incidents of mob 'justice' have become common, families have been killing their own children 'to protect the honour of their community'. Brothers, burning in the fire of anger and revenge, have caused bloodshed within their families and jilted lovers have taken lives to 'put an end to their misery' caused by unrequited love. In fact these days, the more difficult news is about people seeking revenge for 'right ends' than people using violence for 'wrong ends'.

We see violence everywhere man goes. Natural resources have been plundered recklessly as man has behaved like the arrogant

What a fall from 'right is might' to 'might is right'.

ruler who treats all other life forms as subservient to him. Speechless, innocent animals are slaughtered for flesh and other objects. This has caused great disturbance in the elements of nature, resulting in global warming and drastic climate change. Nature has been forced to revolt, causing calamities like floods, landslides, earthquakes and hurricanes to become common all around the world.

But, getting back to the scriptures, Bhagvad Gita itself abhors even the idea of violence in the form of thought, word or action. In fact, the distinguishing feature between the devtas and asuras is that while the former are always non-violent, the latter are always agitated and angry. While it preaches a non-violent way of life, Gita particularly stresses on the consumption of satvik food, which is procured, cooked and served without any violence.

Just ponder over it: what remains of good if it takes to bad means. Secondly, what is the need for the right to 'fight' against the wrong for

truth reveals its own self. Will light ever need to fight with darkness to make space? By natural law, darkness just disappears when light erupts.

The belief in the use of violence has distorted the principle of 'right is might' to 'might is right' making us believe in theories like 'survival of the fittest'. The Bhagvad Gita preaches the Law of Karma that espouses that one receives only what one sows. It means it is impossible to derive harmonious ends by using violent means.

And so, how is it possible that the scripture that clarifies the Law of Karma and calls non-violence our supreme religion sanctions the use of violence under any circumstances? Surely the depiction of wars in the scriptures is symbolic. Surely, it referred to the fight between the good and the evil that goes on in the minds of every human being.

We must understand the true meaning behind the depiction in scriptures and discard this deep-rooted misunderstanding that has caused immense loss to humanity. Because of this myth, religion today has become a cause of war and fundamentalism rather than the reason for establishing peace in the world as was intended by its founders.★

(Purity Features)



Aizawl : Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM (Retd.) Hon'ble Governor of Mizoram, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Narmada.



Gumla, Bihar : Mr. Sudarshan Bhagat, Hon'ble Union MoS for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Shanti.



New Delhi : Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Asha.



New Delhi : Hon'ble Mr. Justice P.C. Pant of Supreme Court, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Brunda.



New Delhi : Dr. Subhash R Bhamre, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Defence, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Savita.



Panaji : Ms. Mridula Sinha, Hon'ble Governor of Goa sitting in silent meditation after tying of 'Rakhi' by BK Shobha.



Chandrapur, Maharashtra : Mr. Hansraj Ahir, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Kunda.



Sirohi, Rajasthan: Mr. Prakash Chandra Pagariya, District & Sessions Judge, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Lata, accompanied by BKs Aruna, Shraddha and Govind.



Cuttack, Odisha: Mr. Mahendra Partap, IPS, Addl DG of Police (HRPC), being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Kamlesh.



New Delhi: Mr K.G. Suresh, DG, IIMC, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, receiving Godly gift from BK Sushant after tying of Rakhi by BKs Shalu & Vineeta.

Berhampur, Odisha: Mr. Amitabh Thakur, IPS, IG of Police, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Manju.



Jammu: Mr. Kavinder Gupta, Hon 'ble Speaker of Legislative Assembly, Jammu & Kashmir, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Sudarshan.

New Delhi: Ms. Divya Kumar Khosla, actress, producer and director, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Aditi.



Moscow, Russia: Mr. G. Balasubramanian, Dy. Chief of Mission, Embassy of India, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Sudha.



Raksha Bandhan Photo Gallery

Mohammedpur, New Delhi: Mr. Amarendra Khatua, Secretary Dean, Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Kanchan and BK Falak.



Jabalpur Katan Colony: Mr. Justice Rajendra Menon, Acting Chief Justice of MP High Court, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Vimla.



New Delhi: Mr. Jagdish Mukhi, Hon 'ble Governor of Andaman and Nicobar, being presented memento by BKs Padmaja, Naveen Wahi and Narinder after tying of 'Rakhi'.



Peace of Mind

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Puri, Odisha: Mr. Dibyasingha Deb Gajapati Maharaja seen with BK Nirupama and others after tying of 'Rakhi'.



Shillong:
Mr. V. Shanmuganathan,
Hon'ble Governor of Meghalaya,
being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Neelam.



New Delhi: Mr. T. Gehlot, Hon'ble Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Babita.



Mangalore: Mr. Amit Shah,
President, Bharatiya Janata
Party, being tied 'Rakhi' by
BK Vishveshwari.



NOIDA, UP: Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Manju.



Gandhinagar : Mr. O.P.Kohli, Hon'ble Governor of Gujarat, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Sarla didi and BK Amar.



Delhi: Mr. Aroind Kejriwal, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Delhi, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Urmil.



New Delhi: Mr. Nitin Gadkari, Hon'ble Union Minister of Road Transport, Highways and Shipping, being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Sunita, accompanied by BK Shubhakaran and BK Savita.

Wise Sayings

- The man with insight to admit his limitations comes nearest to perfection. - Goethe
- A good example is the tallest kind of preaching. - African Proverb
- Behold the turtle. He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out. - J.B.Conant

Overseas Photo Gallery



Russia, St. Petersburg: BK Charles from Australia speaking on "The Art of Leadership" at a public programme. This event was organised as part of a new project dedicated to 16 Celestial Arts.



New York, USA: Brahma Kumaris contingent in the 38th India Day Parade. (Pic. on left) Cine Star Abhishek Bachchan being tied 'Rakhi' by BK Anjani



Nairobi, Kenya: BK Sisters Pratibha and Bhakti with the participants of the event, 'Weaving Just Peace: African Women's Transformative Leadership in Contexts of Transition', held at Kenyatta University.



Milpitas, USA: Celebrating India's Independence Day are Ambassador Venkatesan Ashok, Consul General of India, Dr. Kodela Siva Prasad Rao, the first Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Jayaram Komati, Andhra Pradesh Special Representative for North America, Mr. K. Venkata Ramana, Consul from Consulate General of India office in SFO, Mayor Jose Esteve, Kansan Chi, Assembly member, "Ro" Khanna, Dy. Assistant Secretary in the US Deptt. of Commerce, BK Kusum, Ms. Savita Vaidhyathan, Vice Mayor, City of Cupertino, Ash Kalra, Council member, and T. Martin-Milius, Council member, Sunnyvale.