

Purity

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Point of View

Pure love is the elixir of life. Today a man may love his property more than his brother. This is self-deception. Love cannot be bought like property.

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

Black Money is rooted in Black Minds

Millions of Indians are expecting a new era of reduced corruption and a healthier economy following the bold move by the government to withdraw high-denomination currency notes from circulation.

The overnight scrapping of 86 per cent of the paper money in circulation and the introduction of new banknotes was calculated to bring black money, or cash from undeclared sources kept outside the financial system, into the mainstream economy. The authorities also aimed to end counterfeiting of the old banknotes.

About 20 per cent of India's economy is estimated to be informal, operating outside official regulation, and a mere one per cent of the country's population pays income tax. Moreover, the hidden money is used to transact corrupt deals. In such a scenario, the sudden demonetization had a laudable objective, but will it fully achieve what many are expecting?

Soon after the prime minister announced on 8th November evening that Rs 500 and Rs 1000 currency notes would cease to be legal tender in a few hours, those with hoarded cash rushed to buy gold and other high-value assets in order to get rid of the soon-to-be-worthless notes without the taxman knowing. Those selling such goods made the most of the opportunity, hiking their prices for buyers paying with the old banknotes. More than a week after the old notes ceased to be valid, shops selling expensive goods were issuing pre-dated receipts to their customers without asking. Obviously, the seller had a large sum in cash to account for.

A new black market sprung up, with racketeers exchanging the scrapped money for lower denomination notes

at a hefty premium. To cap it all, within days of new currency notes coming into circulation, they were being counterfeited.

The lesson in all this is that as long as people think that dishonesty is rewarding they will have an incentive to cheat.

Black money and corruption have their roots in black minds. Greed is the seed of these twin maladies. It is essentially a spiritual ailment that cannot be cured with laws or official diktats. India's former president A P J Abdul Kalam made this point once, saying that, "The fight for a corruption-free ethical society will have to be fought against greed, and replace it with a 'what can I give' spirit."

People will desist from corrupt practices when they understand what they stand to lose. Tax evasion may look like a smart move but it exacts a price. Loss of character and peace of mind are the immediate consequences. The tax cheat also lives in fear, not only of losing what he has hoarded, but also of his fraud being found out. Also, one who accumulates wealth by dishonest means will likely teach his children to do the same. The result is visible all around us, with graft being an accepted part of life in today's society worldwide.

In the Ramayana, Lord Rama was unable to kill Ravana even after cutting off all his ten heads, which seemed to grow anew. He was then directed to aim his arrows at Ravana's navel, which contained the source of his life, and he slayed the demon king.

Similarly, the fight against black money and graft must aim to free people's minds of greed. That will happen when we become more



Rome, Italy: H.H. Pope Francis in the Vatican meeting with BK Radha after being presented the book 'Inside Out', by Dadi Janki, together with a quote on mercy, during an interfaith gathering to celebrate the end of the Year of Mercy declared by the Pope.

aware of our true identity as souls, and thereby experience our innate spiritual qualities of purity, peace, love, compassion and truth. When one is nourished by the experience

of these virtues, vices gradually lose their grip on the mind and fade away. Such spiritual empowerment is the best way to create an ethical and strong corruption-free society.★

(Purity Features)

New Year's Eve

Message by Dadi Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris

"New Year's Eve is a time of reflection, a time when we pause to consider what it is we most want to create in the new year to come. You may have had the experience of making a commitment at the beginning of the new year only to find a month later that your resolve has left and you are living your life as you did before. To make a promise is easy, but to sustain it requires God's love, God's support, and God's company.

This is a time when the 'nature' of the world is calling for renewal. There are five types of 'nature':

- 1) Nature of the body
- 2) Nature of relationships
- 3) Nature of wealth
- 4) Nature of the five elements
- 5) Nature of the self

Become a companion of God and you will make your nature elevated in each of these aspects. When we renew our nature, we renew the nature of the world."



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram: During the inauguration of a National Conference on 'Spirituality for a Just and Peaceful Society', after lighting lamps, are Hon'ble Justice A.K.Sikri, Judge, Supreme Court, Hon'ble Justice V. Esvariah, Chairman, National Commission for Backward Classes (Retd.), Justice M.V. Ramesh, Registrar, Supreme Court of India, BK Brij Mohan, BK Sisters Asha didi, Pushpa didi, Lata behn, BK B.L. Maheshwari, Sr. Advocate, Dr. Girish Patel and Mr. Mukesh Ahuja, Advocate.



Shantivan, Abu: Inaugurating 'Wah Zindagi Wah!' conference are Rajyogini Dadi Janki, Mr. Rakesh Dubey, Director, Disaster Management Institute, Bhopal, BK Nirwair, BK Mruthyunjaya, BK Sarla didi and others.



New Delhi: Mr. Rajnath Singh, Hon'ble Home Minister, Govt. of India, with BK Asha didi, BK Savita, BK T.K. Singh and BK Bharat Bhushan.

Photo Gallery

Imagination is the kite one can fly the highest.



Vashi, Navi Mumbai: Inaugurating a programme titled 'Golden Age by God's Wisdom' are BK Santosh didi, Director, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh regions, BK Sheela, centre in-charge, Mr. Sudhakar Sonavane, Mayor, Mr. Sandeep Naik, MLA, Mr. Narendra Patel, MLA, Mr. Prakash More, Corporator, Mr. Rajiv Kumar Singh, MD, Sampi Insurance Co., Dr. Ratan Rathore, cardiologist, Ms. Shilpa More, former councillor, and others.

Kollam, Kerala: Lighting candles during 'bhoomi pooja' and the foundation laying ceremony of Kollam BK centre are Mr. Ramachandran Kadannappally, Minister for Ports, BKs Beena, Pankajam, Usha, Mini and Ranjini.



Cuttack, Odisha: Lighting candles to inaugurate a 'Beti Bachao, Sashakt Banao' campaign are Ms. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Governor of Jharkhand, BK Chakradhari didi, Chairperson, Women's wing, BK Kamlesh didi, BK Nathmal and BK Savita.



Mumbai, Napeansea Road: Unveiling a sign marking 'Dr. Prakashmani Chowk' at an intersection near the BK centre are Mrs. & Mr. Mangal Prabhat Lodha, MLA and Industrialist, BK Rukmani, BK Vandana and others.



New York, USA: During a Diwali event at Clifton Park are BK Priya, Meditation Teacher, Peace Village (3rd left), along with Mr. Manoj Ajmera, Chair of Festival of Nations & Others.

Simplicity is Greatness

Simplicity is an often misunderstood and underestimated virtue. Some people equate it with being poor, ignorant, naïve or foolish. Another common misconception is that to live a simple life one has to subject oneself to deprivation.

Simple living starts with simplicity in our thoughts. Simple thinking is not being gullible or lacking the ability to analyse. It is actually clear thinking which is free from the tangle of unnecessary thoughts that arise from doubt, fear, worry and suspicion. Simplicity and clarity in thought becomes possible when the mind is free of the influence of ego and desires.

The world has conditioned us to believe that it is necessary to analyse every situation, person and each word spoken by that person in order to understand what is happening. Convolved thinking is regarded as a sign of intelligence.

That is why when we meet someone we try to guess their 'hidden' motives, read their body language, and decipher their words to find out what they 'really' mean. All this mental effort is partly driven by ego, which gives rise to fear of appearing inferior to others, of being deceived or slighted.

Too much thinking is needed only when we are unable to discern, which happens when the mind is clouded by impurities. Simplicity comes from purity, and a mind that is pure will naturally be free of the clutter of vices.

When there is no ego there is no comparison or competition, and consequently there is no fear, suspicion or jealousy. We accept others as they are, and since a pure mind will also be kind, we will naturally have good wishes for all. With such a state of mind, there will be no need or effort to analyse.

Since it is calm and clear, the pure and simple mind easily detects the vibrations emanating from others, and is thus able to discern the quality of other souls. Because of this the simple soul is not easily deceived by appearances. Also, the honesty and goodwill of the simple soul inspire others to respond in kind, while those of an ignoble persuasion stay away from such souls. This is how simplicity protects one from harm.

A simple person, having few needs and expectations, also finds it easy to adjust to any situation and accommodate different kinds of people. The ability to mould oneself according to the need of the hour keeps the simple soul contented and happy in both austerity and abundance. Such a soul will neither take more than what it needs, nor hurt itself through self-denial.

Being simple also means being natural and easy. Purity and simplicity are the natural qualities of the soul, and one is at peace and rest when one practises these virtues. Anything artificial, on the other hand, cannot be naturally everlasting. One has to make effort to sustain something that is unnatural, that is why any kind



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram: Inaugurating All-India Diabetes Control Training programme are Dr. H.R. Nagendra, Vice-Chancellor, Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhan Samsthan, Bangaluru, BK Asha, Director, Om Shanti Retreat Centre, and Dr. Ishwar Acharya, Director, Central Council for Research in Yoga & Naturopathy.

Simplicity is often misunderstood.

Purity and simplicity are the natural qualities of the soul.

our health, purity and simplicity help keep the mind strong by saving it from unnecessary thinking, which depletes our energy.

Thus, simplicity brings great rewards which can be appreciated only by experience. It is a quality that appears beguilingly unattractive, but that is the beauty of it – it hides a store of virtues without making a show of it. One who adorns himself with simplicity goes through life easily, not distracted by deceptive lures, avoiding the pitfalls that lie on the path to attaining them. Such a person effortlessly finds the peace and happiness that not so simple people spend a lifetime chasing.*

(Purity Bureau)

SIMPLICITY

- There is no greatness where there is no simplicity, goodness and truth. — *Leo Tolstoy*
- In character, in manner, in style, in all things, the supreme excellence is simplicity. — *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*
- I have just three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. These three are your greatest treasures. — *Lao Tzu*
- Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication. — *Leonardo da Vinci*
- The art of art, the glory of expression and the sunshine of the light of letters, is simplicity. — *Walt Whitman*
- There is a certain majesty in simplicity which is far above all the quaintness of wit. — *Alexander Pope*
- Truth is ever to be found in simplicity, and not in the multiplicity and confusion of things. — *Isaac Newton*

2016 welcoming 2017 before departure.



Buenos Aires, Argentina: Participating in a dialogue on 'Can spirituality change reality' are famous scientist Dr Ervin Lazslo, BK Gayatri Naraine from USA, and Dr. Zancolli from Netspirit. The event was moderated by Minister Andy Freire from the Ministry of Technological Innovation.

Profundity of Love

Love – the original nature

Love is the original nature of the soul. Just as it is the quality of a rose or sandalwood to spread fragrance, and it does not need to make effort to fill the environment with its beautiful smell, a soul-conscious person naturally radiates all the virtues in his surroundings. Everyone wants love, but it can be achieved only when every thought, word and action is filled with love. It cannot be experienced unless it is given and shared.

By being soul-conscious, we can experience this true love within us, and it is then that it starts flowing towards everyone around us and in the entire world. If everyone in the world strengthened themselves and realized their original nature of love, there would not be much effort required to shape a future of a peaceful and united world where everything would be in harmony.

Love – the seed

Love only knows how to give and create. It never desires anything in return. In the huge tree of humanity, love is the seed. The characteristics of humanity are virtues such as faith, respect, cooperation, generosity, mercy and compassion, and the seed of all these virtues is love. If the roots of love are nourished deep inside, never can a man lose the fundamental humanitarian traits. Thus, just like a tree whose seed is well watered, bears sweet fruit, a person full of love leads a virtuous life.

Being soul-conscious is the best nourishment for the roots of love within, and it makes a man a treasure store of all virtues.

Love – the universal language

The world cannot be imagined without communication. But what words can't communicate, love can. It is in the touch of a mother, a lovely smile saying thanks, a helping hand to a stranger and a caring pat on the back of a pet. Love is the only language common to every living entity on earth, be it humans, animals or any other thing. It knows no boundaries of caste, country, religion, colour etc. It is the first language that we understand, the day we are born. What is communicated through love is always real and pure because it knows only to give and share. It is the pure vibrations that flow from one being to another.

By being in the original state of soul-consciousness, this language can be spoken and heard undisturbed and uninfluenced.

Love – the power

Love is the greatest strength. It gives us the power to face, sacrifice, tolerate and overcome even the most difficult situations in life. With love comes unity. This unity, built upon the base of love, is impossible to break. In love, the commonality rises above the differences, which makes each and every individual powerful because they now see the positive traits around them, instead of lamenting the voids. What wars can't win, love can, because it teaches peace, equality and openness.

When we are in the consciousness of being a loveful soul, our inner strength increases, which gives us the power to forget, forgive and let go.

Rising in love

When we mix love with attachment, we mistakenly speak of "falling in love". Contrary to this, pure love is the path to progress and upliftment. It is not attachment or attraction to others but pure affection towards them. It is the affection one has for others irrespective of who the other person is. This affection does not support them in doing wrong, but encourages them to again walk on the right path if they have gone on the wrong course.

The purest form of love is God's love because it is unconditional and without any expectation. A soul immersed in the ocean of God's love rises above all situations, weaknesses and dependencies. It is then that it becomes free from worries, grief and bondage. God's love liberates. When immersed in God's love, the soul experiences complete bliss, which is otherwise unattainable through worldly pleasures.

Love – the undefined and unlimited

Love is a feeling so pure and simple that it needs no definition. It is beyond explanation and justification, and it can only be expressed and experienced. It is the simplest and most precious gift to give to others, and it is never depleted. Everywhere around us we find sources of love. Nature has been bestowing it since time immemorial and God has been showering it on everyone equally and eternally. One becomes immensely satisfied not just on receiving it but also by giving it. Giving love to others does not depend on their capacity to take it, but on our eternal nature of giving it. The more we give it the more it increases, and the happier and more satisfied we become.

Being aware of our inner treasures, I, the soul, can become a source of unlimited love for souls searching for it.★

(Purity Bureau)

Balanced living in a people-oriented system

In this era of globalisation, boundaries between countries have ceased to exist, and to achieve personal objectives and professional goals, people are readily becoming part of teams or forming teams in appropriate places where they can achieve what they want. It is my observation in my personal and professional life that people are diverse by nature, culture and experience. For a well-functioning system, this diversity should help to attain the common goal of the system using pragmatic approaches balanced with individual objectives.

A people-oriented system could be a commune, team, community or an organisation. In order to build a good people-oriented system, how should people conduct themselves within the system so that it becomes better? Should they be controlled? Should they be governed? Should the people be individualistic? Let's explore this a little using the 'Solar System' as a metaphor.

Revolving vs Rotation

For ages the solar system has been running effectively with the sun taking the centre stage and planets revolving and rotating around it. For earth, the action of revolving around the sun brings the four seasons. Its rotation on its axis brings day and night. The relevance of the earth is maintained as long as these actions are performed. If the earth stops its rotation and only goes around the sun, there would be no change from day to night and vice versa. At the same time, if the earth stops revolving, there would be only one season and the entire ecosystem will be in chaos. So, with its finely balanced revolution and rotation, the earth has been able to sustain life and remain intact in the solar system.

'Have to' vs 'Want to'

An established or evolving community will put forth the 'Have to' baggage. This 'Have to' comes in the form of collective rules, principles or policies. At the same time, when an individual moves into a community, there is a set of 'Want to' baggage carried. This 'Want to' comes in the form of expectations or aspirations of the individual. Over a period of time, if there is no alignment between these two baggages, the individuals start collapsing, thereby driving the system or community towards extinction.

'System-Centric' vs 'Self-Centric' living

System-centric living is about following an existing path. On the practical level it could be as simple as a dress code or as complex as making a complete protocol chain work by following existing rules. Self-centric living is about how an individual evolves over a period of time, adding value to himself/herself. On the practical level it could be as simple as a skill or hobby or as complex as reaching nirvana.

Balance

The strength of any system is the individuals in it, and each individual scenario is different. So, whether you are within a family system, or working in a organisation, or part of a commune, make a separate list of 'Have to' and 'Want to'. While fulfilling the obligations you 'Have to' on a daily basis, set aside time to work towards your 'Want to' items.

Conclusion

Nature in itself has a balanced approach, transforming over a period of time. In my opinion, if we as individuals can learn this, great teams can be built, leading to great communities and great nations.★

BK Pavan Patale, Finland

Dear BK readers,

If you have a special Rajyoga experience or some interesting incident to share with 'Purity' readers, please write it down in brief and send it at purity@bkivv.org. Selected experiences will be published in future issues of 'Purity'.

Editor



Raipur: Mr. Balramji Das Tandon, Hon'ble Governor of Chhattisgarh, being greeted by BK Kamla didi, Zonal Director of Brahma Kumaris, and BK Savita.

The ultimate surgical strike

Last month, the government of India announced a demonetization move that has affected the daily life of people in all strata of society. The demonetization banned the use of all ₹500 and ₹1000 banknotes as a form of legal tender in India from November 9, 2016.

The address by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, in which he declared the use of old ₹500 and ₹1000 banknotes as invalid from midnight on November 8, and announced the issuance of new ₹500 and ₹2000 banknotes which could be exchanged for the scrapped ones, came as a surprise and shock to the people.

The move is being described as a 'surgical strike' by the Prime Minister against corruption and black money. A surgical strike is usually a military attack which is intended to result in damage only to the intended legitimate military target, and no or minimal collateral damage to surrounding structures, vehicles, buildings, or the general public infrastructure and utilities.

The surgical strike on black money has had a huge ripple effect on people all across India and Indians living abroad. In just a few

Through this ultimate surgical strike all human souls will go back to the soul world — their eternal home.

minutes all those who had huge amounts of cash which was not accounted for stood helpless and worried about how to make their black money white.

If this surgical strike has upset people and made them think about settling their financial accounts, there is another kind of surgical strike that the whole humanity is unaware of, and yet it will be the final one that will settle all kinds of accounts for a long time to come.

In Hindu mythology there is a tale about how Lord Ganesha was born. He was the son of Lord Shiva, who cut off his head in a fight and gave him a new life by fixing an elephant's

head on the body. Likewise, now God is carrying out a surgical strike by removing the head of ego- and body-conscious, vicious humans and replacing it with a head that is full of wisdom and virtues, like that of Ganesha. Lord Ganesha is invoked at the beginning of every new venture or project because he is regarded as the destroyer of obstacles.

The cycle of time is now ticking away fast. We are approaching that moment in time when everything in this world is going to shift forever. Through this ultimate surgical strike the vicious old world will be destroyed through nuclear war and natural calamities and all human souls will go back to the soul world – their eternal home. Then pure souls, those who imbibe divinity, will come to a brand new world in Satyuga.

According to the spiritual knowledge revealed by Supreme Soul God Shiva, we are now near the end of Kaliyuga. The cycle of time is now moving towards Satyuga and this present period is known as Sangamyuga. This is the time when God guides us about how to attain liberation from vices and suffering and how to purify the soul and settle sinful karmic records.

He gives us a wise intellect through which we perform elevated karma. He makes us a destroyer of obstacles through spiritual powers attained by meditation, and carries out the project of recreating a new world through wise souls.

The most important thing about this shift is that we have to stop doing vicious actions and start performing pure actions. This can be done by purifying ourselves through Rajyoga meditation as taught by God Himself through the medium of Prajapita Brahma.

The present world scenario is giving us enough warning to tell us that we should invest in our spiritual progress to be able to live in the new, forthcoming world.

It is now or never. Let us devote our time, energy and resources to help clean bad karma and purify this world before the ultimate surgical strike that is destined in the world drama.★

(Purity Bureau)

All of a sudden!

There's the story of a caged parrot who thought his owner loved him very much. Whenever he visited, the parrot would be filled with joy and jump and dance in the little cage. One day, a sage parrot came and told the parrot that actually the owner had imprisoned him for his own pleasure. He should awaken from ignorance and get out of the cage as soon as possible. The next time the parrot saw the owner approaching, it pretended to be dead. On finding the parrot dead the owner immediately opened the cage and threw the parrot away. The parrot merrily flew towards the open sky.

When something becomes worthless, people lose interest and throw it away.

Take the recent demonetization of Indian currency notes of Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000. As soon as the announcement was made, these notes become worthless. In fact, they become burdensome and a source of worry for those who had accumulated large amounts by unfair means.

Common people too suffered great inconvenience and hardship in exchanging their hard-earned currency for new notes, because the announcement was made all of a sudden. The general feeling was that a lot of difficulty and suffering could have been avoided if it were not so sudden. This happening carries a big spiritual lesson for everyone.

On death, all money, in new currency or old, along with other belongings, becomes instantly worthless for the departed soul. The lesson is to prepare for that moment in advance and use everything with a sense of detachment. ★



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram: Mr. Bhavesh Chandubhai Bhatia, a Paralympics winner for 114 times and a blind entrepreneur, receiving a Godly gift from BK Asha during a meditation retreat.



Editorial

Ring out the old ... for how long!

The beginning of a new year symbolises the end of times past, of what is old and worn out, and it ushers in a future that is still untouched. January is welcomed at the front door with gala celebrations while December is expected to sneak out unnoticed by the rear gate. This is because a fresh start brims with new possibilities and hope for betterment, but the past is unchangeable.

But however grand the festivities to ring in the future, the past always lingers on in the form of memories. We may look upon the upcoming days with dreamy eyes but the sameness of life returns to us not long after New Year's Day. Even when we try otherwise, the same old patterns take over. Newness does not last long as it is surrounded by everything old. That is why we have a New Delhi in an old India, a New York in an old United States.

So the question arises, can there be anything truly new in this old world? To know this, we first have to appreciate an eternal law: though everything in the universe is created new, nothing remains new forever. Its original sheen fades away with time, its state of purity declines. In the end it becomes old and must make way for the new. This cycle of change moves constantly and it is the secret of the momentum and eternity of life on earth.

An aspect to understand here is that time always moves forward. Its journey is both cyclical and unidirectional, and there is no rewind. Night always breaks into a new day, which then changes to night. The date on the calendar always advances.

Everything material in the universe is governed by this law and so is subject to decline. Therefore, if we want to go against the tide and sustain newness in life, we have to look beyond the physical. We have to engage with the spiritual and connect with something or someone that is timeless, unaffected by the momentum on earth, is always abundant, full and flowing. The only entity with these qualities is the Supreme Soul, our Father.

When we forge a mental link of love with Him, we are able to draw from His unlimited spiritual potential and tune into the ultimate source of creativity and newness. But a prerequisite to achieving this is that we first connect to the real 'I' – the point of sentient energy, the eternal soul that acts through the physical body, its costume.

When a soul comes under the influence of physical matter, which degenerates with time, its qualities are bound to diminish. On the other hand, if one remains in the awareness of one's spiritual truth and connects to the Supreme in that consciousness, the process can be reversed as one's original qualities will be recharged. If one energises oneself through this experience regularly, it will influence one's relationships and physical matter, including one's body and the natural environment, in a positive way.

We souls function by creating new thoughts, choosing them, and then acting upon them. When our thoughts become pure – which means they arise from our innate goodness, our extraordinary core – we become innovative in handling things. This brings positivity in our attitude and behaviour. If, however, our thoughts spring from the limited physical world view, we get stuck in the old and the ordinary.

So this time, let the New Year celebrations not remain a one-day wonder. Let us take this journey to truly ring out the old. The mantra for this is to think out of the ordinary by connecting to eternal truths. We can fill ourselves to the brim and spill over the newness in whatever we do, wherever we go. This is also a natural way of letting go of thoughts of worry, fear and stress and replacing them with elevated and benevolent thoughts. This is Rajyoga, a new way of life for a new era.★

Gleanings from the press

Bad air behind 1 in 10 deaths among children: UN report

A Unicef report says air pollution has become one of the leading causes of mortality among children, contributing to almost one in 10 deaths of children under five years. The UN agency, using satellite imagery to assess the impact of toxic air on children, said around two billion kids live in areas where air pollution exceeds WHO standards. *(Times of India)*

Fear in brain



Scientists from The Scripps Research Institute in California, USA, have identified a sub-region in the brain that works to form a particular kind of memory: fear associated with a specific environmental cue, or "contextual fear memory". The study found new proteins being synthesised in a specific sub-region of the prefrontal cortex, which

has been linked to processing emotional responses. They also found that if they prevented new proteins from forming in the prefrontal region right after fear conditioning took place, those memories did not form.

(The Hindu)

Bhoola Bhai

And our friend Bhoola Bhai on Temple Street has gone one step further than last month and says that not only the places of worship of the three major religions of the world, namely, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, have six letters each but, interestingly, the names of their holy books too are comprised of five letters each, as stated below:

Places of worship (6 letters)	Scriptures (5 letters)
TEMPLE	GEETA
MOSQUE	QURAN
CHURCH	BIBLE

And if five is subtracted from six, what remains is one, which shows there is ONE God of all.

Two-thirds of wild animals to be extinct by 2020



Global wildlife populations have fallen by 58 per cent since 1970, a report says. The Living Planet assessment by the Zoological Society of London and the World Wildlife Fund suggests that if the trend continues that decline could reach two-thirds among vertebrates by 2020. Human activity, including habitat loss, wildlife trade, pollution and climate change contributed to the decline.

(Times of India)

Bad sleep habits may lead to cancer in men

Working in night shifts or skipping day-time naps may significantly increase your risk of cancer, a new study has warned. Scientists from Huazhong University in China found that men who had worked night shifts over 20 years had a 27 per cent increased risk of cancer, and that men who did not sleep during the day had double the risk of cancer of those who took a 60- to 30-minute nap. *(News Item)*

Arctic ice melt could trigger uncontrollable climate change

Arctic scientists have warned that the increasingly rapid melting of the ice cap risks triggering 19 'tipping points' in the region that could have catastrophic consequences around the globe. Scientists warn it can lead to disastrous consequences in places as far away as the Indian Ocean.

(News Report)



Godly Spiritual Knowledge imparted by Brahma Kumaris

Body and Soul

Knowledge of Soul, Why?

Lack of knowledge of one's true 'self' is the real cause of human suffering and unhappiness. Man today identifies himself with the body, sometimes sensuously, sometimes subtly. He does not know much about the immortal entity called 'soul' which resides in and functions through the body. Man's ignorance of the soul results in a 'body-conscious' or worldly approach to life. He sets out to improve his condition in life without understanding why, in the first place, the physical and mental conditions, circumstances and environment of two individuals differ widely right from the time of their birth. He also observes that success comes easily to some at every step of life, while it eludes others in spite of their best efforts. Premature and untimely deaths also baffle him. His sub-conscious is constantly haunted by the fear of death, which, he thinks, will deprive him of everything he possesses and holds dear. Every cradle asks whence and every coffin whither? Human suffering on a mass scale, caused by natural calamities and war, confuse him still more. These phenomena compel him to think as to whether these happenings take place by sheer accident or 'luck' or are there definite laws governing the same. He also wonders as to who he is. Is he sheer illusion or total reality? If man and the world are only illusion then man does not exist, and also nothing exists around him, which makes no sense. Why should one do good if the world is unreal? Why study, achieve and aim for attaining perfection, if annihilation by death is the cruel end? If the phenomenal universe, including him, is the total reality, why is everything so transient and perishable, with the signature of death on the parchment of birth? Unless these fundamental aspects of life are understood correctly, the body-conscious approach is bound to be there. Just as a layman wrongly concludes from usual observation that the sun revolves round the earth, whereas the reality is otherwise,

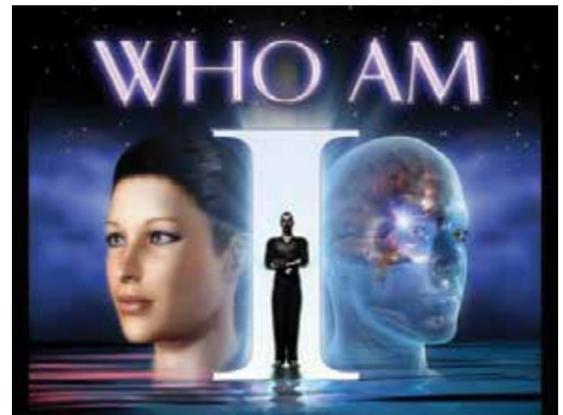
similarly, man's ignorance of his true self leads him to the wrong conclusion that his physical existence is the be all and end all of everything. This results in his adopting wrong values in life, which, in turn, leads to his committing wrong acts and consequently suffering. No wonder, in spite of striving hard he is unable to avoid sorrow and suffering in life. Proper knowledge of one's real 'self' i.e. the soul, its functioning and its role in the world drama is, therefore, a 'must' for leading a peaceful, contented, happy and liberated life.

Who are you?

Man's ignorance of the 'self' is demonstrated by the wide variety of answers which are given to the question, 'Who are you?', when they are asked to introduce themselves. Some give the name of their body, although man, as we shall see later, is not merely a body of flesh and bones. Others disclose their professional identity, such as doctor, lawyer or businessman, although we all know that a person does exist even before he takes up a profession and he does not cease to exist after he gives up the same. Still others introduce themselves by their race, sex or nationality as, say, Negro, woman or Indian, respectively. These again are wrong answers to the question, 'Who are you?', because these statements refer either to the bodily features or country of the person concerned.

'I' and 'My'

The right answer to this basic question is: 'I am a soul'. The difference between the body and the soul can be illustrated by the use of the words 'I' and 'my'. The two have distinct meanings. 'I' refers to the soul and 'my' (or mine) applies to the possessions or belongings of the soul, one of which is the body. Suppose you are living in a cottage. You would say, 'this is my cottage', or 'this cottage is mine'. You won't say: 'I am a cottage', in the same way, you refer to the different organs of your body as 'my nose, my eyes' etc., and to the body as a whole as 'my body'. Thus, you are not the body, but the body belongs to you. In other words, the body is the cottage in which



the soul resides. The simple statement, 'I am a soul and the body I reside in is my temporary abode', explains the difference.

Does the soul exist?

Sceptics may question the existence of the soul, regarding life as the property of a chemical combination of matter. Man's birth, growth and death is a mystery whose physical periphery is all that the sensory instruments of physical sciences are able to decode. Noetic scientists are investigating successfully as to how life after life exists and death itself is a misnomer except to describe discarnation as not the end but a bend. The fact that the soul exists has also been established by recent research in parapsychology. Parapsychologists have confirmed the existence of an entity which is quite distinct from the human body and brain (which is described as 'atma', 'rooh' or soul in religious terminology). The conclusion of parapsychologists about the existence of this entity was arrived at after making a study of actual cases of a number of children who correctly narrated events of their past birth. Without accepting the existence of the soul it is neither possible to explain these extra-sensory perceptions nor satisfactorily account for the differences between the physical and mental state, environment, suffering and all other traits of two human beings right from the moment of their birth.*

(To be continued)

(From correspondence course in Godly Knowledge)

In Lighter Vein

- "Yesterday was the deadline for all complaints" (sign found in a shop).
- Seen in a car repair shop: "If we can't fix your brakes, we'll make your horn louder."
- A hotel allows you to see into the future and what a can of Pepsi will cost in 2025.
- They should put expiry dates on clothes so that buyers will know when they go out of style.
- Employee: Boss, now I have got married... please increase my salary! Boss: Factory is not responsible for accidents occurring outside its premises.
- A sign in front of an IT firm's offices says: Drive slowly, don't kill our employees... leave them to us.
- Doctor talking to a patient: "I understand you've lost the ability to speak, when did this happen?"



Ahmedabad, Mahadevnagar: Mr. Arujn Ram Mehghwal, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, being presented a frame of Shiva by BK Chandrika didi and BK Lalit during his visit to the Rajyoga Centre.



Chandigarh: Launching the 'Safe and Successful Journey of Life' campaign are Mrs. Daya Chaudhari, Hon'ble Judge, Punjab & Haryana High Court, BK Divya, BK Amir Chand, Mr. Amit Talwar, Director, Transport & Travel Deptt., BK Suresh, BK Kavita and BK Girish.



USA, Salt Lake City, Utah: Dr. BK Binny from Mount Abu (centre), keynote speaker on 'Peace, Love, Harmony' at the World Parliament on Spirituality.



Goa, Mapusa: Mr. Glen Ticlo, MLA, breaking a coconut to launch an eight-day 'Nari Divyata Darshan' campaign organised by Brahma Kumaris in association with Nari Shakti Kendra. Also in pic. are BK Shobha, Ms. Darshana Karapurkar, President, Nari Shakti Kendra, BK Surekha and others.



Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh: Inaugurating a two-day free eye camp sponsored by Dr. Kapil Khurana of Khurana Eye Care Centre and conducted by Brahma Kumaris.



Delhi, Majlis Park: Mr. I.P. Chaudhary, Chairman for Delhi, UP & NCR of All India Jaat Mahasabha, being presented Godly gift by BK Rajkumari.

Bhilai Nagar, Chattisgarh: At a programme organised by Prayas Shraavan Viklang Sansthan on the occasion of Children's Day are (R-L) Mr. Kamal Dixit, senior journalist, BK Asha, Ms. Gayatri Aggarwal, Trustee, Prayas, and Mr. Rajesh Pandey, Principal, Prayas School.

Confidence



A business executive was deep in debt and could see no way out. Creditors were closing in on him. Suppliers were demanding payment. He sat on the park bench, head in hands, wondering if anything could save his company from bankruptcy.

Suddenly, an old man appeared before him. "I can see that something is troubling you," he said. After listening to the executive's woes, the old man said, "I believe I can help you." He asked the man his name, wrote out a cheque and pushed it into his hand, saying, "Take this money. Meet me here exactly one year from today, and you can pay me back at that time." Then he turned and disappeared as quickly as he had come.

The business executive saw in his hand a cheque for \$500,000, signed by John D. Rockefeller, then one of the richest men in the world! "I can erase my money worries in an instant!" he realized. But instead, the executive decided to put the uncashed cheque in his safe. Just knowing it was there might give him the strength to work out a way to save his business, he thought.

With renewed optimism, he negotiated better deals and extended terms of payment. He closed several big sales. Within a few months, he was out of debt and making money once again. Exactly one year later, he returned to the park with the uncashed cheque. At the agreed-upon time, the old man appeared. But just as the executive was about to hand back the cheque and share his success story, a nurse came running and grabbed the old man.

"I'm so glad I caught him," she cried. "I hope he hasn't been bothering you. He's always escaping from the rest home and telling people he's John D. Rockefeller." And she led the old man away by the arm. The astonished executive just stood there, stunned. All year long he'd been wheeling and dealing, buying and selling, convinced he had half a million dollars behind him.

Suddenly, he realized that it wasn't the money, real or imagined, that had turned his life around. It was his new-found self-confidence that had given him the power to achieve anything he went after.★

Analogy of Christmas

The Christmas tree is usually shown decorated with lights, with gifts placed under it, which implies that in the new world or Paradise created by God, everything is plentiful.

Most important of all the festivals celebrated by the Christian world is Christmas. On this occasion, no matter how far they are scattered, families come together, the Christmas tree is decorated and gifts and sweets are exchanged. It is celebrated on December 25, which is one of the coldest and darkest days of the year. It brings with it warmth, love and joy. The celebrations involved have a deep spiritual dimension.

Even prior to the advent of Christianity, the 25th of December was considered one of the most sacred days and celebrated as the "return of Sun" day by Druids. The reason was that up to this day the days became shorter, and people were afraid that if the process went on, a time would come when total darkness would prevail. When the days started becoming longer after 25th December, humanity was assured that light was coming back. Perhaps it is for this reason that in Hindi the 25th of December is referred to as 'Bada Din' (Big Day). Christians all over the world celebrate it as the day of birth of Jesus Christ, the founder of their religion.

There are several similarities between Christmas and the Indian festival of Shivratri, which is celebrated to commemorate the descent of incorporeal God Shiva on earth. Christmas is celebrated towards the beginning of the new year and the end of the old year. Similarly, according to scriptures, God descends near the end of the Iron Age (Kaliyuga) of the old world cycle, and just before the beginning of the new cycle with the Golden Age (Satyuga). This period is called the Confluence Age or 'Sangamyuga'. The old Iron Age is pervaded by unrighteousness, sorrow and suffering, and is similar to the darkest day

There are several similarities between Christmas and the Indian festival of Shivratri, which is celebrated to commemorate the descent of incorporeal God Shiva on earth.

of the year. Shivratri, too, is celebrated on the darkest night of the Hindu calendar.

Another significant feature of Christmas is the putting up of the Christmas tree. It is decorated with colourful lights and gifts. On top of the tree is a star. In Shrimad Bhagwad Gita, this world tree is described as an inverted tree, the seed of which, God, lives above and the growth and spread of the tree is downwards. The stars in the Christmas tree actually denote the main actors of the world drama. The creator of the tree, the Seed, appears in the beginning to generate the tree, then disappears in between like the seed of a botanical tree, and then reappears when the tree has reached its full growth and begins to age, in order to give birth to the new tree. Analogically, the seed of the Human Tree (Kalpa Vriksha) is God Himself, who is called 'Vrikshapati', the Creator. He is an invisible, indivisible and infinitesimal sentient point of light who plays His role in the period between the beginning and the end of the world drama. This is perhaps the reason why a shining star is shown at the top of the Christmas tree. The other stars in the tree are symbolic of



souls who play their respective roles as main actors in the world drama.

To children, Christmas means waiting for Santa Claus to bring them gifts. Santa Claus is shown as an old, silver-bearded person clad in white and carrying a bag full of gifts on his shoulder. It seems he gives gifts to only those children who remain good and well-behaved during the year. Similarly, all of us human souls are the immortal children of God, who brings us the gifts of health, wealth, happiness, love, peace and joy, and gives them through Prajapita Brahma, a white-clad old man in whose body God, the golden-red point of light and might descends. It is noteworthy that 'Shanti Karta' (Peace Giver) and 'Santa Claus' are similar sounding words.

Gifts are placed below the tree, which implies that in the new world, Golden Age or Paradise created by God, everything is plentiful. Let us celebrate Christmas with this knowledge and qualify ourselves to get gifts from Santa Claus.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!★

(Purity Features)



Shantivan, Abu: Inaugurating All India Religious Convention are Dadi Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris, Swami Yogi Amarnath, Rishikesh, Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Addl. Chief of Brahma Kumaris, Sadhvi Vibhanand Giri, Delhi, Shri Rajchoteswar Mahaswami, Belgaum, BK Nirwair, Secretary General, Brahma Kumaris, BK Laxmi, BK Sharda and others.

Experiencing out-of-body state

The quality of our life depends on how our time and resources are utilized, which, in turn, is determined by how strong our mind power is.

Strong mind power enables us to take our mind wherever we want, whenever we want, for and as long as we want.

To enhance mind power or will power, I have to consciously take my mind out of the body for a few seconds to experience my bodiless (videhi) state.

This practice of taking the mind away from the body for some moments is to be done several times during the day, even when busy.

Regular out-of-body practice over a period of time will reduce tiredness and be of great relief in worrisome situations, just as a dead body is dead to all consciousness.★



Inspirations from Dadi Janki

Chief of Brahma Kumaris

Take this one blessing from God: I will not take sorrow from anyone

Some have called the world at this time the Land of Sorrow. There are many situations and people that cause sorrow. God has many titles. Two that are helpful at this time are, "Remover of Sorrow" and "Bestower of Peace."

Make a commitment, "I should never experience any kind of sorrow." Many people and situations give sorrow, but I should not take sorrow. Some weak souls say that they don't give sorrow, but they take sorrow. If you keep sorrow inside you will become sick, or you will become scared, and you won't know what to say. Take this one blessing from God: I will not take sorrow from anyone.

There could be many causes for taking sorrow, but a mature child of God will say: "it's okay, my karmic accounts are being cleared at this time, but I will not give sorrow in return or even think about it." To think about it brings sorrow. Even if someone gives sorrow ten times over, you should not accumulate it. If there is an accumulation of sorrow, you will not be able to remember God. Consider the Father to be yours and you will not experience sorrow. Then you will be able to take virtues and power from God and give to others.

Everything will be good

You are learning to have mastery over your thoughts and feelings so you can bring benefit to the world. This is not the time to get upset with anyone else. It is not the time to become dependent on anyone.

We can never know what will happen, but we do know that if we keep our thoughts elevated and our feelings pure, everything will be good.

Put a full stop to negative and wasteful thoughts. When you put a full stop, and keep God as your companion, you will not experience anything to be a problem. You will dance in happiness.

Clean and courageous heart

There is a subtle method for taking help from the Father. When we maintain a clean heart and a courageous heart, we naturally receive help from Him. Always keep your feelings clean and pure, and then whatever pure thought you have, becomes a reality.

In silence you will find that you know what you have to do

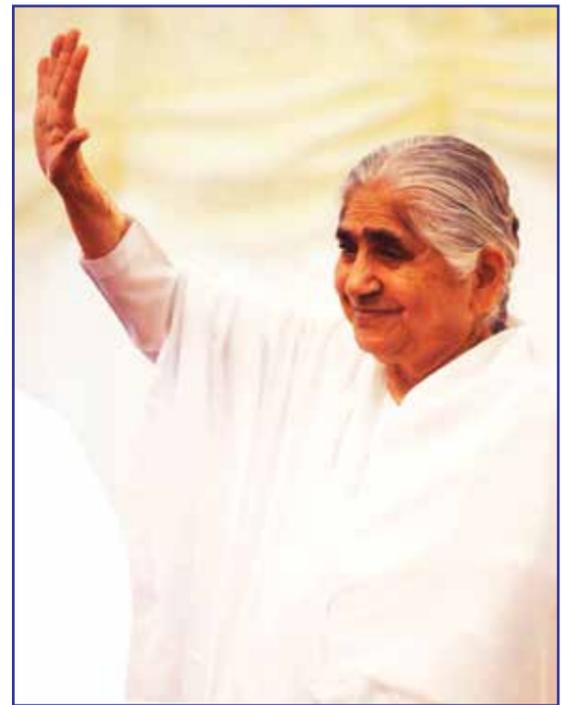
In Rajyoga we talk about there being eight powers: the power to tolerate, accommodate, cooperate, face, pack up, decide, discriminate, and withdraw. The power to decide is the wonder of all the powers. The more we have the power of silence inside us, with truth and faith, the less we will worry.

It's not that I have to think about a problem. Whether it is in front of me or it is something being faced by another person, if I think about it, I will not be able to decide. If I think, I will actually lose time in reaching a decision.

Therefore, don't think. Use the power of silence, and have the deep faith that it will become all right. This is a subtle method that will help you. Remain clean inside yourself, and keep your intellect clear. Then in silence you will find that you know what you have to do.

Make time to look at yourself

Of all of the things you make time for, I wonder if you make time to look at yourself. If all of your



attention goes to looking externally, at others, and at what they are doing, you will never be able to see yourself. Make the time to go inside and ask yourself two important questions, "Who am I?" and "Who do I belong to?"

The time we are living in, the Confluence Age, has special spiritual properties. It is a time to experience God's love. If there is love in your heart for God, you will experience love from God. You are an eternal spiritual being, a soul. And you belong to God, the father of all souls. If you keep love and spiritual awareness in all of your relationships and connections, you will always be happy, and you will make others happy.★



Mumbai, Borivali (West): Participating in a panel discussion on 'Calm in Crisis' are (L-R) BK Bindu, Mr. Ajinkya Rahane, international cricketer, Dr. Shailesh Shrikhande, oncologist, Mr. Shashikiran Shetty, Chairman, Allcargo Logistics, and BK Shreya.



Tamil Nadu, Adyar, Chennai: Lighting lamps to inaugurate a conference on 'Laws of Silence for Transformation' are Mr. T.S. Krishnamurthy, former Chief Election Commissioner of India, Hon'ble Justice P. Jyothimani, Member of National Green Tribunal, Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Pushpa Satyanarayana, Mr. M. Soundarapandian, former District Sessions Judge, Mr. R. Gandhi, Sr. Advocate, Justice S. Ganesan, Mr. E.V. Gireesh, Counsellor & BK Muthumani.



Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu : Dr. K.V. Kuppusamy Iyya of RVS Group presenting 'World Ambassador of Value Education & Environmental Protection' award to BK Mruthyunjaya, Vice-Chairperson of Education Wing (RERF).



New Delhi: Inaugurating Conference on 'Climate Change' are Mr. Balvinder Kumar, Secretary, Union Ministry of Mines, BK Brij Mohan, Mr. V.C. Bhandari, Director (HR), Engineers India Ltd., BK Mohan Singhal, National Co-ordinator, SEW, BK Jawahar Mehta, BK Pius and BK Shakti.



Melbourne, Australia : BK Sadhna from Delhi in a group photo after a talk on the value 'Happiness'.



Manmohini Complex, Shantivan, Abu : Inaugurating HAMFEST India 2016 - Silver Jubilee are Dadi Janki, Dr. D.R. Kaarthikeyan, former Director, CBI, BK Rajni from Japan, BK Mruthyunjaya and others.



Moscow, Russia : At the programme 'Women and Family Values' organised by Embassy of India are BK Sudha (Speaker), Director, Brahma Kumaris, Moscow, Mrs. Anjali Pandey, Minister of Education, Embassy of India and others.



Dehradun : At the programme 'Role of Teachers in World Transformation', BK Prem Lata didi, Director, Uttarakhand, Er. Gurudev Singh, Chief Guest, Dr. Rashmi Dhingra, Special Guest, Dr. F.C.Garg, Addl. Guest and BK Manju.



Hyderabad, Telengana : BK Kuldeep didi, Director, Shanti Sarovar speaking at International Cultural Festival in which artistes from St. Petersburg, Russia, headed by BK Santosh didi gave soul elevating cultural performances.



Jaganathpuri, Odisha : At the launching of 'Beti Bachao Sashakt Banao' campaign and conference are (L-R) Mrs. Shantilata Pradhan, Prof. Dr. Pratibha Maharathy, Prof. Harekrushna Satapathy, BK Dr. Nirupama, Director, BK Centres and BK Chakradhari, Chairperson Women wing.



New Delhi, Hari Nagar : At Stress Management programme for Delhi Police personnel are BK Shukla, National Co-ordinator, Security Services Wing, Cdr. Shiv Singh, Indian Navy, Mr. Sagar Singh, IPS, Addl. Dy. Commissioner of Police (South), Mr. Rijpal Singh, SHO, Janakpuri, Mr. Naresh, Addl. SHO, Janakpuri, Ms. Usha Sharma, Addl. SHO, Hari Nagar and others.



The future of power dialogue, Manhattan, New York City, Opia Restaurant: Group photo of participating leaders from different disciplines with BK Dr. Kala Iyengar, BK Judy Rodgers and Mr. Nizar Juma (Host and Coordinator, The Future of Power, Nairobi). Log on to www.futureofpower.org for details.



A softly-lit iceberg resembles the contour of Mount Uummannaq, Greenland.



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram: An Indian dance item presented by BK artistes from St. Petersburg, Russia.

Mr. Wise



Mr. Wise?

Yes.

Do in Rome as Romans do, goes the saying?

Yes.

What should a simple person do in today's crooked world, shed his simplicity?

I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

And Mr. Wise?

Yes.

To be simple today is to be like 'Alice in blunderland?'
Not necessarily. Simple ones are naturally protected
against harmful influences.

As per their accumulated stock of good karma?

I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Lastly...

Yes.

Isn't your premise too simplistic?

No. Simple is pure, noble and benevolent, which
earns the blessings of one and all.

How about the million BKs across the world who are
living examples of simple and blessed lives?

Perhaps you are right.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Tailpiece



His last will and testament completed, the old man in the oxygen tent fondly told his son that all his wealth, stocks, bonds, bank account and real estate would be his after the end finally came.

'Dad, Dad', whispered the weeping son, his voice emotion-choked, 'I can't tell you how grateful I am, how unworthy I am! Is there anything I can do for you? Anything at all?'

'Well, son', came the feeble reply, 'I'd appreciate it very much if you took your foot off the oxygen hose.'

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

At a motor show, two car manufacturers were talking about the latest improvements in their factories. 'In our place', one of them said, 'we allocate millions to the construction of an industrial complex with test tracks designed to put our latest models through every possible and imaginable treatment.'

'I do the same thing a lot cheaper', said the other. 'When we bring out a new model, I lend it to my son for the weekend.'

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

The editor of a small weekly newspaper, in a rage over several government bills that had recently been passed, ran a scathing editorial under the headline: 'Half of our Legislators are Crooks'. Many prominent local politicians were outraged, and tremendous pressure was exerted on him to retract the statement. He finally succumbed to the pressure and ran an apology with the headline: 'Half of our Legislators are not Crooks'.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦