

February 2009

Prem Rawat
in Sicily





Agrigento, Sicily ~ 3rd February 2009

Every year Agrigento celebrates the Festival of the Almond Blossom.

The Ancient Greek temples which overlook the city provide a splendid backdrop to the lighting of the 'torch of friendship' and the accompanying folk dances.

This year the festival was celebrated in a unique way. Prem Rawat, Ambassador of Peace, was invited by the local government to light the torch and then speak to the people of Agrigento.



Due to rain, the location of the first event was moved from the Greek temples to the Palacongressi.

Here Prem Rawat lit the Torch of Friendship and Brotherhood.

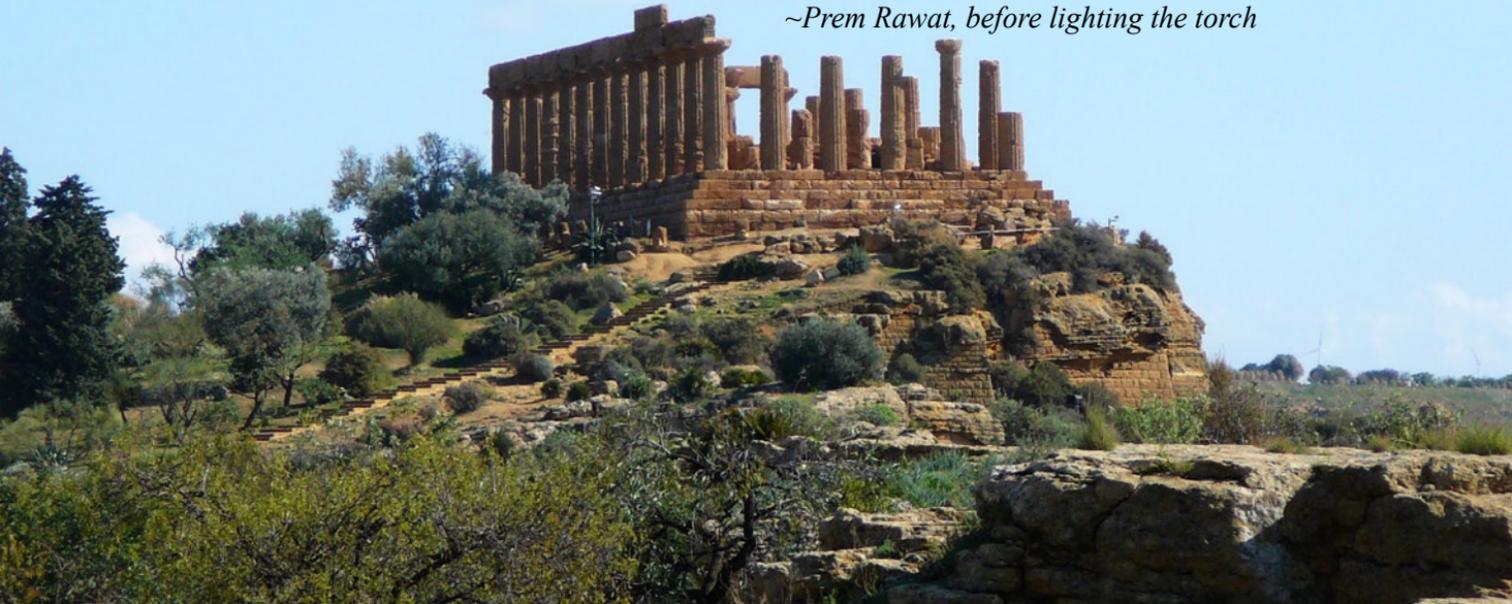


*“So many nations have come and gone.
But throughout history there were always voices
begging for peace.*

*Were they heard? I don't know.
Were they listened to? I don't know.*

But I do know that we are here to make a voice for that peace.”

~Prem Rawat, before lighting the torch



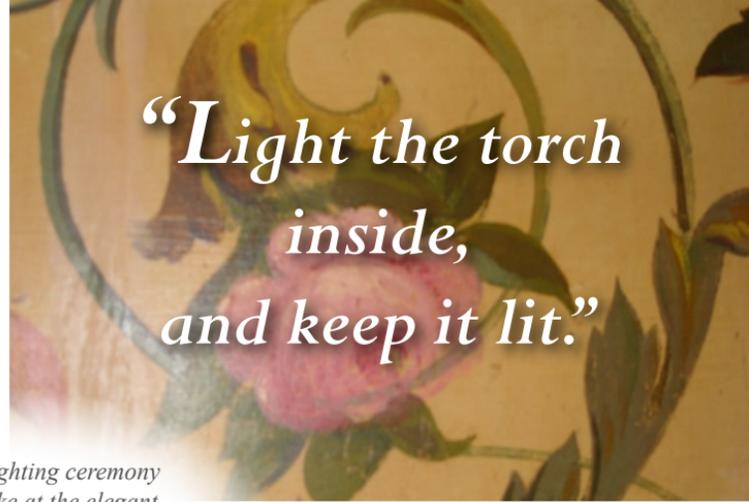


“I have a message of peace for all mankind, and this is an opportunity to make a symbolic gesture towards that.

Because mankind really needs peace, and this is a wonderful opportunity for all of us, for *all* of us, to do this.”

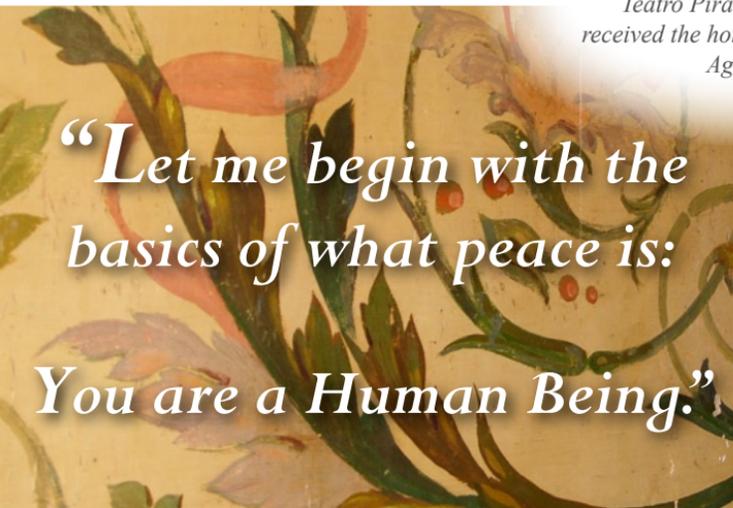
~Prem Rawat, in an interview with the Italian Media





*“Light the torch
inside,
and keep it lit.”*

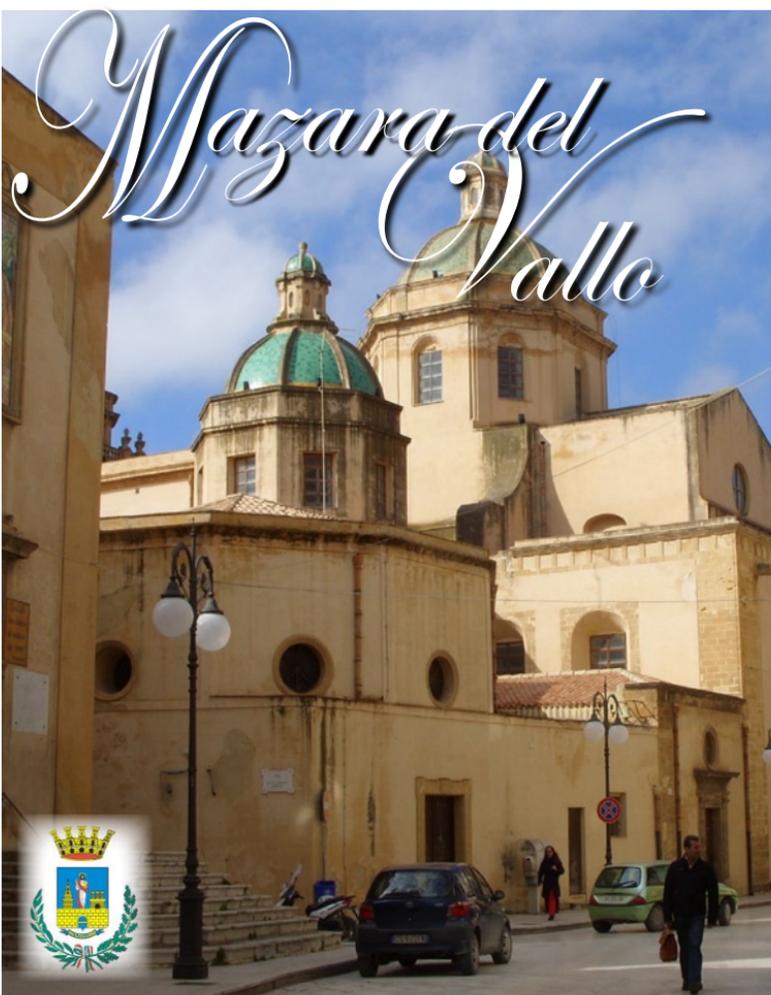
*After the torch-lighting ceremony
Prem Rawat spoke at the elegant
Teatro Pirandello, where he
received the honorary citizenship of
Agrigento.*



*“Let me begin with the
basics of what peace is:
You are a Human Being.”*



Mazara del Vallo



5th February 2009

Mazara del Vallo is a fishing town on the south-western coast of Sicily. People of different ethnic and religious backgrounds have coexisted peacefully here for many years.

It was with great delight and appreciation that the Mayor and all the local officials welcomed Prem Rawat and bestowed on him his third Italian honorary citizenship.



The first event of the evening took place in the town hall of which every seat was taken and the aisles filled with people standing.

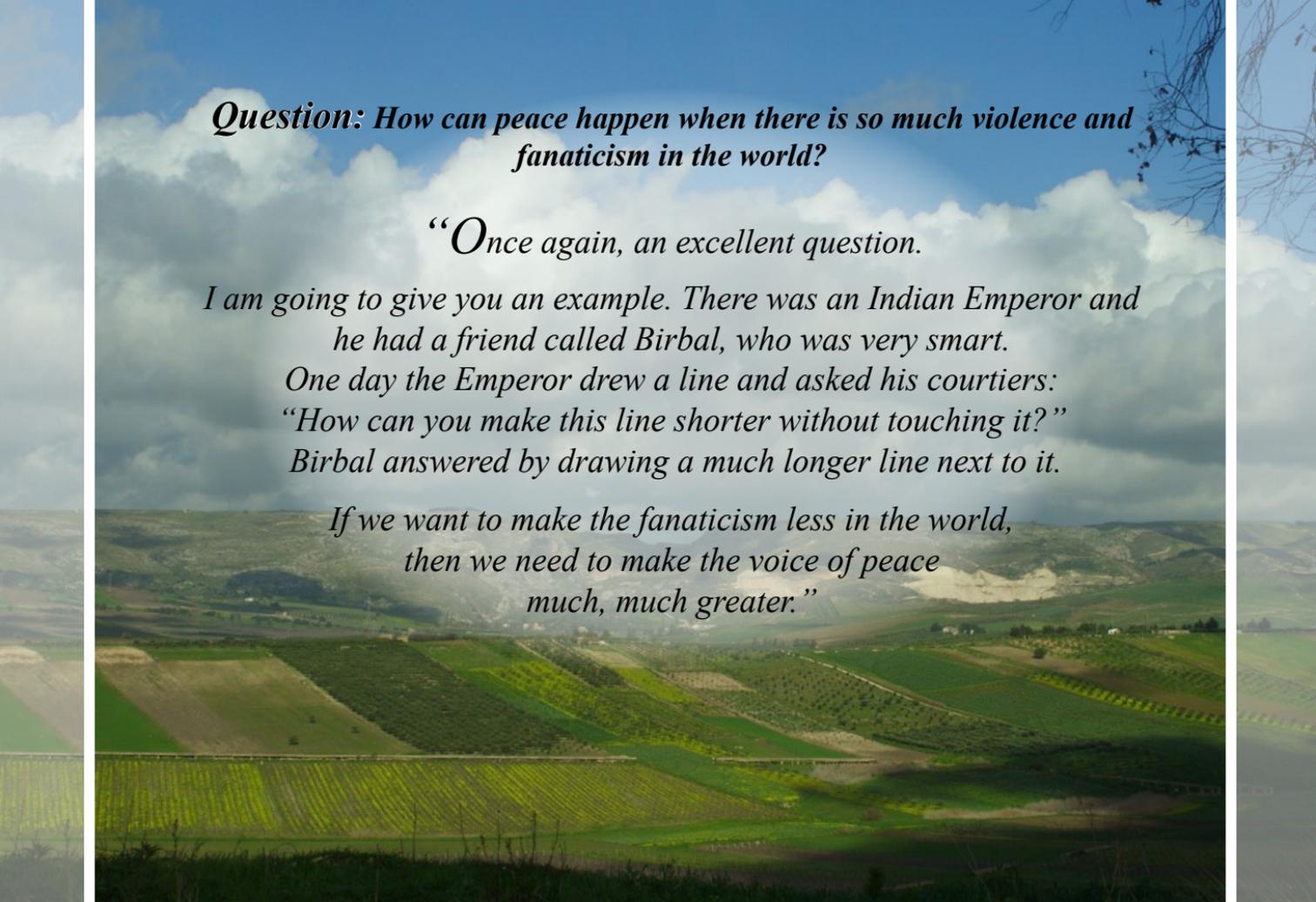
After Prem Rawat accepted the citizenship, high school students from Mazara came to a microphone and directly asked Prem Rawat questions.

Prem Rawat seemed as delighted by their simple and heartfelt questions as the audience was by his short and powerful answers.

Question: In your talks you say not to focus on the destination, but if one does not have a specific goal in mind, won't one drift in life?

“An excellent question. I agree you need to have a purpose in life and the purpose is to enjoy.”





Question: How can peace happen when there is so much violence and fanaticism in the world?

“Once again, an excellent question.

I am going to give you an example. There was an Indian Emperor and he had a friend called Birbal, who was very smart.

One day the Emperor drew a line and asked his courtiers: “How can you make this line shorter without touching it?”

Birbal answered by drawing a much longer line next to it.

*If we want to make the fanaticism less in the world,
then we need to make the voice of peace
much, much greater.”*



Question: ‘When you start looking for peace, then peace starts looking for you’ is one of your quotes.

Can governments bring peace to people on a social, economic and political level?

“Governments cannot bring peace, because the peace is already inside of you. But they can help support the message of peace, that is why they are there. If you find yourself pushing your car rather than it carrying you, then there is a problem...”





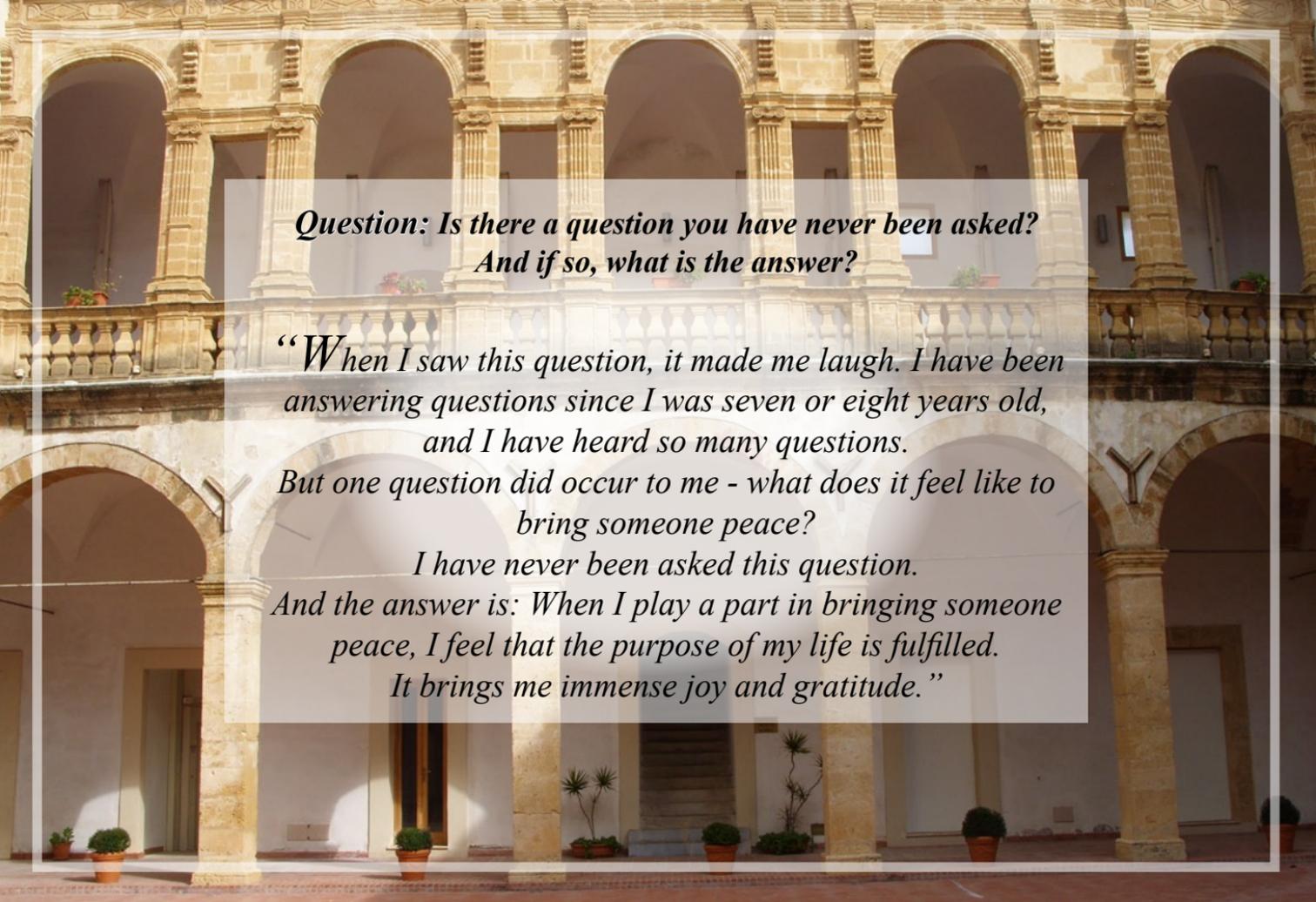
“To light this hall takes many lamps.

Each little lamp has to glow for the hall to be lit. In this world we are the lamps, and we need to glow for peace to happen.

*If we don't bring peace, who will?
The crows? The frogs?*

*If we can make war,
we can make peace.”*





***Question: Is there a question you have never been asked?
And if so, what is the answer?***

“When I saw this question, it made me laugh. I have been answering questions since I was seven or eight years old, and I have heard so many questions.

But one question did occur to me - what does it feel like to bring someone peace?

I have never been asked this question.

And the answer is: When I play a part in bringing someone peace, I feel that the purpose of my life is fulfilled.

It brings me immense joy and gratitude.”



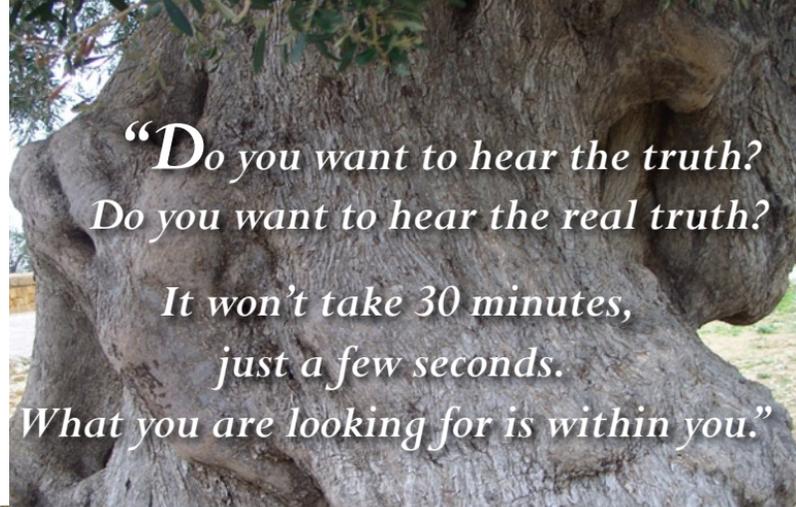
After the ceremony, Prem Rawat spoke at the Teatro Rivoli, just walking distance away.

The event began with a speech from the Mayor who finished with these words:

“Now we will listen to Prem Rawat, I already need to hear him again. Just moments ago he filled the town hall with peace and gave us a glimpse of his beautiful message.

*So I ask you to close your eyes,
open your hearts and listen, just listen to him,
because this is something heavenly...”*

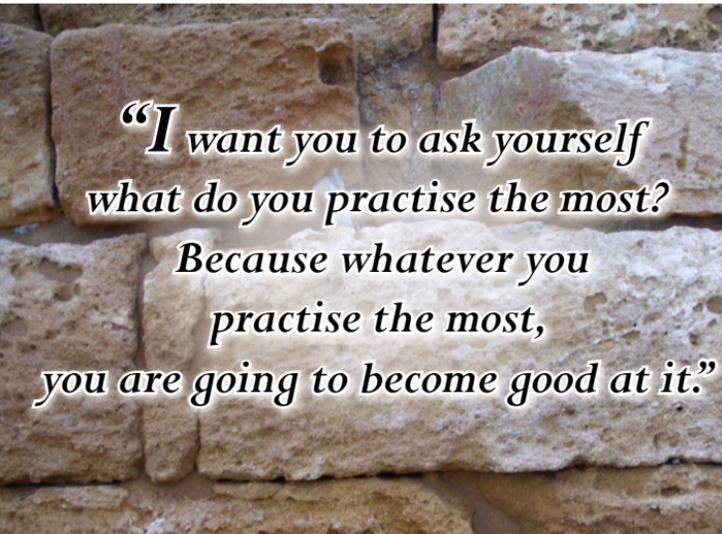




*“Do you want to hear the truth?
Do you want to hear the real truth?”*

*It won't take 30 minutes,
just a few seconds.*

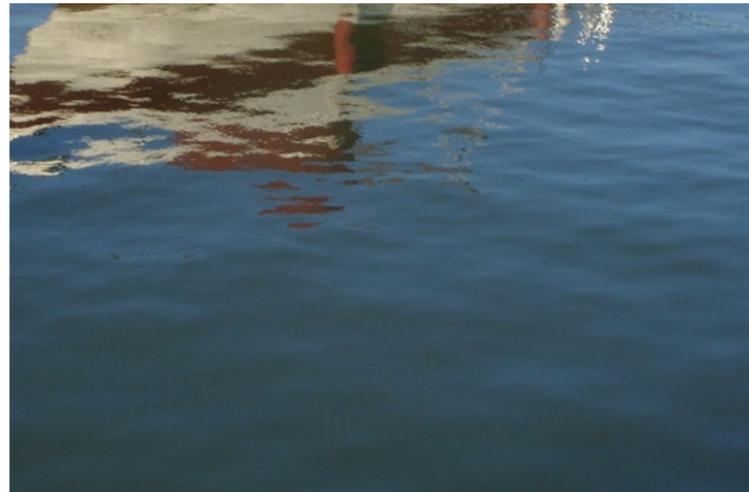
What you are looking for is within you.”



*“I want you to ask yourself
what do you practise the most?”*

*Because whatever you
practise the most,*

you are going to become good at it.”



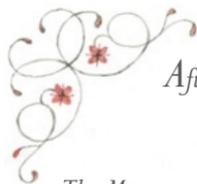


*“When you look at a river
flowing, do you know what
you are looking at?*

Do you know what this is?

This is a love affair.

*The river is rushing to merge
with the sea.”*



*After Prem Rawat spoke he was invited back to
the stage to receive a gift from the city.*

*The Mayor was lost for words as he came to the microphone to thank
Prem Rawat for the last time.*

Prem Rawat concluded the event with these words:

*“Thank you for this warm welcome.
Today is a day I will never forget.”*

