

THE BUSINESSMAN AND THE MAGIC STONE

by Prem Rawat



THERE WAS A BUSINESSMAN who had a small trade. Of course, being a businessman, his desire was to make as much money as possible.

One day, somebody knocked on his door. When he opened it, there was a man standing there, a very beautiful person. The man took a stone out of his pocket and gave it to the businessman, saying, "Let me explain the power of this stone. If you take this stone and touch it to metal, the metal will instantly turn into gold."

Then the man gave him a warning. “I’m not giving you the stone,” he said. “I’m just letting you use it for a while. One day, I will come back to collect it. When I come for the stone, there will be no extensions. No negotiations. No tomorrows. You will have to give it back.”

For the businessman, his wildest dream had come true. Now he could be wealthy beyond his imagination. All he had to do was touch this stone to metal, and the metal would turn into gold. So he was very happy.

But he was a businessman, and he did not want to spend money unnecessarily. He wanted to be very careful. So he called to find out the price that metal was going for on the market. That day, the dealer said, “It’s a little expensive.” The price had gone up. So the businessman thought, “I will wait till the price comes down.” And so he waited.

Every day, he called again to see if the price of metal had come down. But every day, the price kept going higher and higher.

Then, one day, the businessman heard a knock on his door, and there was the man again. And the man said, “I want my stone back.”

Startled, the businessman said, “Just one second. I’ll see if I can find some metal somewhere in my house.”

But the man said, “No. Remember? This was our deal. I have come back, and you have to give me back my stone.” And the man took the stone and left.

Who is the businessman? We all are. Someone came to us and gave us the stone — the gift of

life — and said, “With this, you can fulfill your dream. You can be happy. You can be content.” And what have we said? “Not right now. I’ll wait. Maybe when I am a little bit older. Maybe when I have a little more time.” But the amazing thing is, as we get older, we have less and less time.

War grows in the hatred
in people’s minds.

Peace grows in people’s hearts.

Then one day, somebody knocks on our door, “I want the gift of life back.”

What do we say? “Oh, I wish I could have done this; I wish I could have done that. I feel terrible about this; I should have done that.” But there is no negotiation. When the gift of life must be returned, it must be returned. There is no tomorrow, no day after tomorrow, no day after that.

THE GOOD

We have a lot to do, many responsibilities to take care of in our life, but we have one more responsibility. And that is to recognize the gift of life, to recognize the joy and the beauty of life. Because that is the only thing that can truly fulfill us.

I go from country to country. I see different cultures. But I also see the similarity of each human being wanting — from the heart — to be fulfilled.

We all have the same need. We all have the same want. We all need to be content, to be in peace. A peace that is just a thought does not suffice. We need to have a peace that we can actually feel every day. Every moment. Every moment of our lives is most precious. It cannot be wasted.

When will it become precious for you? The wisdom is not in realizing the preciousness of something when it is gone. The wisdom is in recognizing the preciousness of what you have — not what you don't have.

In this world, the ambitions of people are based on what they do not have.

There is a beautiful saying: "The beggar dreams that someday he will become a king. And what does the king dream of? In his nightmares, he dreams that he is becoming a beggar." A king does not dream of becoming a king. A beggar does not dream of becoming a beggar. The beggar dreams of becoming a king, and the king dreams of becoming a beggar.

All that goes on in the world, all that changes and changes and moves and moves, is happening in everyone's personal life. Sadness. Happiness. Good times. Bad times. Richness. Poverty. And no matter what culture we come from, we all want to avoid the bad.

In all cultures, people want to have the good, the auspicious. So the question is, What is most auspicious in your life?

THE POT

It is the coming and going of the breath. Every time it comes, it brings you the gift of life. It brings you your existence. Not tomorrow. Not yesterday. *Now* — in this moment. And in this moment that the breath comes, there is no bad. It's good. It's good, and it is good, and it is good. Because of it, you have life.

If we never understand the meaning of the gift that we have been given, we will try to look for meaning in everything else. And we do. We look for meaning — the true meaning of this existence — in everything else.

There is a saying: "You came into the world empty-handed, and you will leave empty-handed." It's no accident that this saying exists. This is what people have observed — that all the things we do to be fulfilled ultimately do not bring us fulfillment. Ultimately, everything has to be left behind.

Imagine a clay pot with a big hole in the bottom. You can pour the water of all the oceans into this pot, and not a single drop would remain.

If we fail to recognize the value of our lives, then we are like that pot with a big hole in it. The hole is our ignorance, and it doesn't matter what you put in the pot. You can put all the gold, all the things that are beautiful in it — it will not be able to retain anything.

Put even one drop of water in a pot that has no holes in it, and the drop will stay. Place the understanding of this life in the pot. Place the beauty of your existence in it. Do you see what I am saying? It's very important. Many people think there is no difference between what happens on the outside and what is on the inside. There is a big difference. Outside, you are always changing. Changing, changing, changing. On the inside, there is no change.



I see people I know who have gotten old. Their faces look different; their bodies look different. But their heart is the same, because the heart is timeless. The immortal that you seek on the outside is on the inside.

THE HEART IS PART OF YOU

Within you is magic. Within you, the dance of life is unfolding. Within you, a beautiful play is unfolding. Do you want to witness it? Do you want to see it? Do you want to understand what you have been given? Not what you have created, but what you have been given?

People say that there needs to be peace in the world. I say, “There needs to be peace in *your* world.”

There’s a beautiful Chinese saying: “It’s good intelligence to know your friends, but it is true wisdom to know yourself.” Thousands of miles away, a Greek philosopher said, “Know thyself.” And in India, someone said, “What you are looking for is within you.”

Is this an accident? Today, we hear somebody say, “What you are looking for — the true beauty, the pure joy — is within you.” And people say, “Very wise. Very good.” And then . . . nothing.

Why not find out what is within you? Why not get in touch with the perfection that is within you? Why not understand what your heart is trying to say to you? The heart is a part of you.

Would it be comfortable for you if somebody tied up one of your legs and said, “You cannot use

that leg — you can only use the other one”? You would have to hop everywhere. Then why do we ignore our inner self and only try to do what the outer self wants? That inner self is a part of us. And if we have not heard its simple request, then we have not heard the whole story of our life.

WHAT DO WE TAKE WITH US?

If it is true that empty-handed we came and empty-handed we have to go, then what is life all about? Good times will happen and bad times will happen. Then more of the same, more of the same, more of the same.

You get up in the morning. You leave your house to go to your office. You leave your office to come back to your house. It’s back and forth, and back and forth, and back and forth.

And what do you think of? You think of your problems. “I have to do this; I have to do that.” Problems, problems, problems.

There was another thing I read — a very interesting saying: “You work so hard to make money that you lose your health. And then you spend that money to gain your health back.”

Not very good business, because you lose, lose, lose.

We know so much, but do we know the value of our breath? We know so much, but do we know how to fly in the realm of the heart? If we don’t, then one day, the time will come when what we know will be of no use.

FORMULA PEACE

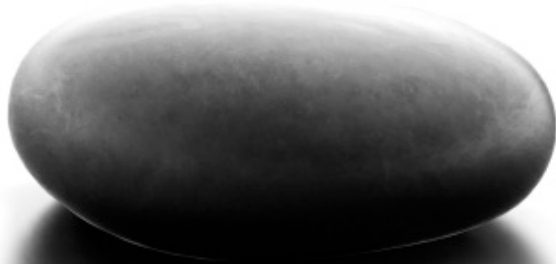
There are two kinds of peace in this world. There is one peace that is a formula. And there is one

peace that has to be felt. The formula peace, many people have. Some say, “I have peace. I’ve got a good family, I’ve got a good job, I’ve got a good house, so I’m happy. I’m fine.” But all that disappears one day.

If you ask a rich person, “Do you have peace?” they say, “Yes, I have peace.” “Why do you think you have peace?” “Well, I have this; I have that — I have peace. I’m okay.” If you ask a monk, “Do you have peace?” they say, “Yes, I have peace because I don’t have this and I don’t have that.”

This is the peace of formulas. Everybody has formula peace, and that’s why there are so many wars, because formula peace does not bring peace.

Even if you take a picture of the sun, you can’t pull it out at night and expect it to light up your house. I wish it could — that would save a lot of electricity and a lot of money, but the picture of the sun does not produce light. The sun does.



Conceived peace is just like that picture of the sun. People talk about peace and read about peace, which is good, but at some point in time, you have to know it; you have to feel the peace.

If you want real peace, it has to be felt — not once, but every day of your life. You need to be able to turn inside every day and feel that joy, that beauty, that serenity, in your life. Every day.

Why not find out what is within you?
Why not understand what your heart
is trying to say?

PEACE IN YOUR WORLD

People say that there needs to be peace in the world. I say, “There needs to be peace in *your* world.” In your world. Because if there isn’t peace in your world, there isn’t going to be peace.



There are so many people saying, “Peace, peace, peace.” Yet, every day, there is war, war, war. They are talking about the wrong kind of peace. True peace is always inside of you. And when you can experience that peace, there will be peace. In *your* world.

War does not grow on trees. War grows in the hatred in people’s minds.

Peace does not grow on trees, either. Peace grows in people's hearts. That's where you will find it — within you. Look for it. Do whatever is necessary to find that real peace in your life and be content.

Peace begins not with countries, not with nations, and not with governments. Peace begins with you. Peace begins with me. Peace begins with each one of us.

I just remind you about something you already know. You have known this since you were a little child, but you forgot it because everything else became important. Now, maybe the time has come for you to remember.

This is one in a series of edited addresses by Prem Rawat, known also as Maharaji. Prem Rawat has dedicated his life to bringing the simple and profound message that peace resides in each and every person, and has been named an ambassador of peace by the International University of Peace in Brazil.

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