

World Book Day

Some people like to read the biographies of the most influential people in history, like Martin Luther King or Mahatma Gandhi. Some prefer the classics, like "Pride and Prejudice" or the "Old Man and the Sea". But regardless of the kind of books you like the most, the indisputable truth is that the world would not be the same without books. Books have been educating and inspiring us for thousands of years, so it should go without saying that World Book Day is a more than a well-deserved holiday.

#IN VOGUE

The Doctors' New Clothes

For the Platinum Jubilee of SMS Medical College, Dr Sanjai Agrawal has put together an apparel collection for doctors.



Dr. Sandeepan Mukul Surgeon, Tractantour

Dr. Sandeepan Mukul, a surgeon at SMS Medical College, Jaipur, has put together an apparel collection for doctors. The result is often exhilarating. Dr Sanjai Agrawal, after working in several corporate hospitals as an ENT surgeon, decided to give vent to his artistic side and began designing garments that were a happy mix of form and function. Born in a family of clothiers and drapers, he has forever been exposed to fabrics, cuts, silhouettes and weaves. His personal tools were a keen sense of aesthetics and an eye for detail.

For the Platinum Jubilee of SMS Medical College, Jaipur, he has put together an apparel collection for doctors. A doctor is expected to dress in a manner dictated by tradition. Any deviation from time-worn conformity is not looked upon with leniency.

The modern doctor, however, wants not only subsistence but a life-style. No longer is the 24x7 grind his raison d'être. He wants to shed-off the ubiquitous white coat. He wants fun and recreation to punctuate his stressful work-life so that he can come back re-energised to take on new challenges. On weekends and vacations he wants a persona far removed from his professional self.

A doctor also wants elegant yet simple attires for life outside hospitals- for conferences, festivals, weddings. Even at work doctors want to appear friendly and approachable rather than stern and intimidating like the old-timers who stirred fear in the hearts of children and simple village folk. Today the patient also looks for a happy ambience to recover in and not an environment that rubs in the morbidity of his condition. Mindful of this evolving scenario Dr Sanjai Agrawal has created garments for the new doctor that will not only



He saw his disciples, make much of his death, contrary to what he had propagated. He saw a huge edifice come up over his interred remains and his likeness in stone installed and worshipped as a deity. He saw his disciples cloak his simple principles of self-worship with ritualism, complex prayers and theological mish - mash to make it dense to the common man. He saw them establish priestly orders, with rigid hierarchies, to "interpret" what had by then become a complex religion.

what had by then become a complex religion. He saw the interpreters of his faith establish rigid codes of social conduct that divided man from man and left virtually no rights for women and the economically wretched. He saw the setting up of congregation centres for the faithful which soon turned to centres of power, pelf and corruption for the priesthood. The unfolding scenario scrolled through the centuries and he saw the controllers of the new faith gathering immense power, enough to even challenge the might of state power and interfere constantly in lay governance. He saw the lure of this power split the faith into different factions which fought each other ferociously.

The young man thought for a long time, then gathered his tattered clothes around him & walked back to his ancestral house. There he announced to his relieved father, "I think I will take you up on the job offer."

He saw the followers of his faith commit unheard of atrocities on the followers of other faiths in myriad and constant struggles for so-called supremacy down the ages. He saw that the faith that he started, to rescue mankind from the sorrows and evils perpetrated by established religions, itself become a member of the wolf pack. "Stop! Stop!" screamed the young man in high agitation. "This is not what I wished to cause when I came up with my solution to the world's ills."

"I am afraid, son, that is precisely what the slave, the prince, the carpenter's son, the camel herder and others before you envisaged when they came up with their solutions. But look what mankind has gone through and is enduring because of their good intentions."

The young man thought for a long time, then gathered his tattered clothes around him, walked slowly out of the forest and back to his ancestral house in the town. There he announced to his relieved father, "I think I will take you up on the job offer. But first, I need a bath." Back in Heaven, the Lord settled back on to his cloud couch with a sigh and remarked to Angel One, "Saving humanity from its savours is becoming an increasingly tough task."

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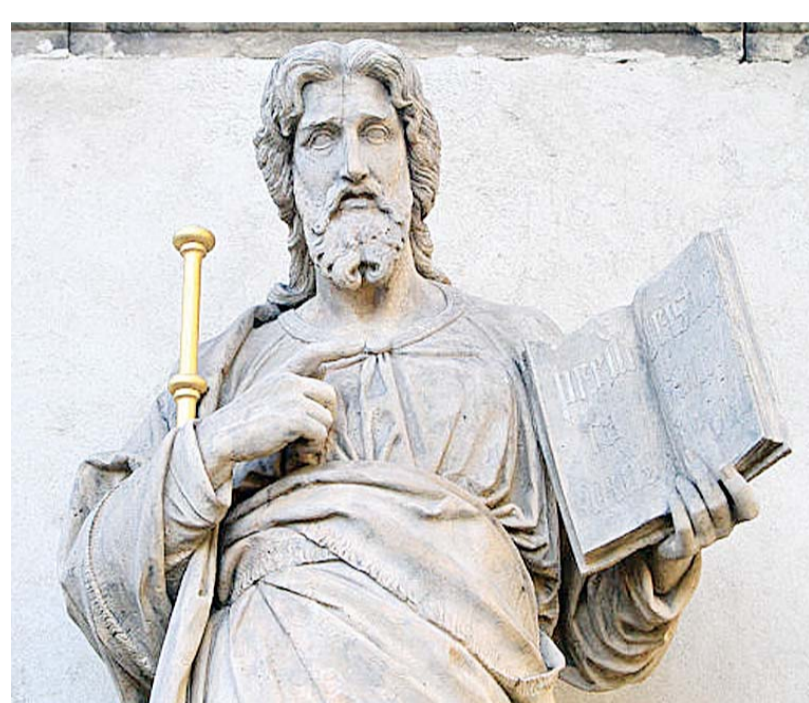
A Prophet That Wasn't



N.N. Sachitanand Senior Journalist

#STORY WITH A MORAL

Once upon a time, not long ago, there lived a young man who, if he had followed a linear life process, would have ultimately been trading in commodities from a comfortable chamber next to that of his merchant father. But, like many potential prophets, the young man chose to think out of the box. And what he perceived of the state of human existence around him - the moral rot, the senseless violence, the pursuit of aggrandisement, the selfishness, the sorrows, the ghastly cruelty, the hypocrisy, the alienation, the fragmentation - profoundly distressed him. He concluded that mankind was on the path of self-destruction. Was there a way to stop this suicidal rush, he wondered.



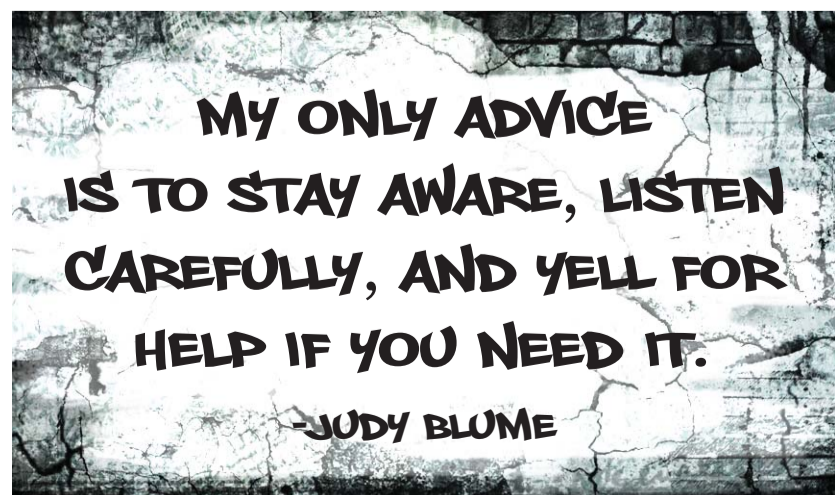
Like other seekers of yore, this youngster opted out of conventional life and left hearth and home for a solution for mankind's ills. Typically, his concentration was sought to be diluted by the celestials, first by arguments and threats and then by blandishments and enticements. But our hero remained steadfast and unmoved. Years passed. And then, one day, the knowledge that he sought dawned on him. An effulgence glowed around his emaciated face and he opened his eyes and smiled. At that moment, God was relaxing blissfully on Cloud Nine. His personal secretary materialized near him and broke his reverie by coughing. "What is it, Angel One?" asked

the Lord. "It's another one of them, Lord," replied the Archangel. "Oh dear," sighed the Supreme Being. "Have you tried the usual tricks with Mara and Maya?" "No dice, Lord. This one is for real. And he has come up with something." "Hmm! It seems I will have to go down and have a chat with him," decided the Supreme One and reluctantly clambered out of the wispy couch. The enlightened young man perceived Him as a vaporous mass of incandescence. "Lord, is that you?" he queried with rapturous incredulity. "Yes, son," boomed a voice from the radiance, or so it seemed, for he also heard an echo within his own mind. "I have found it, Lord," babbled the young man excitedly. "I have found the path to mankind's salvation. And it is so simple and straightforward that the most unlettered and poor person can easily follow it." "I know, son. I have sensed it in your mind." "Please bless me then, O Glorious One, so that I can proceed to reveal the path to mankind and save it from perdition." "Son, you have rightly concluded, through your long period of cogitation, that organized religion has alienated man from me and man from man, which in turn has led to the evils afflicting humankind. You are proposing a new system, in which this distancing is abolished and each individual enshrines me within himself or herself and is his or her own priest and temple. This democratisation and decentralization of worship sans middlemen or ecclesiastical structures or rigid ritualism or hierarchy will, you feel, neutralize much of the dissatisfac-

tion that debilitates humans and lead to a leap in goodwill among fellowmen. "Exactly, O Lord!" It is an excellent idea but before you sally forth on your mission, let me show you what will happen down the years and then you can decide what you want to do. With that a video presentation flashed on in the young man's mind. He saw himself returning to the town, gathering together some of his friends, family and acquaintances and telling them about the new Truth. At first only a handful were willing to accept his logic and these few became dedicated to his cause and teamed up with him as he went from village to village and town to town, propagating his message. He viewed them only as colleagues but soon they began to be characterized by others as his disciples and later, the Inner Circle. He saw the popularity of his faith growing rapidly and the local ruler capitalizing on this to make it the new state religion, leading to conflicts with the followers of the established order. He saw the ruler waging wars to enforce the new faith in other regions and causing tremendous grief and anguish in the process. He saw his disciples, make much of his death, contrary to what he had propagated. He saw a huge edifice come up over his interred remains and his likeness in stone installed and worshipped as a deity. He saw his disciples cloak his simple principles of self-worship with ritualism, complex prayers and theological mish - mash to make it dense to the common man. He saw them establish priestly orders, with rigid hierarchies, to "interpret"



THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman