



Paryushan

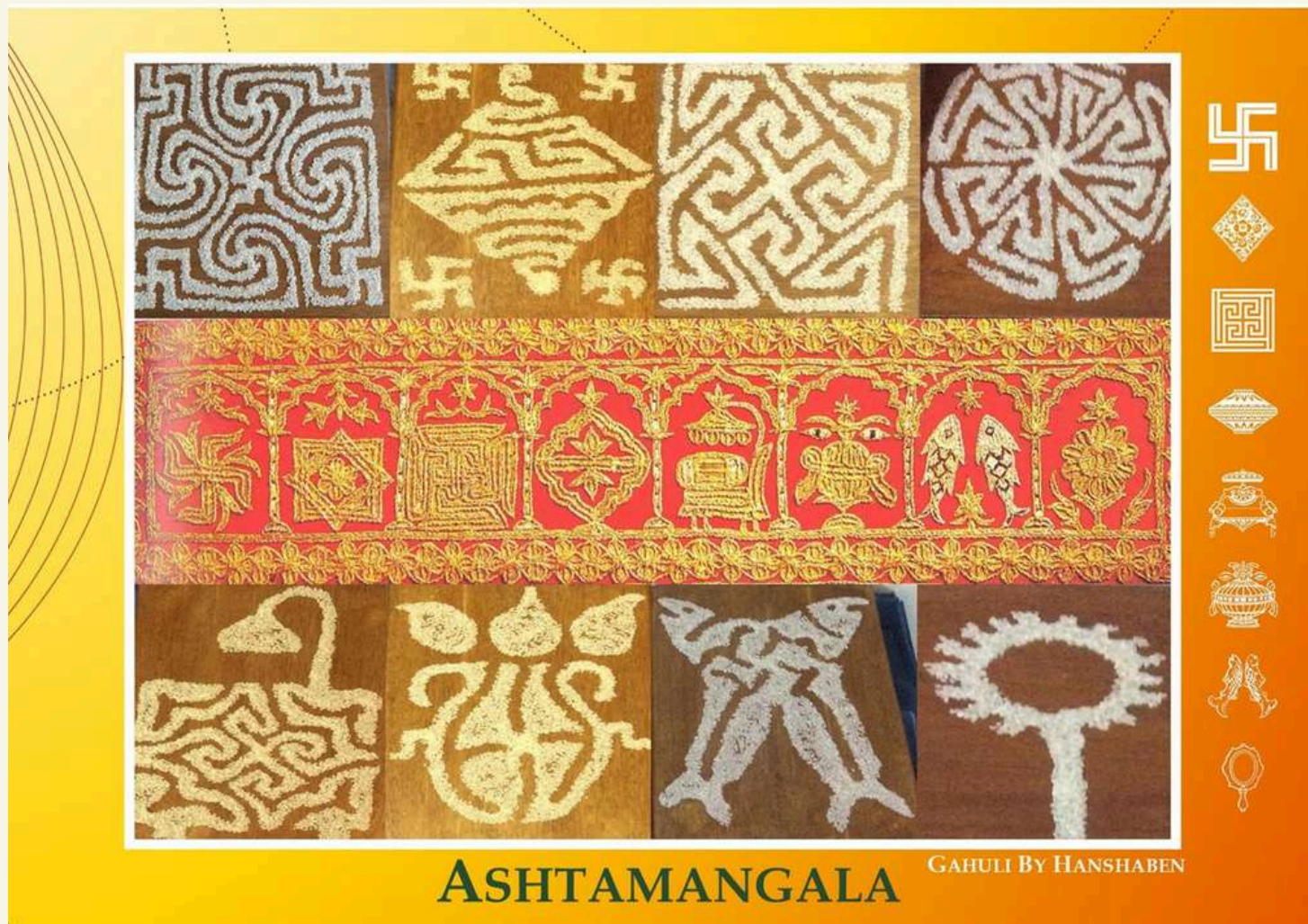
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31st Aug to 7th Sept 2024



Generosity of the spirit is the greatest of gifts. The size of the gift is not important, rather it is in the act of giving, particularly when it is a gift of the spirit, that you experience what it means to be generous. You give without thinking of how much it is costing you or what you will be left with. You give pure of heart and give abundantly. Peace, your most faithful and all-knowing companion, will quietly see you through, as you reach out to those in need. To give without expectation of return is to show an uncommon kindness that only the generous of heart know well.

Art of Giving



ASHTAMANGALA

GAHULI BY HANSHABEN



The following is a story, which many will be familiar with. The lessons in it are worth emulating to learn the true art of giving.

In Mahabharata, Arjuna, a famed warrior questions his divine charioteer, Krishna, about the noblest giver in the land. "Karna is without doubt the finest example of generosity in the kingdom," Krishna informs him. The answer irks Arjuna. Karna is one of his biggest rivals on the battlefield. He frowns deeply and says nothing. Krishna, notices Arjuna's furrowed brow and several days later, Krishna devises a skillful test.

"Do you see those two mountains?" Krishna asks Arjuna, As they are riding together one evening, Krishna asks Arjuna – "Do you see those two mountains full of gold". Your task is to go and distribute to the poor people in the valley.

Excited by this opportunity to impress Krishna and the world with his

philanthropic abilities, Arjuna summons all the villagers together and addresses them grandly. "Listen," says Arjuna, "For I bring glad news. I will be distributing these two glorious mountains of gold amongst all of you." A gasp of wonder and delight rises from the audience, and the air fills with songs in praise of the great warrior Arjuna. Energised by the admiration Arjuna sets about creating a master plan for the collection and distribution of the gold.

For two straight days and nights he shovels gold from the mountain without stopping for food, water, rest or sleep. To his utter dismay, the mountains remain undiminished.

Krishna notices him at the brink of exhaustion and tells him to stop. He

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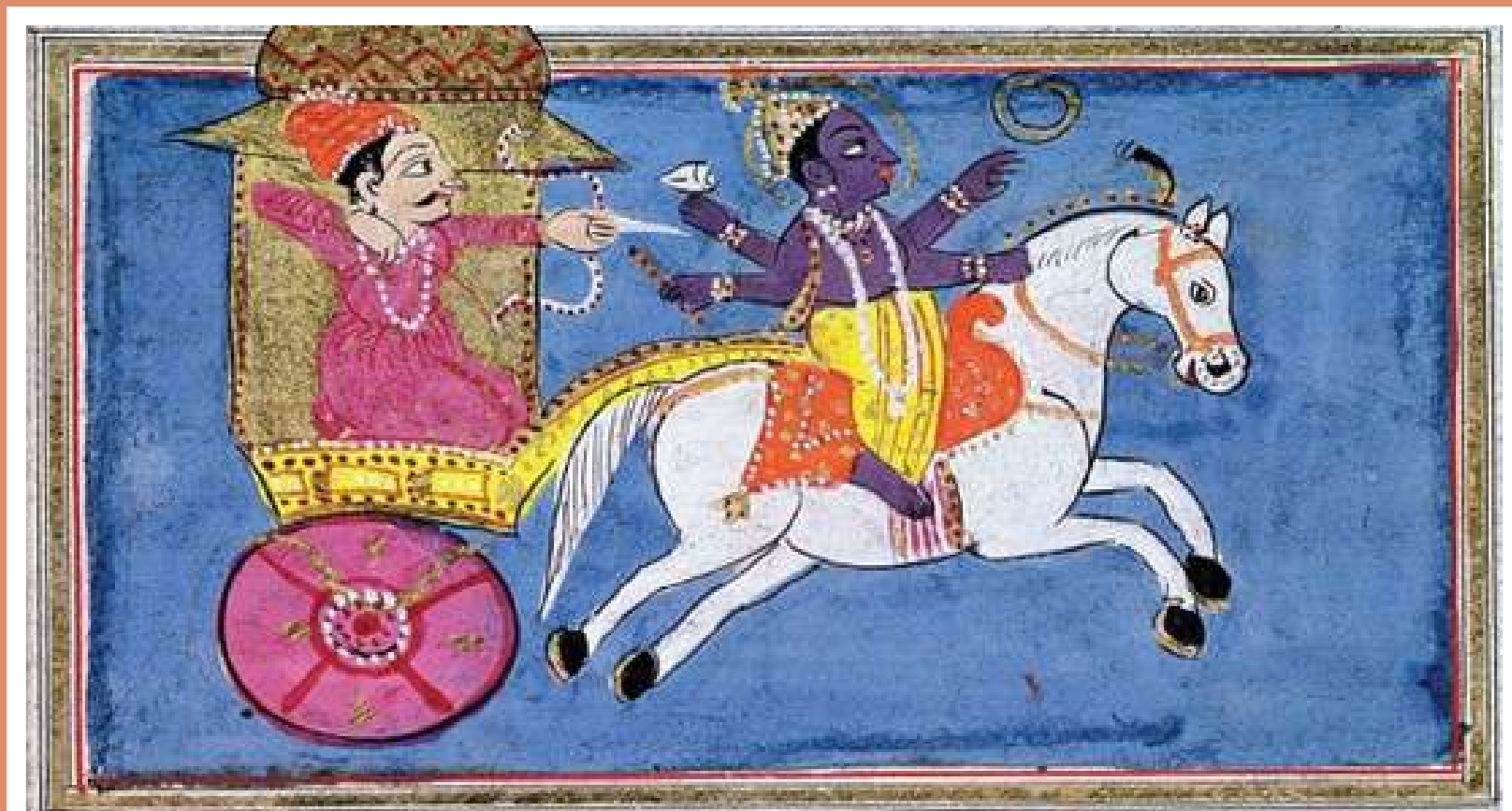
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He tells Arjuna that he had summoned Karna. Karna reaches in no time.

Krishna presents the same test to Karna - Go and distribute the gold from the two mountains to the poor people in the valley.

Without a moment's hesitation Karna calls out to the villagers and tells them with unassuming expression- "Those two mountains of gold are yours", take it. As he utters these words, he bows to Krishna and walks away. Such magnanimous was his way of giving!

Arjuna sits dumbfounded by this turn of events. Krishna turns to him, his voice rich with a love and wisdom beyond the ages. "Arjuna -- in your mind the gold occupied a place of high value, and you were sub-consciously attracted to it. You had a muddied approach to giving.





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You tried to strategize and divide up the gold according to who you thought was most worthy of the gift. But these petty calculations tired your spirit, and over time, you were forced to realise that the mountains' abundance is far beyond the capacity of your individual head, heart and hands." Arjuna silently absorbed the truth of these words into his being.

"And what about Karna?" he finally ventured to ask. "The gold meant nothing to Karna," returned Krishna easily, "For him the true gift was not the gold but the act of giving in itself. He had no calculations to make, nor was he seeking anything in return by way of acknowledgement or praise. He offered everything with a clear heart and a pure mind and having given he moved on to meet the next moment. And that, dear Arjuna, is a true sign of a person on the path of Awakening."

"Do not injure, abuse, oppress, enslave, insult, torment, torture, or kill any creature or living being."

**"The soul is the central point of spiritual discipline.
All human beings are miserable due to their own faults, and they themselves can be happy by correcting these faults."**

"Every soul is independent. None depends on another."

-- Bhagwan Mahavira

