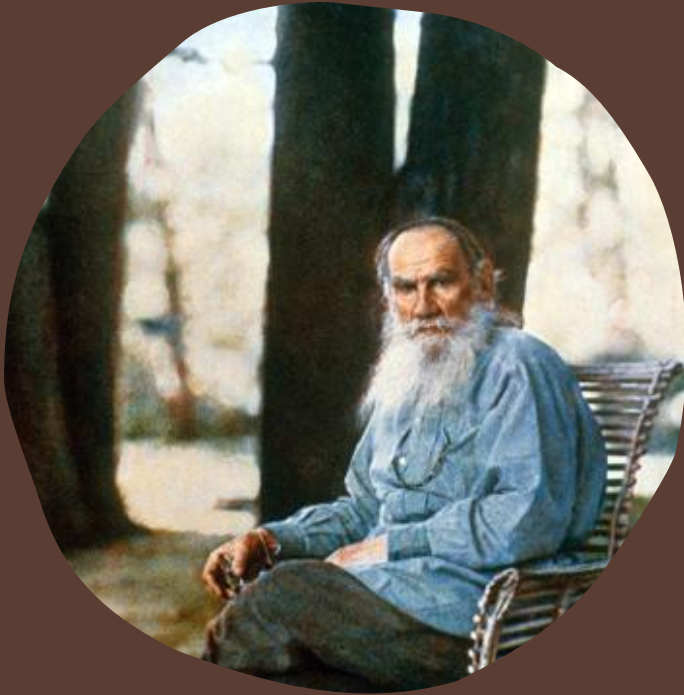




THREE QUESTIONS BY LEO TOLSTOY

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Leo Tolstoy



- On September 9, 1828, Leo Tolstoy was born in Tula Province, Russia.
- In the 1860s, he wrote his first great novel, War and Peace.
- In 1873, Tolstoy set to work on the second of his best known novels, Anna Karenina. He continued to write fiction throughout the 1880s and 1890s. One of his most successful later works was The Death of Ivan Ilyich.
- Tolstoy died on November 20, 1910 in Astapovo, Russia.

What Men Live By and Other Tales (1885)

Tale of a King seeking answer to three questions.

When is the right time for an action?

Who are the right people to associate with?

What is the most important thing to do?

King is not satisfied by answers of educated men of his kingdom.

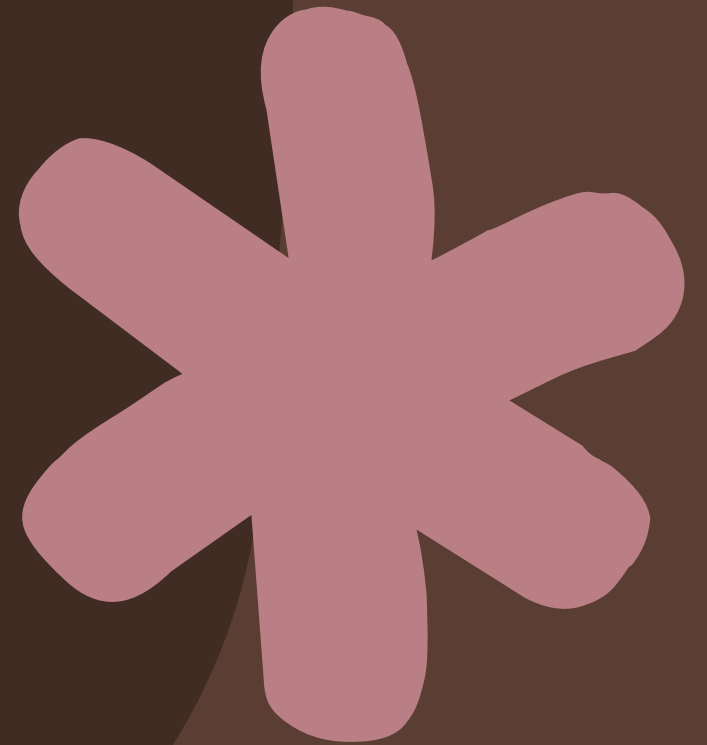
King decides to visit a wise hermit.

- There he saw the old and weak hermit digging the ground.
- The king asked his questions but got no answer.
- Then he took the spade from the hermit and began to work in his place.
- Several hours passed.
- It was evening, so the king stopped digging the beds.
- The king was ready to take leave from the hermit.
- Just then the hermit told that someone was running towards them.

The king saw a bearded man running towards them. His hands were pressed against his stomach from which blood was oozing. As he reached the king, he fainted and fell to the ground. He had a large wound in his stomach. The king washed the wound and compressed it with his handkerchief. At last the bleeding stopped. The man felt better and asked for water to drink. The king gave him fresh water. The sun had set by then. The king and the hermit carried the wounded man into the hut and laid him on the bed. The tired king also fell asleep. When he awoke, the bearded man asked to forgive him.

The man was, in fact, the king's enemy. He had followed the king to take revenge on him. He had vowed to kill him. The king had once put his brother to death. The man had himself in a bush on the way to the jungle. He came out of his hiding place when the king did not return for long. He got wounded by king's bodyguards. He would have died if the king had not dressed his wound. He felt grateful to the king who had saved his life. He promised to serve the king as a faithful servant. The king was happy that he had made peace with his enemy. He forgave the man and promised to give back his property.

- The king then went up to the hermit. He again asked for answers to his three questions. The hermit explained that by digging the beds for him, the king had escaped attack. So the most important time was when he was digging the beds. The hermit himself was the most important person. So to do him good was the king's most important business.
- The hermit further told the king that the most important person for him was the person with him at a particular moment. The most important business was to help that person. And the most important time was 'now' that is, the present moment.





Thank You