



## *The burden of riches*

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The other day, we were strolling in one of the most affluent markets in Chandigarh. It is here that the rich and the famous come for shopping, eating, or simply to show off.

We too were dressed in our best, branded clothes. We were about to enter a shop when suddenly I noticed a toddler on pavement.

While her mother, a roadside vendor, sat there dejected and silent, the little child, ill-clad and ill-fed, was playing with a plastic toy on the pavement. As I looked at the child, he began to lift his arms as if he wanted me to pick him up. Questions crossed my mind: Isn't every child God's gift? Doesn't each child deserve a life full of joy?

Lost in thoughts, I wondered whom to blame for such appalling deprivation.

The story of Alexander

the Great came to my mind: The famous Macedonian king possessed power and affluence beyond anyone's imagination. The story has it that following his many victories and conquests, the creator of one of the world's largest empires had become the slave of wealth.

Once he happened to meet some sages who, upon seeing Alexander, started stamping their feet, and didn't make any effort to talk to him. When Alexander asked them why they were doing so, the reply came, "King Alexander, every man can possess only so much of the earth's surface as this we are standing on. You are but human like the rest of us, save that you are always busy and up to no good....Ah well! You will soon be dead, and then you will own just as much of this earth as will suffice to bury you."

The moral: Shun your lust for worldly things and try to create a better world.