

# The Embrace of Freedom

*Rabindranath Tagore*

When I go from hence let this be my parting word, that what I have seen is unsurpassable.

I have tasted of the hidden honey of this lotus that expands on the ocean of light, and thus am I blessed—let this be my parting word.

In this playhouse of infinite forms I have had my play and here have I caught sight of Him that is formless.

My whole body and my limbs have thrilled with His touch who is beyond touch; and if the end comes here, let it come—let this be my parting word.

Deliverance is not for me in reincarnation. I feel the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight.

Thou ever pourest for me the fresh draught of thy wine of various colors and fragrance, filling this earthen vessel to the brim.

My world will light its hundred different lamps with thy flame and place them before the altar of thy temple.

All my illusions will burn into illumination of joy, and all my desires ripen into fruits of love.

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass, and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean-cradle of birth and of death, in ebb and in flow.

I feel my limbs are made glorious by touch of this world of life. And my pride is from the life-throb of ages dancing in my blood this moment.

And joy is everywhere; it is in the earth's green covering of grass; in the blue serenity of the sky; in the reckless exuberance of spring; in the severe abstinence of grey winter; in the living flesh that animates our bodily frame; in the perfect poise of the human figure, noble and upright; in living; in the exercise of all our powers; in the acquisition of knowledge; in fighting evils... Joy is there everywhere; it is superfluous, unnecessary; nay, it very often contradicts the most peremptory behests of necessity. It exists to show that the bonds of law can only be explained by love; they are like body and soul. Joy is the realization of the truth of oneness, the oneness of our souls with the world and the world-soul with the Supreme Lover.

## Friends Departed

They are all gone into the world of light!

And I alone sit ling'ring here;  
Their very memory is fair and bright,  
And my sad thoughts doth clear.  
It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast  
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,  
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest  
After the sun's remove.  
I see them walking in an air of glory,  
Whose light doeth trample on my days;  
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,  
Mere glimmering and decays.  
O holy Hope! And high Humility,  
High as the heavens above!  
These are your walks, and you have show'd them me

To kindle my cold love.  
Dear, beautiful Death! The jewel of the Just,  
Shining nowhere, but in the dark;  
What mysteries do lie behind the dust,  
Could man outlook that mark!  
He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know  
At first sight if the bird be flown;  
But what fair well or grove he sings in now,  
That is to him unknown.  
And yet as Angels in some brighter dreams  
Call to the soul when man doth sleep;  
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes  
And into glory peep.  
If a star were confined to a tomb,  
Her captive flames must needs burn there;  
But when the hand that lock'ed her up gives room,  
She'll shine through all the sphere.  
O "Master" of eternal life, and all  
Created glories under Thee!  
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall  
Into true liberty.  
Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill  
My perspective still as they pass;  
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,  
Where I shall need no glass.

*Henry Vaughan*

## ***A Fuller Life***

The mind, the faculties that we use every day, belong to God. Our ability to think, to perceive, to will, is God's light and power within us, which, when used for selfish purposes, results in darkness and suffering, or what is termed "the wrath of God." The same mind and will, surrendered to God, will operate unto man's full redemption. So man turns the glory of God into dishonor when he does not accord to God the honor of being his indwelling life and intelligence, but usurps that honor himself.

We often repeat the words, "God is the one and only Life, Light, and Power." But mere repetition will not produce Realization. There must be a daily disposition to surrender the consciousness of self; a joyful willingness that God's will be done. As the mind expands with Truth, it sees the incongruity of personal pride and self-exaltation. It sees that truly it is through the grace of God alone, that it has existence, intelligence, and identity.

Living in the Spirit is not a different life, in essence, from what we call "mortal" life, but the mind is differently focused, recognizing the Everlasting Source, the mystical inner fountain. Individual life is as a tree. From the planting to the fruitage, the same life is growing it, without a break, but with steady expansion, unto fruitage. Consequently, the life in Spirit is a fuller life, the natural faculties becoming increasingly enriched and intensified.

The truly surrendered life will not desire to shine any more in its own luster. It will not think, "How can I do something to make me appear great, or bring my name into prominence?" But its constant prayer will be, "Lord, I am Thine; use me as Thou wilt; let me be conscious of only Thee."

This is not weakness, but true strength. This is building on the only unshakable foundation. When one knows that he is not limited to frail human capacity, there wells up in him a courage, peace, and security such as he could never experience if he continued to walk in self-sufficiency.

We must magnify God, and give Him more room to dwell with each succeeding day. "Never will I take down the vision of my lifted eyes, and place it on aught but Thee."

The redemptive process takes place in the mind. The desire for God must supersede every other desire. The pathway behind us was stony and dreary, only because we did not look to God alone.

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