

You give but little when you give of your possessions.

It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard
for fear you may need them tomorrow?

And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the over-prudent dog
burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy city?

And what is fear of need but need itself?

Is not dread of thirst when your well is full, thirst that is unquenchable?

There are those who give little of the much which they have —
and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire
makes their gifts unwholesome.

And there are those who have little and give it all.

These are the believers in life and the bounty of life,
and their coffer is never empty.

There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.

And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism.

And there are those who give and know not pain in giving,
nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue;

They give as in yonder valley; the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space.

Through the hands of such as these God speaks,
and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth.

It is well to give when asked, but it is better to give unasked,
through understanding;

And to the open-handed the search for one who shall receive
is joy greater than giving

And is there aught you would withhold?

All you have shall someday be given;

Therefore, give now, that the season of giving may be yours and not your inheritors'.

You often say, *"I would give, but only to the deserving."*

The trees in your orchard say not so, nor the flocks in your pasture.

They give that they may live, for to withhold is to perish ...

... See first that you yourself deserve to be a giver, and an instrument of giving.

— Kahlil Gibran: **The Prophet**
"Talk to us about GIVING"

LOVE — For even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth so is he for your pruning. Even as he ascends to your height and caresses your tenderest branches that quiver in the sun, so shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth.

Like sheaves of corn he gathers you unto himself. He threshes you to make you naked. He sifts you to free you from your husks. He grinds you to whiteness. He kneads you until you are pliant; and then he assigns you to his sacred fire, that you may become sacred bread for God's sacred feast.

All these things shall love do unto you that you may know the secrets of your heart, and in that knowledge become a fragment of Life's heart.

Love possesses not nor would it be possessed; for love is sufficient unto love. When you love you should not say, *"God is in my heart,"* but rather, *"I am in the heart of God."*

MARRIAGE — But let there be spaces in your togetherness. And let the winds of the heavens dance between you. Love one another but make not a bond of love: Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup. Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf. Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone, even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping. For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts. And stand together yet not too near together: For the pillars of the temple stand apart, and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

CHILDREN — Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They come through you but not from you, and though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday. You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth. The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far. Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness;

For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

— **Kahlil Gibran: The Prophet**

"Talk to us about LOVE, MARRIAGE, CHILDREN"

EAT AND DRINK — When you kill a beast say to him in your heart: *“By the same power that slays you, I too am slain; and I too shall be consumed. For the law that delivered you into my hand shall deliver me into a mightier hand ...”*

And when you crush an apple with your teeth, say to it in your heart: *“Your seeds shall live in my body, and the buds of your tomorrow shall blossom in my heart, and your fragrance shall be my breath, and together we shall rejoice through all the seasons”.*

And in the autumn, when you gather the grapes of your vineyards for the winepress, say in your heart: *“I too am a vineyard, and my fruit shall be gathered for the winepress, and like new wine I shall be kept in eternal vessels. And in winter, when you draw the wine, let there be in your heart a song for each cup; and let there be in the song a remembrance for the autumn days, and for the vineyard, and for the winepress.”*

WORK — When you work you are a flute through whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music. Which of you would be a reed, dumb and silent, when all else sings together in unison? Always you have been told that work is a curse and labour a misfortune. But I say to you that when you work you fulfil a part of earth's furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born, and in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life, and to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inmost secret. And when you work with love you bind yourself to yourself, and to one another, and to God. And what is it to work with love. It is to weave the cloth with threads drawn from your heart, even as if your beloved were to wear that cloth. It is to build a house with affection, even as if your beloved were to dwell in that house. **Work is love made visible.**

And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple and take alms of those who work with joy.

Often have I heard you say, as if speaking in sleep, *‘He who works in marble, and finds the shape of his own soul in the stone, is nobler than he who ploughs the soil. And he who seizes the rainbow to lay it on a cloth in the likeness of man, is more than he who makes the sandals for our feet.’* But I say, not in sleep, but in the over wakefulness of noontide, that the wind speaks not more sweetly to the giant oaks than to the least of all the blades of grass; And he alone is great who turns the voice of the wind into a song made sweeter by his own loving.

JOY AND SADNESS — Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven? And is not the lute that soothes your spirit the very wood that was hollowed with knives? When you are Joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful, look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.

— Kahlil Gibran: **The Prophet**

“Talk to us about FOOD and WINE, WORK, JOY and SORROW”

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT — Oftentimes have I heard you speak of one who commits a wrong as though he were not one of you, but a stranger unto you and an intruder upon your world. But I say that even as the holy and the righteous cannot rise beyond the highest which is in each one of you, so the wicked and the weak cannot fall lower than the lowest which is in you also. And as a single leaf turns not yellow but with the silent knowledge of the whole tree, so the wrong-doer cannot do wrong without the hidden will of you all. Like a procession you walk together towards your divine-self. You are the way and the wayfarers. And when one of you falls down, he falls for those behind him, a caution against the stumbling stone. And this also, though the word lies heavy upon your hearts: The murdered is not unaccountable for his own murder, and the robbed is not blameless in being robbed. The righteous is not innocent of the deeds of the wicked, and the white-handed is not clean in the doings of the felon. Yea, the guilty is oftentimes the victim of the injured.

FREEDOM AND BEAUTY — You shall be free indeed when your days are not without a care nor your nights without a want and a grief, but rather when these things girdle your life and yet you rise above them naked and unbound. What laws shall you fear if you dance but stumble against no man's iron chains? And who is he that shall bring you to judgement if you tear off your garment yet leave it in no man's path? And if it is a fear you would dispel, the seat of that fear is in your heart and not in the hand of the feared. Verily all things move within your being in constant half embrace, the desired and the dreaded, the repugnant and the cherished, the pursued and that which you would escape.

The aggrieved and the injured say, *'Beauty is kind and gentle. Like a young mother half-shy of her own glory she walks among us.'* And the passionate say, *'Nay, beauty is a thing of might and dread. Like the tempest she shakes the earth beneath us and the sky above us.'* The tired and the weary say, *'Beauty is of soft whisperings. She speaks in our spirit. Her voice yields to our silences like a faint light that quivers in fear of the shadow.'* But the restless say, *'We have heard her shouting among the mountains, and with her cries came the sound of hoofs, and the beating of wings and the roaring of lions.'* At night the watchmen of the city say, *'Beauty shall rise with the dawn from the east.'* And at noontide the toilers and the wayfarers say, *'We have seen her leaning over the earth from the windows of the sunset.'* In winter say the snow-bound, *'She shall come with the spring leaping upon the hills.'*

PLEASURE AND PASSION — It is the blossoming of your desires, but it is not their fruit. It is a depth calling unto a height, but it is not the deep nor the high. It is the caged taking wing, but it is not space encompassed. Ay, in very truth, pleasure is a freedom-song. Go to your fields and your gardens, and you shall learn that it is the pleasure of the bee to gather honey of the flower, but it is also the pleasure of the flower to yield its honey to the bee. Therefore, let your soul exalt your reason to the height of passion, that it may sing; and let it direct your passion with reason, that your passion may live through its own daily resurrection, and like the phoenix rise above its own ashes. Among the hills, when you sit in the cool shade of the white poplars, sharing the peace and serenity of distant fields and meadows - then let your heart say in silence, *'God rests in reason.'* And when the storm comes, and the mighty wind shakes the forest, and thunder and lightning proclaim the majesty of the sky - then let your heart say in awe, *'God moves in passion.'*

— Kahlil Gibran: The Prophet

"Talk to us about CRIME and PUNISHMENT, FREEDOM and BEAUTY, PLEASURE and PASSION"