

THE MIRROR ON THE WALL

by Prem Rawat



ONCE THERE WAS a remote little village. The people in this village were very simple. One day, a tourist arrived. The next morning, he took out his mirror and put it up on a wall so he could shave. He cleaned up and shaved, but he forgot to take the mirror off the wall before he traveled on.

An elderly villager with gray hair, bright eyes, and a beautiful shining face saw the mirror on the wall and looked into it. He had never seen a reflection of himself, so when he saw the face in the mirror, he was mesmerized, and he said to himself, “Today, I have seen the face of God.” He left — completely happy: “I have seen God.”

Then a young girl came along. When she saw herself in the mirror, she was taken aback. “I have seen the most beautiful woman on the face of this earth. When I grow up, this is what I want to look like!”

And then came along a man who had lost his father not too long before. He looked in the mirror and said, “Oh, my God! I have seen my father again.”

Now, the three people who had seen themselves in the mirror started to get very upset. The older man wanted the mirror, because this is where he had seen the face of his god. The young girl wanted the mirror, because this is what she wanted to look like. And the third man wanted the mirror, because in it he had seen his father again. They started arguing, and before long, fights were breaking out all over the village. Everybody was unhappy, because whoever went to the room and looked in the mirror on the wall — whatever they saw, they liked, and they all wanted the mirror for themselves.

Finally, a wise man happened to come by. When he saw what was going on in the village, he asked, “Why are you all fighting?”

Different people answered: “I want this thing because this is my god,” or “This is who I want to be,” or “This is my father,” or “This is my this; this is my that.”

So he asked for the magical thing to be taken down from

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the wall and brought to him. He looked at it and said, “Don’t you know what this is? This is a mirror.”

He called the old man, and he said, “You did not see the face of God. You saw yourself.”

He called the young girl, and he said, “You did not see the most beautiful woman. You saw yourself.”

He called the third man, and he said, “You did not see your father; you saw yourself. You look like your father, and that’s why you thought you saw him, but it was you.”

One by one, he called everyone and said, “What you see in this mirror, what you like in this mirror, is not the mirror. It’s you!”

IT'S YOUR LIFE

Now, how does this story relate to peace? You see, peace begins with each one of us. We have forgotten our own self, our own need. We like to talk about food, and we have become very good at it, but does that mean that we don't need to eat anymore? No. You can talk about food all day long. No problem. But sooner or later you've got to *eat*. This is my little bit of wisdom for you. Hunger does not look at anything else; it looks at being satisfied. And the hunger for peace comes from within you. It is not an intellectual idea. Peace is the desire of the heart. *Your* heart. And it is as simple as the coming and going of the breath. Breath. This is how the movie of life begins. And how does the movie end?

Just recently, somebody's father passed away, and this person said to me, "We were all waiting till he had taken his last breath." Once again — breath.

I know we're fascinated by the in-between part. This is what we live for, this is why we exist. That's all fine. I'm not criticizing that. But you should never, ever forget the importance of where your life began. And where it will end.

FACE OF PEACE

The gift of breath will be given to you freely and abundantly. And you will breathe day and night. And you will think of many things. And the least will be about your breath, the coming and going of this gift.



Everybody was unhappy, because whoever went to the room and looked in the mirror on the wall—whatever they saw, they liked, and they all wanted the mirror for themselves.

Within you lies the possibility of peace. For every single human being — *that's* the place where peace exists. Peace does not belong to any nation. Peace does not belong to any society. Peace does not belong to any religion. Peace belongs to people — people like you and me.

What is the face of peace? Some people will tell you that the face of peace is God. Other people will tell you the face of peace is some temple. May I humbly suggest that the face of peace is none other than your face when you are in contentment, when you are in peace — when peace dances on your face.

Peace is not going to manifest in some giant cathedral. It will manifest in the cathedral of the heart. That is the only pure place there is. That is the only place where peace is welcomed. It is people like you and me who welcome peace in our lives, who want peace, who need peace. And it is here in our existence that peace exists.

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YOUR TRUE NATURE

Look at how much money governments spend on trying to make society amiable — so that everybody is “friendly.” But when we are content, that happens automatically. When you are content, and you are standing in a line to get your movie tickets, if somebody says, “Can I come in front of you?” you say, “Okay.” When you are content, and your child comes to you and says, “I need new shoes,” no problem. “Let’s go.”

It is amazing that we have spent so much money, time, and energy and never realized this simple, basic human quality — that when you are content, you are nice. You’re actually fun to be with. But when you are not content, whew! Forget it. If somebody is in your lane and just *looks* at you implying, “Can I come in front?” you will drive your car a little further ahead. “Don’t even *think* about it!” You are no longer fun to be with. You become different.

This is the importance of contentment; this is the importance of peace. Without contentment, we are so

lost, so different. Without contentment, without peace in our lives, we are unrecognizable. And *with* contentment and peace, everything begins to dance in the sweetest, most beautiful way.

So many people tell us how we are different from each other. Let me tell you how we are the same. People ask me, “What nationality are you?” And I have to laugh. What should I say? Who am I? I am just like you — same aspirations, same ideas, same needs. We all look a little different, and we have different languages. So we think that the difference is all there is, but it’s not. The same engine drives us, the same aspirations. Our needs are not so far apart. And ultimately, every breath that comes into us is the same that comes into every human being in the world. Do you think there is anybody who breathes differently?

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PROBLEM SOLVING

Seeing this similarity should unify us. We have gone to the moon. This was no easy feat, but we thought that it was important, so we did it. We have not yet begun to think that it is important to have peace. Why? Because we have become so good at living without it. The whole world is out there convincing us: “We can solve your problems.” Because people think if our problems are solved, we will

be in peace. No. If we are not in peace, more problems will come, and more problems will come, and more problems will come. Of course, there will also be more problem solvers — but not less problems.

Technology will offer us solutions, but, ultimately, will life get easier? Life begins to become easier the day there is the understanding of peace in our lives. That's when it becomes restful; that's when it begins to dance; that's when the symphony begins to play. That's when clarity begins to come in our lives.

Without that clarity, life is like walking with your eyes

closed, bumping into things left and right. As you have opened your eyes to the world outside, open your eyes to the world within. Begin to understand — not what you are missing, but what you *have* in your life.

Today a miracle took place. The miracle was your existence. And it was made possible by the most divine.

Today you have the possibility of being in peace, being content, being happy. Today you have the possibility of being thankful because you felt peace, because you understood.

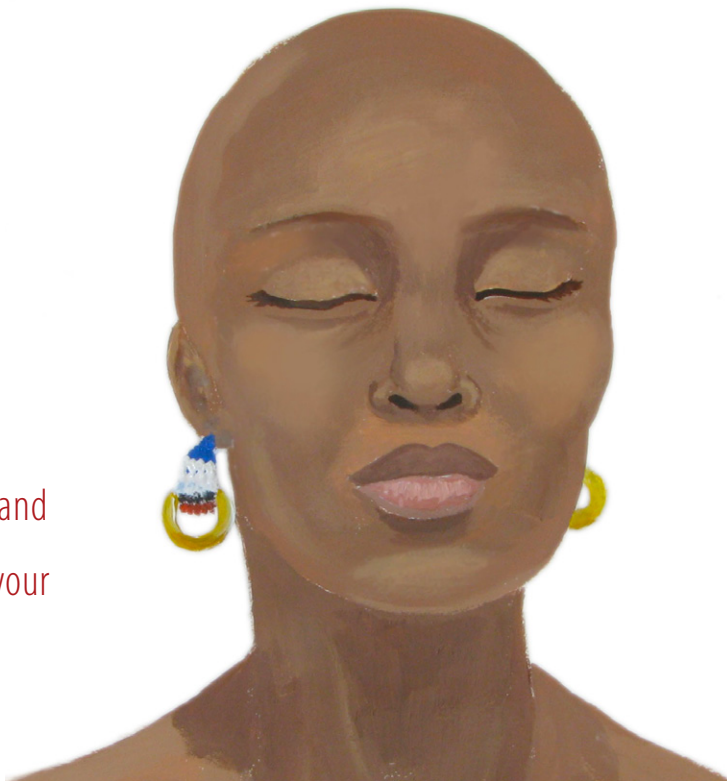
TRUE FREEDOM

What is true freedom? When I speak of freedom, I'm talking about a freedom that can be experienced even if you are locked up in a prison. Hasn't your freedom been taken away? Yes, one freedom has been taken away, but there is another freedom that cannot be taken away — even in prison. And that's the real freedom.

Peace that can be felt in the middle of a battlefield — that's the real peace, because that is the peace that nobody can take away from you. Nobody can rob you of it. And that's *your* reality. That's who you are.

What is your true nature? Look in the mirror of the heart, and you will see your true face. And when you see your true face, you will realize what a miracle you are. You've been created by kindness. You exist by kindness. The gift of

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today
a miracle took place:
your existence

today you have a possibility:
being in peace
being content
being happy

breath is given to you by kindness. And all that that you're given every single day is a gift of incredible kindness.

THE RAIN HAS COME

In this temple that you are exists the truest peace. Not an idea, not a concept. When you can turn within, you can feel the peace that dances in your heart. Every single day. There are so many misconceptions about peace. "Oh, I just need to feel peace once." No. Feel peace every day that you are alive, because that is what makes you come alive.

You are a little seed waiting in the desert to flower. And I am saying, "Flower. Spread your petals. Take in the sunshine. The rain has come, and the desert is not a desert anymore." It's not about the length of time. It is about the

opportunity of existence. This is what is given to you.

Every day, every minute, every second, you can recognize the value of what it means to have a second. Recognize that value while you're alive. When it's too late, and then you begin to recognize the value — that is no fun. Recognize the value while you still have the time. That's wisdom.

When the heart calls for peace, do not ignore it. Respect it. When the heart calls for contentment, do not ignore it. People say, "Isn't that selfish?" No. When you quench your thirst, is it selfish? When the sun shines upon you and you feel its warmth, is it selfish? When the wind blows and cools you down, is that selfish? When you look up and see the blue sky, is that selfish? And when the rain falls in the desert, and the flower awakens, is that selfish?

THIS LIFE!

Somebody put the thirst in you. And the thirst in you says, "Now drink. Drink the water!" Is it selfish to drink the water?

No. It was not me, not my ideas, not my concepts that put this thirst in me. The thirst is innate. Fundamental. There is an attraction to peace built into every single human being. Respond to that need. Because if you don't, no matter what you do, the story of your life will be incomplete.

Will you get another life? I don't know. And, frankly,

neither do you. So, every day, live to the fullest what life is offering you. Be in peace. Be in contentment.

What I offer people is a way to be able to go within and feel the peace that is inside of them. Does it work? Yes. Does it work in jail? Yes. How do I know? I went to a prison and spoke to the prisoners. Many of them have discovered what I offer and have written to me, “Thank you. This made all the difference in the world.” It is not just words, but there is something real that is being offered.

Will that change the world? I don't know. Can it bring peace to your life? Yes.

This is one in a series of edited addresses by Prem Rawat, known also as Maharaji. Prem Rawat has dedicated his life to bringing the simple and profound message that peace resides in each and every person.

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