3 Brothers Found Gold

by Prem Rawat

THERE WERE THREE BROTHERS. They had been brought up quite well. But as they got older, their parents died, they lost all their money, and they became very poor. So in their state of poverty, they had to beg for food. Before long, the three of them decided that they would rather go to the rivers in the mountains and pan for gold.

As luck would have it, all three found an equal amount of gold. They each took their gold back to their own shack, and some time passed.

The first brother was very religious. He made a little altar for the gold he had found. Every day, he would pray to the gold and sing its praises — how the gold had the power to totally eliminate his poverty and his suffering, that he would never again have to beg or do anything he didn't want to do because he would have food and housing. And that's all he did — pray.

The second one was very educated. Instead of praying to the gold, he would write essays on the power of gold and write poetry in its honor. He would write about how the gold, so beautiful and shiny, had the power to remove his hunger, give him clothes, and put a roof over his head.

We might think there is a big difference between what the first two brothers did, but at the end of the day, we really have to question what the difference is.

The third brother sold his gold, and with the money, he bought himself a farm. He grew vegetables, planted fruit trees, and ate whatever he wanted. What he didn't need, he sold. From the money he earned, he made himself a beautiful home.

Amazingly enough, the things that the first two brothers wanted, the third one got — food, shelter, and clothes.

At one point the brothers decided they wanted to come together again. It had been a long time. When they met, they asked each other, "How are you doing?"

The first one said, "It's beautiful. I pray every day. I pray and pray, 'Almighty gold, please make available to me clothes to wear, a house to live in, food to eat.' And I am sure that someday in the future — because of my sincerity — the gold will respond."

The second one said, "I write beautiful essays about gold, and I am sure that someday, pleased with my praises, the gold will bestow upon me all my wishes."

Seeing their devotion and dedication to the gold, the third one kept very quiet.

The others turned to him and said, "And what do *you* do? We can see you have good clothes and look quite healthy — not like us who have to beg and wear these torn clothes. What happened? Were your prayers answered?"

The third one said, "I hate to tell you this, but I sold my gold, and with the money, I bought a farm. I work on my farm, and somehow, that gold made it possible for me to have clothes, food, and shelter."

Then the first two realized that they had started with the same amount of gold, but they didn't really do anything with it.

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WE DON'T ACCEPT THE GIFT

This story is loaded. You can have discussions about it for hours, I'm sure, because this is the condition of the world: We have been given something, but we don't understand its value. We sing the praises of God, but we don't accept his gift. Every day, we ask more from God, but we do not accept what he gives us. We think that if we pray, if we do all those things, someday in the future our wishes will come true. Excuse me, but we have confused God with a genie.

For the fulfillment of our wishes, we need a genie, not God. The difference is that God gives without being asked. With a genie, you have to rub the lamp, and when the genie comes out, you get three wishes. You have to think what you want and then ask for it cleverly. Maybe then the genie will make the wish come true. But only in fairy tales, not in reality.

What we are given every day — the gift of life, of breath, of awareness, understanding, clarity, serenity — you can't buy. These have to be given. There is no store with a sign that says, "Serenity sold here" or "Clarity sold here." They are given. There is no store with a sign that says, "Buy breath here." If there were such a store, there would be a very long line. People in hospitals who are running out of breath would be making a beeline for it saying, "Me, too. Me, too."

Your life has been given to you free of charge. All you have to do is *do* something about it. In the literary world, people talk about peace, write books and essays about peace, create definitions of peace, and imagine how nice it would be to have it. But very few do anything about it.

everybody is holding up two fingers is that peace?

War, a lot of people do something about. There are huge companies doing research on how to blow up a human being quickly and accurately. The point is to make a bullet that doesn't miss, because they want every bullet to be successful. They know the value of a bullet. They do *not* know the value of a human life. And by the way, we are the ones who created the system, and we are the ones who are paying for it. All you have to do is say, "Enemy," and the response is, "Enemy? No problem. We'll go right at it."

We have explanations, ideas. "Oh, yes. Peace. That would be nice." But that's all. Nobody's doing anything about it. What *can* we do about peace?

WHAT IS PEACE?

What do you think peace is? Everybody holding up two fingers — is that peace? Everybody wearing long, white flowing robes, holding flowers, smiling. No more people jogging on the street. They're just picking flowers, passing them on to the next person. Is that peace? What is peace?

I can only ask so many questions. After that, I have to start giving answers. So here are some answers, and they are not empty words. I stand behind each one of them. When I say *peace*, I'm talking about the peace that you can experience, because it is within you. What does that peace look like? It looks like your face in contentment. In gratitude. In understanding. In clarity. In serenity. *Your* face. That's what peace looks like.

Peace dances on the face of a human being. When your face is filled with peace, that's when you look the most beautiful. You don't need makeup. You shave, don't shave, it doesn't matter. Some of you may be thinking, "Hmm. I don't know if that's true." Well, let me explain. Once in a while — when you are content, when you are happy — your whole nature changes. Completely. You become all those things you aspire to be. You become kind. You become courteous.

When the father is in a good mood and the son says, "Dad,

I need new clothes," he responds, "No problem." Vaguely familiar? You're standing in line at the movie theater, and somebody says, "Can I cut in?" When you're feeling good, you say, "No problem."

It is when you feel good that you become a human being. And when you become a human being, you care. When you're feeling good, all the little things that bother you — and bother other people about you — disappear. And when you're not feeling good? Even your child knows not to come near you. "Is Dad in a good mood or a bad mood?"

When you feel good, you become so different. You still have your integrity, and you shine. You're the most fun to be with. The most fun. And when that contentment is not there, nobody wants to be with you — nobody. Not your wife, not your children, not your parents. This is how important peace is, how simple peace is, and how beautiful peace is. And where is it? Within you!

Peace begins in the heart of all human beings. These are not my words. People write charters, poetry, and statements like, "All men are created equal" in the U.S. Declaration of Independence, but they don't know what the words mean. Like the two brothers, they just pray and hope, "Someday, it will happen."

I go from person to person to person because if we want to light this world, we are the lamps. Each one of us is a lamp, and each one of us has to be lit. One by one by one. And when we are lit, we give light.

the greatest miracle that will ever happen in your life happens right under your nose

One little lamp, and the darkness removes itself. That's what a lamp does. A little, tiny light somewhere up on a mountain, and people can see it. Even though it's dark, the darkness has to yield to the light — all the darkness, all the ignorance. Ignorance yields to true knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE SELF

And what is true knowledge? Not my words. Socrates said, "Know thyself." That's the ultimate knowledge. Socrates is not the only one who said this. In so many of the old Indian scriptures, it says, "Of all the knowledge you can have, knowledge of the self is the ultimate." Why? I'll explain it with a little joke.

A young man was walking along, and he saw a very old man sitting on the side of the road crying. So he went up to the old man and asked, "What's the matter? Why are you crying?"

The old man said, "It's amazing. I just married a beautiful 25-year-old woman." The young man says, "Is that why you're crying?" The old man says, "No, no, no. I just bought a beautiful new house. Incredibly gorgeous. Two

new cars, a new boat. My house is beautiful, my boat is beautiful, my wife is beautiful."

The young man says, "You're very lucky. Why are you crying?" And the old man says, "I forgot where I live."

It is the same with the rest of us. We have all these gifts, but we forget who we are, what our true nature is, and where we can find what we have been given. Then we wonder and we wander, wonder and wander. This is what the whole world has been doing for a very long time: wondering and wandering.

The formula for the world was laid out a long time ago: peace, then prosperity.

So it begins. This journey of a thousand miles begins with the very first step. And the very first step is you in peace. That's where it begins. *You* in peace.

Everybody looks for the answers on the outside. Everybody has formulas. When you talk to young people, they sometimes say, "No, no. I don't want to get involved with peace. Maybe when I retire."

Everybody has a plan. And in our methodical plan, we die when we are really, really old. When a young person dies, people say, "How can this be? He was so young." Words uttered in ignorance.

THE MIRACLE

Do you know the greatest miracle that will ever happen in your life? The coming and going of the breath is the *greatest* miracle. It happens right under your nose, and you don't know it. The day it begins to stop is when you will recognize its value. Then you will know how important it is.

From nowhere breath comes and brings the gift of life to you. Then disappears, then comes again, and brings the gift of life again, and again, and again. This is your symphony. This is your story. One breath at a time. Not two, not three, not five — one at a time. That's your beat. That's your rhythm.

Do you understand what a miracle that is? The miracle is your existence, your life. The miracle is the joy that resides within you. The miracle is the peace that dances within you. You can understand and feel that. This is what the Self-Knowledge I offer is about: the possibility of having peace truly dance on your face. The possibility of feeling this life like it is meant to be felt. Like it is meant to be lived.

Some people ask, "Isn't that selfish?" When a flower blooms, is that selfish? When the sun shines, is that selfish? When the moon shines, is that selfish? When a cool breeze blows on a summer's day, is that selfish? When a wave comes onto a shore, is that selfish? Your existence — is that selfish? Or is it a gift?

If you think it's not a gift, it's selfish. But if you understand it's a gift, it's not. It becomes your privilege and pleasure to accept every moment that you are given.

SEARCH FOR IT

The possibility is there. I do not just offer words. I offer the possibility of peace in your life. You need peace. Search for peace. Wherever you find it, good. But remember, peace is not something you just experience one day. Peace, you need every day in your life.

Whatever happens in your life, whether you search for peace or you don't search for peace — remember one thing: Even if you're not looking for it, peace is within you. Even if you don't want it, even if you hate it, peace will always be within you. Wherever you go, you carry peace in your heart.

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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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from nowhere
breath comes and brings
the gift of life to you

then disappears
then comes again
and brings the gift of life
again and again and again

one breath at a time
not two, not three,
not five, one at a time
that's your beat
that's your rhythm

this is your story
this is your symphony