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The Prophet THE PROPHET is Gibran's best known work. An autobiographical book of 26 poetic essays, it has been translated into over 20 languages. The book is about a Prophet, who has lived in a foreign land for 12 years, and was about to sail back home. Along the way, he was stopped by his followers who have learned from him about the mysteries of life. The result of which was a series of sermons designed to free the listeners from the bondages of life. The Prophet is the man's philosophy on love, marriage, joy and sorrow, time, friendship and others. Contents The Coming of the Ship Love Marriage Children Giving Eating and Drinking Work Joy and Sorrow Houses Clothes Buying and Selling Crime and Punishment Laws Freedom Reason and Passion Pain Self-Knowledge Teaching Friendship Talking Time Good and Evil Prayer Pleasure Beauty Religion Death The Farewell Book Excerpts: But if in your fear you would seek only love's peace and love's pleasure. Then it is better for you that you cover your nakedness and pass out of love's threshing-floor, Into the seasonless world where you shall laugh, but not all of your laughter, and weep, but not all of your tears. Love gives naught but itself and takes naught but from itself. 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." And think not you can direct the course of love, if it finds you worthy, directs your course. Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself. But if you love and must needs have desires, let these be your desires: To melt and be like a running brook that sings its melody to the night. To know the pain of too much tenderness. To be wounded by your own understanding of love; And to bleed willingly and joyfully. To wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of loving; To rest at the noon hour and meditate love's ecstasy; To return home at

eventide with gratitude; And then to sleep with a prayer for the beloved in your heart and a song of praise upon your lips. On Marriage Then Almitra spoke again and said, "And what of Marriage, master?" And he answered saying: You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore. You shall be together when white wings of death scatter your days. Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God. 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. On Children And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, "Speak to us of Children." And he said: Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

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