

An analysis on the poem by Rabindranath Tagore: ***Where the Mind is without Fear***

*Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow
domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary
desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought
and action—
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.*

~ Gitanjali, Poem, 35

In 'Where the Mind is Without Fear', his prayer-invocation to God, Rabindranath Tagore envisions a future nation emanating from an inner being of personal morality and ethical probity. Tagore believed in the existence of the sacred godhead within us all, and was convinced that it is this fount of wisdom that makes possible the creation of a sphere within which the humane in us can thrive and prosper, and therefore considered it to be also the origin of all human nations.

Though originally titled *Prarthona*, when published in Tagore's 1901 poetry collection *Naibedya* (Offerings), 'Where the Mind is Without Fear' was included as 'Chitto Jetha Bhaiyashunyo' in the selection of his Bangla poems *Gitanjali* (Song Offerings), which was published in 1910. Two years later in 1912, Tagore's own translation of *Gitanjali* into English was brought out by the Indian Society, London, retaining its Bangla title. The version of 'Chitto Jetha Bhaiyashunyo' in English – 'Where the Mind is Without Fear' – is, therefore, Tagore's own rendering, though essentially expository and prosaic — in stark contrast to its version in Bangla that is composed in regular, rhyming verses with melodious and sombre cadences.

So, when the poem was written, India was under the British Rule and people were eagerly waiting to get their freedom from the British Rule. The poem is written in the form of a prayer to the God, the Almighty for a true freedom for his country. And thus Tagore reveals his own concept of freedom throughout the poem, *Where the Mind is Without Fear*.

Study Material on **Language Core Course (LCC-1)**

First Semester B.A (General) & B.Com (General)

LCC-Study Material -Dept. of English, SCM

In his poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear* the poet Rabindranath Tagore prays to the Almighty to lift his country to a state where freedom would be felt and enjoyed in the best way possible — a heaven of freedom. This poem was written when India was under the British rule. So, he wanted his country to get freedom from the hands of the external rulers. But the poet felt that mere political freedom was not so important if his countrymen were not good and virtuous enough to enjoy that freedom fully.

That is why he prayed to the God to make his country a place “where the mind is without fear and the head is held high“. Moreover, people should be knowledgeable, rational, truthful, hard-working and broad-minded to make his nation achieve true freedom — a kind of spiritual freedom.

The poem is written in free verse. Indeed, no rhyme scheme or no particular metre is followed in writing in the poem. This poem is not a sonnet, but one should keep this in mind that the original Bengali version of the poem was in the form of a sonnet.

Poet wants that the people should not be narrow minded, have progressive thinking so that they can make our country a heaven on the Earth. They should achieve perfection and for this they should do a lot of hard work. They should wake from slumber and help India become a heaven of freedom.