

### *Virtue by George Herbert*

**George Herbert** is one of the most important members of **Metaphysical School of Poetry**. He is known as a religious poet who gives much importance on the beauty of soul rather than the beauty of body. This poem as the title implies, is ultimately concerned with virtue and the idea of a virtuous soul which will survive forever and will not give as earthly beautiful things do. In order to better establish this contrast, however he begins with three stanzas in which he describes the way that transitory sweets on earth all succumb, ultimately to decay as a part of the natural order of thing.

**In the first stanza.** The poet describes the day, personifying both it as the bridal of the earth and sky and the dew as its mourner, who will weep for it when evening comes and it is no more.

**In the second stanza,** he [points to the transience of the rose, which is rooted for its entire life in the same place that will eventually become its grave. A rose may be beautiful enough to evoke tears in the one who looks upon it. It will still eventually succumb to death.

**In the third stanzas**, the poet discusses the beauties of spring more collective as sweets, including such things as beautiful days and blooming roses. All of these things, though they may be lovely, have closes and will come to an end.

**The final stanza**, then turns to the idea of virtue as the only thing which does not follow this same pattern. A virtuous soul, although it is beautiful, less akin to the delicate and fragile beauties previously described than it is to seasoned timber. This message suggests a sturdiness and rigor to the virtuous soul, which is lacking in something like a rose or a spring day. Unlike, these things, the soul does not yield but lives even after the rest of the world has become coal.

**By, Arshad Khan**

**Dept. of English**

**J N College Madhubani**