



Rumi: The Rays of Divine Love

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ABSTRACT

Jalal ad-Din Rumi is a Persian Sufi poet and was born in Balkh, on that time was part of Persian Empire. His important work was his massive Mathnavi. He was a love poet. For him love is for God only not anything else. For him the center of this universe is God. The general theme of Rumi's thought is the concept of Tawhid. The ultimate truth is nothing exists but God. In his life, first he experienced divine love with his enigmatic friend, Shams Tabrizi. After Shams' leaving, he understood that the most important way toward God is love. He declares that love is the reason for the creation of universe. In this article, researcher tries to explain Rumi's view about love. In this work, we pay attention to first Rumi's life and second Rumi and divine love.

KEYWORDS : Rumi, God, Divine love

Introduction

Jalal ad-Din Rumi is master of Sufism and also he used love as the most important factor in world. But the word "love" which he has used is not human's love, it is only love for God, so it is only divine. Generally for religion, love is only divine, and it is different from human's love. In this love the relation between God and human is the most important thing. For a mystic like Rumi, God is the source of love. He regards himself as a lover, and he wants union with Whom he loves. During his life Rumi was following his father's advice, and he was a Sufi. But the most important person who transformed Rumi from a learned religious teacher into the world greatest poet of mystical love was Shams Tabrizi. He has the richest and the most perfect view about love. For Rumi love is an index for the whole universe. In his idea, the real love is love for God. Even his most important work, *Mathnavi*, was about love for God. We can understand the meaning of love from Rumi's life and his path to Sufism.

Life

Rumi was born on September 30, 1207 in a Persian speaking family, originally from the Balkh city of Khorasan, in modern day Afghanistan. His father Baha al-Din was a theologian, jurist, and a Sufi. In 1219, because of the impending invasion of the Mongols, he fled with his family from Balkh to Konia. On the way in Nishapur, the Iranian city, located in the province of Khorasan, they met a great Sufi master Attar. Attar gave Rumi his *Asrarnama* and informed his father that "the child would someday become famous throughout the world" (Davis 34). He learned outward sciences from his father, and at the same time his father developed the seed of spirituality in his soul. When his father died, Rumi became a master in Sufism and was guided by one of his father's disciple named Burhan al-Din Muhaqqiq. He guided Rumi toward the valley of doctrine. In 1244, the most important incident happened in Rumi's life, and that was his meeting with enigmatic figure named Shams Tabrizi. It was the climax of Rumi's life. Shams made him really upside down. Chittick says, "Rumi was transformed from a sober jurisprudent to an intoxicated celebrant of the mysteries of divine love. One could say that without Shams, there would have been no Rumi" (Chittick 1983 3)

After meeting Shams, he left teaching and spent all his time with Shams. This close relationship between Rumi and Shams created jealousy between Rumi's disciples, and due to lack of their hostility, Shams left Konia. Rumi was heartbroken and send his son, Sultan Valad, begging him to return. Shams returned Konia but again the same story happened, and Shams left one day without leaving a trace behind. Shams disappeared, and pain of separation burnt Rumi. He was so much disappointed but finally found Shams in himself. It was a great transformation for Rumi as his son, Sultan Valad, described this change as follow:

Never for a moment did he cease from listening to music and dancing:

Never did he rest by day or night. He had been a mufti. - He became a poet.

He had been an ascetic: he became intoxicated by Love. 'Twas not the wine of the grape:

the illumined soul drinks only the wine of Light. (2005 3)

Rumi's poetic nature was started by Shams. Shams gave him the most important gift, and it was the love of God. In fact it was the love of God which created poetry in Rumi. His major work is *Mathnavi Manavi*. It is consisting of twenty seven thousands verses. It has only a single purpose: communion with the Absolute. Because Rumi used tales and references from Quran and saying of Prophet Mohammad, the *Mathnavi* has been called "the *Quran* in the Persian language" (2005 2). Rumi's major contribution is in Islamic philosophy and *Tasawwuf*. This shows itself through his famous *Mathnavi*. Fundamentally, the *Mathnavi* shows the various hidden aspects of Sufism and their relationship with the worldly life. For this, Rumi used a variety of subjects and numerous examples from everyday life. His main subject is the relationship between man and God on the one hand, and between man and man, on the other.

Rumi's other major work in poetry is *Divan Kabir* or *Divan Shams*, dedicated to his enigmatic friend, Shams. It is a complete collection of lyricism and mysticism. Rumi, the brilliant figure in Islam and world literature, became weak in days of 1273, and died on 17 December 1273.

Rumi and Divine love

In all of Rumi's works we can find the meaning of love. He was the master of Sufism, and Sufism has been called "the religion of love" (Davis 32). Sufism is heart of Islam, and its main idea is the relationship between Divine and human. In Rumi's idea nothing exists in this world except God, and real love is love of God. In his major work *Mathnavi Manavi* love means:

- The cause of creating world and all creatures have been created just because of love.
- Love joined all parts of world to each other, and turning sky and earth is just because of love.
- Love teaches us that all beauties and goodness in the world are just because of God, so love is for God only not anything else.
- Love is brave. It removes anxiety from body and soul. Love of God is alive, so lovers don't have any anxiety for annihilation. A lover is like a drop of water which joined to the sea and becomes eternal. Love for him is just divine, and that is the supreme teaching of Sufism. As Davis described it, "The love of the All-Good, All-Beautiful remains, and when such is found in earthly love it is God find Himself in you and you in Him" (33).

In Rumi's view, love is strong explosion which burns all creatures except God. This burning is necessary for human's evolutions which have been created from clay and mud. Rumi is a poet of love. Love in Rumi's poems is "his realization of the Divine love" (Aydin 8). Love is an inseparable part of Rumi's poetry, but this love is just for God, not for human. This is an intimate link between God and human soul. Love is only divine, and no human can understand its reality except to be a real lover, but you can never describe it. This love is like a fire which enlightened through lover's body and soul and they can escape from the prison of body and soul. They can fly from this world to eternal sky.

In Rumi's view love is just for God not for human, that is why this love has the highest power and nobody can describe that. It has such a power that can make any impossible work possible. Love is always rebellious, so every person who wants to be a real lover should tolerate so many difficulties and doesn't have any fear for obstacles. In Rumi's view, love is the motive force of all creation:

By love bitter things become sweet
 By love pieces of copper become gold
 By love dregs become clear
 By love pains become healing
 By love the dead is made living. (Iqbal 62)

For Rumi love is everything. In Rumi's view love "is the remedy of our pride and self-conceits the physician of all our infirmities" (Nicholson 76). Rumi teaches us that man's love is really the effect of God's love. Divine love is beyond description. God created world through love, so love never stopped, and it is a motive force for creation. In Rumi's view, love has such a powerful power which burns all creatures except God, and this burning is necessary for human beings. In his idea, love is the cause of turning particles around sun. Love means direct understanding of Reality. When love enlightens itself, nothing will remain except God. Generally all Rumi's works give us the colorful pictures of God, human, and world, but the peak of that is love of God. All pictures which Rumi has painted, has just one message and it is there is no god but God, and it is the meaning of *Tawhid*. Rumi's message is always about the love of God and the surrender to God.

What is this love? Rumi told love is:

The sea of Not-being
 There the foot of intellect is shattered
 Servitude and sovereignty are known:
 Loverhood is concealed by these two veils.
 Would that Being had tongue, that it might
 Remove the veils from existent beings. (61)

All love is love for God. Love is good, because it is divine. As Rumi told:

Love is an attribute of God, who has no needs
 Love is for anything is a metaphor
 The beauty of the others is gold-plated
 Outwardly it is light, inwardly smoke
 When the light goes and the smoke appears
 Metaphorical love turns to ice. (Chittick 2005 82)

In the state of union, God is both lover and beloved. That love is complete. As Rumi stated:

The joy and heartache of lovers is He,
 The wages and salary for service is He.
 If they were to gaze on other than the Beloved,
 How could that be love? That would be idle fancy,
 Love is that flame which, when it blazes up,
 Burns away all except the everlasting Beloved.
 It slays "other than God" with the sword of no god.
 Look carefully: after no god what remains?
 There remains but God, the rest has gone.
 Hail, O love, great burner of all others,
 It is He alone who is first and last,
 All else grows up from the eye that sees double. (2005 84)

Rumi believes that love is without definition. It is the most important factor for life in the universe. Nobody can say what love is.

Conclusion

Rumi is a Sufi poet. He is also a love poet. From a brief sketch of Rumi's life we can understand two important things. First, love is only for God not anything else, and second the ultimate truth for human is the concept of *Tawhid*, and it means: there is no god but God. So based on *Tawhid* love is only for God. We subsist in God and for God. In his idea everything in creation derives from God. He is the Absolute Reality. So love is only for God.

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