

The Anchorage of Rumi's Mathnavi in The Qur'an: A Study of some Allegories from Rūmī s Mathnavi



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Abstract: *Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi (1207-1273), known as Rumi in the West, was one of the most renowned Sufis and literary figures of the Muslim World whose Islamic Sufi teachings, imbued with his personal mystical experiences, are laid out in his poetry. This study tries to establish links between teachings, didactic lessons, insights of Rumi in his Mathnavi Ma'anavi and their Qur'anic roots as unfolded in the allegorical tales of The Mathnavi. By shedding light on Rumi's life, his works, especially his Mathnavi, and a trajectory of allegory in world literature and Muslim Sufi literature, the researcher has attempted to highlight the fact that how Rumi has woven Islamic and Qur'anic wisdom, infused with his personal and traditional Sufi insights. Mathnavi of Rumi is deeply interconnected with The Qur'an and Islamic teachings. The warp and woof of the Mathnavi is woven from various Islamic and mystic texts and it is steeped in the spirit of The Qur'an, hadith and other Islamic teachings. Rumi's poetry and teachings, as laid out in his Mathnavi, are deeply entrenched in the Muslim civilization Rumi lived in. These teachings cannot be delinked from these civilizational moorings. His poetry throb with powerful emotions and grandeur, which characterize the impressive style of the Qur'an. It is indubitably the extraordinary attachment Rumi had with the book of God, which has lent palpable fervor to his works. This was literature-based research and it mainly revolved around the original Persian Text Of Mathnavi, its Persian, Arabic, Urdu and English translations and commentaries and related books by Rumi and about Rumi. Parallel with it was consulted Quran and its various English and Urdu translations and commentaries to collate, compare Mathnavi's references with.*

Keywords: Qur'an, Rumi, Mathnavi, Sufi, Islamic Civilization, Allegory, Qur'anic Exegesis

Introduction

Jalaal al-Deen Muhammad (1207-1273), recognized as Rūmī all around the world, had been a very illustrious Sufi and a man of letters of the Islamic World whose Sufi wisdom and insights, steeped in his experiential visions, are rooted in his poetical works. Rūmī chiefly transferred his wisdom by his major works Mathnavi, Diwan-e-Shems-e-Tabrez and Fihi Ma'a Fihe. The first two are versified outpourings and the other is compilations of his

sayings in prose. Mathnavi is widely regarded as his most important work and focuses mainly on his Sufi visions in the shape of narratives, fables, and allegorical tales, interwoven with his interpretations, moral assessments and insights.

Deeply connected with The Qur'an and Muslim moral traditions, the main structure of the Mathnavi is interlaced with multiple narratives of Muslim religious and Sufi traditions and is soaked in the ethos of The Qur'an, Prophetic narratives and religious teachings of Muslim

origins. Rūmī had been very popular for about eight hundred years in the Islamic World but recently Rūmī's poetry has witnessed unusual popularity in the West too. This rising fame of Rūmī is indicated by a cover story carried by Christian Science Monitor in 1997, proclaiming Rūmī as the top poet in U.S (Lewis, 2007).¹

Currently, though, a surge of multiple renditions of Rūmī's works and publications about Rūmī indicate that his poetry and message is offered in an atmosphere, locale and ambiance other than The Qur'an and allied Muslim and mystic setting. In this research, it is attempted to trace and elucidate Rūmī's message, derived from his central book Mathnavi, in tandem with the key Islamic source, i.e., Qur'an, illustrating intimate bond between Rūmī's Mathnavi and The Qur'an. Rūmī proclaims in one Ruba'i of him:

A bondsman of the Qur'an I will be until I am alive. I consider myself as dust of the way The Prophet treaded upon. I absolve myself of the people who attribute to me anything besides it. I condemn all such ascriptions. (Rūmī, Rubai No. 1330, 2022).

Describing this close bond between The Qur'an and Rūmī's Mathnavi Franklin D. Lewis writes that right from the times of Rūmī scholars have been establishing the deep influence of the Qur'an upon Rūmī's Mathnavi, where Rūmī has studied his Mathnavi with original Qur'anic verses, Persian renditions of them, Qur'anic imagery and metaphors, transforming Mathnavi a kind of broad Qur'anic exegetical work. So much steeped in the Qur'an is the Mathnavi, that it is attributed to famous Persian poet Jami as styling Mathnavi as a Persian Qur'an. (Lewis, 2007). 'Though only five hundred and twenty-eight Qur'anic verses have been directly quoted in the Mathnavi, according the research of Hadi Haeri about 6 thousand verses, almost 25% of the Mathnavi, comprising rephrases, exact renditions, or the direct Arabic verses (Nasr, 2005). It amply shows that from its start to modern times, scholars have acknowledged the centrality of the Qur'an in Rūmī's works, especially his chief corpus Mathnavi. Lambard

rightly remarks that Rūmī's immersion in the Qur'an has rendered his poetry drenched with Qur'anic ambience. (Lambard, 2007, P. 0

In Book 01 of the Mathnavi Rūmī proclaims his deep attachment to The Qur'an in the following insights:

Escape to the divine Book, seek Asylum in it;

Intermingle there with the souls of Apostles.

*The Qur'an embraces the feats of the apostles,
the fish of the unadulterated Ocean of Splendor.*

If you approach the Qur'an but do not embrace it, it is of no use to join assembly of virtuous people and messengers. (Lewis, 2007)

Although the Mathnavi is not a full-scale commentary on the Qur'an in its formal and traditional sense, it has the potential to be characterized as a citational exegetical work of the Qur'an as we observe in multiple other Sufi writings and versified stories. (Ahmad, 2016). While elucidating Sufi dynamics of The Qur'anic exegesis, Shahab Ahmad sees Rūmī Mathnavi as a kind of Quranic exegesis where Rūmī shuffles around and interchanges common anecdotes and tales with Quranic verses, giving birth to new locales and themes, resulting in new meaning-making. Though it is not the traditional Quranic exegetical work, it is deeply interconnected with Quranic narratives, steeped in deep Quranic undercurrents. (Ahmad, 2016, P. 309)

Bemoaning the expurgation of Islam from the poetry of Rūmī, Rozina Ali in the New Yorker cites some Muslim authorities on Rūmī and Persian literature in the background of their clarifications about dissociating Rūmī off his Islamic genesis. Omid Safi links the tendency to Victorian period, embedding it in colonialism. He plants the disconnection of Sufi poetical tradition from its Muslim origins in the Victorian Age. Unable to square their stereotypical approaches with the emerging phenomenon, with the divergence between Muslim and Christian moralities and laws and

the exotic dynamics of the poetries of Rūmī and Hafiz, interpreters and clerics of the period tried to connect Islam and Muslim Sufi poetry by delinking the spiritualism of the Muslim poetical works from their moorings in their religion. And thus, this approach resulted in isolating Rūmī and Islam. (Ali, 2017)

Playing down the Islamic context, the renditions of numerous popular interpreters of Rūmī like Coleman Barks, Deepak Chopra and Daniel Landisky are dissociated from their Muslim origins and settings which render many renditions incongruent with the corpus of Rūmī. Omid Safi identifies a kind of mystical colonization operative in the modern forms of mystical poetry, circumventing, decimating, and assaulting a mystical locale which had been the loci of Muslim narratives, lore and ambience from Bosnia and Istanbul to Konya and Iran to Central and South Asia. The estrangement between the phenomena of Sufism and the religion involves serious repercussions. According to Safi approaching Rūmī without the Qur'an is like reading Milton without the Bible: even if Rūmī espoused cosmopolitanism, he was cosmopolitan in an Islamic framework—and it is a fact Islamic civilization Rūmī's times did have cosmopolitan spirit. Rūmī's works are not only steeped in Islamic ambience, they represent the sparkling Muslim civilizational buoyancy in which Muslim intellectual groups thrived. (Ali, 2017)

This article tries to establish the view that Rūmī has upheld the splendid mystic literary heritage of Muslims wherein multiple mystical verities, embedded in primary Muslim corpus of Qur'an, ahadith, mystical practices, are clothed in allegories and metaphorical tales which render these truths comprehensible, realistic and pleasant for all kinds of readers and audience in all times as facts couched in metaphorical and allegorical form tend to develop timeless splendor and have the capacity for application and interpretation which might transcend temporal and spatial restrictions. Allegorical and metaphorical literature and art, crafted with expertise and creativity, transcend the bounds of time and place. Eminent savants, men of letters and divine books always employed metaphorical

and allegorical language to drive home their calls of eternal value. And these literature and art, abounding in allegorical allusions, enrich communities and individuals in multiple ways without getting rusted or irrelevant with the passage of time. People relate these allegories to their situations and lives without getting stuck in in their apparent literal detonations. And in this way, the adaptable, relatable and fluid modes of metaphorical expressions and allegorical tales help audience of diverse settings, natures and abilities in synchronizing with this literature in methods of their own and enhance every one of them her/his life through these allegorical creations. This phenomenon is witnessed in the admiration for Rūmī's poetry and works. People see their own lives and circumstances synchronized with the allegorical anecdotes and situations in Rūmī's poetry. But the metaphorical fluidity and subjectivity of Rūmī's poetry, if handled carelessly, can prompt irresponsible interpretations, stripping Rūmī's poetry of its cultural and religious origins and foundations, the bedrock and fountains Rūmī had been drawing his mystical and inspirational nourishment. The study is trying to point to one of these foundations, The Qur'an, which had been the main forte and motivation for Rūmī and which we see unfolding in the pages of his Mathnavi.

Here are sampled the allegorical stories through which Rūmī transfers his convictions and worldview.

Selected Allegories from Rūmī's Mathnavi and their anchorage in the Qur'an:

Unless sensual cravings do not go away, faith does not flourish, because sensuality blocks the entrance.

You carry the interpretation of the unexplored meanings (of the Qur'an): you need to be the interpreter of yourself, not the Quran.

Your desires and prejudices make you interpreting the Qur'an in their light; rendering its magnificent denotations as tarnished. (M- I: 1079-1081)

Rūmī's works, particularly his Mathnavi is profoundly steeped in Qur'anic essence.

Apparently the Mathnavi might seem to be populated by multiple mundane stories, parables, legends and symbolisms, the bedrock of The Mathnavi throbs with Quranic and Muslim traditional wisdom. A deep Qur'anic allusive ambience intersects the stories and anecdotes of the Mathnavi. The whole texture of the Mathnavi is interwoven with Qur'anic ethos.

Although Mathnavi is full with copious Qur'anic and hadith allusions, coupled with juristic and theological quotations, this all has been oriented towards Sufi orientation of Islam. (Elr, 2014)

Under various captions, tales in shape of allegories from Rūmī's Mathnavi are enlisted here to exemplify different aspects of Rūmī's approach.

The merits of self-effacement and generosity of spirit and denunciation of conceit, complacency in selected allegorical tales of the Mathnavi and anchorage of them in Qur'anic context:

It should be borne in mind that Rūmī condemns sanctimonious self-righteousness, self-assuredness, pious pomposity very much. Through anecdotes and fables in form of allegories, censures the priests and spiritual guides who belittle the people with less knowledge and religiosity or do not subscribe to a particular group.

The story of meeting between Hazrat Musa and a Herdsman in the 2nd Book of Mathnavi (vv. 1720-800) is usually offered as an example of his instructive technique and the essence of his teachings. The story goes that the Messenger Hazrat Moses stumbles upon a herdsman who was glorifying Allah in a way where divine and human attributes were mixed up. The messenger of God rebukes the shepherd for his alleged profanity. Allah admonishes Musa by declaring that messengers are sent by God not for causing split between God and his creatures, but they are deputed to forge bonds between The Creator and His creatures. God told Moses He holds dearer the inner purity and sincerity more than the outer religious trappings. Chastened, Musa looks for the shepherd to request forgiveness and finds him a transformed individual, achieving great

mystical station. The story culminates in some moral lessons about the tendency of announcing judgmental edicts about the level of other believers' religious position. A lyrical sublimity pervades this whole saga, culminating in the much-cited couplet: Millat-i-Eshq ez hem'e deenha juda-est; / aashiqaan-re mellat-u medheb Khuda'est (Beyond every religion is positioned love's dominion; / Allah is its only doctrine and faith" Mathnavi II, v. 1774) (Elr 2014)

The enlightening leitmotifs in the description of Musa and the Herdsman are intermittent in Rūmī's Mathnavi. One is the well-known case of the anecdote of four citizens of India who had their prayers invalidated their prayers by disapproving mutually methods of prayer of the others. (Rūmī, Mathnavi II, vv. 3027-45), and the story of a deaf who met a ailing neighbor and was smug enough when he taunted due to ignorance of the response of his neighbor. (Mathnavi I: vv. 3360-409). He sneers at a detractor of him who lured one of his pupils away, trapping him with the external trappings of the faith. Rūmī' also criticizes clerics of his times who only possess pretensions of the faith, but are unmindful of the kernel and essence of the pristine Islam. Rūmī's corpus mirror his thorough Islamic and prevalent commonplace knowledge. Nevertheless, he frequently takes to task scholars of all kinds. A much-quoted story in this context is of the expert of Arabic grammar and the mariner (Mathnavi I: vv. 2835-65). In this anecdotal allegory the conceited academic's smugness has been satirized. Despite his understanding of the language of the mariner's lack of learning, the ferry is feared to sink because the teacher cannot swim. Framing the above story as a example, Rūmī underlines the benefit of selflessness and superficial outward knowledge, with a comparison of lifeless human body buffeted by the waves of an ocean. (Elr 2014)

The allegorical tale of the housefly and the pool of urine and its exaggerated opinion of little knowledge he fancied.

Rūmī in his Mathnavi, Book One recounts an allegory where a housefly sits upon a piece of hay in a little pool of urine and fancies this pool of urine river and itself as a sailor of big vessel

cruising in the river. In this allegorical fable Rūmī has mocked the superficial understanding of the haughty intellectuals, inflated with scanty superficial learning. fancy themselves eminent sages and scorn the visions and learning of other academics, and tailor Qur’anic verses in light of their parochial concepts. In the following a rough translation of the relevant verses from the Mathnavi has been given:

On a piece of hay in (a small pool of) urine of an ass, the housefly was rearing its crest, in the manner of a sea.

Terming them a vessel and ocean, the fly declared it had been deliberating that (explanation) since a long time.

See, this is an ocean and that is a vessel, and I steer the vessel as an expert seaman.”

The fly was steering the “boat “on the surface of the “sea”, that he considered that little urine as boundless.

It assessed the puddle of urine as an unbounded sea; there was no vision to judge it with correct perspective?

The realm of the fly extends to the point his vision reaches; The Ocean is wide to the extent of his range of sight.

Identical to it is the aberrant exegete of the book of Allah: Similar to the above housefly, its reach of vision is the urine of ass, its views match pieces of hay.

If this housefly forsakes this whimsical rationality, the Providence shall transform it into a Hom’a

Then it is turned into a fly which possesses a acute acumen; its soul then transcends the superficial worldly structure. (Mathnavi 1: 1082-1090).

Here a Qur’anic valuation of the above-cited lessons of Rūmī is attempted. The Qur’anic appraisal underscores the significance of these teachings of Rūmī and their embedment in the Quranic narrative.

Qur’an’s stress upon humility and denunciation of conceit:

Qur’an has admonished its addressees

repeatedly to assume a modest approach in their lives and avoid conceited attitude when interacting with people. The Qur’an denounces haughty and conceited behaviour in all its manifestations, whether in individual or collective context. In the second Sura of the Qur’an al-Baqarah Jews have been reproached for their complacency and vanity in religious and racial outlook of superiority. Fancying themselves as the selected religious community by God, they asserted that they will have privileged seat preserved in heaven. The Qur’an has criticized this self-righteous stance in numerous places. Veiled through these denunciations of Jews and Christians, Qur’an is sounding a caution to the Muslim community to be mindful of the hazards wherein previous communities faltered. The Qur’an underscores the reality that these groundless fancies (*alamaniya*) tempted these societies into depraved deeds, self-righteousness, and denial of divine realities. Likewise, the Qur’an also points out that commonly these deniers of divine realities had not embraced this haughty defiance out of lack of knowledge; on the contrary this haughty posture of the deniers was result of malice (*hasadan* حَسَدًا) and stubbornness (*baghyān* بَغْيًا). Here some Qur’anic excerpts have been contextually cited to demonstrate the above remarks.

1. In verse 111 of Surah Baqarah (02) Allah tells us: “They assert: “No body will go into the heaven except he/she is a Jew or (according to the Christians), a Christian.” These are unjustified wishful fancies. Ask: “Fetch your proof if you are true.” In this verse Allah points to the unfounded assertion of the parochial Jews and Christians who fancied that heaven had been reserved entirely for them. Allah asks them that they must abandon this mistaken view as it is only a misunderstanding. Heaven has not been a private sanctuary for a specific coterie or communal group. Immediately after this verse Allah sets out standard for claiming the bliss of heaven that: “Any person who submits wholly to the commands of Allah and carries out righteous deeds with devotion is entitled to reward from his Nourisher. They need not grieve or fear.” The above-cited quotes of the Quran set out the

basic categorical standard for deliverance in the Hereafter and impresses upon the parochial Jews and Christians (and the Muslim communities by inference) that success is bound with honest obedience of God, and not in racial loyalty to a particular sect, communal group. A devout allegiance to a particular religion is vital only when it is tied with sincere submitting to Allah, coupled with a moral living. The Qur'anic quotes above wholly undo the narrow egotistical self-righteousness of all spiritual societies who assert shallow allegiance to a specific communal or religious group as their permit to heavenly bliss. These verses disprove categorically the religious exceptionalism, chauvinism and self-righteousness many sects and denominations are afflicted with, provoking them into hate, fanaticism and belligerence.

2. In Sura al-Imr'an Allah declares: "They have espoused this posture because of their claim that the Hellish Fire cannot touch us excluding only some counted days. They are deluded by their fictional fancies concerning their religion." In it, Allah points out the fictitious conviction of Jews about their absolution in the hereafter that they shall be exempt from the last damnation because of their being chosen community. God has identified this religious complacency as the bane of their self-righteous posturing, rendering them incapable to see reality and whatever it entails.

3. Alongside pious self-righteousness and sense of superiority, Allah has laid emphasis upon the function of humbleness and warns of haughty interaction with people of one's community. In Sura Luqmaan (31) God admonishes: "Do turn your cheek resentfully towards your fellow human beings, and do not swagger conceitedly on the earth; no doubt God does not like boasting vain people."

Rūmī's approach to love in the Mathnavi; The Influence of Love and its diverse expressions. Its framing through Qur'anic angle.

هر موی من از عشقت بیت و غزلی گشته
هر عضو من از ذوق خم عسلی گشته

My every single hair has become a poetical verse and an ode due to your love,

Every fiber of my being has become a tub of honey by yearning for you.

(Div'an: 2329)

Rūmī's Mathnavi is indescribably majestic masterpiece. Arguably the Mathnavi is an incredible triumph of spiritual ingenuity, an inspired poetical attainment and artistic miracle. Essentially, the Mathnavi is an outstandingly scholarly contemplation upon celestial and divine love, transcending any other considerations. Love had been a perpetually central topic in Muslim mystical tradition and teachings; In Rūmī's poetry love is inlaid with allegorical framing. (Heath, 2010)

It can be safely asserted that that Ishq (upper stage of love) is the key topic of Rūmī's poetical corpus. Though it is his Div'an which typically revolves around love, his Mathnavi and Fihi Ma Fihi also sufficiently discourses diverse facets of Ishq. Rūmī asserts that Eshq totally manages and orders a Sufi's spiritual state. However, as Eshq concerns the solid and real sides of Sufism, and not the theoretical aspect, it can be grasped merely when mystical seekers are involved themselves. In the framework of mundane love, the ineffability of the transcendent realities of the love are hard to be grasped and shared because they rise above imaginative and sensory realms. Rūmī regularly discusses the inexpressibly transcendent aspects of love, rounding it out with other features of the love. The ineffable essence of love can never be articulated enough by talking of it. The ineffability of love is impossible to be encompassed by the restricted frames of worldly learning. (Chittick, 2005)

The phenomenon of enduring love cannot be compared with the evanescent passion for a certain human being, Rūmī tells repeatedly. A sincere and mature love, according to Rumi, is attained when the lover passes through the process of baking, cleansing and maturation in the prescribed mystical purification routine. Exalting love to lofty stature and celestial planes, Rūmī asserts that it is actually the cosmos of love where we dwell. He proclaims that the very life teems with love. Through a Ruba'i (No.57), he declares that love is the real

course and praxis of the Messenger and love is actually the real mother but our dissembling approaches have veiled its maternal essence to us. Rūmī asserts that love throbs with celestial forces and perpetually it forges ahead to manifest and express its potency. Working as a potent remedy for all misfortunes, love carries strong restorative and healing potential. In the 2nd book of Mathnavi Book 11(1529-32) Rūmī spells out the phenomenal influences of love:

Eshq changes the bitter into sweetness.

Eshq changes copper into gold.

Eshq converts dregs into pure stuff.

Eshq resuscitates the lifeless.

Eshq transforms emperors into bondsmen.
(Helminski, 2023)

Sincere and genuine Eshq is beset by numerous maladies, defiling its appearance and blocking its cleansing potential. The ills and impediments, besides others, are conceit, sensuality, fault-finding, to be judgmental, anxiety and suspicion. However, when illuminated with genuine Eshq, these all maladies and impediments evaporate. A soul animated with spirituality resembles a incinerator which incinerates vanity and foul stuff. To cleanse one spiritually, all veneers of conceit have to be scraped away. The demons of egotism have to perish but this loss is harbinger of amazement and joy. In the 3rd book of Mathnavi (3834-35), Rūmī affirms that genuine Eshq is harbinger of multiple losses of life but these losses blossom into new lives. All losses of lives are compensated countless manifestations of love Qur'an alludes in Surah Hood verse 13. (Helminski, 2023)

Through allegories and metaphors Rūmī, in multiple styles, expresses the ineffable states of love. Comparing love and reason, Rūmī argues that reason does not possess the capability to express the crux of genuine Ishq because in some situations reason acts like an ass which is trapped in a mire, not finding its way out of it and it cannot express ineffable states of immaculate love. In fact, Rūmī's Mathnavi is a remarkable document about the mysteries of celestial love. Rūmī calls the heart as an

"astrolabe of Love", and likewise interprets multiple features of love in manifold imageries, metaphorical and allegorical constructions, couched in brief poetical discourses. Like the experiments of alchemy, Rūmī proclaims, love has astounding transformative features, bringing about drastic changes in personalities. Like a food with no salt, life turns into a cheerless exercise if it is not supported by love. The glimpsing of genuine love in a vision summons roving lover back:

Keeping up travelling; I marched from the end
of journey to the beginning,

The elephant espied in his dream colossal desert
of your India.

India in the above-cited quoted verse of Rūmī, and in the medieval Persian traditions too, implies the eternal finale for a soul which it recalls out of blue in a dreamlike vision. Then it longs to unshackle its fetters that had confined it in the transitory mundane world and breaks into a gallop back home, frolicking rapturously, to turn back to the primordial woodland wherefrom it had been once detained. The fantasizing elephant is like the deserted love-sick lark, pining for the lawn of flowers and the lyre, which issues forth melodies of parting. Rūmī continually avows the inexpressible ecstasy of Ishq and it is almost impossible to voice its exact essence. Rūmī proclaims in a poem that the full depiction of a realistic countenance of Ishq is impossible and compares this task with measuring a sea by a small pot.

Love materializes as a replica of the Qur'an in some section of his poetry, rehearsed by the disciple in meditative visualizations or it is compared with the timeless guarded register, out of which he replicates his poetical corpus. The same goes the notion of the Ishq wielding the poet in its fingers like a writing tool, driving the writer into crafting poetic compositions that the author does not know what he is creating or writing. (Schimmel, 2003)

Rūmī's rhapsodic poetic eruptions on Ishq are hard to be pinned down in the frameworks of analyses or theories. Not only in lyrical poetry of him, but this feeling of inadequacy to express the sentiments of love, pervades all his works.

He proclaims that Ishq and its most forceful representative music alternate concurrently between paradoxical phenomena like malady and remedy, venom and antidote, mellifluous and sour songs. Masked as music, the grand mysteries of Ishq are transported in this world. Rūmī proclaims:

There are secret points in the cadence of the flute,

If I unveil them, all things will come crashing down.

Toxic and healing simultaneously is flute, rare is a phenomenon like this.

An devout and eager alter ego like flute is hard to find.

(Mathnavi: Book 1)

Rūmī's lived and existential Ishq was not imaginary and theoretical; blossoming forth from the very depths of his soul, this love cannot be scrutinized through common analytical parameters. For the sake of discussion, we can frame the antecedents of Rūmī's expressed love through academic and historic angles. Plato has exercised great influence upon Muslim and Christian mystical movements and tendencies. Plato's dialogues *Phaedrus* and *Symposium* worked out far-reaching influence upon the dimensions of spiritual love which developed in the framework of Muslim philosophy and mysticism. As in Plato's *Phaedrus*, Rūmī stresses in his *Mathnavi* that Ishq is not utilitarian. In contrast to Ishq, the intellect is cautious, practical and pragmatic, continually vigilant in weighing options and pondering possible consequences before embarking upon a potential course of an action. Ishq never cares about hazards he might encounter, embracing the risks boldly. Prodded by God-inspired passion, the heart-driven adventurers detest the discreet and logical attitude of the Theoreticians. Rūmī declares:

The intellect never ventures upon the track of possible failure,

It is Ishq that sprints recklessly towards it,

Ishq it is which is fearless, not reason,

Reason always looks of profitable ventures.

(Mathnavi 6: 1966-1967) (Hakim, 1999)

The Prophet (PBUH) achieved excellence by way of Ishq, not utilizing reason and deliberate pursuit.

For knowledge. Adam gained signal exemplary stature through love and The Devil was spurned despite abundant knowledge.

Cleverness is like swimming in the seas, a diver in them is seldom rescued; at the end, he drowns.

Love acts like a boat for the chosen ones; disaster occurs rare, mostly it is rescue.

داند او کو نیکبخت و محرمست ** زیرکی ز ابلیس و عشق
از آدمست.

زیرکی سباحی آمد در بحار ** کم رهد غرقست او پایان کار
عشق چون کشتی بود بهر خواص ** کم بود آفت بود اغلب
خلاص

(M IV: 1402-06)

It is love, which drives the world. The rotating skies are put into motion by love. The very life owes its survival to love, asserts Rūmī. According to Rūmī, love is a illimitable sea, upon which skies are only a fragment of froth. Without love, the world would have been dead matter. Only love saturates the world with vibrancy and radiance of life. Love transforms a mineral into plant. Verily love is that glow and vigour, which enlivens, accelerates and invigorates all things it interacts with. It grants a radiance of fervour, infusing such a conviction, which changes the very structure of life. No doubt life owes its basis to love. Had there been no love, there would have been no life, How should there have been your being? How the breads have been clinging to you? How it has become a part of you?

Why the bread assimilated into you? Love and appetite made it so; otherwise, how the bread should make any way to the soul.

Love transforms the dead bread into a soul: it immortalizes mortal spirit into an eternal one.

(M: 5: 2012-2014) (Iqbal, 2000)

The Love unravels all the puzzles of the world. It is malady as well as remedy. A lover's sickness is unique. Love works as an astrolabe

for the secrets of God.

علت عاشق ز علتها جداست ** عشق اصطربلاب اسرار
خداست

In the very beginning of the first book of Mathnavi (M:01-), Rūmī rapturously extols the virtues and wonders of love.

Hurrah! Our pleasant-perceived Love —you are the healer of all our troubles,

The therapy for our arrogance and vanity, you are our Plato and our Jalinus (Galen)!

Through Love the clay figure rose to the heavens: the Mount Sinai leapt into dancing and became agile.

Self-effacement and humbleness are the distinctive characteristics of the lovers. Esteem and veneration are essential in this way. Rūmī cautions those who are pretentious and conceited:

چون ترا ذکر و دعا دستور شد ** ز آن دعا کردن دلت مغرور
شد

هم سخن دیدی تو خود را با خدا ** ای بسا کاو زین گمان افتد
جدا

گر چه با تو شه نشیند بر زمین ** خویشان بشناس و نیکوتر
نشین

As remembrance and prayers became your routine, and this worshipping has made your heart conceited,

You fancied yourself in communion with God; Oh, this fancy has made many people split from God,

The Monarch might be sitting with you on the ground, appraise yourself better and be seated in a proper and decorous manner. (Iqbal, 2000)

Explaining the above central trope of Rūmī's poetry Afzal Iqbal explains that life is a voyage back to Allah; it marches on an evolution goes on. The mineral evolves into plant, and plants into animals, animals into man and man into transhuman beings, reverting eventually to the initial stage; an ingenious way of interpreting the Qur'anic declaration 'God is the start and God is the end' and "To Him is surely our recourse." Rūmī likens the soul to a groaning dove who is missing her companion; he compares it to a flute

made of reed, severed from its field, carved into a flute whose mournful notes which invoke tears, he contrasts with a falcon beckoned by the falconer's whistle to roost on his arm; equates it with snow melting in the sun and spiraling as vapor to the sky; to a wild camel he compares the souls who rushes wildly into the wilderness by night; to a captive parrot, and fish on parched beach; a pawn who covets monarchy. It is love, which drives all things towards their eternal sources. How is it possible for man to comprehend God? 'Through sensory channel it is not possible, for God is transcendent, nor by reason, for God is unimaginable. Rationality can never grasp infinite; philosophers perceive things in duals; bookish knowledge breeds vanity, obfuscating the channels of the ultimate Reality with haze of empty verbosity.' (Iqbal, 2000)

As highlighted earlier, Rūmī's poetry, teachings, and especially his Mathnavi is deeply suffused with Qur'anic spirit. Though the warp and woof of the Mathnavi is threaded with various tales, allegories, fables and metaphors, the core of The Mathnavi is Qur'anic, Islamic and Sufi ethos and lore. Qur'anic, Islamic and Sufi allusions traverse the tales in Mathnavi and Rūmī knit them effortlessly and seamlessly through the stories of Mathnavi.

In the following, a Qur'anic assessment of the above teachings of Rūmī has been made. It has been exemplified with Qur'anic references that how much importance The Qur'an attaches to the love.

Qur'anic perspective of love and its manifestations:

Love manifests itself in many forms. Love for wealth, ambitions, spouse and children, but the uppermost shape of love is the love of God for a believer. All other forms of loves should be oriented and tailored around the love of God.

The Qur'an recognizes these various manifestations of love. God reminds us in the Qur'an:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ
أَمْنُوا أَتَنَادُ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

Still, there are some who take others as God's

equivalent—they love them as they should love Allah—but the believers love God the most. (Al-Baqarah, 2:165)

In essence, displaying love and kindness to others does not have to clash with our love for Allah, as long as our affection for others aligns with His will and is prompted by pleasing Him. Yet, Allah cautions against certain types of love, like those directed towards sinful acts like adultery or towards false gods.

Prince Ghazi Bin Muhammad writes in his book 'Love in the Holy Qur'an': "In the Qur'an, love is not merely one of God's acts or actions, but one of God's very own Divine Names and Qualities. The Divine Name 'the Loving' ('Al-Wadud'), occurs twice in the Qur'an: And ask forgiveness of your Lord, then repent to Him. Truly my Lord is Merciful, Loving. (Hud, 11:90) And He is the Forgiving, the Loving. (Al-Buruj, 85:14). There are many other Divine Names in the Qur'an which denote God's loving qualities and imply love (by Arabic linguistic definition), such as: 'the Gentle-Al-Latif'; 'the Kind'-Al-Raouf; 'the Generous'-Al-Kareem; 'the Forbearing-Al-Haleem'; 'the Absolutely Reliable'-Al-Wakil; 'the Friend'-Al-Wali; 'the Good'-Al-Barr; 'the Forgiving-Al-Ghafur'; 'the Forgiver'-Al-Ghaffar; 'the Granter and Acceptor of Repentance'-Al-Tawwab, 'the Pardoner-Al-Afu' and others. This is true a fortiori for the two Divine Names 'the Compassionate' ('Al-Rahman') and 'the Merciful' ('Al-Rahim'), because the stem of these two Divine Names is the tri-letter root R-H-M, which means 'womb, and thus implies maternal mercy and love together. Thus, God's Loving is inseparable from His Mercy, and indeed love usually comes with mercy, and mercy usually comes with love—though evidently, they do not mean exactly the same thing." (Muhammad, 2022, P. XV)

The exaltation of free enquiry and condemnation of Taqleed (blind conformism) in selected allegories of Mathnavi and its placement in relevant Qur'anic perspective.

Through various allegorical stories in The Mathnavi, Rūmī highlights the harmful effects of blind following (Taqleed) of a creed,

ideology, teacher or spiritual mentor. Rūmī maintains that blind imitation dulls an imitator's thinking and spiritual capabilities and he becomes unable to act independently and rationally.

In the Mathnavi Rūmī tells the tale of an itinerant Sufi who stayed up for the night at a Sufi hospice, handing over his donkey to the porter. Some of the other folks staying in the hospice were unscrupulous ones. They disposed of the Sufi's donkey, and with the money gained arranged a banquet and got engaged in revelries. They began to chant Khar Biraft, Khar Biraft (The donkey is gone, the donkey is gone). The Sufi too joined them in this chorus. In the morning, when all had left, the Sufi realized to his dismay his loss of donkey and the meaning of the chorus "the donkey is gone". In this allegorical story, the donkey epitomizes the personification of the soul's voyage. Employing similar images, Rūmī recurrently frames Isa (a.s) and his donkey—the soul and the body. Without the donkey, Isa (a.s) is not able to travel to Jerusalem, which in other words means that without this corporal frame, the soul is not able to reach its desired goal, which is his true beloved. In the above allegorical tale, the refrain that the itinerant Sufi takes up blindly from the ascetics at the hospice symbolizes the knowledge and data that we lap up without comprehension of its implication. Morning symbolizes death, when the human soul awakens to the ultimate truth.

Rūmī employs the tale to highlight the damaging consequences which Taqlid (blind imitation or following of an authority) might entail. If we merely emulate others in the field of knowledge and fail to realize the actual core of the truth, we will miss our desired goal. In the above tale from Rūmī, once the Sufi is roused up from his slumber, and realizes his idiocy, he shouts his regrets out:

Imitation of them has thrown me to the winds;

Two hundred curses on that blind Taqleed!

It must be clear that the objective of knowledge is not only the accumulation of data. But it entails the correct comprehension of them and acting accordingly upon them. For this

purpose, one should grasp everything related to the Absolute Haqq, the Creator of them. In short, it boils down to the fact that things can be grasped truly, suitably and accurately when placed in the context of their connection to God and the performance of all acts are truly carried out only when the Haqq of the situation is maintained. The entire Mathnavi of Rūmī is in fact, the elaboration of the process and methodology of this taḥqeeq, the attainment of Haqq, the ultimate truth.

Common people can get knowledge and act upon it chiefly by imitation (Taqleed). One can avoid blind imitation only by following the qualified guides, that is The Messengers of God and saints who show the right path to the ultimate Reality. If it is done appropriately and with sincerity, the seeker of The Truth can find the multi-leveled way to the Reality. The help of a sincere and qualified teacher in the attainment of true knowledge is indispensable. Like other mystics, Rūmī asserts the indispensability of spiritual mentors in the way to the Reality. At one place, he names the spiritual mentors as “partners.” He says,

You must obtain this much impact from good associates

that you pull out water from the sea that is not influenced.

You must be aware that the first inspiration to fall upon you is taqlid.

When it gets constant, it becomes taḥqeeq.

Until you arrive at taḥqeeq, don't dissociate yourself from the associates—

Don't detach yourself from the shell unless the drop turns into a pearl! (Mathnavi-V: 566-68)

Spiritual Awareness in its fullest sense is the consciousness and training attained by the Messengers and the great saints. Taqleed (Imitation) is the portion, bestowed upon us, we common people, whose thinking and acting resemble those of children. As Rūmī, declares;

How can kids on the path have the views of grown-ups?

How can their visualizations be likened to true taḥqeeq?

Kids only think of nannies and milk,

raisins and walnuts, sniveling and weeping.

Copiers are like ailing kids,

even if they advance refined opinions and testimonies. (Mathnavi-V: 1287-89)

Spiritual accomplishment and awareness are actually the consciousness of things as they really are and to act in appropriate way accordingly. Awareness of the actual state of things is realized by the inborn capability of the human spirit, a capability which is named ‘Aql, “intellect” or “intelligence.” In some narratives. Blind followers only talk about heard things but spiritually accomplished ones talk about realities, which are directly known. Blind Followers pursue external knowledge, but spiritual adepts discover it sparkling up in their own bosoms. When Rūmī is critical of derivative and indirect knowledge, he enlightens us that everyone should strive to attain the watchful heart.

You possess eyes; start seeing with your own eyes.

Don't perceive with the eyes of an ignorant.

You possess ears; start listening with your own ears.

Why to be to mortgaged to the ears of morons?

Make Nazr [foresight] your norm, without blind imitation—

Reflect according to your own mind. (Mathnavi-VI: 3342-44)

Blind Following (Taqleed) and the Qur'an:

The Qur'an repeatedly calls free inquiry and using reason. It condemns blind following of priests, monks and clerics in every form. The Qur'an terms blind following as one of the main causes of hindrance in accepting the truth. In Surah Baqarah (02) verse 170 God condemns those people who reject the truth when it is against the mores and norms left by their forefathers; The Qur'an says that when advised to obey the teachings of Allah, some respond by insisting on following the traditions of their ancestors, regardless of whether those ancestors' lacked wisdom and proper guidance. In the

subsequent verse of Surah Baqarah (2:171), God uses an allegory to portray those who reject Allah's guidance as resembling cattle. When the shepherd summons them, they hear nothing but noise and commotion; they are deaf, dumb, and blind, thus unable to comprehend anything. This comparison serves a dual purpose: firstly, it highlights how these individuals mindlessly follow their leaders without understanding where they are being driven like cattle; secondly, it highlights their appalling thoughtlessness to the Truth, comparing them to beasts that merely recognize sounds but fail to grasp their significance. (Mawdudi,)

In context of Surah Ash-Shu'ara (26) verses 91--103, Mawdudi highlights the contentious interchange between wily, misleading leaders and their deluded supporters in the Hereafter, emphasizing the dire consequences of blindly following such leaders. He portrays how followers, who once revered their religious guides as almost divine figures in the world, will confront them in the afterlife upon realizing they had led them astray, resulting in their own damnation. In this alarming scenario illustrated in the Qur'an at various instances, individuals will hold their guides accountable and berate them for their misguidance. This portrayal serves as a warning to blind followers to carefully weigh whether their leaders are leading them on the right path. For instance, as each generation enters Hell, they will blame the preceding one for their misguidance, seeking a double punishment for them. Similarly, disbelievers will demand to confront those who led them astray, wishing to humiliate and curse them harshly. This narrative underscores the importance of perspicacity in choosing one's guides and the seriousness of blindly obeying them. (Mawdudi, 1997)

The importance of the Purification of the soul in selected allegories of Mathnavi and its placement in the relevant Qur'anic perspective.

Like other Sufi writers, for Rūmī the goal of the mystical way is to regulate the self (nafs). Rūmī dwells on this topic in detail in the Mathnavi that as it is impossible to streamline one's self without a guide, the means to accomplish this

objective is under the supervision of a Sufi counsellor (Mathnavi I, vv. 2934-58) who must have been a seasoned traveler of this way. He emphatically specifies the preeminence of this kind of mentorship and grooming over the performance of normal religious obligations, because of its effectiveness for this objective (Mathnavi I, vv. 2972-93). The mentor is required at different phases in the way for guidance about how to tread the route of self-purification, both to motivate the trainee (Mathnavi I, vv. 1399-556), and also to support at the advanced phases, faced by the risk of likely arrogance when the disciple has attained spiritual heights, as shown in the tale about the Messenger Muhammad and Zayd (Mathnavi I, vv. 3514-720). Fake Sufi teachers abound, and the means to differentiate between the true and false one is through their inward piety, not their external posing, activities, and claims; however, even devotees of a fake mentor may flourish in their spiritual endeavours by divine mercy, if they are earnest and honest (Mathnavi I, vv. 2275-98). (EIr, 2014)

The very first tale in the Mathnavi (Book I) narrates the story of a monarch who gets infatuated with a bondwoman. Despite great care by the king, the maiden becomes sick and her health deteriorates. No doctor in the royal court could find any cure for her illness. The distressed monarch implores God and he is divinely guided that a holy man will visit the court who will cure the girl. This new spiritual physician discovers that the real cause of maiden's illness is her infatuation with a goldsmith in Samarqand. This goldsmith is summoned. The doctor administers him a concoction which makes him sick, resulting in his ugliness. The girl is cured of her love sickness and develops attachment with the king. Rūmī's allegorical tales are usually intricate and deliberately embedded with multi-layered meaning, with the potential of manifold interpretative unfolding. The above tale can be interpreted in a way that the spiritual disciple (the slave girl) misguidedly is tempted with the worldly glitter (the goldsmith), but the supervision of spiritual mentor (the doctor) lastly guides her to divine love. The allegory has

been interpreted philosophically in another way that the monarch symbolizes the rational soul whose inferior part is infatuated with the carnal desires of the beastly and vegetal spirits, which requires the impetus of the Active Intellect (the spiritual doctor) to steer love on the correct course. (Heath, 2010)

At the outset of Book 1 of the Mathnavi, there is the allegorical tale of a sickly maiden who is love-sick and her ailment cannot be identified by the all-available doctors until a spiritual physician discovers that the root of her woes is infatuation. The monarch in this allegorical tale is the Spirit (Ruḥ) which hold dear the soul (nafs) and wishes to cleanse her. But though the nafs is a little attached to him, she is not willing to barter her infatuation for a better option. This revulsion to treatment is signified by her sickness, which grips her and splits her from the emperor. At this stage the reason (Aql), the counsellor of the Spirit, steps up in the appearance of a spiritual healer who is a little successful but exacerbates nafs's disease. The Spirit, noticing that rational therapies do not benefit, prays earnestly to God, admits its powerlessness, and pleads for divine assistance. God dispatches Grace (Jamal), who comes before the spirit in the guise of a Holy man and the monarch tells him, "Actually you are my beloved; not the heart which asserted to be capable to cure itself". Then the heart, concurring with the spirit, weds soul (nafs) with her beloved, i.e., carnal desire, but gradually the Heart treats the Carnality with the medicine of Irfan (the true comprehension of divine knowledge), so that it degenerates and becomes repulsive in the sight of the soul and finally passes away. In the same way operates the mechanism that transforms evil-suggesting soul (Nafs-i-ammara) into the tranquil soul (nafs-e-Mutmainah). This soul is affectionately invited by God to the bliss of paradise, "You, O serene soul go back to your Cherisher, pleasing (the Lord), and made pleased (by Lord). Enter into the (ranks) of my (close) servants. Step into my paradise! (Fajr (89):27-30)

Rūmī is exhilarated by the ecstasy of answering such a call:

I had been searching much for a picture of my

soul, but in no body, I could locate my portrait.

Only the beloved's image is the mirror of my soul but visage only of the Beloved beyond that realm.

"Finally, I have found myself; in His eyes I have found the illuminated path." I announced.

My reflection in your eyes called out, "I am you and you are me, united together". (M: 2:93-103). Most of the inmates of the Heaven will be simple-minded pious people. The shrewd ones are bogged down in the snares of philosophical thoughts. The humble believers carry out their obligations and salvage themselves and the people around them from discordance. They have little idea of the philosophy of Zakat but they pay it; they do not quibble about the causes and philosophy behind prayers, they just perform their regular prayer. The philosopher frets himself to death with rationalizing but with no solid result. Samiri did not benefit from his skills who fashioned a calf out of gold; Qarun attained little by his alchemical skills. Abu Jahl was condemned to hell despite his perceptiveness. Actual Knowledge means beholding fire clearly, openly and not rationally, and analogically. Rūmī explains justice as placing an item in its exact place, and injustice as placing it out of place. Nothing is useless that God fashioned. There is no absolute good or bad. The utility and disadvantage of each thing depends upon its placement and categorization. That is why knowledge is necessary and useful. Moses and Pharaoh resemble one another physically but one is heavenly, the other despicable. Knowledge is indispensable for sifting one from the other. The Sublime Reality is not an outward entity; it is embedded inside the human beings. Realization of this knowledge is made possible knowledge, but it is spiritual knowledge that lights up the reality and not beclouding discursive knowledge.

"The heavens or the void or the lofty intellects and souls cannot encompass me.

However, the heart of a sincere believer can accommodate me, without condition, explanation, or portrayal.

From this mirror, at every instant fifty (spiritual)

nuptial banquets manifest. Listen to the mirror, but do not ask (Me) to explain it.” (Iqbal, 2000)

As above explained, the image of the true beloved (God) is lodged deep in our hearts but it is clouded due to many worldly veils. The image of the beloved lights up and the lover (the believer) starts to behold it when the mirror of the heart is polished and free from rust of various sins and vices which have been underlined by Rūmī in various parts of Mathnavi and for this very purpose Rūmī calls his Mathnavi as polisher of the souls. In the end of the very first discourse in the beginning of first book of Mathnavi, Rūmī says:

The Beloved is everywhere, and the lover is only a mask; the Beloved is living reality and the lover is dead.

When Love does not care for him, left in the lurch, he is helpless like a wingless bird. Pity upon him!

How can I be conscious of my surroundings when the light of my Beloved is not around me?

Love longs that this talk of love is displayed: if the mirror is not communicative, how it is possible.

Why the mirror of your soul is not expressive; do you know? Because the rusty side of it is not distinguished from its front. (Mathnavi: 01, 31-34)

To make the most of the sublime in one's self one must start by combating all that hampers our development - greediness, selfishness, rapaciousness and hate. The parable of the Greek and Chinese painters in Book I of the Mathnawi wonderfully portrays the situation. The Chinese asserted that they are the superior artists; the Greek declared that supremacy and brilliance belong to them. The Chinese and the Greek began to argue. The Greeks left the argument. The Chinese solicited a room for the creation of their display of art. There were two rooms with their door in front of the other door. Both parties were assigned separate rooms. The Chinese solicited hundreds of colors for their artwork. The Greeks declared that they required no colour; they would simply take away the outer rusty layers from the walls. They closed the door

and kept polishing. When the Chinese had completed their work, the monarch arrived at the room and saw the artwork there. The splendor of the art was incredible. After the monarch visited room of the Greeks. They just drew aside the curtain between the two rooms. The Chinese art reflected on the burnished walls in the room assigned to the Greeks. The monarch was astonished. All that he had noticed in the Chinese chamber appeared markedly more attractive in the other chamber despite the fact that the Greeks used neither a colour, nor a brush; they had simply rubbed off the rusty and old layers from the tarnished walls. The lessons drawn from the allegory are thus emphasized:

The Greeks, O my dear one, are the mystics: They are not dependent on study, books, and learnedness. However, they have polished their bosoms and have cleansed them of ravenousness, greediness, avarice and animosities. That transparency of the mirror is, indubitably, the heart, which reflects numerous imageries. Those who polish (their hearts) have got rid of the mere appearances of the world of scent and colour: they see The Beauty invariably without waiting or trying.

The mystics have renounced the outward arrangement and rind of knowledge; they have kept aloft the standard of the eye of certitude. Thought is gone, and they have attained illumination: they have attained kernel, spirit, and the fountainhead of gnosis. Death, of which all are direly scared, these accomplished mystics deride it. Nobody can vanquish their hearts: only the shell might be impacted, but not the core of the pearl.

رومیان آن صوفیانیند ای پدر ** بیز تکرار و کتاب و بی هنر

The Greeks, O father, are the mystics: With no pretensions of the paraphernalia of the scholarship like books and skills.

لیک صیقل کرده اند آن سینه ها ** پاک از آرزو و حرص و بخل
و کینه ها

However, they have polished their bosoms, purged of avarice, greediness, miserliness and avarice and malice.

آن صفای آینه وصف دل است ** کاو نقوش بی عدد را قابل
است

That transparency of the mirror is the characteristic of the heart that absorbs the inestimable figures.

صورت بی صورت بی حد غیب ** ز آینه ی دل تافت بر موسی
ز جیب

The amorphous inestimable form of the Invisible illuminated out from heart upon Moses, issuing apparently from his collar (of shirt).

گر چه آن صورت نگنجد در فلک ** نه به عرش و فرش و
دریا و سمک

Though that visage is not encompassed by Heaven, nor upon the Divine Throne, nor the earth nor the river, nor the legendary Fish,

ز آن که محدود است و محدود است آن ** آینه ی دل را نباشد
حد بدان

Because all of them are confined and limited in number—: But you know that the mirror of the heart has no limit.

عقل اینجا ساکت آمد یا مضل ** ز آنکه دل با اوست یا خود
اوست دل

Here the reason turns hushed or it is gone astray, as the heart is with Him (God), or actually the very heart is He Himself.

عکس هر نقشی نتابد تا ابد ** جز ز دل هم با عدد هم بی عدد

The reflection of every image never illuminates until through the heart, upon both the finite and without infinite.

تا ابد هر نقش نو کاید بر او ** می نماید بی حجابی اندر او

Till the eternity, every new image which enters the heart, now unfolds in it unveiled.

اهل صیقل رسته اند از بوی و رنگ ** هر دمی بینند خوبی
بی درنگ

Those who polished their hearts, are free from the shackles of the pretensions of cosmetics and perfumes: they observe the eternal Beauty without any hindrance.

نقش و قشر علم را بگذاشتند ** رایث عین الیقین افراشتند

They have passed beyond the form and shallow shell of knowledge; they have unfolded the flag of the faith of certitude.

رفت فکر و روشنایی یافتند ** نحر و بحر آشنایی یافتند

Thinking has vanished and have attained light: they have attained essence and the ocean of gnosis.

مرگ کاین جمله از او در وحشت اند ** می کنند این قوم بر
وی ریشخند

Death, of which all are mortally scared, these accomplished mystics deride it.

کس نیابد بر دل ایشان ظفر ** بر صدف آید ضرر نی بر گهر

Nobody can vanquish his or her hearts: only the shell might be impacted, but not the core of the pearl. (Mathnavi: 01; 3883-96) (Iqbal, 2000)

In the following, a Qur'anic validation of the above teachings of Rūmī has been made. It has been demonstrated with Qur'anic references that how much importance The Qur'an attaches to Tazkiyah (purification of soul). Rūmī has poetized and allegorized these same Qur'anic teachings.

Qur'an and Purification of the soul:

The purpose behind the mission of prophets, revelation of scriptures, and enactment of Divine laws is purification of souls. This spiritual improvement, termed 'Tazkiyah-i Nafs' in Islamic corpus, was the core objective of The Prophet's mission, evident from Abraham's prayer for a prophet to purify humanity. God's response to Abraham's supplication reaffirmed this objective, emphasizing the purification of souls through revelation and Hikmah. While the Qur'an highlights other objectives like recitation of revelations and teaching of wisdom, it subtly underscores that these are merely means to achieve the ultimate goal of spiritual purification. The Qur'an's literary structure, notably the placement of 'Tazkiyah' at crucial points, underlines its supreme importance as the central focus and ultimate destination of human endeavor.

Qur'an tells us in surah Baqarah (02), verse 129 Abraham requested God to appoint a messenger for this very task:

Lord, appoint a Prophet among them, who may recount to them Your revelations, and impart them the scripture [the Qur'an] and wisdom, and may cleanse them, for thou art mighty and wise.

God pronounced the goal of the mission of

Muhammad (SWS) in these very words when Abraham's prayer was responded to:

As We have appointed a Messenger among you, who recounts to you Our verses, and purges you, and imparts you the scripture [the Qur'an] and wisdom, and teaches you that which you were not aware of. [Baqarah: 2:151]

Likewise, in Surah Juma'h, while narrating His favours on Children of Ismael, God states the Abdul Hakim, K. (1999). *The Metaphysics of Rumi, A Critical and Historical Approach*. Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture.

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targets and aims of Muhammad's undertaking:

"It is He who has appointed among the untutored [Banu Ismail] a Messenger of their own, to recount to them His verses and to refine them, and to teach them the Book and wisdom, whereas they had been, before, in obvious deviancy." [Jumah: 62:2] (Iftikhar, 1991)

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