

RAMADAN

IMMERSION



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Mojadedi

Sa'di's Journeys

- Sa'di left Shirazi at the age of sixteen, on a journey to find himself and his Lord.
- He was born 606 AH, the same year that Fakhruddin Al-Razi passed away
- He studied and taught for seventeen years at Nizam-ul-Mulk's school
- This was during the time of the Crusades
 - He was captured and dug tunnels for seven years
- Although he was captured, Sa'di mentions nothing sad in the Gulistan.
 - The purpose of his travels was to worship Allah and get to know Him SWT
- Sa'di said that he left on his feet and came back on his head
 - Meaning, he left as a person of the nafs and returned as a person of intellect.

Writing the Gulistan

- In 1256 AD, the entire book of the Gulistan came out and became the most popular book in Persian literature.
 - While the Qur'an was the most printed book, Gulistan was the second most printed.
- He studied under Ibn Al Jawzi's grandson, who gave him the advice about *حسن الظن* - Don't see faults in other people, but don't be pleased with yourself.

- We're living in an age of nafsee, nafsee.
- On this journey, the greatest thing that Sa'di achieved was finally falling in love with Allah SWT - he mentions this in his poem.
 - Rumi's father was asked about love, and he said "Those who know, know. But those who don't know, I can't explain it".
- "All I could think about is meeting Allah"
 - Hadith Qudsi: if you make all of your anxiety the one anxiety of meeting Allah SWT, Allah will remove all of your anxieties of the world.
 - A poem about Sa'di's death: When I give my last breath and I die and leave this world, I will die with an immense desire and hope of seeing You. I will give my soul and die because I will become the dirt of Your Dominion. On that Day of Reckoning, when I rise from my grave, I will rise with my first speech being, where is my Lord? I don't care about Paradise and the smells of the roses of Paradise. I am not going to do any of this, because all I want is to see You. I am not going to drink the pure wine of Paradise. Why would I need wine, when I'm already intoxicated with You (Your remembrance)?
 - Everyone is running away from their family on that day, and are afraid.
 - However, Sa'di is saying that he will be running to find Allah SWT.
 - A fasting person has two joys:
 - The joy of breaking their fast
 - The joy of meeting their Lord

Preface of the Gulistan

- One can learn the Gulistan at the age of seven to learn the language, or at seventy to understand the meaning. It's a book for all ages.
- The book starts with a preface.
 - The preface is a prose, not a poem, but it is still poetic.

- “Praise be to Allah, the One whom, when you worship Him, He will bring you closer to Him.”
 - Minna is praise, but it also means when you are indebted to someone.
 - Taa’a is worship
 - There is no material gain out of worship, but Allah rewards us with *قربة* (closeness) to Him.
 - If Allah were to give us material items, such as money, for our worship, it would be dhulm.
 - The qurba we get to Allah is priceless.
 - The reward for worship should be of a similar status, as Allah says in the Qur’an:

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَنِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ

Shall the reward of good be anything but good? (Surah Rahman, 60)

- “But, if you are grateful, Allah will give you more blessings.”
- This is like the ayah in Surah Ibrahim:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

If you are thankful, I will increase you

- If you have been given abundant money and are grateful for it, Allah will give you more money.
- If you complain, Allah will give you more to complain about. If you are grateful, Allah SWT will increase you.
- Who are the grateful ones? The ‘ulema (the scholars) are grateful.
 - If this is true, why are there so many poor scholars?
 - Ghazali said, there are people who see the pen, there are people who see the hand, then there are people who see the artist.
 - The scholars recognize the artist, the giver of their blessings. They don’t see the world, they are grateful to Allah SWT, so Allah gives them more of the meaningful things they are grateful for.

- “Every breath that you inhale, it prolongs your life. But when it comes out (when you exhale), it gives you good health.”
 - Allah is constantly giving us life and keeping us healthy.
 - This is a karama - Sa'di knew about this at the time he lived in.
- “So know, oh beloved, that for every breath, there are two ni'mahs. Isn't it mandatory to be grateful for every blessing Allah has given you?”
- “Show me someone who has a tongue and hand to be grateful to Allah SWT to this degree?”
 - None of us can thank Allah twice for every breath.
 - The reason why he mentioned the hand is that he was representing all of the limbs of the body.

اعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُورُ

Work thankfully, family of David, for few of my servants are truly thankful. (Surah Saba, 13)

- “So here is my advice: it is better that all of those who have shortcomings just go to Allah with brokenness and say, ‘Oh Allah, forgive me.’ For no one can be grateful for the amount of blessings that Allah has given them.”
- Being a Shukoor is a very beautiful maqam (standing).
- People who are shukoor are often happy as well.
- We all have shortcomings, as Prophet SAW said that all of Bani Adam are sinners.
- Since we can't thank Allah for the amount of blessings He has given us, we should sincerely seek His forgiveness.
- We must realize that everything is from Allah, and any wrong that we have done is from ourselves.
- When 'Ali RA was the khalifa, someone asked, why is it that in Abu Bakr and 'Umar's khilafas, no one was fighting and everything was going well, but when you and 'Uthman became khalifas, there was so much fighting and corruption?

- 'Ali replied, when Abu Bakr and Umar were khalifas, they had people like Uthmaan and I under them, now that we are khalifas, we have people like you under us.
- There are three levels of knowledge:
 - علم اليقين - learning something
 - عين اليقين - seeing it in practice
 - حق اليقين - living it, experiencing it
- Rumi says, if you look at lovers, they are grateful for each other and give gifts. However, this is the lowest level of gratitude - anyone can do this. The highest level is when you become the gratitude, you become their gift and they don't need any other gifts.
- Sa'di continues, "The rain of His mercy has reached every corner of the world.
 - Allah's name Rahman is universal mercy, it isn't unique to the Muslims.
 - Raheem, on the other hand, is exclusive for the believers.
- "The cloth of the ni'mah of Allah has reached every household."
 - This is like a tablecloth
 - Everyone has been given food.
 - Allah was Al Razzaq before there was creation that needed rizq.
- "There's a veil that's between you and humanity."
 - Only we know ourselves, and Allah knows us. Other people only know us based on what we tell them or their perception of us.
 - Rumi said, everyone became my friend and got to know me based on their opinion of me, no one was interested in hearing what I had to say about myself.
 - Allah put a veil between us and humanity.
 - Poem: "If Allah removes the veil from the actions of human beings, how many fasiqs (wrongdoers, sinners) would become mullas instantly? And how many mullas would become fasiqs instantly?"
- "The veil of your privacy, Allah will not rip that veil so that people can see. Even if you disobey Him and fornicate."

- Naamus - privacy, honor, dignity
- Allah even veils the sins of the one who fornicates.
- Sa'di next talks about the sustenance Allah has given us and has written down for us.
 - Sa'di has a story (in a different poem) about a crippled fox. A man walks by and wonders how the fox eats. Then a lion comes, eats meat, and throws the leftovers, which falls directly in front of the fox. The fox eats from it. The man saw a similar incident happen the next day. He then sat down and thought Allah would give him rizq since the fox was given rizq. He was starving for a few days. After a few days, he asked why he was not provided with food like the crippled fox, although he was a believer. Then inside himself he understood, don't be a crippled fox, be a roaring lion.
 - One of the practices of the people on the path of spirituality is that they wouldn't eat a lot. One reason for this is that when one eats a lot, their stomach is full and can't echo inside, but when it is empty there can be echoing. The man felt the echo of his own soul and understood that he was to work for his rizq.
- "Allah will not cut off their sustenance, even if they disbelieve in Him."
 - This is why we will see wealthy disbelievers.
 - One breath in Paradise is more expensive than everything in the dunya combined.
 - With the first inhale in Jannah, every anxiety and worry is washed away for eternity, and one is in a state of ecstasy.
- "Oh Kareem, You have unseen inexhaustible treasure houses, and You are giving to fire worshippers and disbelievers. How could You deprive Your friends?"
 - If this is how Allah treats the disbelievers, how would He treat His friends?
 - Allah is the ولي of those who believe. A wali is a protector and also a friend.

- “When a sinful servant goes into disobedience and feels remorse and is asking Allah constantly for forgiveness, Allah doesn't look at him. He repeats his plea, but Allah doesn't look at him.”
 - When you go to Allah in a state of brokenness and you are not just putting on a show, He will accept you.
 - Rumi says that Allah isn't looking for eloquence in duas, He wants burning.
- Allah says, “I accepted his prayer and gave him what he wanted. I feel embarrassed that a sinful servant keeps asking me, and I don't forgive him.’ Look at the generosity of Allah. The servant committed the sin, but Allah felt embarrassed.”
 - This is a Hadith Qudsi

Summary

- We should try to list what we are grateful to Allah for on a daily basis
- We only understand the value of our blessings once we lose them
- Shukr should become a part of our lives
- We can never count the blessings of Allah, they are innumerable.

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا

If you tried to count God's favors you could never calculate them.
(Surah Ibrahim, 34)