

# MIFTAAH SEMINAR

## FROM MAWLANA TO RUMI: A JOURNEY TO THE HEART



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### SESSION 1

#### Introduction

- Rumi's most famous work is the Masnavi. His essential teaching in the Masnavi is how to find yourself and reach your potential
- There is you and there is a potential you. Rumi is trying to get people from their mundane lives to come out and see their full potential.
- For some people, this is scary because it is amazing
- Ali RA saw a little boy crying and said to him, "Don't you know the entire cosmos is inside of you?"
- We are the microcosm of the microcosm and Rumi understood that and embraced it

#### The Life of Rumi

- Rumi was born in Balkh in 1207. He moved to Iran when he was 12 and met 'Ataa al-Nayshapuri who gave Rumi's father advice to protect his child. They moved to Iraq, Syria, performed Umrah, and eventually ended up in Karaman, an area in Turkey.
- When Rumi was 18, he got married and had 2 children. His wife eventually passed away and he got remarried and had one more child.
- In brief, Rumi had 3 advantages over every other person of his time:

- His father
  - His father was an encyclopedia of his time
  - He could ask his dad anything
  - Books were scarce at the time, so having a father like that made a difference in his life
- Nusaybah
  - She is unknown in the books written about Rumi
  - She was the servant of Rumi's father
  - She loved knowledge
  - She used to sit by the door when Rumi's father taught his students and she would teach Rumi everything in a story format as a child.
  - Freud said by age 5 you have developed your character already.
  - Up to age 12, Nusaybah did this for Rumi
  - You have an impact on people when they are young, not when they are old.
  - This is the reason why Rumi's book is made up of mostly stories. Nusaybah influenced him in that way.
- When he meets Shams al-Tabriz
  - Would maulana become Rumi if he was not a maulana? No
    - He had to learn every classical text to get himself ready to become Rumi
    - He was Hanafi and Maturidi in aqidah
    - Rumi's father was the chair of Islamic education of the Seljuk Empire. When Rumi was 25 years old, his father died and Rumi became the chair of education of the Muslim world. This is because he was the most qualified in his knowledge.
      - Most people have the intellect, but they do not use it. Rumi had the intellect and used it

- Muhaqqiq Tarmizi was a student of Rumi's father and when he heard that he died, he went back and taught Rumi everything he learned from his father. Muhaqqiq told Rumi to leave his position as the chair of education and go to Halab in Syria to study. Instead of being arrogant, Rumi accepted this immediately.
  - This is called wafaa; doing good to people's families after they die.
  - Rumi had humility even though he was the chair of education of the Muslim world
  - He studied in Halab for 4 years
    - The Mongol invasion happened and people were fleeing to Hala, so it became the hot spot of knowledge. All of the scholars of every science were in Halab.
  - Muhaqqiq saw the potential in Rumi
- When Rumi came back from Halab, Muhaqqiq decided to leave and Rumi was devastated. Muhaqqiq told him that a lion was going to come from Tabriz and flip the town upside down. So, Muhaqqiq left and this is when Rumi said, "I can summarize my life in 3 stages. I was raw, I got cooked, and I got burned."
  - Raw was the first stage until he met Muhaqqiq
  - He got cooked while he was with Muhaqqiq
  - Getting burned refers to when he was met with the fire of Tabriz
- 8 months after Muhaqqiq left, Tabriz came to Konya.
- The meeting of Shams al-Tabriz and Rumi is referred to as "The Meeting of the Two Oceans."

- The main complaint that Rumi had was that he said, “I am suffocating from not having a companion who can understand me.” He had to dumb the message down in order for people to understand him, but Shams al-Tabriz understood him.
- Who is the teacher and who is the student?
  - This is the unsolved mystery
  - The view is generally that Rumi was the student and Tabriz was the teacher.
  - Shams said to Rumi, “Why are you crawling through life when God has given you wings?”
  - Shams and Rumi were both incomplete. According to Sa’dī Shīrāzi, the world is a chemistry lab and that is how you make gold.
    - Marriage can be gold or toxic depending on the chemicals that are mixed. If the right chemicals are mixed, it can be gold. The same thing is true with friendships.
    - Shams and Rumi made gold. If Shams was not there, Rumi would be another mufti from the 13th century like the others. He would not be unique. If Rumi was not there, Shams would have been someone we just had an anecdote from. People would not know him.
  - Rumi said, “Shams was just an excuse, it is all me.”
  - They both played big roles and benefited from each other
- Rumi could not understand what Shams was doing to him. Shams flipped him.
  - Scholars often write books that are very difficult in the beginning because they want serious people to hold their work, not mediocre students.

- We have a tradition of trusting in your teachers
- We have a chain of teachers in our tradition
  - This makes you sure of your source so you don't have to worry about if the information is accurate and you can just focus on learning.
- Rumi complained to Shams, "What did you do to me? I don't understand the world anymore. You flipped me upside down." Shams said, "You lived your entire life upside down. I just turned you right side up. If you stay like this, you will see that everything is perfect."
  - Most people live their life upside down and they only realize the truth once they are dead.
  - Ali said, "People are asleep and when they die, they wake up."
  - It is not easy, but it is not impossible.
- In reality, Shams opened the wings of Rumi that societies, the nafs, dunya, and shaytan locked up.
  - Society tells you that you are not enough and that you cannot achieve things. It is non-stop negativity. That is what we are used to.
  - Everyone has wings, but we keep burning their wings. We make ourselves and others featherless
  - Shams showed Rumi his reality