

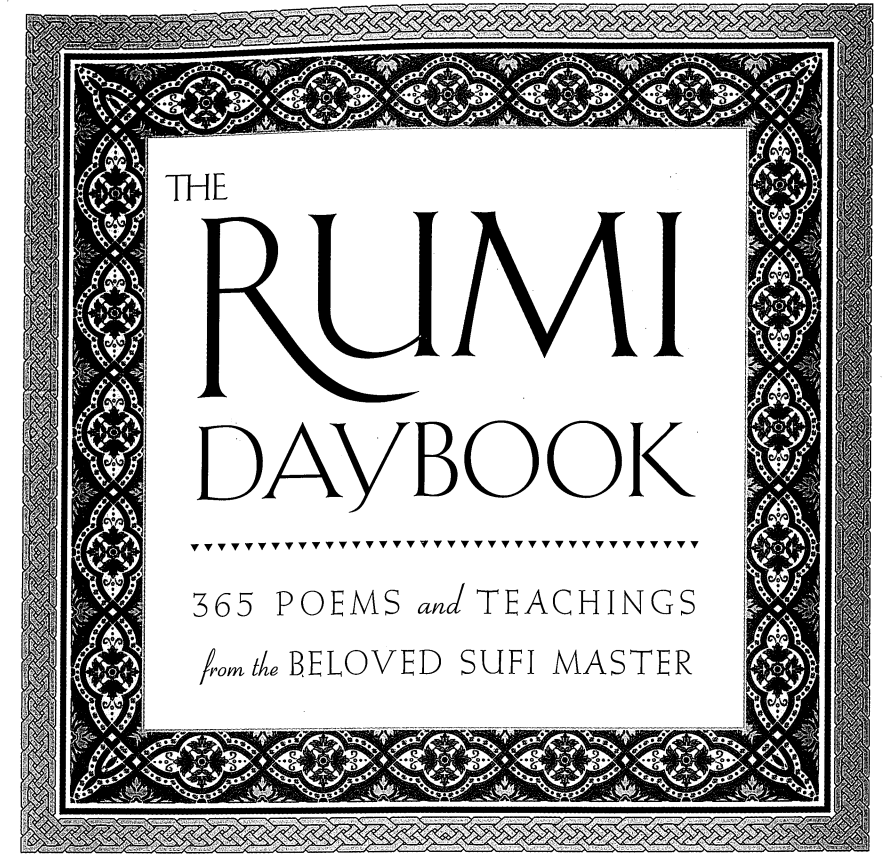


The heart is your student
 for love is the only way we learn.
 Night has no choice but to grab the feet of daylight.
 It's as if I see Your Face everywhere I turn.
 It's as if Love's radiant oil
 never stops searching
 for a lamp in which to burn.
 —From *The Rumi Daybook*

RUMI
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 THE RUMI DAYBOOK



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You Are Joy

1

O my God, our intoxicated eyes have blurred our vision.
Our burdens have become heavy, forgive us.
You are hidden, and yet from East to West,
You have filled the world with Your radiance.
Your Light is more magnificent than sunrise or sunset,
and You are the inmost ground of consciousness
revealing the secrets we hold.
You are an explosive force
causing our damned-up rivers to burst forth.
You whose essence is hidden while Your gifts are manifest,
You are like water and we are like millstones.
You are like wind and we are like dust.
The wind is hidden while the dust is plainly seen.
You are the invisible spring, and we are Your lush garden.

You are the Spirit of life and we are like hand and foot.
Spirit causes the hand to close and open.
You are intelligence; we are Your voice.
Your intelligence causes this tongue to speak.
You are joy and we are laughter,
for we are the result of the blessing of Your joy.
All our movement is really a continual profession of faith,
bearing witness to Your eternal power,
just as the powerful turning of the millstone
professes faith in the river's existence.
Dust settles upon my head and upon my metaphors,
for You are beyond anything we can ever think or say.
And yet, this servant cannot stop trying to express Your beauty,
in every moment, let my soul be Your carpet.

[*Mathnawi V: 3307-3319*]

A Pen in the Hand of God

Though a thousand snares catch our feet,
 when You are with us there is no difficulty.
 Every night You free spirits from the body's snare,
 and clear the tablets of the mind.
 Every night spirits are set free from this cage,
 no longer ruled by rules or long stories.

At night prisoners have no sense of imprisonment,
 at night governors are unconscious of their power.
 There is no sorrow, no thought of gain or loss,
 no tales of this person or another.
 Even without sleep this is how the gnostic* is.
 As God said, *You would think they were awake,
 while they slept.*†

Have no doubt: there are those who are asleep,
 day and night, to the affairs of this world,
 yet moving like a pen in the hand of God.

[*Mathnawi* I: 387-394]

* The term translated as "gnostic" here is *'arif* (the spiritual knower).

† *Surah Kahf* (The Cave), [18:18].

Of Shadows and Saints

A bird is flying high;
 its shadow speeds over the earth like an actual bird.

A fool starts to chase the shadow,
 running so far that he exhausts himself,
 not knowing that it is but the reflection of that bird in the air,
 not knowing where the origin of the shadow is.

He shoots arrows at the shadow and the quiver is emptied—
 his life is wasted by what he seeks.
 But when the shadow of God tends to him,
 it saves him from every illusion.

The shadow of God is that servant of God
 who has died to this world and is living through that One.
 Quickly, take hold of his robe,
 that you may be saved during the last days of this earth.

[*Mathnawi* I: 417-424]



WE OFFERED the trust to the heavens, but they could not accept it [33:72]. Consider how many bewildering feats they perform: they transform rocks into rubies and emeralds; they turn mountains into mines of gold and silver; they cause the plants of the earth to sprout forth into life, making a Garden of Eden. The earth, too, receives seed and produces fruit; it covers faults, and does countless miraculous things beyond description. The mountains produce all kinds of minerals. All these things they do, but that one thing they cannot do—that one task is for the human being to do.

And We have honored the children of Adam [17:70]. Since God did not say, "We have honored the heavens and the earth," it is for the human being to do that which the heavens, the earth, and the mountains cannot do. If he does accomplish this task, his injustice to himself and foolishness are erased. You may object and say that, even though you don't accomplish that task, you do accomplish many other things. But you were not created for those other things. It is as though you were to take a priceless blade of Indian steel, of the sort only found in the treasuries of kings, and use it for cutting up rotten meat and then justify that by saying, "I am not letting this sharp blade stand idle, I'm making good use of it." It is as though you were to use a golden bowl to cook turnips when from one bit of that bowl you could buy a hundred pots. . . . God has set a high price on you, for He says: *See how God has purchased of the faithful their lives and their possessions; in return, theirs is the Garden* [9:111].

[*Fihi ma Fihi*: Discourse 4]

*A Knowledge Like Light*

What God taught to the bees
doesn't belong to the lion or wild ass.
The bees make a home of juicy sweetness—
God opened the door of that knowing.

What God taught the silkworm—
does any elephant have such expertise?
Adam, though made of earth,
was given knowledge by God,

a knowledge like light
that pierced the Seven Heavens.

[*Mathnawi* I: 1009–1012]

Becoming the Treasury

A certain king said to a shaikh,
 "If you would like some of the riches I have, just ask."

"Your Royal Highness," he answered,
 "Aren't you ashamed to say that to me?
 I have two ugly slaves, and you are under their power."

"Who are they?" said the King, "There must be some mistake!"

The shaikh replied, "One is anger and the other is lust."

A true king is unconcerned with kingship;
 he is someone whose light, without moon or sun,
 shines forth from itself.

Only one whose essence is a treasure
 can offer gifts from the treasury.

[*Mathnawi* II: 1465-1470]

Be Occupied with What You Really Value

No matter what plans you make,
 no matter what you acquire,
 the thief will enter where you least expect.
 Be occupied, then, with what you really value
 and let the thief take something less.
 When a trader's bales fall into the water,
 he'll try to grab the most valuable things.
 Some things will certainly be lost
 as the water of life flows away.
 Let go of the cheap stuff
 and work to save what's really important.

[*Mathnawi* II: 1505-1509]



"THE NIGHT IS OVER, my friend, but our story has not yet ended." The night and darkness of this world may pass, but the light of these words shines brighter every moment. Even so did the night of the prophets' lives pass, but the light of their words has not yet ceased—nor will it ever.

[*Fihi ma Fihi*: Discourse 49]



BAHAEDDIN WELED (Sultan Weled) told us one day:

My father said, "O Bahaeddin, when the seed of my teaching has taken root in your heart, you will understand; reflect deeply on my teaching and really try to absorb it and if you do, felicity will be yours. Know that the body of the prophets, the saints and their friends will never perish. A seed thrown into the earth may appear to die and disappear; however, at the end of a few days, it comes to life and flowers. In a similar way the body of the prophets and the saints will also come to life again."

Mevlana was absorbed in the mystery described in the Qur'an [51:21]: *Have you not looked within?*

There is nothing in the world
that exists outside yourself;
look into the depths of your being
for that which you desire.

[*Menaqib al-Arifin*: 251]