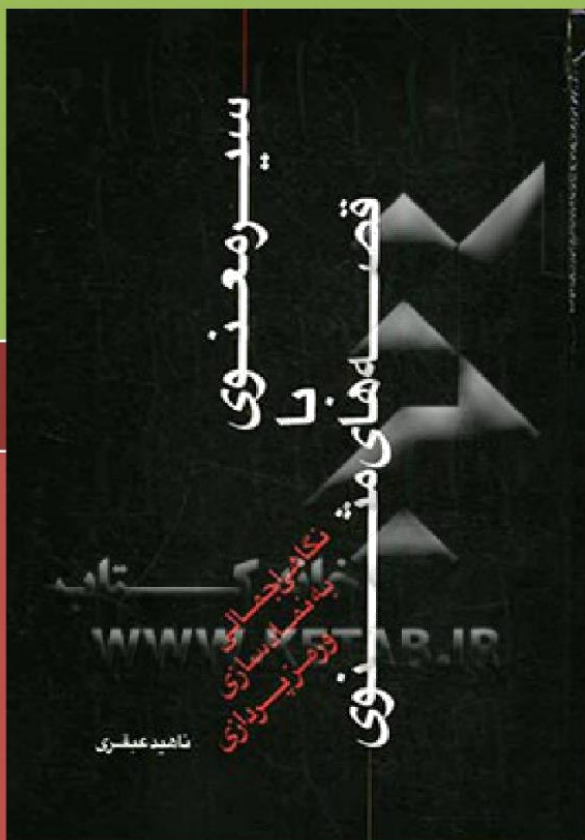


Spiritual Travel with Mathnavi Stories

By:Nahid Abghari



**Pol Literary &
Translation Agency,**
Unit.9, No.138, Azadi
Ave, Shadmehr Str.,
Tehran-Iran
Tel: +98 21 66159346,
Fax: +98 21 66087895,
www.pol-ir.com
info@pol-ir.com

Title: Spiritual Travel with Mathnavi Stories

Author: Nahid Abqhari

Publisher: Bang-e Ney

Year of publishing:

۲۰۱۰/first edition

Subject: Fiction

Language: Persian

No. of Pages: 237

Size: 17× 25

ISBN: 978-9648475777

- ☐ *Sample English text is available.*
- ☐ *Copyright is available in all languages.*
- ☐ *The book has been take into account of literary critics in Iran.*

*Right Sold:
Iran(Bang-e Ney Publication)*

King's falling in Love to a Slave Maiden

This anecdote that Rumi himself had considered that 'Human's state account' is in fact an allegory of 'human's state' as in Human the potentiality and talent of achieving 'Godly Perfection' is granted while he is isolated and captured and by 'the mean materials' in 'the world of sensibilities'.

This anecdote is about a learned king that in the way of hunting, he himself was hunted by the love to a slave maiden. After buying her and taking her to his court and making love with her, the maiden became patient. The most knowledgeable physicians gathered in the court by the king's order and while they all claim that due to their knowledge and resourcefulness they are able to cure any diseases, since they disregarded the will of God because of their vanity and superciliousness, they failed to cure the maiden by all possible means. When the king found out the physician s' inabilities, he ran to the mosque bare foot and took refuge to God and asked Him to cure the maiden. He wailed and cried before the alter to that

degree that he fell asleep there. Because of his sincere prayers, God had a favor so in a truthful dream he was told that he was sent an honest physician that in his remedy there are God's power and the Absolute's Magic. In the coming morning and old physician like a sun in a shadow came to the court and started to cure the maiden in a particular way. By checking the symptoms of her disease like the maiden's pulse, the physician said the king that the previous Physician's cure worsened her disease due to their unawareness of her internal (psychological) situation.

'The Godly Physician' noticed a secret and found out that her disease is not because of a physical disorder but is as her heart belongs to somewhere else. When the physician was alone with the maiden he started to ask her about her previous city and her affections there and he noticed that when they called the name of her previous city, Samarghand, her pulse beat faster. Finally, he found out that the maiden loved a goldsmith in Samarghand that resides in Ghatafar Street of the Sarpol neighborhood. As the physician asked, the goldsmith was brought from Samarghand to the court and the maiden was given to her. For six

month, they were making love with each other and the maiden got cured completely. Then the Godly physician made some syrup for the goldsmith. After drinking that before the maiden, the goldsmith started to have a fever and he became pale, yellow and ugly and the maiden hated her as her love was just for his good-looking appearance. This mean and shameful love of the maiden to the goldsmith was an impediment for her love and unity with the king.

Killing of the goldsmith by the physician was ordered by God like the story of prophet Khezr (Elias) that killed a boy and the people did not find out the mystery of the reason for that act; however, the prophet was God's representative and his act was God's. The prophet did that as God had found that expedient and even Moses with all his knowledge and cognition could not understand that.

In this anecdote, the king is a symbol of 'lofty spirit' that had been abandoned from the 'High World' and is capture in the 'world of senses' and 'body cage'. The maiden is a symbol of 'human's ego' at its meanest stages. Her love to the goldsmith is a secret that releasing from 'worldly mean properties' is not

possible except 'the assistance and guidance of a Godly sage'.

Rumi formed this anecdote by using different themes from *Char Maghale* (The Four Articles) of *Nezami Aruzi*, *Eskandarnama* (The Account of Alexander) of *Nezami* and *Ghanun* (The law) of Avicenna. By adding some elements innovatively, Rumi narrates a story of 'our state' and as it is his way in narrating this story, from each element of this anecdote, Rumi came to a conclusion.

The very theme of Rumi's words here is that the human in the 'Life Highway' is captured by 'his mean ego' unwillingly and this very ego is entrapped by worldly mean properties. Rumi considered the way of releasing from this entrapment as 'an inner clamor' that causes 'the Forgiver's favors' and as a sincere turning to The Right to appear a Godly Physician in favor of a broken heart and in curing that the Absolute Magic can be seen that how with its assistance the dust of the mean properties would be removed from the mirror of the heart and following the steps in the God's Path is possible in this world.

The Parrot and the Grocer's Businessman

A poor parrot lost its head feathers by the blow the grocery man, in whose grocer's shop the parrot is kept, hit it. So, it kept sitting silent and sorrowful in one corner of the shop and did not speak with anybody. The grocery man hit it as a punishment for it had broken the oil jars when it escaped from a cat. The parrot not speaking was continued until it saw a bald-headed *ghalandar* (a Gnostic group that as one of their customs, its members made themselves bald) wearing woolen clothes among the bazaar passer-bys. It shouted enthusiastically: 'why did you become bald? Did you break the oil jars too?'

The theme of the story is drawing 'false analogies' and expressing the state of the 'sages' of God compared to the common people. Rumi brought this story to justify the deed of 'the Godly physician' in the story of 'King's Falling in Love to a Slave Maiden' to clarify this thought indicating that there is something wrong in killing the goldsmith, which is a symbol of the worldly properties, by the physician as the deeds of 'the Perfect' cannot be compared to the

common's. From Rumi's view point the major mistakes of the common people is due to such wrong analogy drawings, analogies that cause unbelievers to consider the prophets and god selected people as themselves and not to be able the wonderful differences that are between those selected ones and themselves.

Naturally, this story For Rumi is like a glass in that he put the seeds of lofty sciences and high knowledge and in this way he attempts to tell what can't be told by daily words and Rumi by these stories clarified one of his most significant principles and he explains there that the prophets and selected people are different or had been become different and the God's features had filled their entire existence and the reason they live among the common people is to guide and to grant favors and blessings to the commons.

The Jewish King's Dogmatism

At the time of the dawn of Christianity and beginning of its prevalence among different tribes, a dogmatic king that was still Jewish, was determined to eradicate Christianity. So, he killed many faultless people under

the pretext of supporting his religion and as he found out that many Christians could save their lives by dissimulating, he consulted with his sly minister to be able to recognize these Christians too. The sly minister designed a plan. So he recommended the king to sentence him to death for being a Christian but later to refuse of killing him and just after ordering for the minister dismembering, to exile him to another city. Then the minister would join those Christians and would deceive them to make them love and trust him and after that he would plan to annihilate them.

This plan was successful and the minister by putting himself on a show of piety could be accepted by the Christians to that extent that all Christians became his follower whole-heartedly. In an appropriate opportunity, he called his twelve followers that he had chosen as his probable successor and gave each of them a scroll. In all scrolls, the minister had written that the follower would be his definite successor so he had to follow the scroll instructions that in fact were in contrast with the Jesus' true teachings. Then, the minister killed himself. Consequently, the twelve selected Christians and their followers started a war

with each other as each follower regarded himself the true successor. In those wars many Christians lost their lives.

During the Rumi's life period, the Crusades did not come to an end and the Muslims and the Christians were still killing each other under the title of the religion. Even different Islamic sects were arguing hostilely. The Shia from one side and other Sunna denominations like Hanafi, Shafe'I, Hanbali, and Maleki from another side were thirsty to each other's blood. They even were in contrast with followers of Sufism and other philosophical thoughts and their followers were bothered. In such situation, Rumi himself that was not secure from the superficial clergymen's bothering and annoyances criticized the dogmatism in this story and by that he clearly said that the only difference between God men is at the surface level otherwise the 'truth' and messages of The Perfect words is just one.

There is a delicate point in connections of Rumi's story series as by the end of the story of 'King's Falling in Love to a Slave Maiden', he talks about the anthropoid evils that they don't have to be trusted and

given the dexterity and positions by which they put themselves on the show of piety and this is a spiritual connection to the beginning of the story related to the late periods of the first Christian century or the beginning of the second Christian Century that is a story about the religious dogmatism of the nescient people and the plans and intrigues of those seeking the leadership over the nescient.

In that story an anthropoid evil in a role of a minister founded an unthinkable sedition based on the blindly following of the king and the commons' nescient.

The Description of Islam Prophet in the Bible

In the Bible some features of the Islam Prophet is mentioned. Some of the Christians when facing the name and adjectives used for the Prophet while studying the Bible expressed his name with a lot of dignity and respects. They kissed that honored name on the bible pages while they were others that did not do that. In the continuation of the story of that sly minister of the Jew king, Rumi said that the warring Christians could survive finally due to the very respect they had for the name of the Islam Prophet

۱۰

(Peace be upon him) and His name protected them like a strong fence.

Another Jew King

Doubtless, what are written about the torturing of Najran Christians by 'Zonavas' are all originated from the Holy Quran in that it refers to this incidents that 'Akhduiyān were killed in a ditch full of fire... Towers Sura, verses: ٤٠-٤١. In fact the Holy Quran there refers to a full of fire ditch on that the disbelievers were sitting and killed and burned those believers in God with a sever hatred. This incident also so painful that caused many researchers and historians to gather and retell what they could find from every scattered source.

A summary of the narration of this incident, mentioned in Sa'alabi's 'the prophets' stories', is as follows:

One of the followers of Christianity on Najran (a Northern place in Yemen) advertised for Christianity and some people joined him. The Jewish king there called 'Zonavas' opposed them and said: "If you don't

converted back to Judaism, I will burn you all. Finally he burnt many Christians that their numbers that had been mentioned to ٧٠ thousand are recorded different in different accounts. Zonavas was the last king of Homayer tribe. By the end of his ruling, the army of Abyssinia, who were Christian, attacked him and added his territory to their land. In another narration it was mentioned that the incident happened as that king had been idol-worshipper and Akhdudiyān had been God worshipper and it seemed that Rumi used the narration of Sa'alabi as his source.

Reasons pertaining to that horrible incident are very different in different accounts of historians and Quran interpreters but our trust is based on the accounts that are similar more to what mentioned in Quran. According to some interpreters one of the Najran Christians, 'Dus ZuSa'alabian' could escape from Zonavas and for asking for justice he went to the court of Roman Kaiser that was Caser Justin (٥١٨-٥٢٧ A.D.). As Caser Justin could not mobilize his army to the land of Zonavas due to the distance, he wrote a letter to Negus, the king of Abyssinia, since his religion was similar to the Christian to take your right.

Consequently, Negus according to the caser request dispatched an army of ٧٠ thousand to Yemen and after capturing there added that land to his territory. By the death of Zonavas that according to some accounts he was killed by some of Christians and according to others he committed a suicide in the sea, the sorrowful incident of Najran came to an end.

However there are many accounts about Zonavas, the most definite and logical statement about him is that he was inviting the Najran Christians to idol-worshipping and not Judaism so he was certainly an idol-worshiper.

Christian and Greek sources regard the date of Abyssinian-Yemenis the year of ٥٤٢ B.C. The researchers wrote that the Abyssinians attempts to take Yemen had been started many years before that date and sometimes they won and sometimes failed that their attempts or wars was quite victorious at the time of Zonavas. This war seemingly for supporting of Christianity and the Christians and while Abraha of Abyssinia seemingly fought Zonavas for religious purposes, his real purpose was to expand the Abyssinians' penetration to the middle of Arabian

lands. Even the Kiser of Eastern Rome by writing a letter to Negus was following political and economic motivations and he was keen to take the Arabian lands from the hands of the Arabs and replaced them with the governments of Egypt and governments of other lands of his emperorship as these lands were the main connecting road of different territories and were one of the most important economic bases of that time since these lands were adjacent to Beabelmandeb Strait that connects Red sea to the Indian ocean and was located in the middle of Arabic and African lands. So following this plan he decided to add the Southern Arabian lands to his emperorship by means of religion. To do that, he even dispatched some groups of clergymen and missionaries to different parts of those lands to prepare the feelings and minds of the people residing there for the Roman penetration. Thus, He made Abyssinians to attack Yemen.

This story of Akhdudiyan is in fact the continuation of the hideous tradition that was mention in Rumi's story of 'The Jew King's Dogmatism' in which the torturing and chastising of the Christians by their opposing tribe was stated. The main purpose of the

story is to express 'the believers' patience and persistence' against the cruelties and disturbances of unbelievers. In this story that according to most of the interpreters the cruel king had been taken as Zonavas, the king of Homeyri tribe of Yemen, and had been told that they were living about a century before the advent of Islam, the full of fire ditch of the king could not make the Christians to convert from their religion while many of them had been burnt. Sa'alabi in his 'The Quranic Stories' wrote that at the time of burning the Christians, a woman that was converted to Christianity with her three children was taken to the ditch. As she refused to convert, two of her children were set to the fire and as they were about to put her baby to the fire too, she was about to convert that suddenly the baby started to talk and said: "What are you doing, mom? Take care not to convert from your faith."

In Rumi's story, the Jewish king made the believers to 'touch the grounds with their foreheads before the idols'. This is a symbol of his own 'ego idol' that would not accept anything except his words and manners and his egoism is of the type of the Jewish

king's of the Bules story and their spirit homogeneity placed them in the way of cruelty and egomania.

Deforming of the Mouth

An unbeliever and ignorant man during the life time of the holy Prophet of Islam (Peace be upon Him) called the name of the Prophet ridiculously, therefore because of this hideous act of him, his mouth deformed in a way he pronounced the name of the Prophet.

The relation of the meaning of this story with the story of 'Another Jew King' is in this point that the devil nature of the Jewish king that was determined to destroy people's reputation, believe and honesty and this story indicates the above-mentioned story that is about an evil nescient that intended to disgrace of the God's messenger (Peace be upon him).

The gist of the stories is this fact that it is impossible to stand up against God and one who does such thing based on his stupidity, he stands up against his own soul and reputation.

The Lion and His Preys

This story is retold from the book of ‘Kelila va Demna’. The stories like these are called analogies of animals and some of these stories that are told by Rumi are taken from ‘Kelile’.

This story is a parable of this story of ‘Kelila va Demna’ that once upon a time as the animals of a plain were constantly afraid from the presence of a lion and they could not have fun at all, so they went to the lion and promised him if he quit hunting them, every day a chose an animal and took that to the lion as his prey. Since the lion found that suggestion satisfactory, he agreed and the animals fulfilled their commitment until it became the turn of a rabbit to be the lion’s prey. He asked his companions to wait a little before sending him to the lion. His friends agreed. After passing some hours from the lion’s lunch time, the rabbit set off to him and when he arrived the lion, he asked the rabbit about the reason of his late coming. The rabbit replied that it had been the turn of another rabbit to be the lion’s prey and as they were coming to him another lion that had been

near a water well took that rabbit forcefully regardless to my words saying that rabbit is your, our king's, prey. The lion became furious and said: "You have to show me that rude lion." The rabbit moved toward the well and the lion followed him until they reached the well. The rabbit said: "As I am afraid of that lion, if our king keeps me in his arms, I will show you that lion down in the well." The lion kept him in his arm and bent down the well and he saw his own picture having the rabbit in his arms and he became assured that there was a lion down the well with his prey rabbit. He put the rabbit down on the ground and for fighting his imaginary lion jumped down the well or according to Rumi to the well he himself had dug before himself.

In this story the lion is a symbol of 'an arrogant tyrant' that the rabbit of 'soul' pushes him down the well of 'ambitiousness.' the lion like many socially upper-class commons did not find out to the fact that they are deceived and are misguided and in their imagination they like to be appreciated for the faith and knowledge they don't have.

While in a part of Rumi's story the 'rabbit' symbolizes thinking about solutions but generally in the entire parts of the story it is the symbol of 'inspired wisdom', 'revealed wisdom' and 'a symbol of Godly messengers'.

During this story and during the frequent exchanges of questions and answers between the lion and the preys and between the rabbit and the preys, the issues of 'reliance on God and striving', 'science and revealing' and 'destiny and willingness' are discussed. At last, the wrath and greed of the lion made him humiliated and striving and science also could not prevent his death that is his destiny.

Azrael's Look

An anxious and agitated man entered the court of Solomon and begged him to order the wind to take him to India as he was so frightened of the fearful look that Azrael cast on him. Prophet Solomon accepted his request and in a meeting he had with Azrael later asked about the reason for his wrath toward that man. Azrael answered that the reason of his wrath was as God had ordered him to take that

man's life in India and he got shocked and angry when he saw that men there and not in India.

Nasty Interpretation of the fly

A fly was sitting on a straw in a ditch full of flowing donkeys' urinate. According to an improper analogy it considered itself as a sailor, the straw as a ship and the ditch as a sea. He was very satisfied and pleased of his imagination.

This story that in Rumi's book was mentioned after the story of 'The Lion and The Rabbit' was brought there to show the importance of following the great (people) and it symbolizes the states of 'guidance claimants' and 'claiming followers' that in the 'world of imagination' consider their states as the states of 'the perfect' and regard themselves similar to them. This story is a warning to the followers of the path of God not to consider themselves as a criterion of reality as the everybody's world is as much as he can conceive. The deeper and more expanded one's insight, the wider and more expanded his world and he can perceive more elevated realities. The fly that is exemplified for tininess and humiliation is a symbol

for the limitedness of God's cognition that is the impediment of perfection. If this short-sighted and pondering creature leaves drawing analogies to himself like that fly that would become a phoenix would reach the Perfect.

The Hoopoe and the Salomon

When the kingly tent of the Solomon was placed in a plain, all the birds found him congenial rushed to his presence. Every bird rushed to him and each of the birds started to talk about his skills and abilities until it was the time of hoopoe. He claimed that while flying high in the skies, he could see the waters beneath the lands. And he could recognize the origins and colors of the waters. So, the hoopoe suggested Salomon to take him with his army to use him for supplying water for quenching the army's taste. The prophet Salomon that found the hoopoe a useful companion in dry deserts accepted his request. The crow out of jealousy said: "If his claim is right how he can't see a trap under a layer of soil.' the hoopoe answered: "my sharp-sighted eyes can see traps under a layer of soil from the height of the sky if God's

determined fate does not close my wisdom's eyes and I am not drunk from the wine of egoism due to His disfavor.”

The theme of this story lies in this reality that in the presence of written ‘Divine destiny’, the wisdom of the sharp eyes is not working and human's knowledge is of no use and his thoughts and plans will not help.

Rome Messenger and Omar

Rome emperor sent a messenger to Omar at the time of his caliphate. As the messenger had found previous kings and governors in their splendid palaces in his previous missions, asked about the place of Omar's palace. Muslims replied him that Omar has no palace and his bright soul is his palace. After searching awhile, the messenger found him lying under a palm with no bodyguard. He got wonderfully bewildered as how Omar that had conquered some countries by fighting with his sword and now was ruling over them was lying on the ground with a patched clothe and without any concern.

Rome messenger while was trembling out of the reverence of Omar waited until Omar woke up after awhile and called him to move to him and as Omar found that man seeking the world mysteries, planted the pure seeds of sciences and world mysteries in the land of his soul as a perfect master.

Rumi as his usual committed method in story telling is uses the story of 'Rome Messenger and Caliph Omar' as a glass to plant his intended theme seed in that glass. In that story the messenger is the symbol of 'an inexperienced follower of God's Path' and Omar is a symbol of 'the perfect master' and their conversations is full of mystical subtleties and nuances. The sharpness of the story words is indicative of other stories and valuable deep discussions.

In this story the gist is how and what is the quality of belonging of the 'soul' to the 'body' and 'holy spirit' to 'terrestrial body'. If the soul in a purely clean world can fly and have such freedom, why and how it is bind and captured in an earthly frame? In the layers of the answer given to this subtle question, other issues

such as Divine power and wisdom and its state and position, willingness and fatalism and... are stated.

Adam's Fault and Satan's Sin

Quran: Araf Sura verses: ١٢/٧ They say: "Oh! God, we were cruel to ourselves."

Araf Sura verses: ١٦/٧ He said: "Oh! God, since you deceived me on Your Right Path I ambush them."

In Rumi's story, both Adam and the Satan confessed their sins but the Satan attributed seduction of Adam to god and some of the interpreters said that the Satan by saying God: "since You deceived me,..." meant that you examined me by Your decree for touching the ground with my forehead before the Adam and I was deceived and became misled. Even according to some interpreters, the Satan did not accept to bend to touch the ground with his forehead before someone else except God due to the zealousness and prejudice in his Faith.

The Satan was misled or according to his own words was deceived as he thought that the order to bend before Adam is as God desired to examine his

sincerity and degree of worshiping; therefore, he attempted to maintain his firmness while the spirit of obedience and its bases is in following the orders.

The Parrot and the Merchant

A merchant was decided to travel to India so asked his talking parrot that what gift he wants. The parrot just asked the merchant to be his messenger of his pains of separation from his friends and his enthusiasms of unity with them. When arriving India and meeting a group of parrots, the merchant gave the message and he wonderfully witnessed that one of those parrots trembled badly immediately after hearing the news and fell down the tree. After returning home, he told the parrot what had happened sorrowfully and regretfully. He saw more wonderfully that his parrot trembled too and fell down. The merchant after bewailing and lamenting a lot for his euphonious parrot, took him out of his cage and then the parrot flew and sat on a tree and when the parrot noticed the merchant's wonder, told him that the Indian parrot with his act taught him to pretend himself to death to be able to get released from the cage.

This story is also a format for clarifying and exemplifying the bases that the mystics presented in their path seeking the Perfection and they regarded salvation and human's 'spiritual perfection' in 'annihilation of his attachments' and 'a death before death'. This anecdote is a perfect parable of human's soul states in this world and his prosperity. The result pointed out at the end of the story is that 'body is the cage of the soul'.

Moses and the Wizards

By the order of the Pharaoh, the wizards were gathered before him on the occasion of a particular celebration that was the celebration of the time when Nile became full of water or another celebration to compete Moses as being hopeful to their dexterities, they longed a valuable present from the Pharaoh. As Fakhr Razi said: "Before Moses, they showed politeness and modesty and allowed Moses to start while out of his modesty, Moses asked them to start. And told them: "You cast." (Sura: Sha'ra ٤٣/٢٦). This modesty and politeness of them caused their salvation and believe as it will be read in this story of Rumi.

Anyhow, the wizards started the competition and cast their sticks and strings on the ground and by using wonderful magic made people there to be frightened to a great extent (Sura: Eraf (Confession) ١١٦/٧) as their sticks and strings were moving and twisting like snakes. Moses cast his stick on the ground. It turned to a dragon and devoured all those magic of the wizards. The wizards put their foreheads on the ground wonderfully and they said: “we converted to the religion of Moses and Aaron’s God (Sura: Taha ٦٥-٧٠/٢٠). What God’s will did by Moses’ hands was so influential and overwhelming on the wizards’ thoughts, feelings and believes in a second that they regarded Pharaoh’s threats while he yelled them that he would cut their limbs asymmetrically and would hang them on palms nothing and replied they would not afraid of Pharaoh’s threat and they would lose nothing from his side as they turned to their Creator. They hoped God to forgive their faults as they were among the first believers (Sura: Sha’ra ٥٠-٥١/٢٦). The Pharaoh did not convert his believe and kept being insurrected. He encountered many heavenly calamities. There were famine and drought and a storm of cockroach, grasshopper and toad fell down

on them and all water of the brooks and rivers in his land turned to blood. In all cases of these calamities the Pharaoh asked Moses to request God to finish those and then He would believe in Him but as God finished those calamities, the Pharaoh broke his promise and finally he was drowned in sea as Godly revenge. This is the punishment of those that consider the right's signs as lies (Araf: ١٣٠-١٣٦/٧).

Now maybe this question is brought up that why God's miracles for Moses are of magical kind. This is the question that its answer can be gotten by referring to the ancient history of Egypt as the prophets' miracles of that time is very similar with the issues dominant among the people of that time. The ancient history of Egypt is apparently full of accounts about magic and wizards. This shows us that people's minds and lives of that time were involved with such issues to a very great degree so for the reason of homogeneity with such issues, Moses' miracles is of that type. Similarly, since during the time of the Islam's Prophet (Peace be upon Him), people's lives and minds were involved with poems, the poets, words and eloquence more than anything else, the

Prophet put a miracle of the same type of eloquent words (God's words, Quran) before them for the purpose of homogeneity with such atmosphere and culture. Quran was fluent and eloquent to that degree that it made words and poems of the resourceful Arab poets to sound ineloquent and everybody in any circle of that time was talking about the eloquence, subtleties and nuances and wonders of Quran that its coherent and wonderful structure has nothing for the most meticulous critics.

Let us turn back to the story of Moses' miracles. He was appointed to prophethood that Egypt's people evidently from their literal works like the stories of 'Xofo and Magicians' written on a papyrus (Vestkar) were enchanted with magic and believed in magic to that limit that they asked magic for assistance for all their tasks.

The third story of the papyrus of 'Xofo and Magicians', which is kept in Berlin museum, titled 'the story of the seduced wife', is the story of a diviner whose wife has illegal relationships with a young man. When the diviner found out to their relationship, he got that his wife had her dates with

that man in a hut by a lake and when the date days finish the young swam the lake and went back home. The diviner that is a wizard made a crocodile of wax and after reciting a spell on the crocodile, put it on the lake. Then the wax crocodile became a real big one and after hunting the young man, went under the water. The diviner express his complains to the king and the king accompanied him to the lake to see the young man as a proof for his claims. When they reached the lake, the diviner called the crocodile and it came to the lake surface as it had the young man in its month.

In another story of that papyrus titled 'the story of Songhoru King and Palace Maidens' (Songhoru is the first king of the forth dynasty of ancient Egypt), the king with some of his beautiful maidens went sailing on the palace lake and as one of the jewelries of the maidens fell into the lake and she insisted on having that very jewelry, the king has to summon the palace diviner immediately and asked him to push the whole lake water into a part of that to allow the servants walk on the lake bed to find the jewelry. The diviner did so by reciting a spell and after the jewelry was

found, he turned the lake back to its natural form by reciting another spell.

In the papyrus, there is another story of a wizard that by reciting spells, made the cut heads and bodies of a goose, a duck and two bulls alive in a way they moved toward each other and joined each other.

By referring to these myths, we can understand the story of 'Moses and Pharaoh's Wizards' well and we can understand the reason of the Pharaoh's slanders to Moses and his brother Aaron about their masteries in magician by which they were intended to conquer the Egypt and to banish Egyptian and to bring the Jews to Egypt.

The Old Harpist

During the Omar's time, there was a minstrel that had a very beautiful voice. The sound of his harp and singing would make everybody crazy out of happy feelings caused by his singing and harp sound. Passing the time made him old and his voice was not as beautiful as it was and soon no one liked him anymore. The old harpist that became disappointed

from everybody turned to God and went to Medina cemetery and while talking with God he said: “As there is no other way for my income, today I am your guest.” So he started to ply the harp for the God and asked his some silk cloth for the payment. He played to that extent that fell asleep. As he was asleep, God made the caliph Omar felt sleepy badly out of a sudden. Omar understood that this feeling is because of a purpose so he slept too. While asleep, Omar heard God’s voice addressing him that He had an especially respectful follower so Omar had to fulfill his request. God told Omar to give the harpist seven hundred gold coins from the treasury and to tell the harpist whenever that coins finished, he came back to God again and play for Him to receive his money. When Omar woke up, he went to the cemetery and searched there and found no one else except that harpist. He wondered if the harpist could be God’s especially respectful follower. Before that he whipped some people disobeying religious law so how he could give some money of the treasury to a harpist. After searching inside the cemetery for another time he came to the conclusion that God’ special follower

is the harpist and told himself that no one is aware of God's mysteries.

So, he sat politely and silently by the old harpist until he sneezed suddenly and made the harpist awake. When he saw Omar with his special reverence sitting above his head he thought that Omar came to punish him so he started to shake out of fear. Omar told him to not be afraid of him as he brought him the God's message and added that God greets you and is taking care of your sorrows. Then Omar told him what he had heard in his sleep. After hearing those words, the harpist became so regretful about his past that why instead of praying Him, he had spent his life in playing the harp. Due to a state he felt inside himself, he repented while crying and his internal change was so great that he passed away their and left this world to the eternal world here after.

The main point and the gist of this story is that 'reaching God' and 'acceptable prayers' do not have any special forms or manners. The most important condition to receive God's attention is 'sincere necessities', 'heart sadness', 'breaking of the heart' and 'a feeling of shelterlessness'. Having any of such

conditions will cause God have favor to His follower in a particular way and a sincere prayer to God is more acceptable than fanciful rituals of prayer.

In Rumi's story, the setting is Medina that had many famous musicians and ministerial and was the center of caliphate during the time of the three of first four caliphs. The other point that makes Rumi's story different from Attar's is this point that in Rumi's story the Caliph Omar has the role of the Abusayid in helping the old harpist while Omar was a caliph that was famous for his inflexibilities in religion affairs and carried a whip to hit those not observing religious rules and was very sever in following religious musts and must n'ts and Abusayid is an intellectual, far-sighted and happy Sheikh that held the ceremonies of mystics' dancing and unlike superficial observers that considered persuading of purification would be gained by exerting force, he considered that through the dominancy of divine attraction and state. Thus, he acted accordingly.

The gist of this story is this fact that 'negligent soul' that is plunged in 'the sensibilities of the visible world' that 'the old harpist' symbolizes it when

becomes disappointed from the creatures and turn to the Creator, broken-hearted and with injured-sensations, can enter God's sanctuary that is for His close followers by enjoying Godly favors. The story also indicates that 'not to look down at any unbeliever ever' as they may become a believer right before the time of their death and for the magnanimous things are not difficult and with a single sincere sigh a long scroll of sins will be cleared.

The story of 'The Old Harpist' is of folklore type that its similar stories can be found in many literatures with a slight difference. In French religious literature of the middle ages, there is a similar story titled 'The magician of our Lady'. The differences between this story and of 'The Old Harpist' are due to the differences of customs between West and East. In this French story, an old magician wanted to participate in the prayers held in a church. As he could not participate in prayers, stealthily he started to dance before the picture of the saint Mary and kept dancing to that extent that died and fell on the ground. When the monks found him dancing before his death, they accused him for disrespecting the sacred picture of St.

Mary. At this moment, St. Mary and angels appeared and took the magician's soul with themselves to the heaven and because of this incident the monks would believe in him and would bury him with full respect.

The Invisible World Rain

Islam Prophet (Peace be upon Him) went to the cemetery for the funeral of one of his companions. While returning as Ayeshe (one of the Prophet's wife) saw the Prophet, she went toward him and after moving her hands over his clothes, she found them dry. So she told the Prophet surprisingly: "Your clothes are not wet of today rain." the Prophet replied: "With what did you cover your head at the time of rain?" She said: "With your robe." The Prophet said: "the rain you saw was not a natural rain and it was a rain from the invisible world. You saw that rain as you covered your head with my robe."

The gist of this story is that there are other invisible worlds besides this world of sensibilities that eyes are not able to see them and with the eyes seeing mysteries those spiritual worlds can be seen. There are rains and skies in those worlds that will be apparent to

the God mystics in their researches and intuitions. To emphasize on this point, in this story there is a verse of San'i (another Persian mystic poet). This research-like clarification about invisible worlds is like the Plato's theories that in his idea, whatever that is in the world of sensation is generally existed in the invisible world too.

The compassion-seeker Pillar

This story refers to a famous story that based on that the Prophet's mosque in Medina had a platform facing Kiblah that thick trunks of palms were used there as pillars and frames. The roof of the mosque was made of trees branches. During one of His sermons, the Prophet was speaking while leaning on one of the trunks. One day, one of the Prophet's companions with his permission made him a pulpit to stand on him while speaking to let everybody be able to see Him. When the Prophet was on that pulpit, the trunk leaned toward Him. The Prophet (Peace be upon Him) said: "Oh, pillar! Stay in your position calmly." Then He told the companions: "This trunk complained." Then He told: "Oh, pillar! Stay calmly

if you wish me to place you in the Paradise to feed the good men by your fruits and if you desire I can make you the tree as you were. The pillar chose the Paradise.”

The gist of the narration is that the awareness about the world mysteries is located in all creatures of the entire universe. About this point, there are many Quranic verses and narrations such as: Israa: ٤٤/١٧, there is nothing in the world that does not pray thankfully and graciously but you cannot understand their thankful, gracious prayers.



Nahid Abqhari is a famous Iranian Rumi researcher who has conducted extensive research in human sciences. Due to deep devotion to Jalal ad-din Rumi the writer has spent most her time to introduce the great mystical scholar and his outstanding works to the Iranians and to the world at large. By carefully studying Rumi's works and the books written about Rumi, the author has produced a series of valuable books about the great mystic scholar.

Her book entitled 'Description of Mathnavi' containing 6 thousand lines is a comprehensive commentary on Rumi. In another book entitled 'A Spiritual Study of Stories of Mathnavi' Abqhari has

collected a lovely summary of almost all the stories, parables, anecdotes and allegories in the Mathnavi. Beside 'Stories of Rumi's Mathnavi' which has been described above, the author has written two other books entitled 'Articles about Mathnavi' and 'The Story of the Reed'. Nahid Abqhari is living in Mashhad and is compiling other books of commentary about Rumi.

Pol Literary & Translation Agency

Contact Person: Majid Jafari

www.pol-ir.com info@pol-ir.com

manager@pol-ir.com

***Unit.9, No.138, Azadi Ave, Shadmehr
Str.***

Tehran-Iran

[Tel:+98 21 66159346](tel:+982166159346)

[Fax: +98 21 66087895](tel:+982166087895)



