



## AN ANALYSIS OF SPIRITUALISM IN RUMI'S MATHNAWI

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## AN ANALYSIS OF SPIRITUALISM IN RUMI'S MATHNAWI

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### ABSTRACT:

*This aim and purpose of this article is to analyse spiritual aspects in Rumi's Mathnawi (Spiritual couplets). His Mathnawi gives plenty of stories which are based on spiritual message. He also highlights good and evil whereas the readers know the consequences of evil results become evil. Rumi gives allegorical interpretations of allegorical stories how to find the right path. Mathnawi expresses about the connection of humans with God through any special person and such special person has some attributes and elements. In this research, the qualitative research is applied i.e textual analysis and close reading. The research is expected to fill the gap in the research about Rumi and Mathnawi from the dimension of Spiritualism, as most of the earlier researches are done on Rumi and Mathnawi from mystic point of view.*

KEYWORDS: Good and Evil, Allegorical interpretation, Spiritualism, harmony and peace.

### RUMI'S MATHNAWI:

Nicholson adds that Jalal-u-Din Muhammad Rumi, also known as Jalal-u-Din Muhammad Balkhi, and more popularly simply as Rumi (30th September 1207 – 17th December 1273), was a 13th century Persian poet, faqih, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic originally from Greater Khorasan. Rumi's influence transcends national borders and ethnic divisions: Iranians, Tajiks, Turks, Greeks, Pashtuns, Other central Asian Muslims, and the Muslims of South Asia have greatly appreciated his spiritual legacy for the past seven centuries. He is buried in Kunya,

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Turkey<sup>1</sup>. His Mathnawi (Spiritual couplets) is one of the most influential works of Sufism. It has been viewed by many commentators as the greatest mystical poem in world literature. The Mathnawi is a series of six books of poetry that together amount to around 25,000 verses or 50,000 lines. It is a spiritual text that teaches Sufis how to reach their goal of being truly in love with God. Spiritualism in Rumi's Mathnawi is the main topic of this study, but for the sake of narrowing down, two selected stories from Mathnawi have been taken in focus i.e. "Harut and Marut" and "Hoopoe and Solomon".

#### **WORKS OF RUMI:**

Rumi's works include Mathnawi, Diwan-e-Shams Tabrizi, Fihi Ma Fihi, Majales-e-Sab and Makatib. After Mathnawi, Diwan-e-Shams Tabrizi is other major work which is named in honour of Rumi's master Shams, it contains 35000 Persian couplets and 2000 Persian quatrains, the Divan contains 90 Ghazals and 19 quatrains in Arabic, a couple of dozen couplets in Turkish and 14 couplets in Greek. Fihi Ma Fihi (In It What's In It) provides a record of seventy-one talks and lectures given by Rumi on various to his disciples. Majales-e-Sab's (Seven Sessions) contains seven Persian sermons or lectures given in seven different assemblies. The sermons themselves give a commentary on the deeper meaning of Quran and Hadith. Makatib (The letters) is the book containing Rumi's letters in Persian to his disciples, family members, and men of state.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

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<sup>1</sup> Nicholson, RA. 2005 The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I & II. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

Q.1. what is Spiritualism?

Q.2. what are the elements of Spiritualism in Rumi's Mathnawi?

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

Research methods include all the techniques and methods which have been taken for conducting research whereas research methodology is the approach in which research troubles are solved thoroughly. It is a science of studying how research is conducted systematically. In this research, qualitative research is applied, and the main tools of research are textual analysis and close reading.

As Denzin and Lincoln add that, Qualitative research is bases on interpreting data itself. It focuses on textual analysis and close reading. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.<sup>2</sup>

Qualitative research is a systematic scientific inquiry which seeks to build a holistic, largely narrative, description to inform the researcher's understanding of a social or cultural phenomenon. "One undertakes qualitative research in a natural setting where the researcher is an instrument of data collection who gathers words or pictures, analyzes them inductively, focuses on the meaning of participants, and describes a process that is expressive and persuasive in language".<sup>3</sup> Burke in her publication writes that "Close reading is thoughtful, critical analysis of a text that focuses on significant details or patterns in order to develop a

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<sup>2</sup> Denzin, N.K and Lincoln, Y.S 2018. The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. California: Sage Publication, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> Creswell, J.W 1998. Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions. California: Sage Publications, Inc.

deep, precise understanding of the text's form, craft, meanings, etc. It is a key requirement of the Common Core State Standards and directs the reader's attention to the text itself".<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Rumi's Mathnawi is analysed with close reading of the selected stories in order to find Spiritualism in textual lines.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW:

Latif asserts that Jalal-u-Din Muhammad Rumi's Mathnawi gives the spiritual message to readers<sup>5</sup>. It is a spiritual text that teaches Sufis how to reach their goal of being truly in love with God. Further, the writer says that spiritualism gives the lesson of harmony and peace by reading allegorical texts i.e. Mathnawi.<sup>5</sup> In the world, there are many Walis (saints) who are sincere their religious teachings. They do not only teach people but also are the men of action and deeds. The great prophets of God have been the source of connection between living and dead creations with the creator. They connect the whole universe and its entities as a single whole. Rumi's purpose behind Mathnawi is to teach the lesson of good and evil.

Tanyi defines Spirituality as "a personal search for meaning and purpose in life, which may or may not be related to religion. It entails connection to self-chosen and or religious beliefs, values, and practices that give meaning to life, thereby inspiring and motivating individuals to achieve their optimal being".<sup>6</sup> According to him, nature of Spirituality is subjective, it is a quest for the meaning, aim and purpose of life and

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<sup>4</sup> Burke B.2012. A Close Look as Close Reading: Scaffolding Student with Complex Texts. NBCT. [https://nieonline.com/tbtimes/downloads/CCSS\\_reading.pfd](https://nieonline.com/tbtimes/downloads/CCSS_reading.pfd).

<sup>5</sup> Latif, A. 2009. *Qur'anic Narrative and Sufi Hermeneutics: Rumi's Interpretations of Pharaoh's Character*. New York: Stony Brook University.

<sup>6</sup> Tanyi, R.A. 2002. "Towards the Clarification of the Meaning of Spirituality". *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 39 (5): 500-509.

sometimes the spiritual person may be religious or non-religious. For this purpose, a spiritual person may take the support of religious practices, values and beliefs as their motivation if he/she is a religious one.

Tanyi further states, “This connection brings faith, hope, peace, and empowerment. The results are joy, forgiveness of oneself and others, awareness and acceptance of hardship and mortality, a heightened sense of physical and emotional well-being, and the ability to transcend beyond the infirmities of existence”<sup>7</sup> It means that this connection helps people the soulful development of a person’s inner being. It offers happiness, internal satisfaction and one’s freedom from his doomed sins and mistakes. It also provides internal and external or bodily perfection to the people and makes them able to come out of self-centered nature or selfish activities.

It is interpreted that the most prominent elements of spiritualism include deep-observation, contemplation, reflection, calmness, self-satisfaction, aloofness from worldly attachments, non-aggression, love, kindness, compassion, generosity, helpfulness, empathy, humility, open-mindedness, insightfulness, unprejudiced, self-analysis, and altruism.

Walliss has recently quoted, for a long time in Western society the prevailing view of the grieving process of the ‘proper’ relationship between the living and the deceased—has been the necessity of severing ties and reinvesting in other relationships. Indeed, “persons attempting to maintain ties with the dead are likely to be viewed as suffering from complicated mourning or pathological grief”.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Tanyi, R.A. 2002. “Towards the Clarification of the Meaning of Spirituality”. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 39 (5): 500-509.

<sup>8</sup> Walliss, J. 2001. “Continuing Bonds: Relationships between the Living and the Dead within Contemporary Spiritualism”. *Mortality* 6 (2): 127-145.

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From the above quotation, it can be assumed that there are some connections between living and dead and these connections are continued through many ways such as mourning, prayers, charity, etc. Such grieving processes are present in both the eastern and western societies with slight differences. As this process in the west is done by simple mourning or putting some flowers on the graves, whereas in eastern society we usually see a long process for the grief which even continues till the death of their near and close relatives. As this process in east is something like beginning with the 3rd day, then seven Fridays, and then 40th day of death and then yearly offerings and charity in the name of Allah for the deceased one.

Walliss states "Spiritualism may be seen to offer a means and a supportive environment where a type of relationship can continue between those on both sides of the 'Great Divide'. 'This relationship is in many ways a continuation of the alive one, with the deceased offering support and advice which the living can then either act on or not'.<sup>9</sup>

Walliss in above quotation seems to say that this phenomenon is sparkling from both sides of the great divide (death); not only the living ones support their deceased relatives but the deceased ones also help their living ones by suggesting, advising and even supporting in their worldly matters. In addition to that the deceased people sometimes give the messages related to worldly matters, but then it is the responsibility of the alive ones whether they obey and follow the messages of their deceased fellows or not.

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<sup>9</sup> Walliss, J. 2001. "Continuing Bonds: Relationships between the Living and the Dead within Contemporary Spiritualism". *Mortality* 6 (2): 127-145.

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In this study, the philosophy of Spiritualism with the lens of Muslim faith (Islam) is being analyzed. Islamic spiritualism is defined as the presence of a relationship with Allah that affects the individual's self-worth, sense of meaning, and connectedness with others and nature.<sup>10</sup>

One can infer from the above interpretations that the presence of connection with Allah increases one's value in society, because he or she has a sense of viewing things in his/her own way and does have spiritual relations with other people and with nature. Such people live for the sake of the others as by imitating nature's philosophy. They represent the laws, beauties and teachings of nature in front of the common people. They are the real ambassadors of nature to the people. They are the real source of the connection or union of common people with nature.

In this respect five types of Islamic texts were reviewed: a) the beautiful names of Allah (Divine attributes) for any attributes that signify Allah as a Caring, Nourishing, and Omnipresent attachment figure; b) stories of the Qur'an that signify dynamic attachment relations between Allah, His prophets, and servants; c) verses of the Qur'an that emphasize the caring and supportive relationship between Allah and His servants; d) divine sayings and prophetic inspirations that underscore Allah as a caring and supportive attachment figure; and e) suggested supplications which reveal individual's deep and dynamic relations with Allah. The possibility of insecure attachment to Allah was also examined.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Walliss, J. 2001. "Continuing Bonds: Relationships between the Living and the Dead within Contemporary Spiritualism". *Mortality* 6 (2): 127-145.

<sup>11</sup> Bonab, B.G., Miner, M., & Proctor, M.T. 2013. "Attachment to God in Islamic Spirituality". *Journal of Muslim Mental Health* 7 (2): 77-104.

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“God, ever Mighty and Majestic is He, shall say on the day of resurrection: ‘Where are those who have loved each other for the sake of My Majesty? Today I shall shelter them in My shade, on a day when there is no shade but My shade’”.<sup>12</sup>

From the above hadith, it can be assumed that religious rituals have some closeness to Islamic spirituality as they are said to provide a means to demonstrate and maintain relationship with Allah. Further, they are believed to have an outward expression of the believer's desire to maintain closeness to Allah, especially during times of psycho- spiritual or physical threat. Loving others, giving unconditional positive regard to others, and altruistic acts are said to be examples of religious virtues that demonstrate an individual's deep and sincere relationship with Allah.

Qur'anic stories and statements show that Allah is always with His prophets and His servants. In return, the prophets (Peace be upon Them) sought always to serve Allah through preaching as a service of humanity, the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) says in the *Holy Quran*: “Surely, my prayer and my devotion, my life, and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. He has no partner, and this is what I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims”.<sup>13</sup>

Mutual relationship between the Divine and human beings is thus regarded as an important Islamic value within Muslim spirituality. Evidence of this mutuality is articulated in the following prophetic saying:

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<sup>12</sup> IbnArabi, M., Hirtenstein, S. and Notcutt, M. 2004. *Divine Sayings: 101 Hadith Qudsi*. Oxford: Anqa Publishing.

<sup>13</sup> IbnArabi, M., Hirtenstein, S. and Notcutt, M. 2004. *Divine Sayings: 101 Hadith Qudsi*. Oxford: Anqa Publishing.

“God, ever mighty and majestic is He, says... ‘I am present in My servant’s thought of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me.’ If he approaches Me by a hand’s breadth, I draw near to him by an arm’s length, and if he draws near to Me by an arm’s length, I draw to him by a fathom. If he comes to Me walking, I come to him running”.<sup>14</sup>

Nasr states, “The spiritual life of Islam as it was to crystallize later in Sufi orders goes back to the Prophet (PBUH) who is the source of the spiritual virtues found in the Muslim soul. But the soul of the Prophet (PBUH) was itself illuminated by the light of God as revealed in the Quran, so that quite justly one must consider the Quranic revelations as the origin of spiritualism”.<sup>15</sup>

Nasr through above quotation seems to say that Islam is helping to clear the idea about culture and traditions connected to the Prophet (PBUH) who is the source of spiritual teachings which can be traced in the Muslim soul. He appears to say that the soul of prophet itself was enlightened by the divine light of God, which is told by the holy Quran so that the masses should know that the Quranic verses are the origin of the spiritualism.

Nasr further states, “If the soul of the prophet is the fountain of the Islamic spirituality, the Quran is like lightning which having struck the human receptacle caused this fountainhead to gush forth or like the water descending from heaven which made streams to flow this fountainhead.

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<sup>14</sup> IbnArabi, M., Hirtenstein, S. and Notcutt, M. 2004. *Divine Sayings: 101 Hadith Qudsi*. Oxford: Anqa Publishing.

<sup>15</sup> Nasr, S.H. 2008. *Islamic Spirituality*. New York, USA: Routledge.

The Quran is the origin and the source of all that is Islamic, including, of course, spiritualism”.<sup>16</sup>

The explanation of the above quotation can be attempted that if the soul of the Prophet (PBUH) is the main stream or the foundation of Islamic spirituality, then the Quran is the main source or reason behind the making or creation of that mainstream or the foundation of spirituality for common people. The Quran is the source of making it flow like a river from its peak point origin or the glaciers. Precisely he means to say that the Prophet (PBUH) is the main source of revelation of spirituality to the people like a river which provides the sweet water of spiritualism, and the holy Quran is like the origin point which gives the water to the river to provide that to people.

Nasr also states, “It is not accidental that over the ages some saintly figures have been the foremost expositors and communicators upon the Quran and that one of the greatest works of spiritualism and Sufism such as Mathnawi of Jalal-u-Din Rumi is in reality commentary upon the sacred text”.<sup>17</sup>

In the above quotation, Nasr tries to reveal that some saints have been the communicators and commentators upon the Quran since ages and that he says is not a random process but it traces back to its mainstream in chain or sequential way. Since ages and ages, these saints have been transmitting the teachings of the Quran in their own spiritual way. He says among such works of Spiritualism and Quranic teachings; the Mathnawi of Jalal-u-Din Rumi is a work of the greatest importance.

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<sup>16</sup> Nasr, S.H. 2008. *Islamic Spirituality*. New York, USA: Routledge.

<sup>17</sup> Nasr, S.H. 2008. *Islamic Spirituality*. New York, USA: Routledge.

### **TEXTUAL ANALYSIS:**

As Spiritualism has been explained in Literature Review, in this section (analysis), two stories are taken from Rumi's Mathnawi "Harut & Marut" and "Hopooe & Solomon" are analyzed from the lens of Spiritualism. Mathnawi expresses the essence of the Holy Quran because most of the stories and concepts are taken from the Quran. Below elements of spiritualism would be analysed from the above stories which are mentioned Mathnawi. As Patnaik enlists deep-observation, contemplation, reflection, calmness, self-satisfaction, aloofness from worldly attachments, non-aggression, love, kindness, compassion, generosity, helpfulness, empathy, humility, open-mindedness, insightfulness, unprejudiced, self-analysis, and altruism as the most prominent elements of Spiritualism.

### **HARUT AND MARUT:**

Nicholson expresses the story of Harut and Marut in Rumi's Mathnawi. These are two angels are analysed with spiritual message. Rumi asserts that the Quran indicates that they were a trial for the people and through them the people were tested with sorcery.<sup>18</sup>

The angels were astonished at the acts of disobedience committed by the human beings on earth, claiming they would do better than them. Therefore, Allah challenged the angels to choose two representatives among them, who would descend to earth and be endowed with bodily desires. During their stay on earth, they fell in love with a woman (often identified with Venus). She told them she would become intimate with them if they joined her in idolatry. The angels refused and remained pious.

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<sup>18</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I & II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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Later they met her again and the woman this time stated she would become intimate with them if they drank alcohol. The angels thought that alcohol could not cause great harm and therefore, they accepted the condition. After they were drunk, they became intimate with her and after noticing a witness, they killed him. On the next day, Harut and Marut regretted their deeds but could not ascend to heaven anymore due to their sins; their link to the angels was broken. Thereupon, Allah asked them, either their punishment shall be in this world or in the hereafter. They chose to be punished on earth and therefore were sent to Babel, teaching human's magic but not without warning them that they were just a temptation (Al-Quran). Similarly, Rumi's Mathnawi teaches readers how to live well and die well. As,

“Listen to (the tale of) Hárút and Márút, O you to whose face we are (devoted) slaves and servants.

They (Hárút and Márút) were intoxicated with the spectacle of God and with the marvels of the King's gradual temptation (of them).

Such intoxication arises (even) from God's gradual temptation, so that (you may judge) what intoxications are wrought by the ascension to God”.<sup>19</sup>

In these lines, Rumi begins his poetry on the Quranic story of Harut & Marut while making his readers attentive by saying ‘Listen to (the Tale of) Harut and Marut’. Here these two angels claim to be devoted slaves and servants of God and they became excited by the sight of God and His trial of these two angels. Such intoxication and inebriation, further

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<sup>19</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

Rumi says is the result of God's ultimate trial/test as one can know that such tests are required to be near to Allah. In the above lines, love, an element of Spiritualism is noticeable when Rumi says that two angels are devoted to God so devotion is also love.

“Therefore they (Hárút and Márút), because of their feelings of intoxication, said, “Alas, we would rain upon the earth, like clouds;

We would spread in this place of injustice (a carpet of) justice and equity and devotions and faithfulness.”

This they said, and the Divine decree was saying (to them), “Stop! Before your feet there is many an unseen pitfall.”<sup>20</sup>

In these lines, Harut and Marut because of their proud ;one sort of intoxication, say that they will move on earth in the manner of rain; it means they think of themselves as blessing on earth and they say with their advent on earth, they will replace injustice with justice, equity, love etc. There and then, God commands that many unseen hindrances are there before you, and God commands them to stop. Element of self-satisfaction is seen as both the angels are satisfied but also if one see, both the angels like worldly attachments so the element of aloofness from worldly attachment is absent. And the element of self-analysis in objective way is also not present, because the two angels do not analyze themselves objectively.

“God has said that (His) servants (who are) attended by (His) help walk on the earth quietly and meekly.

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<sup>20</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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How should a bare-footed man go into the thorn-thicket  
save with halting and reflection and cautiously?

The Decree was saying this (to them), but their ears were  
closed in the (muffling) veil of their hotheadedness”.<sup>21</sup>

Here Rumi seems talking about the concept that to whom God helps, they walk on earth with humbleness and calmness. He further says that the two angels because of their carelessness do not follow God’s commands. In these lines, helpfulness, humbleness and calmness are the elements of spiritualism. Element of helpfulness is vivid from the line where it is said that those who walk on earth meekly, Allah helps those, and resultantly these people are humble and calm in nature; in fact nature itself is calm and humble as long as we the people are humble to nature as Emerson puts this philosophy in his famous essay “Nature”. Ralph Waldo Emerson says that nature is caring and protective to us as long as we are caring and protective nature.<sup>22</sup>

“(All) eyes and ears have been closed, except for them that  
have escaped from themselves.

Who but Grace shall open the eyes? Who but Love shall  
allay the (Divine) Wrath?

Truly, may no one in the world have toil without (God’s)  
prospering (it)! And God best knoweth the right course”.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu’dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

<sup>22</sup> Richardson, R.D. 1990. *Ralph Waldo Emerson Selected Essays, Lectures, and Poems*. New York, USA: Bantam Books

<sup>23</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu’dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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In above lines, Rumi means to say that eyes and ears of all are closed except ones who do not have ego and who do not have pride in self. Further Rumi says once people's eyes are closed, then Allah's blessing will open these and he says that only love can make Divine wrath, lesser. Here elements of kindness as God's grace is noticeable from the above lines, and open-mindedness and self-analysis are quite absent. Element of love is present.

“As (for example), because of their arrogance, the celebrated Hárút and Márút were smitten by the poisoned arrow (of Divine wrath).

They had confidence in their holiness, (but) what (use) is it for the buffalo to have confidence in the lion?

Though he makes a hundred shifts (to defend himself) with his horn, the fierce lion will tear him to pieces limb from limb. (Even) if he become as full of horns (prickles) as a hedgehog, the buffalo will inevitably be killed by the lion”.<sup>24</sup>

In the above lines, Maulana Jalal-u-Din Rumi seems to say that well-known angels; Harut and Marut get Divine Wrath due to their arrogance. Then, Rumi illustrates this with the examples of buffalo and says although buffalo has horns but what use of these, because lion tears buffalo to pieces limb from limb. Here Emerson's philosophy of soul and over-soul is comparable from above lines. Critically, one can say the

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<sup>24</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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element of humbleness is not present, which is an element of spiritualism.<sup>25</sup>

“Inasmuch as the sin and wickedness of the people of the world was becoming clearly visible to them both from the latticed window (of Heaven),

They began to gnaw their hands in wrath, but had no eyes for their own fault”.<sup>26</sup>

In the above lines, Rumi advances further story in his poetry and says the two angels, Harut and Marut when they saw sin and wickedness of the people of the world from the beautiful window of heaven, after which they bite their own hands in carelessness but what is the use of regret after all. In the above lines, absence of kindness and aloofness from worldly attachments have been pointed, as the two angels seems attracted towards worldly/earthly things and wickedness of the people is marked, but which one can see in the end, both become wicked.

“God said to them, “If ye are enlightened, (nevertheless) look not (with scorn) upon the doers of black deeds who have been made forgetful (of God).

Render thanks, O Host (of Heaven) and Servants (of God)!

Ye are freed from lust and sexual intercourse.

If I impose that kind of nature on you, Heaven will accept you no more”.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Richardson, R.D. 1990. *Ralph Waldo Emerson Selected Essays, Lectures, and Poems*. New York, USA: Bantam Books

<sup>26</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

<sup>27</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

Rumi further writes that Allah says them if they are enlightened, they do not ignore wrong deeds of those people who have forgotten God. In these lines, elements like reflection is observable as in the lines, Rumi writes, ones who are enlightened will not ignore wrong deeds of others, rather they will reflect and think on these.

“The preservation (from sin) which ye have in your bodies is from the reflexion of my preservation and care (of you).

Oh, beware! Regard that as (coming) from Me, not from yourselves, lest the accursed Devil prevail against you”.<sup>28</sup>

In the above lines, Rumi says that one’s free from sin are because Allah has kept them preserved and safe, and because of Allah’s care and eye on them. Further Rumi says, Allah makes them alert that all goodness that they possess is from Allah’s side and is not from their side, otherwise the devil resides in all of them as every coin has two sides, so every human has good as well as evil side. Elements of Spiritualism like reflection and kindness are present in the lines. Reflection, Allah says, people free from sin are actually reflection of my (Allah’s) preservation and that is the kindness of God.

## **THE HOOPOE AND SOLOMON**

Nicholson adds that Rumi expresses the Hoopoe and Solomon in his Mathnawi, Prophet Sulaiman/Solomon (PBUH) was a very powerful prophet and many wondrous stories are told about him. He could understand the speech of animals, even the lowly ant, but despite his

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<sup>28</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu’dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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worldly powers, he never forgot Allah. He was grateful to Allah for all his gifts and he always tried to serve Allah.<sup>29</sup>

Prophet Solomon (PBUH) had jinn and birds serving in his army as well as men. They were all kept in order and ranks, and Prophet Solomon (PBUH) demanded strict discipline among them. That is why he was very upset one day to find that one bird, the hoopoe, was absent without his consent. However, the hoopoe soon appeared to explain his absence. He had been scouting for Prophet Solomon (PBUH) in areas where Prophet Solomon (PBUH) had not yet scouted. He brought with him an account of the kingdom of Saba (Sheba).

The hoopoe reported that the kingdom of Saba was ruled by a rich and powerful queen. She and her people worshipped the sun and other idols instead of Allah. To test the truth of the hoopoe's story, Prophet Solomon (PBUH) sent a letter to the queen, greeting her and requesting her to submit to Allah.

The queen consulted with her ministers. They informed her that the country had the strength to wage a war, but they entrusted her with the decision of whether to use her armies or seek a peaceful settlement. The queen was reluctant to expose her country to the destruction and waste that would accompany a war. Instead she decided to try to please Prophet Solomon (PBUH) by sending him expensive gifts. Her chiefs and ministers agreed with her decision.

When the messengers of the queen delivered the queen's gifts to Prophet Solomon (PBUH), he rejected the gifts. He said that the gifts which he had received from Allah were infinitely better than those which

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<sup>29</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I & II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

she had sent. He sent the messengers back with the gifts and a message to the queen that she had better submit or he would send armies which would thoroughly destroy the Sabaeans and their country.

While Prophet Solomon (PBUH) was awaiting the arrival of the queen, when she would come to him in submission, he desired that her throne be brought to him. Very strong jinn offered to bring it within a matter of moments. One who had knowledge of the Book said he could bring it within the twinkling of an eye. When the throne had been placed before him, Prophet Solomon (PBUH) praised Allah and gave thanks to Allah. Prophet Solomon (PBUH) did not desire the conquest of the queen of Saba to enhance his personal power. He desired that her throne be transformed from a seat of no faith to a seat of faith in Allah, that she would lead her people in submission to Allah, not to Solomon.

Prophet Solomon (PBUH) had the queen's throne disguised in order to test whether she would accept it in its changed condition. When she arrived, she was asked whether it was her own throne. She confirmed that it was something like it and that she had been informed by Allah in advance of such a change.

When the queen was asked to enter the palace, she tucked up her skirts, because she thought she had to pass through a pool of water. Prophet Solomon (PBUH), not wishing to humiliate the queen, informed her that what she had mistaken for water was actually smooth slabs of glass which paved the courtyard. The queen acknowledged her misperceptions and submitted in Islam, with Prophet Solomon (PBUH), to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

The elements of Spiritualism are analysed in the context of Rumi's Mathnawi. As,

“To speak the same tongue is a kinship and affinity: a man, (when he is) with those in whom he cannot confide, is like a prisoner in chains.

Oh, many are the Indians and Turks that speak the same tongue; oh, many the pair of Turks that are as strangers (to each other).

Therefore the tongue of mutual understanding is different indeed: to be one in heart is better than to be one in tongue”.<sup>30</sup>

In these lines, Rumi takes affection and affinity as basis to know and speak a language which others speak, as Prophet Solomon (PBUH) knows and speaks the language of animals. Prophet Solomon says that most of these birds are Turks and Indians that speak the same language but He (the Prophet (PBUH)) points out that some are unfamiliar to each other, although they are from the same geographical area. Then, Rumi quotes Solomon (PBUH) who says mutual understanding is the most important, no matter which language do someone speak; it means to say being one in heart is better than in language. In these lines, elements of love, open-mindedness and insightfulness are being highlighted here. As knowing someone’s language shows love towards someone, mutual understanding presents the concepts of open-mindedness and insightfulness. As,

The birds, all and each, their secrets of skill and knowledge  
and practice

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<sup>30</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu’dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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We're revealing, one by one, to Solomon, and were praising themselves by way of submitting a request (for his consideration),

Not from pride and self-conceit, (but) in order that he might give them access to him.

When a captive wants a lord (to buy him as a slave), he offers a preface (summary account) of his talent".<sup>31</sup>

Rumi carries on the story further as all birds after presenting the account of their skills, request to be near to Solomon, indirectly near to Allah. Birds were giving the portfolio of their skills, only and only to get closure to Solomon (PBUH). Rumi says that it is a general fact that slave is supposed to give the account of his talent before one sells oneself. In these lines, word request shows the humbleness of the birds which is an element of Spiritualism. As birds want to be near to Solomon, it shows love and compassion of the birds which are in fact the elements of spiritualism. The turn came for the hoopoe and his craft and the explanation of his skill and thoughtfulness. Rumi expresses the skill of Hoopoe. As,

"O king," said he, "I will declare (only) one talent, which is an inferior one; 'tis better to speak briefly."

"Tell on," said Solomon; "let me hear what talent that is."

The hoopoe said, "At the time when I am at the zenith,  
I gaze from the zenith with the eye of certainty and I see the water at the bottom of the earth".<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu 'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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The above lines suggest that it is Hoopoe's turn to present its skill and talent, where Hoopoe prefers brief talk, and then Prophet Solomon (PBUH) says to proceed and Hoopoe tells that it has skill to detect water from high peaks at the bottom of the earth. Element of humbleness is vivid here from the way Hoopoe speaks and deep-observation is noticeable from the skill of Hoopoe.

“When the crow heard (this), from envy he came and said to Solomon, “He has spoken false and ill.

It is not respectful to speak in the king's presence, in particular (to utter) lying and absurd self-praise.

If he had always had this (keen) sight, how would not he have seen the snare beneath a handful of earth?”<sup>33</sup>

Here in the story, another bird crow out of jealousy, blames Hoopoe as a liar in front of Prophet Solomon (PBUH). Further crow says, Hoopoe even cannot see snare at a little difference on Earth. Hoopoe is silent on the blame of crow and unprejudiced which is apparent from its calm nature. So, being unprejudiced and calmness are the elements of Spiritualism. Further Rumi expresses in Mathnawi. As,

“He said, “O king, for God's sake do not listen to the enemy's words against me, bare beggar as I am.

If this which I claim is not (true), I lay my head (before thee): sever this neck of mine.

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<sup>32</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

<sup>33</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu'dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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The crow, who disbelieves in the (absolute) authority of the Divine destiny, is an infidel, though he has thousands of wits”.<sup>34</sup>

In these lines, Hoopoe entreats King Solomon (PBUH) that for the sake of God, to not believe crow which is its enemy. Further, Hoopoe says if it proves to be wrong then cut its (Hoopoe’s) head. Crow, which is among disbelievers, is powerless, despite the fact that it has many wits. Element of non-aggression is vivid from the way Hoopoe speaks, and Hoopoe in its speech does not show any anger or hatred for crow.

“I see the snare (when I am) in the air, if the Divine destiny do not muffle the eye of my intelligence.

When the Divine destiny comes, wisdom goes to sleep, the moon becomes black, the sun is stopped (from shining)”.<sup>35</sup>

Here Rumi seems to make us understand his philosophy through Hoopoe’s speech/talk. Hoopoe answers that it can see snare from the air if Allah does not take back its eye of intelligence, further it says that before Divine destiny, no wisdom works. From Hoopoe’s speech, it is apparent that it is an unprejudiced, open-minded and it has insightfulness.

While explaining the power of the Divine destiny, Hoopoe says that if it is like a cloud that covers sun and in front of this lions and dragons are like mice. Further, Hoopoe says that it (Hoopoe) is nothing in front of Divine decree. Rumi further quotes Hoopoe’s words which say that one, who is moral and divine law, will always prostrate in submission

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<sup>34</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu’dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

<sup>35</sup> Nicholson, R.A. 2005. *The Mathnawi Of Jalalu’dinn Rumi, Translations of Books I& II*. Karachi, Pakistan: Darul-Ishaat.

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of one's strength in front of Allah. Rumi advocates the concept that if Allah puts someone in darkness then nobody but Allah will get that someone out that darkness into light. Rumi says, Allah always tests one's life, He (Allah) blesses that someone's life again, and Allah is the healer of one's pains. Rumi writes that Allah surprises one by blessing heaven in return of one's good deeds. Finally, Rumi says that this is love and kindness of Allah to make us afraid of ill-deeds, and in this way Allah keeps us in His security and preservation.

### **CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS SPIRITUALISM:**

Tanyi adds that Spiritualism is a personal search for meaning and purpose in life, which may or may not be related to religion.<sup>36</sup> It entails connections to self-chosen and or religious beliefs, values, and practices that give meaning to life, thereby inspiring and motivating individuals to achieve their optimal being. Spiritualism contains elements; deep-observation, contemplation, reflection, calmness, self-satisfaction, aloofness from worldly attachments, non-aggression, love, kindness, compassion, generosity, helpfulness, empathy, humility, open-mindedness, insightfulness, unprejudiced, self-analysis and altruism. Spiritualism in the story of "Harut and Marut" has been depicted through the actions and attitudes of two angels towards worldly things and towards Allah. While, Spiritualism in the story of "the Hoopoe and Solomon" has been presented through the characters of mainly Prophet Solomon, Hoopoe and their

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<sup>36</sup> Tanyi, R.A. 2002. "Towards the Clarification of the Meaning of Spirituality". *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 39 (5): 500-509.

actions and attitudes towards Allah and His (Allah's) other creations.

Almost all the elements of Spiritualism are present in both the stories.

#### **LOVE:**

Love is the most prime element of Spiritualism, and is present in both the stories; Harut and Marut, and the Hoopoe and Solomon. Element of love is present in the story of Harut and Marut at one place, love has been depicted from the devotion of the two angels towards Allah.

Element of love in the Hoopoe and Solomon story is vivid when hoopoe and rest of the animals present account of their skills, just to achieve closeness of Solomon, indirectly closeness of God. So, love is present in both the stories.

#### **DEEP-OBSERVATION:**

As observation is a symbol of a wise person, as one can live better and successful life if one has good sense of observation, whereas deep-observation can only be seen in Prophets, angels, godly figures such as walis (Saints) etc. Deep-observation in “Harut and Marut” story can be seen from the God's warrant to both angels that they are pious and pure because God has kept them in His (God's) preservation and they (angels) do not know about unseen hindrances on earth that hinder humans in living a pious life. So, deep-observation of Allah is very much clear. Deep-observation in the story of “the Hoopoe and Solomon” is vivid from the skill of Hoopoe as this is its skill through which hoopoe is able to find water on earth even in depths. So, on the account of two instances, one can

say that deep-observation is a landmark element in both the stories.

#### **ALOOFNESS FROM WORLDLY ATTACHMENTS:**

Spiritual figures always sacrifice their material needs for achieving closeness of Allah. This characteristic element of Spiritualism is noticeable in the story of “Harut and Marut” through God's warrant as God says them that those are pious and pure who keep aloofness from worldly attachments. So, from this instance it is proved that concept of aloofness from worldly attachments is present in this story. In the story of the Hoopoe and Solomon (PBUH), the concept of aloofness from worldly attachments is noticeable from the Solomon’s not accepting the costly gifts from Queen Bilqees of Sheba. From here it is also proved that the element of aloofness from worldly attachments is present in this story as Solomon (PBUH) does not accept the gifts which are worldly things.

#### **KINDNESS:**

Kindness, one another landmark element of Spiritualism, is an act of kind assistance and quality to understand feelings of other people. In the story of “Harut and Marut” element of kindness is clear at a place where Allah says to both angels that His (Allah’s) kindness is for those who walk on earth meekly and humbly. Kindness in the story of “the Hoopoe and Solomon”, is noticeable from the act of Prophet Solomon (PBUH) when in the palace Queen Bilqees misunderstand glass floor as a pool of water, so Prophet Solomon (PBUH), out of kindness and respect, informs her that this is glass floor and not water pool.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Spiritualism, the belief that people who have died, can send messages to the living people, usually through a saint, prophet ,wali etc. There are many elements of spiritualism from which some have been defined above, like love, deep-observation, aloofness from worldly attachments, kindness etc. All the elements are quite vivid in the poetry of Rumi, as it is proved from the two stories; “Harut and Marut” and “Hoopoe and Solomon”. Rumi’s Mathnawi is the quest in the search of spiritual element which are analysed in the textual analysis. The readers learn from Mathnawi which teach people how to live well and die well.



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