

The Doctrine of True Love with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as Expounded by Allama Muhammad Iqbal

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ABSTRACT:

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal was a remarkable poet-philosopher of the 20th century. Iqbal wrote both in Persian and Urdu and is often regarded as the poet of the East who addressed the Muslim ummah and propounded the philosophy of Khudi (Selfhood), which called for self-realization and the discovery of the hidden talent with love and perseverance. According to Iqbal, this Self of human being is strengthened by the true love and perfect following of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). As the holy Quran declares loudly and clearly: "Say: if you do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins". This article is about the essence of Dr. Iqbal's poetry, which is the love and devotion of Allah's beloved Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ). Just like Rumi, Dr. Iqbal had a similar pattern of love for the personality of the Prophet. He made Him to be the role-model in bringing the socio-political change within the Muslim society of his time. He says to the entire Muslim Ummah in the words of Almighty Allah:

If you are loyal to Muhammad (ﷺ), then We are yours
the world is naught: The Pen of Destiny shall be yours.

Key Words: Poet-philosopher, Selfhood, Perseverance, role-model, socio-political.

Undoubtedly, the poet of the East, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, (May God have mercy on him), is one of the great poets of the world. He was a renowned scholar and professor of history, philosophy, and literature. He was well versed in many languages, but he had unparalleled mastery of Arabic, Persian and Urdu. He was more profound and comprehensive than other poets of his time. That is why his position in the art of poetry is very high.

In fact, poetry, be it Eastern or Western, has a unique position in the literature. As Aristotle said: "Poetry is something more philosophical and more worthy of serious attention than history." This feature is present in the Kalam-e-Iqbal in its entirety and perfection. After going through his collection of poetry, one thing becomes absolutely clear, that is to say, "Man should recognize his hidden talents and powers, take full advantage of them and must keep and proudly show the love for God and His Messenger".

فردوس میں رومی سے یہ کہتا تھا سنائی
مشرق میں ابھی تک ہے وہی کاسہ، وہی آتش

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حلاج کی لیکن یہ روایت ہے کہ آخر

اک مرد قلندر نے کیار از خودی فاش!¹

In Eden Sinai to Rumi said that people living in the East,

Still eat their bread and beans from begging cups they have not made progress least.

Hallaj relates that thus at last a Man in India has appeared,

Who with efforts firm and strong, the webs that hid the Self has cleared.

Besides his discovery and promotion of Self, with more emphasis, he also promulgates the key to strengthen it, which is the love of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). He writes with full zest and zeal:

بمصطفیٰ برسائ خوش را کہ دیں ہمہ اوست

اگر بہ او ز سیدی، تمام بولہبی است²

Merge your Self with Mustafa (ﷺ) for all faith embodies in Him!

If you do not reach up to Him It is all Bu Lahab's idolatry!

All his life, Allama Iqbal kept proclaiming this message in strong words: O servants of Allah! O Muslims! Bring yourself close to Mustafa (ﷺ) because He himself is the very essence of religion. If you can't get there, then think that you are far from Islam and you are caught up merely in false claim of faith. Allama Iqbal says:

عشق دم جبریل، عشق دل مصطفیٰ عشق خدا کا رسول، عشق خدا کا کلام³

Love is the breath of Gabriel. Love is the heart of Holy Prophet (PBUH).

Love is the messenger of God. Love is the Word of God.

In this regard, Dr. Tahir Farooqi writes: "With the blessing of this love, the lover gets immense strength, he becomes Abu al-Waqt and Abu al-Hal. The soul and the universe are under his care and he begins to consider the jinn and the angels as his prey."⁴

Thus, Allama Iqbal says:

عشق کی ایک جست نے طے کر دیا قصہ تمام اس زمین و آسمان کو بے کراں سمجھا تھا میں⁵

One leap by Love ended all the pother,

I fondly imagined, the earth and sky were boundless.

According to Allama Iqbal, love is one of the highest creative abilities of life. It is love that perpetuates human deeds such as the Mosque of Cordoba (Spain) and the Taj Mahal (Agra). Therefore, Allama Iqbal says that true love never dies. See this:

مرد خدا کا عمل عشق سے صاحب فروغ عشق ہے اصل حیات، موت ہے اس پر حرام⁶

Deeds of the godly radiate with Love,

The essence of life, which death is forbidden to touch.

Although the word "Ishq" is not mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, but Iqbal means "love" with this word and the word love is present in this verse. That is, the concept of "Ishq" is taken from this verse. Thus, Allah Almighty has said:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ⁷

"The believers love Allah the most."

Prof. Yusuf Saleem Chishti in his book "Sharah Zarb-e-Kaleem" on page number 430 writes about the themes of Allama Iqbal's poetry. He says that the focus of his religious thought is in fact the love of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and it is the center of his life. This theme of Iqbal's verses is basically connected with this hadith of the Prophet:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَحَدَّثَنَا آدَمُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
"لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ" (8).

Narrated Anas:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said "None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his children and all mankind.

The love of the Prophet means not only verbal or outward love for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) but also a demonstration of heartfelt and practical obedience.

According to Allama Iqbal, the love of the Prophet is the essence of religion and is also a source of prosperity in this world. Without it, man has neither religion nor worldliness. Therefore, Allama Iqbal says:

ہر کہ از سر نبی گیر د نصیب

ہم بہ جبریل امیں گرد و قریب⁹

Whoever finds share from the secrets (Shari'ah) of the Holy Prophet (saw) he also comes close to Jibril Amin (who is a sign of wisdom). He goes on to say in the same Masnavi:

می ندانی عشق و مستی از کجاست؟

ایں شعاع آفتاب مصطفیٰ¹⁰ ست

Moreover, the manner in which these verses of the Mystery of Self have been written in the love of Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (ﷺ) is a precious gift for the people of the heart.

در دل مسلم مقام مصطفیٰ است

آبروے ما ز نام مصطفیٰ است

بوریا منون خواب راحتش

تاج کسری زیر پای آتش

در شبستان حرا خلوت گزید

قوم و آئین و حکومت آفرید¹¹

Iqbal says: Mustafa's place is in the hearts of Muslims. Our honor is in His blessed name. The crown of Kasra is under the feet of his ummah. The Holy Prophet took

solitude in the cave and gave a nation, a (great) constitution and a (great) government to the world.

Mr. Faqir Syed Wahiduddin in his book writes: “The most distinguished, beloved and valuable passion of the life and character of late Dr. Muhammad Iqbal is the love of the Holy Prophet. His devotion to the Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was reflected in the tenderness of his eyes. And wherever someone mentioned the name of the Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in front of him, he was overwhelmed with emotion and tenderness. Uncontrollable tears flowed. Iqbal used to get out of control as soon as the Prophet’s name came, or it was mentioned in his presence. A sum total of his poetry, which is all about love and obedience to the Prophet. It is very difficult to express in words the expressions of Prophet’s love that I have seen in the company of Dr. Sahib.”¹²

Iqbal is a lover of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and wants all Muslims to become true lovers of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and to follow his Sunnah. It is mentioned in this verse of him.

ہر کہ عشق مصطفیٰ سامانِ اوست

بجز برد در گوشہ دامنِ اوست¹³

Allama Iqbal says in the above Persian couplet that: Every person whose heart holds the love of the Prophet is undoubtedly dominant over the entire world. Obedience to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is defined as obedience to God Almighty, loyalty to him, loyalty to God Almighty, friendship with him, friendship with God Almighty and above all, the love for Muhammad (ﷺ) is in fact the love of God.

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Say, ‘If you love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins, and Allah is all-forgiving, all-merciful.’⁽¹⁴⁾

Hazrat Mujaddid Alf-thani says in Maktoobat: “The same meaning is found in the text of this verse that the Almighty says: فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ That the great reward of following the Holy Prophet is that man attains the position of the beloved of Allah.”¹⁵ This level of Prophet’s love and devotion is basic characteristic and essential for faith. Without following Him in letter and spirit, the love of Prophet cannot be imagined. Following in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet, His Sunnah, and the pattern of beauty of his example is essential for the love of the Holy Prophet.

In Javed Namah in the words of Hallaj, Iqbal gave a very good explanation for “Seeing” the Holy Prophet. He said:

معنی دیدار آلِ آخرِ زمان

حکمِ اوبرخویشتن کردنِ رواں

در جہاں زی چوں رسولِ انس و جاں

تا چو اوباشی قبولِ انس و جاں

باز خود را بین ہمیں دیدار اوست

سنت اوستے از اسرار اوست¹⁶

Live your life in this world as the Prophet's beautiful pattern (of conduct) instructed you. If you do this, you will be honored among the Jinns and humans altogether. Immerse yourself in the Sunnah of the Prophet and gain self-knowledge. This is like seeing him. Remember that the beautiful pattern of conduct and His Sunnah are the secrets of Prophet's personality. The claim of love is meaningless as long as the beloved (Prophet) is not followed. What is the true love of the Prophet in the eyes of Allama Iqbal? See another example from his works:

کیفیت ہائیز داز صہبائے عشق

ہست ہم تقلید از اسمائے عشق

کامل بسطام در تقلید فرد

اجتناب از خوردن خر بوزہ کرد

عاشقی؟ محکم شواہز تقلید یار

تا کمند تو شود یزدان شکار¹⁷

Allama Iqbal says that the only way to get love is to Imitate and follow the Prophetic ways. But keep in mid that imitation is one of the names of love. Remember the example of Hazarat Ba Yazid Bastami. He was so active among the followers of the Prophet and so committed to imitating the Prophet that he did not eat watermelon all his life because he did not know how the Prophet (ﷺ) ate it. The name of this perfect imitation of love, so if you are a claimant of Prophet's love, then become firm in the imitation of Him. Therefore, Allah Almighty asks His Messenger (ﷺ) to tell the believers.

قُلْ إِنْ كَانِ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ

تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرْتَصُّوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

Say, 'If your fathers and your sons, your brethren, your spouses, and your kinsfolk, the possessions that you have acquired, the business you fear may suffer, and the dwellings you are fond of, are dearer to you than Allah and His Apostle and to waging jihād in His way, then wait until Allah issues His edict, and Allah does not guide the transgressing lot.

Such a kind of perfect love of the Holy Prophet was necessary for the satisfaction of Iqbal's delicate heart. Iqbal's desire to visit the two holy shrines lasted for a lifetime, but he could not perform Hajj despite his great desire. However, in the world of his thoughts, he has always benefited from this blessing. Armaghan-e-Hijaz, which is the last book of Allama and published after his death in November 1938, contains many quatrains which show that he is traveling to Hijaz in his world of imagination. The depth of thought and the intensity of love are the hallmarks of these quatrains.

Iqbal says:

بایں پیری رہے شرب گر فتم
نواخواں از سرور عاشقانہ
چو آں مرغے کہ در صحر اسر شام
کشاید پر بکمر آشیانہ⁽¹⁹⁾

In my old age, I have taken the road to Madinah. Like a bird that flies in the desert in the evening to fly to its nest.

کیونکہ جہاں از عشق و عشق از سینہ توست²⁰

The world is about love and this love is related to your (Prophet's) blessed heart. According to Iqbal, the love of the Holy Prophet is obligatory on all Muslims. In fact, it is His love that completes our faith.

Khalifa Abdul Hakim in his book "Fiqr-e-Iqbal" writes thus:

"Such a kind of love the Messenger of God had with Allah, the Companions had a similar love for the Prophet. There is no one among the Companions who believed in the Prophet on the basis of reason or by some miracle or habit. This love of Prophet was produced in those people by the company and devotion to Him. After that, who can doubt that Islam was born out of love, but love is another name for Islam."²¹

The best example of this love with Allah's Messenger is indeed that event, which happened to the second caliph, Umar ibn al-Khattab. The study of which refreshes the faith.

و كذلك قصة عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه قال عبد الله بن بشام رضي الله عنه: فقد كان مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو اخذ بيده فقال له عمر: يا رسول الله، لانت احب الى من كل شيء الا من نفسي، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا والذي نفسي بيده حتى اكون احب اليك من نفسك فقال له عمر: فانه الان، والله لانت احب²² الى من نفسي، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: الان يا عمر

Narrated `Abdullah bin Hisham:

We were with the Prophet (ﷺ) and he was holding the hand of `Umar bin Al-Khattab. `Umar said to Him, "O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)! You are dearer to me than everything except my own self." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "No, by Him in Whose Hand my soul is, (you will not have complete faith) till I am dearer to you than your own self." Then `Umar said to him, "However, now, by Allah, you are dearer to me than my own self." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Now, O `Umar, (now you are a believer).

Keeping this event in mind, let us now look at these couplets of Iqbal:

وہ داناے سبل ختم الرسل مولائے کل جس نے
غبارِ راہ کو بخشا فروغ وادی سینا
نگاہ عشق و مستی میں وہی اول وہی آخر
وہی قرآں، وہی فرقان، وہی یسین، وہی لہذا²³

From these verses of Iqbal, the fact has come to light that he believed in keeping and showing of great love and high regard for the person of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). And that very love was the deepest, strongest, and most enduring passion of his life. Therefore, in the light of Iqbal's words the Muslim Ummah should know the true meaning of love of the Prophet which is obviously to follow Him sincerely in all the matters of worldly life.

The Glorious Quran fully approves this:

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ²⁴

Whoever obeys the Apostle certainly obeys Allah

Allama Iqbal says to the nation of Islam:

بمنزل کوش مانند مه نو
دریں نیلی فضا ہر دم فزوں شو
مقام خویش اگر خواهی دریں دیر
بحق دل بند و راہ مصطفیٰ رو²⁵

O Muslims! You try to reach the destination like the new moon. Keep growing in this world every moment. If you want to find your (lost) status in this world, then believe in Allah and follow the path of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) (follow his Shari'ah, Sunnah and Aswa-e-Hasana). This is, in fact, the key to the unity of Ummah. The revival and existence of the Ummah is the love of Mustafa (ﷺ).

Allama Iqbal says in Ramooz-e-Bekhodi:

عشق او سرمایہ جمعیت است
ہیچو خوں اندر عروق ملت است
عشق در جان و نسب در پیکر است
رشتہ عشق از نسب محکم تر است²⁶

The **love** of the Holy Prophet is the only thing for us to live together. This **love** is running like blood in the veins of the nation. **Love** descends into the soul and lineage is confined to the body. This proves that the relationship of **love** is stronger than the relationship of lineage.

In modern times we have considered the love of the Prophet (ﷺ) as insignificant and that is why we are humiliated in the world. If we cherish the love of the Prophet (ﷺ) in our hearts and prove it by our deeds, then there is no reason why we should not be respected in the world as before. The one and only reason for the prosperity of Muslims in this universe is the love of Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (ﷺ). If this passion of love disappears from the universe, it will become empty and purposeless.

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