



One of my favourite wise man and poet is Rumi. Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi was born on 30 September 1207 to Persian speaking parents in modern day Tajikistan or Afghanistan. He was a visionary beyond his time, a 13th century Persian poet, jurist, scholar, writer, philosopher, and Sufi Mystic. He is regarded as one of the greatest spiritual masters and poetical intellects, who made use of everyday life's circumstances to describe the spiritual world. He was strongly influenced by his father, also a renowned scholar and two Persian Poets – Attar and Sanai. At the age of 37, he met a wandering dervish (a Muslim who attempts to get closer to God by leading a life of poverty) named Shams Tabrizi, who changed the course of his life.

Shams, who soon after became a devotee and intimate friend of Rumi, is credited as his spiritual mentor, and is mentioned with great reverence in his poems. Remembering their meeting, Rumi wrote: "What I thought of before as God, I met today in a human being." Their friendship was short lived as three years after they met, Shams disappeared, rumoured to have been murdered by one of Rumi's jealous followers.

One story concerning Shams & Rumi is that Rumi had a library containing valuable books of knowledge acquired from around the world – books that no one, not even his wife or daughter were allowed to touch. Sometime into their friendship, one day Shams casually throws Rumi's valuable books into the fountain in their courtyard. Rumi watches without any change of expression or heartbreak. In fact Rumi only watches with love, the only emotion he ever feels of any action of Shams. This friendship made Rumi

that he had unlearn everything he knew, and instead of the outside, Shams taught him to look inside his own Soul, which was the all-knowing, which did not need any books or teachers... It was its own master, all knowing and all joyful.

Rumi passed away on December 17, 1273. His disciples called this night Seb-i Arus (wedding night), the night of unity, when he was finally united with his beloved – Allah. (God).

There are some poets through the ages, whose every word reflects purity and divine refulgence – their poetry is a reflection of their own perfect state. Rumi was such a poet, whose poetry was infused with such genius and perfection as to belie human origin. He was a pure instrument of the Divine, a flute upon which God played an beautiful and profound song. Rumi wrote

*"Do you think I know what I'm doing,
That for a moment, or even half a moment,
I know what verses will come from my mouth?
I am no more than a pen in a writer's hand,
No more than a ball smacked around by a polo stick!"*

Now popularly simply known as Rumi, he is often quoted and is considered one of the most celebrated poets in the world today. In fact, he has become one of the bestselling poets in the USA. His popularity gained further when one of his famous poems – “The Guest House” was featured on a Coldplay album.

N Farzad, a scholar at SOAS, London states “Rumi was a prolific writer – he wrote over 3000 ghazals dealing with love and loss, over 2000 robaiyat (short poems), ‘Masnavi’ considered as one of the most influential works of Sufism – often referred to as the Persian Quran – a series of six books of poetry containing some 25000 verses. His six-volume magnum opus of Spiritual verses alone is five times the length of Milton’s Paradise Lost.” A J Arberry, a Islamic scholar states “In Rumi we encounter one of the world’s greatest poets.”

His teachings are far reaching and very inspiring. His message of universal love, tolerance, patience, love, compassion, benevolence, self-empowerment, spiritual development, and enlightenment are timeless and of great relevance today.

Rumi weaved magic with his words. His poems and quotes give insight and shows the way of living. I share below some of my favourite Rumi quotes.



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- “Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself.”
- “What you seek is seeking you”
- “A loving eye does not find faults, While an angry eye sees all faults.”
- “The art of knowing is knowing what to ignore”
- “The rule that covers everything is: how you are with others, expect that back.”
- “Observe the wonders as they occur around you. Don’t claim them. Feel the artistry moving through and be silent. Don’t grieve. Anything you lose comes round in another form”
- “Goodbyes are only for those who love with their eyes. Because for those who love with heart and soul there is no such thing as separation.”



MERCY

She asks me to kill the spider.

Instead, I get the most peaceful weapons I can find.

I take a cup and a napkin.
I catch the spider, put it outside
and allow it to walk away.

If I am ever caught in the wrong place
at the wrong time, just being alive
and not bothering anyone,

I hope I am greeted
with the same kind
of mercy.

By Rudy Francisco



One of my favourite Rumi poems is “**Seven Advices**”, simple yet so profound. It has been said that Seven Advices “epitomises the highest sentiment of humanity, transcends religious boundaries, and encompasses the common values of all religions today - compassion, tolerance, patience, acceptance, and beyond all love!”

**In generosity and helping others:
be like the river**

In compassion and grace: be like the sun.

In concealing others’ faults: be like the night.

In anger and fury: be like the dead.

In modesty and humility: be like the soil.

In tolerance: be like the ocean.

**Either you appear as you are, or:
be as you appear.**

Rumi educates us that our generosity and assistance to others should be like the river, ever flowing. In Jainism, daan is the unconditional or unattached generosity, giving and helping others without expecting anything in return. Jainism lays great emphasis on the generous act of Daan. Imagine a world where generosity and help flowed as freely and as powerfully as a river

Imagine a world where compassion and graciousness shone in all of our lives as brilliantly as the sun on a perfect summer day. Mahavira said you should not say or do anything to others that you would not like to have done to you. Everybody in this world wants to be happy, no one likes to be hurt. Jainism is a compassionate religion advocating being compassionate and friendly towards all by thought, word and deed and having no enmity for anyone.

Imagine a world where we were eager to hide others faults the way the darkness of a cloudy, starless night hides just about everything.

Imagine a world where we put no energy or life into our anger or frustrations

Imagine a world where our modesty and humility were as rich and fertile as the soil of a river delta.

Imagine a world where we were all as tolerant and accepting as the ocean is deep.

Imagine a world where appearances were not deceiving, but what you saw was what you got, where authenticity reigned. Appearance reflects one’s behaviour and practice. When our outward appearance matches our inner self, it means that we have put our knowledge and faith into practice and action.

