

## Dahsha and Hayra (Utmost Astonishment and Amazement)

Contributed by Fethullah Gulen  
Monday, 09 January 2006

Every traveler journeying in valleys of love and zeal sometimes burns with the fire of love, and sometimes overflows with joy owing to the "wine of immortality" offered by the Beloved. While burning, the lover sighs: O Cupbearer, I have burned away. Give me some water! While looking attentively through the door of the Beloved left ajar, the lover entreats: I have dipped my finger into the honey of love. Give me some water!

Until the traveler is saved from worldly anxiety and considerations of distance or, in other words, until the traveler passes beyond the spheres of the manifestations of Names and Attributes and is honored with the manifestation of Divine Essence, he or she continues to travel between burning and entreating, and receiving his or her lot from the pure drink the Lord offers (76:21).

The lover pursues more and more knowledge of God, for every new Divine gift increases his or her desire. As this desire increases, new gifts pour into the lover's heart. He or she embroiders the acquired knowledge of God with the feelings and thoughts traveling between his or her heart and things. Like a honeybee collecting nectar from flowers and thereby causing flowers to be the source of honey, the lover collects the nectar of knowledge of God from the manifestations of Divine Names and Attributes that open like flowers in the garden of the universe. He or she distills the collected nectar through the filter of his or her appreciative, grateful conscience, and feels as if his or her sight has reached the rays of the Attributes themselves. Then the dream of reaching the Divine Being comes, and the lover is stricken with the utmost astonishment.

The writer of Gulistan (The Rose Garden) expresses the traveler's feelings of astonishment and amazement while burning and drinking:

At times You show Your Beautiful Face,  
But It is veiled without being completely seen,  
Thus You incite us to compete to be able to see You  
And increase our fire.

When I see unveiled the Beloved  
With Whom I have fallen in love,  
Something occurs to me  
And I am bewildered on my way.  
The Beloved lights a fire in my breast  
And then puts it out with a drizzle.  
That is why you find me burnt away  
And drowned in an ocean.

Bursawi presents travelers as incessantly intoxicated:

All saintly ones are intoxicated with the pure water their Lord offers them (76:21);  
Seven, five, and four are intoxicated With His Beautiful Face. [1]

If the traveler has not prepared his or her heart according to the requirements of the spiritual journey and the commandments of the Shari'a (that is, if one does not think and reason in the light of Prophethood while one's feelings fly in the boundless realm of the achieved spiritual state), he or she will inevitably fall, be confused and bewildered, and speak and act contrary to the spirit of Shari'a.

Mulla Jami' expresses astonishment and amazement in his vivid language:

The women of Egypt were astounded and cut their hands when they saw the beauty of Joseph. O Master! If they had seen your beauty, they would have thrust the daggers in their hands into their breasts. Speaking of Joseph's beauty, where Your beauty is mentioned means no more than telling tales.

In other words, if transient, worldly beauty and perfection that only reflect the Infinitely Perfect and Beautiful One through many veils can seduce us, how great will be our inability to perceive the dazzling awe and amazement produced by beholding and gazing upon that Beauty.

Those who prefer to serve Islam and the Qur'an at this point in time should not aim at all the pleasures, whether bodily or spiritual. Rather, they should continue their service aided by God in awe of and with amazement at the extent to which God comes to their aid and makes them successful. They should never conceive of anything other than serving Islam. This is a special gift of amazement to the army of light from God's special treasury of: We make the distribution among them (43:32).

163 Isma'il Haqqi Bursawi, Tafsir Ruh al-Bayan, 10 vols. (N.p.: Maktabat al-Islamiya, 1330 ah / 1911 ce), 10:276.