

THE MODERN WORLD : A HEARTLESS SOCIETY

by Mansoor Ahmad

A great heart can compensate for not so great a mind but not vice verse.

A protection which was available to people living in traditional communities where spiritual had not yet withdrawn into itself is now not available to us living in the secular world of today. The contemporary structures of societies are without any moisture from spiritual springs, which were flowing in full abundance in all traditional societies and cultures instead these are now dry and are merely rational. The scientific knowledge is totally devoid of any hint to the spiritual. A sense of Eternal and eternity along with the sense of the sacred has now eroded almost completely.

The overwhelmingly rational approach has even affected religious understanding. Religion has been reduced for all practical purposes to a mere rational and one-dimensional image of the spiritual. The sweet taste and the pleasures of life lived as a ritual, which were the high points of a spiritual life, have been replaced with purposeless discipline and aimless exercises of lukewarm religiosity, leaving behind residual sentiments of boredom and absence of joy. The satisfaction of the intellectual (not rational) dimensions, which is only possible through the intuition of the Real, finds little value in the religious understanding.

This situation presents great difficulties for many people who are inclined to live an authentic spiritual life. They find no clue in the popular religion of the Truth that their own intuition, though uncultivated, vaguely hints. Being brought up and having participated in a grossly material and rational culture, these individuals incorporate in their souls certain poisonous elements of their surroundings and misconceptions from their education curriculum and thus suffer from the pain of an inner split. They can neither enter nor abandon the spiritual life. The search for an authentic life torments them from moment to moment. The ingress of profane and darker elements in the souls obscures the light of the Intellect and obstructs the deployment of full range of its operations. These individuals live an almost schizophrenic life, while the lust of worldly pleasures continues to lure them towards the multiplicity and contingency that they are never one with and in this situation, their spiritual life acquires the stature of a daydream and a phantasy.

The contest between the profane and the Sacred is perpetual and unending. While all the sweetness of world fails to taste any better than brackish water. What they cannot taste in this life is that for which they have a strong pre-taste. The colors of Reality that cannot be distinguished due to the darkness of their own souls illuminate the eyes of imagination with the brightness of a sun. What then is the remedy for such individuals? What is the compensation for being the battleground of the Sacred and the profane? Are they to unjustly pay a heavy price for being born at this stage of human cycle? Are they suffering

because of a previous life of which they have no conscious memories? Is it that they are not qualified for spiritual life, which they have greed to attain? Are these purely mundane individuals posturing as spiritual beings? Are they destined to fail to enter the Paradise of the Soul?

IMPURITY
(RUMI)

If wheat mixed with chaff, dirt and barn dust
Is put in soil, watered with loving trust
The soil will nurture that single wheat
Won't allow garbage its growth deplete
The soil absorbs chaff, dirt and dust
Turns them to goodness, at any cost
It is the same for any wheat
This process, soil will repeat
Nature is good; nature is kind
In our essence goodness will find
Separate the garbage from our wheat
Transform our dust, evil defeat
Nature does not mind if we are impure
She will find our wheat, goodness secure
This is the way we know for sure
To heal ourselves, ailing world cure