

resplendent by the same light. I am amazed at the quarrel between faith and unbelief." He goes on to add, "From the day I have seen conflict between creeds, I have given up all concern either with the Sheikh or with the Brahmin."

Sages and saints have taught brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. Without the foundation of the latter the mansion of the former could never stand. Guru Arjun says, "There is but one Father, and we are all His children."<sup>1</sup> Likewise, says Guru Amardas, "All living creatures are His, and He belongs to all. Whom shall we call bad, when there is none other?"<sup>2</sup> In the *Bible* we find the same teaching in the commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." On these two commandments,<sup>3</sup> hang all the law and the prophets.

In his own matchless style Bulleh Shah conveys the same truth in these words:

Somewhere He is Ramdas, somewhere Fateh  
 Mohammed,  
 There is the same ancient uproar!  
 The Muslims are averse to being cremated;  
 And the Hindus are loath to be buried.  
 Both die quarreling over this wrangle.  
 Such is the cause of enmity between them!  
 Their quarrel came to an end,  
 When someone else made His appearance.

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1. *Adi Granth*: p. 611

2. *Adi Granth*: p. 425

3. *Matthew*: 22: 37-40

## SEARCH FOR GOD

**He is within**

God is not to be found anywhere outside, neither in the mosque nor in the temple, neither in holy places of pilgrimage nor in holy rivers or mountains. He abides within man himself, and there alone He can be realized.

In terms of his most frequently employed symbols, Bulleh Shah says:

Deluded Heer seeks Him in woods,  
While Beloved Ranjha plays in her veil.  
I completely lost my senses before Him.  
Ever new, ever fresh is the spring of love!

Many other *kafis* have been written by Bulleh Shah in the same strain. Those starting with the lines "In the fold of my cloak hides the beloved Thief, friends" and "Words that come to my tongue cannot be held back" are two outstanding examples on this theme. They stress the point that something lost in the house can be found only in that house, and not somewhere outside. All attempts to search for it outside are bound to fail, and will entail the loss of much time and energy. True lovers of God do not roam about in forests and jungles in quest of Him, but seek Him within themselves.

Whosoever found the secret from the mystic,  
He searched for the path within himself.  
He is a blissful dweller of that temple,  
Which knows neither rise nor fall.  
One essential truth is worthy of all respect,  
And I know this truth to abide in everyone.  
In everyone dwells the form of the Lord.

In some it is manifest, in some it is latent.  
 Here in this world darkness prevails.  
 And, this world is a slippery courtyard.  
 Enter within yourself and see who is there.  
 In vain do the crazy seek Him outside.

He goes on to say:

O Bullah, the Lord is not separate from us.  
 Other than the Lord none does exist.  
 But, alas! we do not have the seeing eye.  
 That's why life is a tale of suffering.  
 Words that come to my tongue cannot be held back.

Bulleh Shah has often described the body as a house or a courtyard. In the following lines of a *kafi* he says that the Beloved resides within the house, but it is difficult to catch Him:

He came to abide in my house;  
 He came to delude me with His guiles.  
 Ask Him if it was magic or a dream.  
 Get all the truth revealed by Him.  
 He dwells within my heart;  
 He sits and laughs with me.  
 If I make a query, He gets up and flees;  
 And, He takes to flight as does a hawk.

### **Body as Temple of God**

Since God resides within man, Bulleh Shah has called the human body as the Temple of God. And, God himself has created this temple. The initial lesson for a true seeker of God is to know this truth. All external temples are false temples. The music played in them, such as of the bell and the conch is a poor imitation of

the divine melody reverberating in the true temple of the human body. The divine melody never ceases to ring, the music of the external temple rings only for some time. In the temples outside, light is produced from the oil poured into clay lamps, which goes out when the oil is finished or when the wick is burnt out. In the inner temple the immortal flame of divine light is ever glowing. The inner music and the inner light have no beginning, no end, no decline:

When I learnt the lesson of love,  
 My heart dreaded the sight of a mosque.  
 I then entered the abode of the Lord,  
 Where resound a thousand flutes.  
 I was sick of reading *Vedas* and *Qura'ns*;  
 My forehead was bruised by prostrations.  
 God is not at Hindu shrines nor at Muslims' Mecca.  
 Whosoever found, found Him in light divine.  
 Ever new, ever fresh is the spring of love!

The *Bible* reveals the same truth thus: "Kingdom of God is within you."<sup>1</sup> Again, "Lord of heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is He worshiped with men's hands."<sup>2</sup> Guru Nanak conveys it in almost identical words: "That alone is the temple of God wherein He is revealed. And, it is in the human body where He is found through the Guru's Word. Seek Him not without, for the Creator is within the house. The worldling know not the essence of God's temple and so waste their lives. The One pervades all, but is known through the Guru's Word."<sup>3</sup>

1. Luke 17 : 21

2. Acts 17 : 24, 25.

3. *Adi Granth* : p. 953.

### Human body is Mecca and Ka'ba

Bulleh Shah calls the human body as the true Mecca and the forehead as its arch. He feels sorry for the people who go on a pilgrimage to the external Mecca. They do not know that the true Mecca is the body wherein the effulgence of God can be experienced. Says he:

The hajjis go to Mecca, my house is my Mecca with  
my Bridegroom.

Whichever side the Beloved is, that way the *Ka'ba* is,  
Even if you were to read all the four books.

In another *kafi* he says that through the waves of love aroused in the heart can God be found:

The seven seas sleep within my heart;  
I shall stir them into a storm.  
Charms and spells I shall work;  
And win over my offended Friend.

Bulleh Shah has given the name "Lanka" to the body in one of his poems. Ravan, the villain of the epic, *Ramayan* the demon with ten heads—signifies the ten senses which have to be tamed to realize God. The true pool of nectar, bathing in which the soul becomes purified, is within the human body.

Reverse the direction of the flow of Ganga,  
O Sadhu, for then you will behold the Lord.  
If Kumbh Karan<sup>1</sup> were to retrace his steps,  
he would find the secret of Lanka.

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1. A character in the epic *Ramayan*, who used to sleep for six months at a stretch. Here, it signifies the long period of inactivity of man in doing his meditation.

Kill the ten-headed monster,<sup>1</sup> and save the life of  
Lakshman, for then the unstruck melody will ring.  
Your Master will grant you such a region of nectar,  
that it will take you to complete absorption  
in God.

In a beautiful analogy Bulleh Shah denounces  
external search for God by going to temples, mosques  
and other places of pilgrimage. Those who look for Him  
within themselves are blessed with the ecstasy of divine  
union:

Beloved, no longer does noise appear sweet;  
Now I am happy within myself.  
A new flower has blossomed in my house;  
I have experienced new thrills and delights.  
O mother, I am dying of ecstasy and joy.