



BULLEH SHAH

Tear down the mosque and temple too, break all that divides
But do not break the human heart as it is there that God resides.

Bulleh Shah was a Sufi poet who lived in Pakistan from 1680 to 1758. His given name was Abdullah Shah, Bulleh was a nickname and it is the name he chose to use as a poet. Bullah traveled to Lahore in search of a Murshid(Master). He found Hazrat Shah Inayat, a well-known Qadiri Sufi and gardener by profession. He asked Inayat, "I wish to know how to realize God." Inayat Shah replied, "What is the problem in finding God? One only needs to be uprooted from here and replanted there." Inayat graced Bulleh with the secret of spiritual insight and the Knowledge of God.

Bulleh Shah's poetry reflects a turbulent period in Punjab history and highlights his mystical spiritual journey. He is critical of those in power - intellectuals, academicians and religious authorities - who put obstacles in the way of the common people in discovering the love of God. Sufism has produced a multitude of saints, Bulleh Shah is arguably one of the greatest Sufi saints and Punjabi poets. His tomb is in Qasur (Pakistan) and today he is highly regarded by all Sufis of Sindh and Punjab.

Bulleh's Poetry

Translated by Shuman Kashyap

The blossoming of love is strange and wondrous!

When I acquired the knowledge of love,
I dreaded the mosque.
I fled to my Lords dwelling,
Where a thousand sounds reverberate.

When love revealed its mystery to me,
The parroted words vanished.
Inside and out, I was cleansed.
I saw my Beloved wherever I looked.

Heer and Ranjha are already one.
But Heer, deluded, still searches the woods.
Here Ranjha is with her,
And she does not even know it.

I am tired of reading the Vedas and the Koran!
Obeisance has only abraded my forehead.
God was not in Mecca, nor any holy place.
But whoever finds Him becomes brightly illuminated.

Burn the prayer rug, break the clay pot,
Divest yourself of rosary, bowl and staff.
Those who love - proclaim repeatedly and loudly,
'Eat the forbidden! Forsake *halaal!*' (a lawful diet)

You have spent your life in the mosque,
Yet your heart is filled with filth.
Not once did you discern that God is One!
What is your point in making this racket now?

Your devotion was loveless.
Now your protestations are worthless.
Bulleh says, I would have remained silent,
It is love that compels me to speak forcefully.

The blossoming of love is strange and wonderful.

Bhaanve Jaan Na Jaan VeDe Aa VaD Mere

Whether or not you know this,
Enter my courtyard.
I adore you (I would sacrifice my life for you),
Enter my courtyard.

For me, there is nobody else but you.
Though I search every forest, plain and desert.
Though I search the entire world.
Enter my courtyard.

People believe you are a lowly cowherd,
Named Ranjha.
But you are my faith, my religion.
Enter my courtyard.

I left my parents for love of you,
 My Lord, Shah Inayat.
 Honor this love I bear for you.
 Enter my courtyard.

Translated by GhaDiyaali Deyo Nikaal Ni

Banish the timekeeper, my beloved has come home, my precious one!
 Again and again the time keeper strikes the gong,
 Diminishing this night of our union.
 Were he to look into my heart,
 Himself, he would fling it away.
 The unheard music plays majestically.
 The singer accomplished in rhythm and measure.
 Forgotten are my prayers
 As the distiller gives me plentiful wine.
 At the wondrous sight of his face,
 All my sorrows vanished.
 The night marches on. How can I extend it?
 O build a wall against the day!

I have lost myself.
 I can not remember when I was wedded.
 It is not possible to hide,
 This complete grace that is upon me.
 Many magic spells were cast,
 Magicians came, big and small.
 Now that my beloved is home,
 I will remain with him for a hundred thousand years.
 Says Bullah Shah, in this beloved bed
 I have crossed over to the other side.
 Finally, my turn came,
 Separation is no longer possible.
 Banish the timekeeper, my beloved has
 come home, my precious one.

Translated by Hajji Lok Makke Val Jande

The hajjis go to Mecca.
 My beloved Ranjha is my Mecca.
 Yes, I am crazy!
 I am wedded to Ranjha.
 Still my father pushes me.
 Yes, I am crazy!
 The hajjis go to Mecca
 My bridegroom, within me, is my Mecca.
 Yes, I am crazy!
 Hajjis and ghazis both lie within us,
 Thieves and pickpockets too.
 Yes, I am crazy!
 The Hajjis go to Mecca
 But I am going to *Takht Hazara*.
 Yes, I am crazy!
 Wherever is your beloved, there lies Kaaba,

Though you search the four books.
Yes, I am crazy!

Translated by Ishk Di Naviyon Navi Bahaar

Why should I go to *Kaaba*
When I long for *Takht Hazaara*?
People worship *Kaaba*,
I worship my dearest Friend.
I long for *Takht Hazaara*.
Beloved *Raanjha*, seeing my defects,
do not put me out of your mind,
Remember(think of) this worthless one.
I long for *Takht Hazaara*.
Though I cannot swim,
It will be your shame if I drown.
I long for *Takht Hazaara*.
I found no one like you,
Though I searched the entire world.
I long for *Takht Hazaara*.

Translated by SaaDe Val MukhDa Mo

Turn your face toward me,
my dear one,
Turn your face toward me!
It is you who inserted the hook in me,
It is you who pulls the cord.
Turn your face toward me!
The call to prayer came from your throne in heaven,
The sound reverberated in Mecca.
Turn your face toward me!
Says Bulleh, I will not die,
Though someone else may.
Turn your face toward me!

Translated by Suman Kashyap

Stay silent to survive.
People cannot stand to hear the truth.
They are at your throat if you speak it.
They keep away from those who speak it.
But truth is sweet to its lovers!
Truth destroys *shara* (shariah).
Brings rapture to its lovers,
And unexpected riches,
Which *shara* (shariah) obscures.
Those lovers cannot remain silent
Who have inhaled the fragrance of truth.
Those who have woven love into their lives,
Leave this world of falsehood.
Bulleh Shah speaks the truth.
He uncovers the truth of *shara* (shariah).

**He opens the path to the fourth level,
Which *shara* (shariah) obscures.**



[Translation reference: book by J. R. Puri and T. R. Shangari, titled Bulleh Shah]

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