

Soulmates in The Quran and Prophetic Tradition

M.Shakir

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“O humankind have consciousness of your Loving-Sustainer,^[1] who created you from a single *nafs*(soul) and created from it her *zawj* (mate) and dispersed from both many men and women. And have God Consciousness, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Certainly, God is ever, over you, an Observer.”

- The Quran, Meaning of The Women 4:1

Just like letters that go together in a word, there are soulmates who came in the symbolic “Be.” Spiritual partnership found in soulmates are far from foreign to Islam: to the contrary, The Quran and Prophetic Tradition are replete with them. The need for heart-based self-study and

*self-discovery beyond (including but not limited to) family of origin, into the Muslim meta-history, is evident in the erasure of this truth from mainstream narrative. When applied with intellect revelation stands well on their own for depth in understanding relationships. Guidance from the Quran and Prophetic Tradition makes connections to the perennial wisdom of all faiths, the spirituality of the Prophetic inclination to love[**ii**] and the Divine Reality of being.*

*The Zohar, a Medieval Jewish compilation rooted in Talmudic tradition relates "Each soul and spirit prior to its entering into this world, consist[ing] of a male and female united into one being." The Gospel describes this "two in one" relationship as a means to the Kingdom of God with "when you make the inner like the outer and the outer like the inner, and the upper like the lower, and when you make male and female into a single one." Current Western conceptions of soulmates popularize the Yin and Yang of Taoism or ancient Chinese Philosophy Shiva and Parvati of Hinduism's mention Ardhanarishvara, a "represent[ation of] a synthesis of masculine and feminine energies of the universe," and Aristotle's saying "Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies" are also prominent modern depictions of soulmates. The Quran and Prophetic Tradition, however, is full of context for soulmates by the mere meaning of the term *zawj* (Quran 4:1, 6:98, 7:189, 39:6). Yet when discussing the soul Seyyed*

Hossein Nasr discusses how we don't typically see the connection made by *mufaseereen* between the first soul being linguistically feminine plural and the pair being a masculine (The Study *Qur'an*, The Women 4:1).

The Reality of Soulmates in The Primordial Religion

On a meta-historical moment cited as The Day of *Alast*, it was said "When your Loving-Sustainer took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Loving-Sustainer?" They said, "Yes, we have testified." [This] - lest you should say on the day of Resurrection, "Indeed, we were of this unaware," (The Quran, The Heights 7:172). I cite this as the basis for the *mithaq*, or Divine covenant with man and the kindred nature of some souls to others. This verse has is used alongside The Prophetic Tradition translating to: "The souls are (like) aligned soldiers joined (in the world of spirits) whichever souls knew each other (in that world) attract each other (in this world)" to substantiate the levels of affinity people experience for one another in this world. This is the premise for the ever-present knowledge of higher being, and thus the *fitra*, or natural dispositions of humans toward The Highest Unity, God. In our case, this inclination manifests in the yearning for union and procreation.

The *mithaq* that not even mountains would take (The *Qur'an al Ahzab* The Combined Forces 33:72) refers to the *Din* and more so viceregency. We also see references to humans as the *khalifah* or representative of The Divine on earth (The Quran The Cow 2:30). This centrality of the primordial spirit of humans is crucial to our understanding of soulmates when we understand that term *al Mumin* is both a name of God and epistemologically used to describe the second dimension of the *Din, Iman*. All believers are designated to be soulmates in this sense, and our obligation to fulfill this weighty covenant is reciprocal to our receptivity to this inner truth.

The Experience of Soulmates

We come to know ourselves through trials. Le Gai Eaton in *Man* captures this in his commentary:

They 'fell' together, equal in guilt as they had been equal in glory. Eve was no temptress so far as the Islamic tradition is concerned. And although they were exiled, as were all who lie upon this earth, they were promised by Him Who is named the Ever-Forgiving, the Effacer of sins, that their posterity would never be left without guidance through the dark alleyways of the lower world. This

“guidance,” per Islam, culminated and was completed in the coming of Muhammad, who, as it were, closes the circle.

Muhammad’s صلى الله عليه وسلم soul and being are still centered as the ultimate example and manifestation of all the Divine Names, a perfect balance of the masculine and feminine. Through this, we see that while the latter is an essential category in the cosmology of Islam, they are not stagnant in the sense of being biologically designated to male or female. While we also find a polarity existing between the more *Jalal*, rigorous and *Jamaal* beautiful attributes we also find they are not confined to relationships of the romantic sense. While polarity underlies the scheme or creation, and all animate creation has *azwaj*, only humans have access to *an Nafas al Rahman* The Spirit of Compassion from The Divine. In this way, we see why despite all the public events, the focus with The Messenger of God صلى الله عليه وسلم in Prophetic tradition is on his relationships with the animate and inanimate alike, and most of all The Creator of them all.

God has no need for an intermediary or a method; need doesn’t fit him, but that does not eliminate the phenomenon of our purpose as *khalifahs* and the perfect love God expressed when we were created with God saying *Kun fiya kun* “be and it is” (*Quran Baqara* The Cow 2:117). For God, there is “Nothing like it” and “nothing like its likeness” (*Quran Ash Shuraa* The Consultation 42:11). In this way, we recognize human

life as a love letter in the symbolic, linguistic sense, and as a state of being, ontologically. We are all a few letters away from Pure Being, God as itself. Just like letters that go together in a word, there are soulmates who came in the symbolic “Be.”

The Primary Longing for Unity

Separation from The Absolute is impossible. Le Gai Eaton elaborates on this wisdom with “Reality, which is also by definition absolute Perfection, can only have one obligation, the obligation to be Itself. Thus the reality of all, even mates, originating from one soul and God itself. Realizing this The Absolute Reality of individual experience saves one from the caprice of false identity and to *Wahdat al Wujud*, or Oneness of Being, substantiating the sages who say, “the one who knows themselves knows their Loving-Sustainer.” This is the meaning of the original question God posed “Am I not your Loving-Sustainer?” Our response, a core level testimony to the Unity we long for in every way. Answering for one’s self is to answer their sole mate, only a letter or so from them, and in truth only one in number and nature. Through it all, we come to know even when it seems we aren’t physically with certain beings they appear in forms of others we meet, and at high levels integrated into our heartbeat.

[i] "*Rabb*" based on the intimate connotations of what is commonly translated "Lord."

[ii] See *God as Love and Light in God* by Seyyed Hossein Nasr for full commentary on this.

[iii] Le Gai Eaton, Charles. "Islam and the Destiny of Man." *Albany: State University of New York* (1985) (363).

[iv] *kanz makafee*

[v] Matt, Daniel Chanan. *Zohar: Annotated & Explained*. Skylight Paths Publishing, (2002)

31. Also "Then God separated from Adam another Adam as a helpmate (Genesis 2:2-22; Genesis 5:2).

[vi] Thomas Gospel 22.

[vii] Haviland, William; Prins, Harald; Walrath, Dana; McBride, Bunny, *Anthropology: The Human Challenge Fifteen Edition*. Cengage Learning, 2016, pg 561

[viii] Bolton, Robert. "Aristotle's Definitions of the Soul:" *De Anima* ii, 1-3." *Phronesis* (1978): 258-278.

[ix] *Sahih al-Bukhaari*, *Kitaab Ahaadeeth al-Anbiyaa'*.

[x] Or per the theological minority of *Maturidis* at least the blank slate waiting to be filled as some distinguish which still implies Godliness since there is only one overwhelming Truth.

[xi] This can either mean a few know it, that those who do know a little about it, or a combination thereof.

[xii] Le Gai Eaton, Charles. "Islam and the Destiny of Man." *Albany: State University of New York* (1985) 359.

[xiii] *Nafs* is a linguistically feminine.

[xiv] "And We did certainly create humankind out of clay from an altered black mud.

And the jinn We created before from scorching fire.

When your Lord said to the angels, "I will create a human being out of clay from altered black mud."

And when I have proportioned it and breathed into it of my *Ruh*, then fall down to it in prostration."

So the angels prostrated - all of them entirely

But Iblees, he refused to be with those who prostrated.

[Allah] said, O Iblees, what is [the matter] with you that you are not with those who prostrate?"

[Iblees] said, "Never would I prostrate to a human who You created out of clay from altered black mud."

[Allah] said, "Then get out of it, for indeed, you are expelled." The fact is linguistically indisputable based on the *Quran*.

[xv] Commonly translated religion, or faith, specifically breaks down to disposition, Debtor and indebtedness and the essence of civilization, or *madina*. See the-concept-of-religion-by-sayyid-naquib-al-attas for an in-depth discussion of this.

[xvi] *Iman*

[xvii] Le Gai Eaton, Charles. "Islam and the Destiny of Man." *Albany: State University of New York* (1985) (365).

[xviii] al-Mu'jam al-Awsat 992.

[xix] As a farmer covers a seed, illustrating even in their ignorant defiance of Divine order they continue to carry out the Divine will in producing what God wills to grow in their symbolic soil (soul).