

Father Elias were shaking with anger. Silence dominated the courtroom and it seemed as if Khalil's spirit hovered in that hall and diverted the souls of the multitude from fearing Sheikh 'Abbas. There was a divine power in his words attracted the hearts of the villagers. Sheikh 'Abbas remained alone with terrible silence like a destroyed tower and Khalil stood among the villagers like a prophet.

دمعة وابتسامة
(A TEAR AND A SMILE)

A Tear and A Smile (Dam' ah wa-Ibtisamah), first published in 1914, is an anthology of Jibran's youthful writings in the Arabic-speaking Émigré newspaper "المهاجر" *Al-Mohajer (The Immigrant)*. Jibran's column, "Tears and Laughter," attracted a wide attention from his readers both in the Arab world and among the Arab literati in America. Jibran dedicated this book to Mary Haskell in the following lines:

إلى

M.E.H.

أقدم هذا الكتاب، وهو أول نسخة من عاصفة حياتي، إلى الروح النبيلة التي تحب
النسمات وتسير مع العواصف.

جبران

“To

M.E.H

I offer this book, the first breath in the tempest of my life, to that noble spirit who loves with the breeze and walks with tempests.

Jibran”

The book contains 56 poetic prose pieces close to the aphoristic, and Illustrated with 4 of Jibran’s paintings. In a beautiful and splendid language, the poems, stories, and parables included exhibit the youth’s world of imagination; his self-reflective thoughts and romantic philosophy of life and death, which although at the burgeoning stage, is quiet insightful and universally appealing. Jibran’s reflections in *A Tear and a Smile* are especially pleasing to those sensitive and emotional souls which are his most fervent admirers. As the title evokes, the book is a mixture of tears and smiles, mourning and celebration of a wounded lover and solitary poet. But the tears seem to be much more abundant than the smiles. The poet lives in agony and longing for his beloved, for a restoration of beauty in the world, and for a peace of mind, but is convinced that human life is a world of suffering to be lived through until death.

Shortly before the outbreak of the World War I, Naseeb Arida, a deep poet and a devoted friend of Jibran, asked his permission to publish the collection of his short prose-pieces and poems which appeared periodically in al-Mohajer between 1903-1908, under the title "دمعة وابتسامة" "*Dam' ah wa-Ibtisamah*" (A tear and a smile). Then Jibran replied:

"The youth that wrote *Dam' ah wa-Ibtisamah* has long since died and has been buried in the valley of dreams. Why do you wish to exhume his remains? Do what you like, but forget not that the soul of that the soul of that youth has been re-incarnated in a man whose love for will and power is equal to his love for good taste and beauty; who is bent on demolishing as much as on building. That man is at once the friend and the enemy of men."²⁸

In a letter to Mary Haskell, Jibran mentioned about *Dam' ah wa-Ibtisamah* by saying:

"I wrote huge volumes of prose and verses in the period between childhood and adolescence! But I have never committed the crime of publishing them-nor will I ever do so."²⁹

The reason behind the title دموعة وابتسامة is related to an event during Jibran's days in Madrasa al-Hikma. One day Hala Dahir came to meet

²⁸ . Nuiama, Mikhail, Khalil Jibran, p. 126

²⁹ . Hilu, beloved Prophet, Letter dated 28th Jan, 1920, p. 32

Jibran in Madrasa al-Hikma. As she saw Jibran, tears fell from her eyes but after few moments she began smiling. When Jibran asked her the reason, she replied *معناه دمة وابتسامه* under the same title.³⁰

The writings in this book cover his early days in Beirut, migration to America, his stay in Paris and the problems and difficulties faced by his family. Moreover it depicts his unquestioned mastery of the art of symbolism and simile and is an achievement in the field of Arabic literature that few at any age, have been able to attain. It is astounding that this book with its obvious historical influence, tremendous philosophical significance, metaphysical probing and ripe appreciation of life was written when Jibran was hardly twenty years old. As he has been observed through later of his books, this early brilliance was foreword; Jibran has set forth his love for tears in many places of the book.

The first piece *حياة الحب* (The Life of Love) is a prose-poem, likening the four seasons of the year to the comparable periods of married life. In winter the aging couple exchanges reminiscences, while the husband affectionately sings³¹..... "Feed the Lamp with oil and let it not dim and place it by you, so I can read with tears what your life with me has written upon your face. Bring autumn's wine. Let us drink and sing the song of remembrance to spring's carefree sowing. Come near to

³⁰ . Nadwi Ashfaq Ahmed, Khalil Jibran, His life and works, p. 263

³¹ . Ibid, p. 8-9

me oh the beloved of my soul; the fire is cooling and fleeing under the ashes. Embrace me, for I fear loneliness; the lamp is dim and the wine which we pressed is closing our eyes. Let us look upon each other before they are shut. Kiss me, for the snows have prevailed over all save your kiss. Ah my beloved one, how deep is the ocean of sleep. How distant the morning... in this world.”

رؤيا ‘vision’ is an small essay laded with symbolism of disillusion. In this essay Jibran reemphasizes his concern for individual freedom in society. He uses a picture between a caged bird and a caged human heart that laments the imprisonment of men by convention and civilization. The human heart reflects Jibran’s criticism of the oppressiveness of man-made laws which he believes strip the human being of his life and essence as he says:³²

“ أنا هو القلب البشري أسير المادة، وقتيل شرائع الإنسان الترابي في وسط حقل الجمال ،

على ضفة ينابيع الحياة أسرت في قفص الشرائع التي سنها الإنسان للشواعر ”

“I am the human heart, the captive of matter and the slain of men’s edicts. In the midst of this field of beauty on these banks of the source of, I am captive in this cage of laws fashion by men for the feeling.”

“موت الشاعر حياته” (A poet’s death is his life)” is a small essay where Jibran discloses the pity condition of poets. Giving example of a poet, he

³² . Ibid, 24

describes the story. The poet suffered a lot of problems in his lifetime. At last the poet breathed his last, he had no one at his bedside. As the angel of death approached him, he bade farewell to the earth receiving nothing from the earthly deeds. After several years, when the people of the city arose from the diseased slumber of ignorance, they created monument and celebrated a feast every year in his honor.

In this essay, Jibran has felt pity on men's ignorance. People paid no attention to the poet because they were unable to understand his language. They left him in dark corner of oblivion because he interpreted to them the language of angels. People glorify only those who attain greatness by moments of advantage and ignore a poet who enable them to see the beauty of their spirit and who is a symbol of peace and love. According to Jibran, a poet is recognized in his society only after his death.³³

The poet lives somewhere between a real world and a transcendent world. He is the final stage in the evolution of man which he describes as a process from descent into the material world to alienation to a return to the spiritual universe. Hence he reveals his passionate belief that men are capable of discovering their inherent divinity because humanity is the

³³ . Ibid, p. 17

spirit of divinity on earth.³⁴ He emphasizes the deeper power of the soul, for true light comes from within man.

Jibran rejoices in feelings of self-fulfilment through a mystical union with God who is “the Ocean of Love and Beauty”.³⁵ He invites us to a contemplative life rather than the comfort of materialism. He opens “The Playground of Life” saying:

“A minute moving among the patterns of Beauty and the dreams of Love is greater and more precious than an age filled with splendour granted by the weak to the strong”.³⁶

Jibran accomplishes transcendence also through union with nature. In several of the selections he expresses an aesthetic and spiritual affinity to the valleys and the flowers, the shore and the wind. In “Meeting”, for example, he describes the glorious valley of the Nile and its magical cedars and cypress trees. He tells us that nature’s sweet words and tender smile fill the spirit with joy.³⁷

The hard edge to the book, however, represents Jibran’s frustration and anger with the corruption of humanity. In bitter and ironic tones, he describes a world that glorifies power and the pursuit of richness rather than human values. He expresses his sympathy with the poor and the

³⁴ . Ibid, p. 191

³⁵ . Ibid, p. 4

³⁶ . Ibid, p. 120

³⁷ . Ibid, p.113

wretched who are being exploited and abused by the rich and the powerful.

In the same mode as *The Broken Wings*, Jibran rejects orthodoxy and organized religion. He attacks priests for he believes they embody falsehood, immorality, and evil. He writes: "I beheld priests, sly like foxes; and false messiahs dealing its trickery with the people".³⁸

Jibran's relationship with Josephine Peabody at the time inspired his thoughts in the book. This probability seems consistent with Waterfield's argument that the poet's painful love for Josephine created "the melancholy habits and wounded eyes of the Romantic hero"³⁹. We can also find a parallel to the feelings of alienation and dissatisfaction with humankind in Jibran's own life. Nadeem Nu'aima sees the book as a bridge between a first and a second stage of Jibran's career, the poet's longing for his homeland evolved into rebellion against humanity in general. Nu'aima points out that the tears in *A Tear and A Smile* "are those of Jibran the misfit rather than of the rebel in Boston, singing in an exceedingly touching way of his frustrated love and estrangement, his loneliness, homesickness and melancholy"⁴⁰

³⁸ . Ibid, p. 40

³⁹ . Waterfield, 1998, p. 88

⁴⁰ . Naimy, 1974, p. 59

He claimed that his sayings will be accepted in the days to come. So he writes at the end:⁴¹

والذي أقوله الآن بلسان واحد بقوله اللتي بألسنة

“What I say now with one mouth will be said tomorrow by many mouths”

المواكب

(THE PROCESSIONS)

المواكب (The Processions) is a collection of long poetry over two hundred lines composed by Jibran Khalil Jibran. The book was published in 1919. For the first time Jibran strictly abided by the rules of rhyme and metre. It is a philosophical dialogue in two voices; each following its own metre. The first voice of in the metre of al-basit (البحر البسيط) is of an old sage, worldly-wise and ripened by the experience of life. He left the city to wander in the countryside and wearily rested himself at the edge of the forest. The second voice in majzu-al-ramal (البحر الرمل) , is of a naked sun-bronzed youth with a reed in his hand. He is innocent, simple and pure unlike the philosopher sage. The two meet where their two worlds also meet at the edge of the forest outside the city and they talk about good and evil, knowledge and freedom, cruelty, death and eternity. The old sage approaches life through the narrow socket of the human eye. For him life appears as many disconnected mutually self-excluding

⁴¹ . Khalil Jibran, *Dama wa Ibtisama*, p. 174

links such as good and evil, right and wrong, justice and injustice, freedom and slavery, love and hate, birth and death and so on. According to the old sage, men are in constant unrest and confusion as they always try to weld the disconnected links into one chain and they never succeed the reason. It is because they don't know how to measure and weigh these different links. Though the old sage knows the methods of measuring the links but he is stingy with his knowledge and generous with his sarcasm. He laughs at someone's good and evil but refuses to reveal upon them his own good and evil. He satires their God and creeds but does not unveil his God and creed. He makes fun at their justice without giving a hint of his own justice. Between his sarcasm and mockery, he disperse few precious jewels of his super manic wisdom in order to show men, how great an abyss stood between him and them. Of those jewels is his pronouncement of will and Right.⁴²

والحق للعزم ، والارواح ان قويت سادت و ان ضعفت حلت بها الخير و الشر

To will belongs the right, for soul when strong prevails

*When weak becomes subject to change, good or bad.*⁴³

And that of love in which he seems to rebuke himself:

والحب في الروح لا في الجسم نعرفه كالخمر للوحي لا للسكر ينعصر

For love lies in the soul alone not in the body

⁴² . Jibrān Jibrān Khalil, al-Majmua al-Kamila, p. 356

⁴³ . Kahlil Jibrān, The Processions, ed. & Trans. George Kheirallah, p. 83

Like wine should stimulate our better self

*To welcome gifts of love divine.*⁴⁴

In fact *الموكب* represents the unconscious autobiography of Khalil Jibran. Jibran had come to believe in the unity and universality of all existence; he longed for simple, impersonal freedom merged with harmony with all things. We see his philosophy as a rebellious youth in his verses while he says therein:⁴⁵

وأنس داء ودواء	أعطني الناي و غن
كتبت لكن بماء	إنما الناس سطور
في إجتماع و زحام	ليت شعري أى نفع
واحتجاج و خصام	وجدال و ضجيج
وخيوط العنكبوت	كلها انفاق خلد
فهو في بطن يموت	فالذي يحيا بعجز

Give to me the reed and sings thou! Forget all the cures and ills;

Man is like written verses upon the surface of the rills

What good is there, pray thee tell me in jostling through the crowd in life

Mid the argumentum tumult, Protestation and endless strife

Mole-like burrowing in darkness grasping for the spider's thread,

*Always thwarted in ambition until the living, join the dead.*⁴⁶

⁴⁴ . Jibran Kahlil, *The Processions*, p. 95

⁴⁵ . Jibrān Khalil Jibrān, *al-Majmua al-Kamila*, pp. 363-364

⁴⁶ . Trans. As quoted by G. Kheirallah, *The processions*, p. 109

العواصف
(THE TEMPESTS)

Jibran published his another significant work العوصف (The Tempests) in 1920. Here he talks about the injustice meted out to the poor and weak section of the society and how the beauty of love has been destroyed. All these he describes through a tale of a young man named Yusuf al-Fakhri who quits society to live as a hermit in North Lebanon. The narrator is eager to engage the man in conversation, to learn his motives, his vision of the world.

The author meets the hermit and tries to find out the secret of his reclusion through a discussion with him. The author tries to defend society and civilization against his attacks. The reason he gives for becoming a recluse are:

“I left man because I found that the wheel of my soul was turning one way and grinding harshly against the wheels of other souls. I left civilization because I found it to be an old and corrupt tree, strong and terrible, whose roots are locked into the obscurity of the earth and whose branches are reaching beyond the cloud; but its blossoms are of greed and evil and crime, and its fruit is of woe and misery and fear... They died disappointed, persecuted and torn.”⁴⁷

⁴⁷ . Gibran Gibran Kahlil, *The Tempests*, A Treasury of Kahlil Gibran, ed. By Martin L. Wolf, trans. By A. R. Ferris, London, p. 20

He also resembles the society to a sick man who kills his physician, and then closes his eyes saying, " He was a great physician".⁴⁸ The faith makes him pessimistic and misanthropic, and so he sees no progress in history and does not believe that a group of men who live by the Spirit and by the truth will ever arise in the future. We may say that he is living in his hermitage for these ultimate realities.

After ending the conversation the author returns to society with some spiritual awakenings revealed by Yusuf al-Fakhri and he feels that the spiritual awakening is the most essential thing in man's life, and it is the sole purpose of being. In fact the story is a long series of wonderful sayings. We do not see any particular action in the story except the ensuing conversation which is a polished articulation of Khalil Gibran's mystic philosophy.

THE PROPHET

The Prophet is Gibran's literary and mystic masterpiece. For this book Gibran was named *The Prophet of Lebanon*. The book remained during the 20th Century America's bestselling book, after *The Bible*. As of 1998, it has sold 9,000,000 copies in North America alone.⁴⁹ It has been translated into at least twenty languages.

⁴⁸ . Ibid, p. 23

⁴⁹ . Waterfield, 1998, p. 257

Before publishing this book, Jibran told Mary Haskell: “The world is hungry, Mary, and I have seen and heard the hunger of the world; and if this thing is bread it will find a place in the heart of the world, and if it is not bread it will at least make the hunger of the world deeper and higher”.⁵⁰

Although there are critics like Najjar who argue that Jibran’s idealistic symbolic message of balancing Eastern spirituality and Western material progress did not relieve human suffering around the world,⁵¹ readers have found themselves returning to *the Prophet*’s pages to reabsorb its wisdom. Its poems were recited at wedding parties. Truly the *Chicago Evening Post Literary Review* said about the book:

“Truth is here: truth expressed with all the music and beauty and idealism of a Syrian...The words of Jibran bring to one’s ears the majestic rhythm of Ecclesiastes...For Jibran did not fear to be an idealist in an age of cynics. Nor to be concerned with general truth where other people devote themselves to mountebank intelligence.”⁵²

The book discovers Jibran as a messenger who shares his spiritual sensitivities with his disciples. It portrays the journey of a banished man called Al-Mustafa, which in the Arabic language means the chosen one.

⁵⁰ . *Beloved Prophet*, 1972, p. 264

⁵¹ . Najjar, 1999, p. 156

⁵² . qtd from Young, Barbara. *This man from Lebanon*, New York, Knopf, 1945, p. 61

As he prepares to go back to “the isle of his birth,” he wants to offer the Orphalese, the people among whom he has been placed, gifts but possesses nothing. The people gathered around him, Almitra and all the people asked him saying “give us of your truth”.

Al-Mustafa presents moral values, the mysteries of life, and timeless wisdom about the human experience: marriage, children, friendship, pleasure, death etc. He calls the people for keeping balance between mind and heart and giving without seeking any reward.

Al-Mustafa describes the yearning of the soul for spiritual regeneration and self-fulfilment. He teaches that man’s purpose in life is a mystic philosophy towards a Greater Self, towards Godhood and the infinite.

At the end of the book Al-Mustafa closes his farewell address saying: “A little while, a moment of rest upon the wind, and another woman shall bear me”⁵³. This saying reflects a romantic vision of eternal rebirth, reincarnation, and continuity of life. It evokes the Unity of Being which Jibran believes in rather than fragmentation. Al-Mustafa’s soul, hence, will return again to its mystical path towards a greater soul.

Al-Mustafa’s words are beautiful, powerful and full of inspiration. The secret of the book’s success is “Jibran’s capacity to send profound

⁵³ . Jibrān Jibrān khalil. *The Prophet*, New York, Knopf, 2000, 96

message in simple yet incomparably elegant language”.⁵⁴ It may also be cited that simplicity and delicacy of language are exceptional quality of Jibran’s writings. In his deliberation on Joy and Sorrow Al-Mustafa says:

*“When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.”*⁵⁵

Jibran also beautifully combines his Romantic feelings of nature with his teachings. In his sermon on Reason and Passion, for example, he says:

“Among the hills, when you sit in the cool shade of the white poplars, sharing the peace and serenity of distant fields and meadows – then let your heart say in silence, “God rests in reason.”

The Prophet may be considered partly autobiographical. Mary is often said to be the inspiration for Almitra, and America or New York for the city of Orphalese. The description of twelve-year waiting of Al-Mustafa experienced before returning home from the land of the Orphalese seems to equal Jibran’s own twelve-year stay in New York.

Yearning and gratefulness to the homeland is also seen here in this book. Al-Mustafa’s departure for the land of his birth and his gratefulness

⁵⁴ . Bushrui, 1996, p. 4

⁵⁵ . Ibid, p. 29

to the people, reflects Jibran's everlasting dream to go back to his homeland and his gratefulness to the countrymen.

While creating the prophecy of Al-Mustafa, Jibran undoubtedly considered his own experience as an "exotic Easterner" living in America and his interest in teaching Eastern spirituality to the West. Bushrui and Jenkins emphasize the image of the wise man coming from the East and argued: "the idea of a sage dispensing wisdom among the people of a foreign land no doubt appealed to Jibran".⁵⁶ The book is inspired by Biblical literature, Christian and Sufi mysticism, Buddhism, Hinduism.

Talking about *The Prophet*, Mary Haskell promised Jibran that "in our darkness and in our weakness we will open it, to find ourselves again and heaven and earth within ourselves".⁵⁷ While Mikhâ'il Nu'aima added: "Such books and such men are our surety that Humanity, despite the fearful dissipation of its incalculable energies and resources, is not yet bankrupt".⁵⁸

The Prophet seems to reflect Jibran's efforts to unite various faiths and religions. It is a masterpiece of his humanism. Jibran himself declared that *The Prophet* wrote him instead of him writing *The*

⁵⁶ . Bushrui & Jenkins, 1998, p. 99

⁵⁷ . Mary Haskell to K.G., October 2, 1923

⁵⁸ . qtd in Bushrui & Gotch, 1975, p. 9

Prophet.⁵⁹ Behind Al-Mustafa's global vision of a harmonious universe healed by the power of love and unity, there is an underlying theme of the unity of all religions and the essential oneness of humanity. Jibran communicates a universal humanist message and truths relevant to all cultures and times.

Jibran has a reputation in the Western world due to his *The Prophet*. The fame of *The Prophet* in terms of its worldwide readership, however, has shadowed the fame of Jibran's earlier Arabic writings through which he had already established his literary name and fame in Arabic literature.

THE MADMAN

The Madman, a collection of poems and parables, was Jibran's first publication in English appeared in 1918. The book analyzes the philosophical relation of cooperation between man and God. The Madman is none other than the Mad God transplanted from his lonely existence in the valley of death to another, equally lonely, at the heart of society and culture. As this is the loneliness of madness, it gives him freedom, and he is safe from being understood. Madness is freedom because the Madman has thrown away his masks and faces the sun with

⁵⁹ . Daoudi, 1982, p. 99

his face naked. His madness is only in the eyes of others, from whom he deviates in his right and just and logical doings.

The Madman believes in reincarnation that he has passed through before his present incarnation. In his first life, he spoke to God addressing 'Master', whose slave he was, and therefore God made no answer. Next he worshipped Him as the Creator, and thought of himself as a piece of molded clay; then as a Father, calling himself His son, but God was displeased by both these conceptions of Himself, and made no answer. At last he spoke to God, saying:

*“My God, my aim and my fulfillment; I am thy yesterday and thou art my tomorrow. I am your root in the earth and thou art my flower in the sky, and together we grow before the face of the sun”.*⁶⁰

In the parable *My Friend*, the Madman admits his ironic hypocrisy to a friend who knows nothing of his heaven and hell, or of his secret laughter at truth, beauty and righteousness of his real. He masks his madness and he is not his friend, though he walks hand in hand with him

In *The Wise Dog*, wisdom is made out to be prayer to dead from, which turns out to be a revelation of trifling egotism and desire for profit. The wise Dog tells some cats who are praying for a rain of mice that is

⁶⁰ . Gibran, Gibran Kahlil, *The Madman*, London, 1919, p. 10

written that 'that which rained for prayer and faith and supplication is not mice but bones'.⁶¹ In *The Blessed City*,

Wisdom and the knowledge of reading have brought everyone in the city of the title to live according to the Scripture. All the inhabitants of the city have plucked out their right eyes and cut off their right hands, for according to Scripture it is more profitable for member to perish than for the whole body to be cast into hell. In the city "there is none whole save such as are yet too young to read the Scripture and to understand its commandant".⁶²

There are some parables and poems in *The Madman* (المجنون) which are dealt ironically with the laws and orders of society. In the parable *The Two Cages* he shows that caged animals or beasts are brothers although they belong to different categories. Jibran produces the cage as a symbol of the oppressive laws of society.

Some other parables reflect on self liberation. For instance, the parables *When my Sorrow was Born* and *Joy was Born* tell rather of the extinction of joy and sorrow, in his self, and of a life beyond both. In *The Crucified* he asks to be crucified himself. He asks men to remember only that he smiled.

⁶¹ . Ibid, p. 18

⁶² . Ibid, p. 44

Jibran was very much attracted with the metaphor of madness. It came very easily to his mind and was applied indifferently to love, rebellion, religious faith and thought. It is a protest against the conventional wisdom and ways of life. Coming out from the traditional system *The Madman* shows the negative as well as the positive aspects sides of his philosophy.

The Madman aspired to destroy civilization, specially traditional religion, worship himself. He expresses the negative as well as the positive aspects of his doctrine.

THE FORERUNNER

Jibran's next book in English after *The Madman* (المجنون) was *The Forerunner* (السابق) , which was published in 1920. It is also a collection of his parables and poems. With *The Forerunner* (السابق) Jibran becomes more mysterious and more of a mature philosopher. He mainly devoted it to the explanation and expansion of his theory of reincarnation and evolution of the individual self. In his introduction, he sees man as a forerunner saying: "You are your own forerunner, and the towers you have built are but the foundation of your giant-self. And that self too shall be a foundation".⁶³

⁶³ . . Gibran Kahlil, *The Forerunner*, The Greatest Works of Kahlil Gibran, Eds., Jaico Publishing House, Mumbai, 2008, p. 1

According to him we should not blame others for our being and having and this is what self-actualization. This process never ends for the tomorrow is always stretched out there, untouched. He asserts that man's life is timeless, saying. ... "for yesterday was death conquered and tomorrow was birth pursued".⁶⁴ To him the process of death and birth never ends: "And always shall we be the beginning".⁶⁵

The poem *Out of my Deeper Heart* expresses his belief in the expansion of the self by aspiration. Giving example of a bird he says: 'it was but like a swallow, then a lark, then an eagle, then as vast as a spring cloud, and then it filled the starry heavens'.⁶⁶ In the poem *The Last Watch* Jibran draws the pictures of his early loves; how it was indulged and misunderstood. So he says to the people in the rebellious mood that followed he was hiding his love with a semblance of hatred and disguising his tenderness as bitterness.

THE GARDENS OF THE PROPHET

This book was published in 1933, two years later after the death of Khalil Jibran. The plot of the book is connected to his famous book "*The Prophet*". The main character of both books is same which is related to Jibran's personal life. In "*The Garden of the Prophet*" one of the

⁶⁴ . Ibid, p. 2

⁶⁵ . Ibid, p. 2

⁶⁶ . Ibid, p. 31

companions of the Prophet on his journey towards his home asks him to tell them about the city of Orphalese where he stayed for twelve years. Then the Prophet replies very beautifully which Jibran used to call 'The Nine Pities'.⁶⁷ The theme is scornful pity for the fate of Lebanon, which is reflected in the following quotation:

"Pity a nation that wears a cloth it does not weave, eats bread it does not harvest.... Pity the nation divided into fragments, each fragment deeming itself a nation".⁶⁸

The mood is one of darkness and pre-occupation with death. It is Jibran's farewell to life, and expresses his longing to dissolve into nature. In the last part of "حديقة النبي" Jibran says:

O Mist, my sister, my sister, Mist, I am with you now. No longer am I a self. The walls have fallen."⁶⁹

⁶⁷ . Mrs. Barbara Young, This Man from Lebanon, eight printing, New York, 1956, pp. 119-20

⁶⁸ . Gibran, Gibran Kahlil, The Garden of the Prophet, London, 1935, pp. 13-14

⁶⁹ . Ibid, p. 67

CHAPTER- III

SPIRITUAL LOVE AS REFLECTED IN THE WRITINGS OF JIBRAN KHALIL JIBRAN

Love is created by God. Nobody can deny the importance of love in the world. Affection, sympathy, humanity.... these virtues can only come from love. Love can lead the Conjugate life to happiness. Father, mother, husband, wife, kinsmen, friends everybody needs the taste of love. We share our love only with our near and dear, but we do not share it with those many people who need it so much. According to Jibran love is a burning fire as well as a double-edged weapon. Novels are based on love-stories showing man either as the victim, or the hero of his love. So love is a great and significant factor human life. Jibran, like Jhon Keats was the worshiper of beauty as well as truth through which he tried to find spiritual love.

Love is holy flame

Love has been a fascinating subject for Jibran. It is a flame that consumes his heart and melts his emotions and passions. He defines love as a strong force that brings both death and life.⁷⁰. He describes love differently in different stages of human life..... For the old it is

⁷⁰ . Habib Massoud, *At The Gate of The Temple*, p. 54

weakness inherited from our forefathers, for the young it is a decision that is part of our existence, which links our present with the past and future, for the tired woman it is a deadly poison. Love is the blind ignorance which starts in youth and ends in old age. For the people with clear vision "it is divine knowledge that makes us to see things as the gods do". Jibran divided the human life into two parts... one is frozen and the other one is burning and love is that burning part which is produced from divine flame.⁷¹

Love is divine call:

Jibran's philosophy of love goes deeper than other writers; he talks about love as being something beyond the understanding of a normal man. He sees love as a state of mystery. Jibran stressed clearly that love is a special mysterious and divine call: "It is wrong to think that love comes from companionship and preserving courtship. Love is the offspring of spiritual affinity and unless that affinity is created in a moment; it will not be created in years or even in generations."⁷² Jibran is convinced that love is not created by human being, it is sent from the heaven. He does not make any clear difference between the heaven of theology and that of the cosmos. In ancient literature, the word *Al-Samaa* is used usually for poetry and divinity. In mysticism, the stars and the

⁷¹ . *Ibid*, p. 55

⁷² . Kahril Jibran, *The Broken Wings*, p. 23

planets are believed as the seats of the gods. We see the following lines about love in a letter Jibran wrote to Ameen Goryeb: “ They (lines of the letter) were written with the finger of the soul and the ink of the heart upon the face of love that hangs between the earth and the stars and hovers between the East and West.⁷³

So far as the divinity of love is concerned, he says: “When you love you should not say ‘God is in my heart’; but rather ‘I am in the heart of God.’⁷⁴ It shows that his divinity is genuine that remains practically a mystery. Jibran’s doctrine considers love as sacred thing. He sees the laws imposed on marriage as man-made laws. So, he declares this law as invalid. Actually this type of marriage system was going on in the East at that time; marriage brokers were very strong there and they imposed marriage in the society without seeing the existence of love between the two. The right of selecting a partner was not permitted to the girls. Therefore Jibran disagrees with the man-made laws and considers them against the essence of spiritual love.

In his book *al-Arwah al-Mutamarrida* (Spirits Rebellious), the story *Sayyida Warda Al-Hani* clearly shows the spirituality of love. The girl named *Warda al-hani* was married by force to a rich man *Rashid*

⁷³ . Khalil Jibran, *Self Portrait* (London: Heinemann. 1960), p. 34

⁷⁴ . Jibran, *The Broken Wings*, p. 13

Nu'man . Al-hani was used as his mouthpiece. There was no love between the relationship. The girl said:

“ I prayed in the silence of the nights before Heaven, asking it to create in my soul a spiritual affinity that would draw close to me the man who had been chosen for my husband. But Heaven did not so, for love descends on our spirits on God’s command and not on man’s asking..... Then one black day I looked beyond the darkness and saw a soft light shining from the eyes of a youth who walked the highways of life alone and who dwelt alone among his books and papers in this poor house. I closed my eyes that I might not see those rays, and said within myself: “Thy lot, O spirit, is the blackness of the tomb; covet not, therefore, the light! Then I listened and heard a divine melody.....”⁷⁵

At last *Al-hani* ran away from her husband’s house. At that time she felt herself as being led by a sacred and divine force. But afterwards, the public used to see her with bad eyes as she said:

"يقول لك الناس إن وردة الهاني امرأة خائنة جحود قد اتبعت شهوة قلبها وهجرت الرجل الذي رفعها إليه وجعلها سيدة منزله. ويقولون لك هي زانية عاهرة قد أتلفت بمقابضها القذرة إكليل الزواج المقدس الذي ضفرته الديانة، واتخذت عوضاً عنه إكليلاً وسخاً محبوباً من أشواك الجحيم، وألقت عن جسدها ثوب الفضيلة وارتدت لباس الإثم والعار. ويقولون لك أكثر من ذلك لأن أشباح جدودهم ما زالت حية في أجسادهم. فهم مثل كهوف الأودية الخالية يرجعون صدى

⁷⁵ . Khalil Gibran, *Self Portrait* (London: Heinemann. 1964), p. 10

أصوات لا يفهمون معناها. هم لا يعرفون شريعة الله في مخلوقاته، ولا يفقهون مفاد الدين الحقيقي، ولا يعلمون متى يكون الإنسان خاطئاً أو باراً، بل ينظرون بأعينهم الضئيلة إلى ظواهر الأعمال ولا يرون أسرارها..."

*"The people will tell you that Warda al-Hani is a heretic and unfaithful woman who followed her desires by leaving the man who elated her into him and made her the elegance of his home. They will tell you that she is an Traitress and prostitute who destroyed with her filthy hands the wreath of a sacred marriage and replaced it with a besmirched union woven of the thorns of hell. She took off the dress of virtue and put on the cloak of sin and disgrace. They will say you more than that, because the ghosts of their fathers are still living in their bodies. They are as like as the deserted caves of the mountains that echo the voices whose meanings are not understood. They neither understand the law of God, nor comprehend the true intent of veritable religion, nor distinguish between a sinner and an innocent. They look only at the surface of objects without knowing their secrets."*⁷⁶

So far as the story *The Bridal Couch* is concerned it also highlights Jibran's spiritual philosophy of love between a bride and a bridegroom. In the story the bride and the bridegroom were coming out from the temple after completing their religious rituals of marriage. There was a welcome programme with full of joy and happiness. All guests were

⁷⁶ . Khalil Jibran, *al-Arwah al-Mutamarrida*, p. 28-29

rising up with shouting happiness and offering greetings on the both. Everything was remaining in that hall and the beautiful bride was looking at this scene like an oppressed captive. The groom stood up from his place, he was old and harsh appearance and was wandering among people freely. At once the bride ran away from the marriage party to the garden where *Salim*, whom she loved was waiting for her. As she found herself beside him, she embraced with his neck and expressed her feelings of love for him asked him to take her away with him. After hearing her sentences, the love and nobility (honesty) were fighting inside the soul of *Salim*. According to Jibran, the Love was God gifted and the Nobility was evil tradition, as he said in this story:

"ذلك الحب الذي ينزله الله على القلب ، وذلك الشرف الذي تسكبه تقاليد البشر في الدماغ"

*"That Love which is brought down on the heart by God and that Nobility is the evil traditions of (our society) which pour it in the mind of human being."*⁷⁷

Salim was not ready to accept her due to the man-made laws of the society. So he pretended that he was in love with another girl. He urged her to accept that bridegroom for whom the wedding programme was going on. But she could not leave *Salim* saying that she has already left that house and that bridegroom forever.

⁷⁷ . Ibid, p. 69

She then expressed the pure feelings of her deep love before him in the following lines:

" لا تقل بأني خائنة ، لأن يد الحب الذي مزجت روحي بروحك هي أقوى من يد الكاهن التي أسلمت جسدي إلى مشيئة العريس ، هاقد طوقت ذراعي حول عنقك فلا تحملها القوات وقربت نفسي إلى نفسك فلا يفرقهما الموت" ⁷⁸

"Do not say that I am a betrayer, because the hand of love which is melts my spirit it with your spirit is stronger than the hand of the priest, who devoted my body to the bridegroom. I have thrown my shoulder on your neck. So, nothing could separate from you."

At last the bride picked up a dagger from her cloth and then scabbards him in his chest. Salim was falling down and at that time he expressed the truth that actually he loved her, but due the society he could not flee away in that wedding night. The bride tried to expose her love in front of all the people because after killing him she shouted: "O' the people, hurry up! The bride is here and this is the bridegroom. Wake up O' the sleepiness and watch out O' the intoxicate people and hurry O' the people to see the secret of Love, Death and Life."

Suddenly the bride raised up the dagger and pushed it in her chest fell down beside Salim. People present there became shocked; they came closely to the dead body. She saw them and said with rebellious spirits:

⁷⁸ . Ibid, p. 70