

A Bottomless Void

Bint Shahid

The human soul, I have always thought, is something singularly intriguing. From its compelling desires that could burn brighter than the fiery sun to its captivating light that could reflect the wonders of heaven, it is an enigma unlike any other. It is possibly the only creation that simultaneously possesses the ability to be the better than angels - or worse than beasts. When we ponder over human history, we come to realise that there is one singular need within the human soul that led people to either divinity or destruction, depending on how they fulfilled it. This is the inherent human desire for "something better."

The human soul has been created with an abyssal void within it; a deep unfathomable desire for something unnamed. The presence of this void lights a fire of longing within the human being. Desperate to assuage the burn, he tries to fill this void with the transient pleasures of the Dunya.

Money, fame, fashion, music, movies and so much more is carelessly thrown into this void with the hope that it will be filled. However, what most people fail to comprehend is that this abyssal void in the heart of Insaan can be satiated by nothing other than the love of his Rabb ﷻ. This concept was beautifully encapsulated by Allama Ibn Qayyim رحمه الله عليه in his timeless poetry:

إن في القلب شعث : لا يلمه إلا الإقبال على الله .

In the heart there is a dispersion, that cannot be collected except by turning towards Allah.

وعليه وحشة : لا يزيلها إلا الأنس به في خلوته .

And in it, there is an overwhelming loneliness that cannot be wiped away except by the secluded company of your Rabb.

وفيه حزن : لا يذهبه إلا السرور بمعرفته وصدق معاملته .

And in its hollows there exists a profound sadness that can not be erased, except by the joy of knowing Him and being truthful to Him.

وفيه قلق : لا يسكنه إلا الاجتماع عليه والفرار منه إليه .

And within it, there is a deep-set anxiety that cannot be calmed except by presenting yourself before Him and fleeing from Him to Him.

وفيه نيران حسرات : لا يطفئها إلا الرضا بأمره وقضائه .

And in its depths, rage smouldering fires of remorse, that will not be extinguished except by contentment in His command and decree.

وفيه طلب شديد : لا يقف دون أن يكون هو وحده المطلوب .

And within it, there is an intense yearning that is impossible to satiate, until He alone becomes the aim of your seeking.

وفيه فاقة : لا يسدها إلا محبته ودوام ذكره .

And in it, there is an inexplicable emptiness, that can not be filled except by His exquisite love and continuous remembrance.

ولو أعطى الدنيا وما فيها لم تسد تلك الفاقة أبدا!!

And if a person was to be gifted the entire world and all it contains, this void would still remain painfully empty.