

Benevolence in the Quran, Hadith, and its Reflection in the Poetry of Sa'eb Tabrizi

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Article Info (47-60)

ABSTRACT

Article type:
Research Article

Article history:

Received:
28/11/2023

Accepted:
02/03/2024

Keywords:
Benevolence

Quran

Hadith

Poetry

Sa'eb
Tabrizi

In this research, the perspective of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the infallible Imams regarding benevolence were examined, and its reflection in the poetry of Sa'eb Tabrizi was studied. Using a qualitative (descriptive-analytical) approach, information and data were collected, analyzed, explained, and organized in a library style. This study demonstrates that benevolence is one of the fundamental values in Islamic and human society. The Merciful God in the Holy Quran encourages and commands humans to perform benevolent acts, and has promised great rewards for the benevolent: "Those who believe and spend from among you, they will have a great reward." (Hadid:7). Numerous traditions about benevolence and charity have been narrated from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the infallible Imams in reputable books. For example, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Benevolence is a tree from the trees of Paradise, extending from heaven to earth. Whoever holds onto one of its branches, Paradise will pull him towards it." (Varam, 1369: 318). Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (AS) stated, "Fulfilling the needs and necessities of a believer is greater than performing a thousand accepted pilgrimages, freeing a thousand slaves, and sending a thousand equipped horses in the way of God." (Ibn Babawayh, 1400AD: 197). Sa'eb Tabrizi, influenced by the Quran and Hadith, paid infinite attention to benevolence, charity, and compassion for the needy. He can be classified among the compassionate, human-friendly, and encouraging poets of benevolence because he believed that it is necessary for individuals in human society to feel responsible towards the afflictions of others and to behave benevolently and compassionately towards the needy.

Citation: Ahmadi, Mohammad Yasin (2024). The Rhyme in Nimai's Poetry (Iranian and Afghan Poets). *Modern Literary Studies*, 3(1) 47-60



Publisher: Association for the Promotion of Persian Language and Literature
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DOI: [20.1001.1.28211413.1403.3.1.1.2](https://doi.org/10.28211/413.1403.3.1.1.2)

Introduction

Generosity (*Sakhawat*) and charitable spending (*Infaq*) are fundamental mechanisms within Islamic teachings designed to elevate human character to the highest moral strata. From the inception of Islam, generosity has been regarded as a quintessential virtue, representing a selfless yielding of personal rights and a profound act of altruism. This research investigates the theological and ethical foundations of generosity as presented in the Holy Quran and the Prophetic traditions (*Hadith*), and subsequently explores how these divine and prophetic mandates are aesthetically and ideologically reflected in the poetry of Saeb Tabrizi, a master of the 11th-century Hijri (Safavid era) Persian poetic tradition. In a contemporary context where many Islamic societies face economic hardship and social inequality, understanding the link between religious duty and poetic expression becomes vital for promoting social responsibility and empathy.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research design, specifically utilizing a descriptive-analytical methodology. Data collection was conducted through extensive library research, involving the scrutiny of primary religious texts (the Holy Quran and authoritative collections of Hadith) and the literary works of Saeb Tabrizi (*Kulliyat*). The research involves the systematic gathering of textual evidence, which is then analyzed to identify thematic parallels between the religious injunctions regarding charity and the metaphorical and didactic expressions used by the poet.

Results

The research yields several significant findings regarding the intersection of theology and literature:

- **Theological Foundations in the Quran:** The Quran establishes generosity not merely as a recommendation but as a divine command linked to justice and righteousness. Key verses (e.g., Surah Al-Hadid: 7; Surah Al-Insan: 8-9) emphasize that true charity involves giving even when one has a personal need for the object being given. The Quran promises immense spiritual rewards and protection from future anxieties for those who practice secret and open charity.

- **Prophetic and Imami Traditions:** The *Hadiths* provide a practical ethical framework, equating the act of satisfying a believer's need with far superior spiritual merits than certain ritualistic acts (such as multiple pilgrimages). The traditions categorize the "hand that gives" as superior to all others and warn that miserliness (*Bukhl*) is a barrier to divine favor and heavenly entry.
- **Saeb Tabrizi's Poetic Reflection:** Saeb integrates these religious tenets into his poetic discourse through sophisticated imagery and philosophical depth. His work functions as a mirror to Islamic ethics in several ways:
- **The Paradox of Abundance:** Following the Quranic principle that charity does not diminish wealth, Saeb employs metaphors—such as a spring that increases the more it is drawn upon—to illustrate that generosity actually expands one's spiritual and material fortune.
- **Charity as a Shield:** He depicts benevolence as a "fortress" or "fence" that protects the "harvest" of one's life from the "storms" of calamity and misfortune.
- **Humanism over Ritualism:** Echoing the teachings of the Imams, Saeb posits that attending to the sufferings of humanity is a higher form of devotion than certain outward rituals. He suggests that a "smiling countenance" and "gentle speech" toward the needy are themselves forms of essential charity.
- **Social Responsibility:** Saeb's poetry serves as a moral call to action, urging the wealthy to recognize their responsibility toward the marginalized, thereby framing social empathy as a prerequisite for true faith.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Saeb Tabrizi was a deeply committed and socially conscious poet who successfully synthesized Islamic ethical teachings with Persian poetic excellence. His poetry is not merely an artistic endeavor but a medium for transmitting the values of *Infaq* and *Sakhawat*. The research demonstrates that generosity, from both a religious and a literary perspective, serves as a catalyst for social cohesion, the eradication of poverty, and the attainment of spiritual tranquility. Ultimately, the study emphasizes the necessity of revitalizing these profound themes within contemporary Islamic discourse to address



Modern Literary Research

journal homepage: <https://jpll.ir>

Online ISSN:
ISSN:2821-1421

modern socio-economic challenges through the lens of compassion and shared responsibility.