

God has given us a dark wine so potent that,
 drinking it, we leave the two worlds.

God has put into the form of hashish a power
 to deliver the taster from self-consciousness.

God has made sleep so that
 it erases every thought.

God made Majnun love Layla so much that
 just her dog would cause confusion in him.

There are thousands of wines
 that can take over our minds.

Don't think all ecstasies
 are the same!

Jesus was lost in his love for God.
 His donkey was drunk with barley.

Drink from the presence of saints,
 not from those other jars.

Every object, every being,
 is a jar full of delight.

Be a connoisseur,
 and taste with caution.

Any wine will get you high.
 Judge like a king, and choose the purest,
 the ones unadulterated with fear,
 or some urgency about "what's needed."

Drink the wine that moves you
 as a camel moves when it's been untied,
 and is just ambling about.



Historical and cultural context

Jalal ad-Din Rumi (aka Rumi) was a 13th-century Sufi poet and mystic. Rumi was also a professor, husband and father. Sufism is a mystical branch of Islam, a religion which emerged in Arabia in the 7th Century at a time when excessive wealth from the spice trade, overuse of alcohol, and other behaviours were affecting family relationships and tribal customs. The Qur'an (the holy book for Islam) says of wine and gambling, "In them is great sin, and some profit, for men; but the sin is greater than the profit." Many Islamic societies went on to adopt formal rules against alcohol use. But like all major religions, there has always been great variation in beliefs and behaviours among followers of Islam.