

Bulleh Shah has given us a riddle to unravel today.

*Bulleh! to me, I am not known*

Ask yourself, What or who is not known when he keeps saying that he is “not known”? How can he say to himself that he is not known?

The little self, the ego, the self of attributes with a place in the world, the self that answers to the name Bulleh (“I am not the name I assume”) — that self can’t know the deeper Self. Why? Because the True Self is far too immense. The True Self is “not a believer... nor a pagan.” The True Self is not involved “in happiness nor in sorrow.” The True Self is too big to be contained by those definitions; it permeates them and encompasses them, without being caught by them.

*Not from water, nor from earth*

*Neither fire, nor from air, is my birth*

The True Self is not hemmed in by beginnings and ending.

*From Adam and Eve, I am not born*

One’s True Self is eternal.

*I am the first, I am the last*

And utterly whole and all-encompassing, with nothing external.

*None other, have I ever known*

No surprise then that the little self that clings to definitions and boundaries cannot know the Self Bulleh speaks of. The great, flowing vastness one is, well, it is perceived, but it is not ‘known.’

*Bulleh! to me, I am not known*

To encounter the deepest mystery, we have only to look in the mirror.

