



## Religious Gatheka – Hazrat Inayat Khan

### 7. Religion

Is a certain religion an important thing or is living it an important thing?

Perhaps a person belongs to the best religion there is in the world, he does not live it, but he belongs to it. He says he is a Mussulman or a Christian or a Jew. He is sure it is the best religion but at the same time he does not care to live it, he just belongs to it, and thinks belonging to a certain religion that is an accepted religion, is all that is needed. And people of all different religions have made it appear so, owing to their enthusiasm and forced by their mission in life; for they have made facilities for those who belong to their particular religion, saying that by the very fact of their belonging to that particular religion, they will be saved on the Day of Judgment, while others with all their good actions will not be saved, because they do not belong to that particular religion.

This a man-made idea, not God-made. God is not the Father of one sect, God is the father of the whole world and all are entitled to be called his children, whether worthy or unworthy. And in fact it is man's attitude toward God and truth which can bring him closer to God, which is the ideal of every soul. And if this attitude is not developed, then whatever a man's religion may be he has failed to live it. Therefore what is important in life is to try and live the religion to which one belongs, or that one esteems, or that one believes to be one's religion.

But one always has to know that religion has a body and has a soul. But whatever body or religion you may touch you touch the soul, and if you touch the soul you touch all its bodies, which are like its organs. And all the organs constitutes one body, which is the body of the Religion, the religion which is the religion of the Alpha and Omega, which was and which is and which will always be. Therefore the dispute, 'I am right and you are wrong' in the path of religion is not necessary. We do not know what is in the heart of man. If outwardly he seems to be a Jew, a Christian, a Moslem or a Buddhist, we are not the judge of his religion, for every soul

has a religion peculiar to itself, and no-one else is entitled to judge its religion. There maybe a person in a very humble garb, without the appearance of belief in God or of piety or orthodoxy, and he may have a religion hidden in his heart which not everybody can understand. And there maybe a person who is highly evolved and his outward conduct, which alone manifests to people's view may appear to be altogether contrary to their own way of looking at things. They may accuse him of being a materialist or an unbeliever or someone who is far from God and truth, and yet we do not know. Sometimes appearances are merely illusions, behind them there may be the deepest religious devotion, the highest ideal, hidden, of which we know very little.

For the Sufi, therefore the best thing to do is to respect man, his belief, whatever it may be, his ideal, whatever is maybe, his way of looking at life, even if it be quite different from our own way of looking at it. It is in this spirit of tolerance that, when developed, will bring about the brotherhood which is the essence of religion and want of the day.

The idea, ' You are different and I am different, your religion and mine religion is different, your belief is different and my belief is different', that will not unite, that will only divide humanity. Those who, with their excuse of their great faith in their own religion, hurt the feeling of another and divide humanity, whose source and goal is the same; they abuse religion, whatever be their faith. The message, whenever, at whatever period it came to the world, did not come to a certain section of humanity; it did not come to raise only some few people who perhaps accepted the faith, the Message, or a particular church. No, all these things came afterwards. The rain does not fall in a certain land only, the sun does not shine upon a certain country only. All that is from God is for all souls. If they are worthy they deserve it, it is their reward; if they are unworthy they are the more entitled to it. Verily, blessing is for every soul, for every soul whatever be his faith or belief belongs to God.