



Religious Gatheka – Hazrat Inayat Khan

9. Prayer

Often mankind thinks, ‘Since God is the knower of the heart of every man what does it matter if prayer is recited and gestures or action made? Would it not be sufficient if one sat in silence and thought of God?’ And the answer is that it is according to the extent of your consciousness of prayer that your prayer reaches God. If your body is silent and only your mind is working, part of your being is praying and part is not, for you are constituted by both mind and body. Therefore, when the mind is praying the body must pray too, to make it complete. In reality God is within you, and as he is within you, you are the instrument of God, through you God experiences the external world and you are the best instrument of conveying yourself to God. Therefore your thought, action and word makes prayer complete.

Then there is another idea. The next question is, when God already knows what we want what is good for us, what we need, why should we ask Him for it? He knows it. For this in the first place I would quote Christ’s words: “Knock and it shall be opened unto you; ask and ye shall receive.” In other words God knows your need, He knows what you want, but your want becomes clear when it is expressed not by the mind or the body only but by your whole being. That is the secret.

The question “Why does God need praise from us? Who are we that we should praise God?” is answered thus. We can never praise him enough, and our praise can never be sufficient, but at the same time our soul is blessed with the impression of the Glory of God whenever we praise Him. The soul could praise God every moment and yet be wanting to praise Him more. It is constantly hungering and thirsting to find the perfection of beauty. When to our utmost we praise the beauty of God our soul is filled with bliss. Even to utter the name of God is a bliss which fills the soul with light and joy and happiness as nothing else can.