



Religious Gatheka – Hazrat Inayat Khan

14. Three aspects of the work of the Sufi Movement

Before the service commences I would like to speak a few words to introduce the idea of our movement. The Sufi Movement has three aspects of its work: the esoteric work, the devotional service and the third, the activity of brotherhood, the activity, the meeting which took place this afternoon and the religious activity you will see here. In spite of the different opinions of all the different people in the world, it is an undeniable fact that humanity needs religion greatly. But which religion does it need? Does it need the sectarian religions as of old? No. Mankind is getting tired of that idea of being confined in a sect. And the new generation to day is beginning to see that there is no such religion in this world, which can be considered inferior to its own, and therefore that narrow outlook of the sectarians of the religions does not appeal to them.

Now the question, - if the Sufi message is a new religion. Certainly it cannot be a new religion. When Jesus Christ has said that 'I have come to fulfil the law, not to give a new law'. It is the same religion which Jesus Christ has brought still continued further. It is one and the same stream which all prophets have brought and given to humanity, it is carried along. It is the same stream which is always there. The Message of the Sufi is the answer to the cry of humanity to day, for it is in agreement with the science and it stands to defend all religions. The Sufi does not say this religion is greater than the other, nor does he come out and say this religion and that religion are equal. He leaves it to the individual to think as he thinks. He only holds his service as the proof of adhering all the teachers and respecting all the scriptures, which are respected by the collectivity.

But with all its forms the Sufi ideal has also the formless ideal of worship. The form is to help the one who can be helped by seeing the form, because all education is an education in names and forms. If there was no form and no name we would not have learned the. The form is only suggestive of what is behind it, of the one and same truth, which is behind all religions.

Therefore this service is a teaching at the same time and yet every Sufi is free to take up a form or not take up a form; a Sufi is not bound by a form. The form is for his use, not to make him captive.

And one may ask, is there priesthood in the Sufi Movement? Priesthood, not in the sense as it is understood; priesthood only to conduct the service and to answer the need of a priest which is always in everyday life. Those ordained in the Sufi Movement are called Cherags and by other names. There is no distinction between woman or man; the worthy soul is ordained, who has the desire to serve humanity by this, showing the example to the world that in all places, in the church, in the school, in the house of parliament, in the court, it is woman and man together who complete evolution. But at the same time every Sufi is a priest, a preacher, is a teacher and is a pupil of every soul that he meets in the world.

Since the only ideal in working is to qualify oneself in order to be a proper servant to serve the cause of God.