



Religious Gatheka – Hazrat Inayat Khan

20. Christ

The Christ ideal is unexplainable in words. The omnipresent intelligence, which is in the rock, in the tree, in the animal. In man it shows its gradual unfoldment.

It is a fact accepted by both science and metaphysics. This intelligence shows its culmination in the complete development of human personality and in the personality such as that of Jesus Christ, which was recognized by his followers to be. The followers of Buddha recognized the same unfoldment of the object of creation in Gautama Buddha and the Hindus saw the same in Sri Krishna. In Moses, the followers of Moses recognized that and maintained their belief for thousands of years. And the same culmination of the all-pervading intelligence was recognized in Mohammed by his followers.

No man has the right to claim this stage of development, nor can anyone compare very well two persons recognized by their followers as the perfect spirit of God. For a thoughtless person it is easy to express his opinion and to compare two people, but a thoughtful person first thinks whether he has arrived at that stage where he can compare two such personalities. No doubt a question of belief is different. Neither can the belief of the Muslim be the same as that of the Jewish people, nor can the Christian belief be the same of that of the Buddhists. However, the wise understands all beliefs for he is one with them all.

And the question if a person was destined to be a complete personality may be answered that there is no person who is not destined to be something. Every person has his life destined beforehand and the light of the purpose, for which he was born and to accomplish in life, has already been kindled in his soul. Therefore, whatever be the grade of a person's evolution, he is certainly destined to be so. Discussion of the lives that the different prophets have lived and of

the superiority of one over the other seems to be a very primitive attempt on the part of man. Not knowing the condition of that particular time when the prophet lived nor the psychology of the people at the time when the prophet existed, he is ready to judge that personality by the standard of ideas which he knows to-day, does not do that personality justice. And when a person compares one particular teaching of a prophet with the teaching of another prophet, he also makes a great mistake, because the teachings of the prophets have not always been of the same kind.

The teaching is like the composition of a composer who writes music in all the different keys, and who puts the highest note and the lowest notes and all the notes of different octaves in his music.

The teachings of the prophets are nothing but the answer to the demands of the individual and the collective souls. Sometimes a childlike soul comes and asks and an answer is given appropriate to his understanding. And an old soul comes and asks and he is given an answer suited to his evolution. When two teachings are brought together, a teaching which Krishna gave to a child and a teaching which Buddha gave to an old soul, it is not doing justice to compare. It is easy to say: "I do not like the music of Wagner, I simply hate it." But I should think it would be better to become Wagner first and then to hate if one likes. To weigh, to measure, to examine, to pronounce an opinion on a great personality one must rise to that development first, otherwise the best thing is a respectful attitude. Respect in any form is the way of the wise.

Then there are simple people who hear about miracles, who give all the importance to what they have read, perhaps in the traditions about the miracles performed by the great souls, but that is the way how they limit the greatness of God to a certain miracle. If God is eternal, then His miracle is eternal, it is always there. There is no such a thing as unnatural nor such a thing as impossible. Things seem unnatural because they are unusual, things seem impossible because they are beyond man's limited reason. Life itself is a phenomenon, a miracle. The more one knows about it, the more one lives conscious of the wonderfulness of life, the more one realizes that if there is any phenomenon or miracle, it is man's birthright. Who has done it? It is man who can do it and who will do it. But what is essential is not a miracle, the most essential is the understanding of life.

The soul who realized before he claimed to be Alpha and Omega, is Christ. To know intellectually that life is eternal or that the whole life is one, is not sufficient, although it is the first step in the direction towards perfection.

The actual realization of this comes from the personality of the God conscious soul as a fragrance in his thought, speech and action and proves in the world as incense put on fire.

There are many beliefs, such as that of salvation through Christ, and the man who is agitated against religion closes the doors of his heart before having the patience to understand what really it means. It only means there is no liberation without an ideal before one. The ideal is a stepping-stone toward that attainment which is called liberation.

There are others who cannot conceive the thought of Christ's divinity. The truth is that the soul of man is divine and that divine, when with the unfoldment of the soul reaches the point of culmination then deserves being called divine.

And there is a great difference in the beliefs of people who have various opinion about the immaculate birth of Jesus. And the truth is when the soul arrives at the point of understanding the truth of life in its collective aspect, he realises that there is only one Father and that is God, and this world out of which all the names and forms have been created is the Mother, and the Son, who deserves by his recognising the Mother and Father, and by fulfilling the aim of creation, is the son of God.

And then the question of the forgiveness of sin. Is not man the creator of sin? If he creates it, he can destroy it also. If one cannot destroy, his elder brother can. The one who is capable of making, he is capable to destroy. He who can write with his pen, can rub it with his eraser from the surface of the paper. And when he cannot do it then that personality has not yet arrived at completeness, at that perfection to which we all have to go. There is no end of faults in man's life and if they were all recorded and there was no erasing them, life would be terrible to live, impossible to live. The impression of sin in the terminology of metaphysics maybe called an illness, a mental illness, not physical. And as the doctor is able to cure illness, so the doctor of

the soul is able to heal. If people have said that through Christ sins are forgiven that can be understood in this way: that love is that shower by which all is purified. No stain remains.

What is God? God is love. When His mercy, His compassion, His kindness are expressed through a God-realised personality, then the stains of one's faults, mistakes and wrongdoings are washed away and the soul becomes as clear as it has always been. For in reality no sin nor virtue can be engraved or impressed upon a soul, it can merely cover a soul.

The soul itself is Divine Intelligence and how can Divine Intelligence be engraved either by sin or virtue or happiness or unhappiness? For the time it becomes covered with the impression of happiness or unhappiness and when these clouds are cleared, then it is divine in its essence.

And the question of the crucifixion of Christ, apart from its historical aspect, may be explained as such, that the life of the wise is on the cross all the time. The wiser the soul will become the more it will realise the cross, because it is the lack of wisdom which causes the soul to do all actions, good or bad. As it becomes wise, the first thing is that its action is suspended. And the picture of that suspension of action becomes a helpless picture, the hands nailed and the feet nailed. Neither can he go forward, nor can he go backward, nor can he act, nor can he move. And this inactiveness outwardly may show helplessness but in fact it is the picture of perfection.

There are two questions which come to mind:

What is then the meaning of the sacrament which is said to be symbolical of the flesh and blood of Christ? It teaches that those who give importance to the flesh and blood of the Master are mistaken, that the true being of the Master was bread and wine. If he had any flesh and blood, it was the bread and wine. And what is bread and wine? The bread is that which is the soul's sustenance, and the soul's sustenance is the knowledge of God. It is by this knowledge that the soul lives the eternal life. And the blood of Christ is the love element, the love principle, the intoxication which is a bliss and if there is any virtue, it all comes from that principle.

And there is another question: 'Why Christ gave his life to save the world?'

It only explains sacrifice: No man in this world going toward a goal will escape from the test to which life will put him, and that test is sacrifice.

At every step towards the final goal to the attainment, he will be asked a sacrifice which will be a greater and greater one as he will continue on the path.

He will arrive at a point where there is nothing, whether it is his body or mind or action or thought or feeling that he keeps back, from sacrifice for others. And it is that by which man proves that realization of divine truth. In short the Christ-ideal, in other words, is the picture of the perfect man, and the possibility of the perfect man can be seen in the verse of the Bible:

‘Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven’.