



Religious Gatheka – Hazrat Inayat Khan

27 Sufism is “the” religion

The question is sometimes asked whether Sufism is a religion. Yes, Sufism is ‘the’ religion, not ‘a’ religion. And it is the religion, it has always been and will always be. What we call Judaism, Christianity or Islam, it is all Sufism in its essence. And the question if the Sufis have a religion, a form or a dogma may be answered: “The Sufi is not subject to a form or dogma, but the Sufi uses the form and the dogma as the soul uses a name and a form.” The one who questions the importance of a name and form must first come out of his body and then ask: “Why is there a form?” So he must become free from the name and form he has. A man carries in his heart his own name and says: “ Anything that has a name, I am against it.” But he has his own name.

In this world of names and forms it is absurd to say we do not need a name, we do not need a form. Therefore what a Sufi does with his realization of the essence of religion, is that he arrives at the understanding of the use of names and forms. He does not allow the names and forms to blind him, he takes names and forms to use them towards that purpose, the purpose which he has to accomplish through life. And the Sufi worship is a worship of all scriptures and all religions. But this does not mean we have a discussion or a debate on comparative religions by this worship. Neither by these scriptures which are there on the table, do we mean that we believe only in certain scriptures, that these are the ones to which we adhere and will respect and that we reject the other scriptures. And by kindling the lights in the name of the religions of the world we do not mean by this, that only these particular religions we have, that these are the only religions that we believe in and we reject the other religions. By this it is only meant that our religion is what may be called ‘the’ religion, a religion which embraces all scriptures and all religions, a religion which recognizes the values of wisdom, and a religion the God of which can be found in truth alone.