

The Mystic's Path in Life



There is one God and one Truth, one religion and one mysticism, call it Sufism, Christianity, Hinduism, or Buddhism. As God cannot be divided, so mysticism cannot be divided. It is an error for a person to say, "My religion is different from yours." One does not know what religion means. There cannot be many mysticisms, just as there cannot be many Wisdoms. There is one Wisdom. It is an error of mankind to say, "This is Eastern and that is Western." This only shows lack of wisdom. Everyone has the divine truth, no matter what part of the world they belong to. It is also an error to distinguish between occultism and mysticism. It is an error to say, "This is my eye and that is yours." The two eyes belong to one soul. When a person pictures mysticism as a branch of a tree which is truth, he or she is wrong, for mysticism is the stem which unites all branches.

What is mysticism really? Mysticism is the way by which to realize the truth. Jesus Christ said, "I am the

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*These quotations were selected from the works of
Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan*

Truth, I am the Way." He did not say, "I am the Truths and I am the Ways," for there is only one way. There is another way-the wrong way. Many religions there are, but not many wisdoms. Many houses of the Lord for worship, but one God. Many scriptures, but one Truth. So there are many methods, but one way. Thus it is either the right way or the wrong way.

The methods of gaining that way of realization are many, but there are mainly four: by the heart, by the head, by action, and by repose. A person must choose among these four different methods of developing him or herself and preparing to journey on the way, the only way, which is called mysticism. No religion can call it its own, but it is the way of all religions. No church can say that it belongs to it for it belongs to all churches. No person can say that the way which he or she has chosen is "the way." All others are getting there by the same way.

Often people have imagined that a mystic means an ascetic, and that a mystic is someone who dreams, dwells in the air, does not live here on earth, is not practical, and that a person who is an ascetic must be a hermit. Now this is not the case in reality. Very often people want to see the mystic as a peculiar sort of person, and if there is someone peculiar, then they say that is the mystic. Now this is a wrong conception and a one-sided exaggeration. A real mystic must show equilibrium and balance. Real mystics will have their head in the heavens and their feet on the earth.

The real mystic is as wide-awake in this world as in the other. A mystic is not someone who does not possess intellect; a mystic is not someone who dreams. A mystic is wide-awake, yet capable of dreaming when others are not and capable of keeping awake when the rest cannot keep awake. A mystic strikes the balance between two things, power and beauty. A mystic does not sacrifice power for beauty, nor beauty for power. A mystic possesses power and enjoys beauty.

As to the life of the mystic, there is no restriction: there is balance, reason, love, and harmony. The religion of the mystic is every religion and all religions, yet the mystic is above what people call their religion. In point of fact the mystic is religion, for it is not any religion, it is all religions. The moral of all religion is reciprocity: to reciprocate all the kindness we receive from others, to do an act of kindness to others without intending to have appreciation or a return for it, and to make every sacrifice, however great, for love, harmony and beauty.

The God of the mystic is to be found in one's own heart; the truth of the mystic is beyond words. People argue and debate about things of little importance, but mysticism is not to be discussed. People want to talk in order to know, and then they forget all. Very often it is not the one who knows who talks much, but the one who wants to know. The one who knows, but does not discuss, is the mystic. The mystic knows that happiness

is in his or her own heart. Besides, to put it into words, is to put the ocean into a drop of water.

There is a wine the mystic drinks and that wine is ecstasy. This wine is so powerful that the presence of the mystic has become wine for everyone who comes into his or her presence. This wine is the wine of the real sacrament, the symbol of which is in the church. One might ask, "What is it, where does it come from, what is it made of?" You may call it a power, a life, or a strength, which comes through the mystic, through spheres everyone is attached to. The mystic by his or her attachment to these spheres drinks the wine which is the sustenance of the human soul; that wine is ecstasy, the mystic's intoxication. That intoxication is the love which manifests in the human heart. Once a mystic drinks that wine, what does it matter if he or her is sitting on the rocks in the wilderness or in a palace? It is all the same. Neither does the palace deprive him or her of the pleasures of the mystic, nor does the rock take it away. The mystic has found the kingdom of God on earth, about which Jesus Christ has said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added unto you."

People strive for many different things in this world and last of all seek the spiritual path. There are some indifferent ones who say, "There is a long life before us and when the time comes that I must awake I shall awake." But the mystic says, "That is the one thing I must attend to — all other things come after that." It is of the greatest importance in the mystic's life.

Should the mystic, by working for realization of God, neglect his or her duties in the world? It is not necessary. There is nothing that a mystic should renounce in order to have the realization of life. It is only necessary to give the greatest importance to what is of the greatest importance in life. Ordinary people give it the least importance. The mystic gives it the first importance.

One may ask, "Is the life of a mystic meditative?" Yes, but meditation for a mystic is like the winding of a clock. It is wound for a moment, and all day long it goes by itself. It does not mean that one must think about it all day long. The mystic does not trouble about it. A Shah of Persia used to sit up at night for his night vigils and prayers. A visitor wondered at his meditating after all the day's work. "It is too much," he said. "You do not need meditation." "Do not say so," was the answer. "You do not know. For at night I pursue God, and during the day God follows me." Your moments of meditation set the whole mechanism in running order, like a stream running into the ocean. It does not in the least take the mystic away from his or her duty; it only blesses every word he or she speaks with the thought of God.

In all the mystic thinks or does is a perfume of God which becomes a healing and a blessing. How does a mystic who becomes kind and helpful get on amidst the crowd in everyday life? The rough edges of everyday life rubbing against the mystic must necessarily make him or her heart-sore. Certainly they do. The heart of the mystic is more sore than that of anyone else. Where there is only kindness and patience, then it takes all the thorns. Like the diamond being cut, so the heart being cut becomes brilliant. The heart, being sufficiently cut, becomes a flame which illuminates the life of the mystic and also that of others.

Mysticism changes man's outlook on life. The higher a mystic reaches, the wider becomes his outlook. It is therefore very difficult for a mystic to adjust himself to the limited life of the world. He must continually speak and act differently from what he feels and knows. It is just like an actor on the stage: when he has to be a king then he acts as a king and speaks as a king, and when he takes the part of a servant he acts that part, but all the time he knows and feels that he is neither a king nor a servant; that he is an feeling of a mystic is one thing, and his outer affirmation is another.

Is this a right thing to do? Is it not a kind of hypocrisy? An outspoken person would say, 'I say what I mean,' just as he might say, 'I tell the truth whether you like it or not, I don't mind.' But it cannot be helped. In order to get away from this hypocrisy some mystics have closed their lips and have not spoken throughout their whole life; they have retired into the forest in order to get away from it. But when they live in the midst of the world they can only adopt this method: feel and know the truth, while speaking and acting as everybody else does. And if someone says that this is not right, the answer is that in the case of other people most things are wrong:

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knowing, acting, as well as speaking; whereas in the case of the mystic only one thing is wrong. The mystic at least feels and knows rightly; that much is to his advantage.

Imparting mysticism to a seeking soul is an automatic action on the part of the pupil and also on the part of the mystic, for what the mystic gives to the pupil is not his own, it is God's, and the pupil is a kind of vessel that receives this blessing. If the vessel is not ready or if it is filled with something else, with every desire on the part of the mystic to fill it he cannot. Therefore the whole training of mysticism is first to clean this vessel, to make it ready for the mystic to pour into it the divine knowledge which comes from within.

One might wonder whether life in the West has become too confused for real mystics to develop there. As there are tall people and short people in all parts of the world, so there are wise people and foolish people everywhere. The mystic is born with a tendency towards mysticism, and there are many who are born like this in the West. Only, in the East there are many who are interested in giving a stimulus to this tendency, whereas in the West it is the contrary; for when a person shows that tendency people laugh at him, they think it is something abnormal and they do not allow this gift with which he was born to develop in life. That is why one finds far fewer mystics in the West than in the East.

Besides, when a youth has a mystical tendency in the East he finds a teacher, a guide who can help him on, whereas in the West this is very difficult. Then generally nobody in his family knows anything about mysticism, and so they discourage him or disapprove of his tendency; and it is the same with his friends. So from all around he is pulled back instead of finding encouragement on the path. Nevertheless, a person born with a mystical tendency, however much he is pulled back, will always sooner or later try to find what he is looking for. He cannot feel satisfied because of that innate yearning.

Coming Events

Dec 1-3, near Toronto: A weekend group retreat with Noor Nicolai. This retreat will emphasize the unfolding and development of inner qualities. For registration information, please contact [REDACTED]

For more information, please see the flyer enclosed with this newsletter or visit the Special Events section of our website at [REDACTED]

Special Notices

Sufi Order Classes in Toronto

- Classes will resume on Wednesday, September 6.

Sufi Order Classes in Brampton

- Please contact [REDACTED].

Activities

The Message Class: provides an opportunity to experience the teachings and practices of the Sufi Order on an ongoing basis. These classes, based on teachings given by Hazrat Inayat Khan and Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, are deepened through the use of complementary meditation practices which may use the breath, light, Dhikr (remembrance of God) and Wazifa (mantra).

Classes in the Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan are held, in *Toronto*, each *Wednesday at 8:30 pm* and, in *Brampton*, every *Thursday at 8:00 pm*. The last meeting of each month is dedicated to the practice of Dhikr. For this evening only, no instruction is offered.

Mureeds Class: This class is for initiates in the Sufi Order. For information, please contact Hafiz: by phone at (416) 658-7340; via email at: nrothenberg@rogers.com

Dhikr: means remembrance of God. Participants unite in intensive exploration and experience of this central practice of the Sufis. *If you have never been to Dhikr, please call in advance.*

Healing Circle: Open to members of the Sufi Healing Order. The Healing Circle is held in Brampton, at 9:30 am, on Saturdays. If you wish to attend, please phone [REDACTED].

Universal Worship Service: