



**A Sufi Message
The Infinite and the finite**

Social Gathekas 3, What is Wanted in Life?

By Hazrat Inayat Khan

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Inayat always remembered the words his Murshid said: "*There are many ties which make people friends in this world, but there is one tie which is the closest of all and that is the relation between Murshid and mureed, which is a friendship that never ends, for it is in the path of God and Truth and is eternal.*"
(From Hazrat Inayat Khan's Biography)

Gayan 332, Chala 11: *Time and space are but the length and breadth of the infinite.*

What is Wanted in Life? If this question were asked of several people each would perhaps make out a list of not less than one thousand things that one wants in life. And after writing one thousand things that one wants in life, one rarely knows what one really wants. What one apparently wants in life is not what one really wants in life because the nature of the outer life is illusion. As soon as one feels, "I want this in life," then the world of illusion answers, "Yes, you want me in life; this is the particular thing you want in life." When a person finds a lack in life, they only find the outer lack; they do not find the lack which is within themselves.

Coming to the central theme I would say that if there is anything that we can all be in accord with, it is that what we lack in life is to be tuned with the Infinite and to be in rhythm with the finite. In simple words, to be in rhythm with the conditions of life and to be in tune with the source of our existence.

I should like to explain more plainly what I mean by being in rhythm with the conditions of life. Our perpetual complaint against all things in life comes from our not being in rhythm with the diverse conditions of life that we have to face. We think that if these conditions change into something that we wish, it would make life easier. But that is an inexperienced expectation. If we were placed in the same condition that we just now desired as best, we would not say we are quite satisfied; we would then find lacks in that condition also.

With all errors and mistakes and lacks which we find in our external life, we see a perfect hand working behind it all. And if we looked at life a little further than we look at it generally, we would certainly find that all the lacks and errors and mistakes and faults sum up into something, making life as complete as the wise hands which are working behind it wish it to be.

There is a Persian saying: "The gardener of this garden of the world knows best which plant to rear and which to remove."

Practice: ▶ **Ya Kabir** (yaa ka-BEER) / ▶ **Ya Mutakabir** (yaa mu-ta-KAB-bir)

Al-Kabir is the station beyond time and space, beyond expansion and contraction. It is incomparable vastness.

Al-Mutakabbir is an ultimate transcending process. And al-Mutakabbir, since it is dynamic, can lead outside and then go back into the time and space continuum. One way to experience the absolute is through our willingness to let go of our own definitions, our own boundaries, and our own comfort zone, whether these boundaries are in the mind or the physical reality.

Invoking **Ya Mutakabbir** is undertaking the continual action of dissolution of the boundaries. Whenever we reach a boundary, an irresistible wave will gently erase that boundary. And then comes another expansion and another boundary. So the continual action through **al-Mutakabbir** is that it will not stop at any boundaries or any comfort zone. When we come to **al-Kabir** there are no more boundaries. There is no more time. Time and space are themselves boundaries, but **al-Kabir** is like a boundless ocean.

- **Al-Kabir (The Greatest, The Perfection of Greatness)** is beyond time and space. It is incomparable vastness. It is like a boundless ocean. Kabīr denotes the One whose essence is greatness.
- **Al-Mutakabbir (The Supremely Great, The Possessor of all Rights, The Perfection of Greatness)** is an ultimate transcending process. Invoking Ya Mutakabbir is undertaking the continual action of dissolution of the boundaries. Al-Mutakabbir reveals Divine Greatness and Power at every moment and in every incident! Mutakabbir is an empathic form of the root k-b-r. Meaning what? *Note: Elaborated in class. [Click to Listen to Audio File.](#)*

There are many imaginative and intelligent people who, day after day, read the newspapers and draw the conclusion that there must be a war. Every little struggle they read about gives them the idea that the world is going to pieces. Other people interested in astrology, who have gone further than ordinary astrology, expect the end of the world year after year, month after month. What I mean to say is that the best thing is to go through every condition that life presents with patience, understanding, open eyes, and to try to rise above it with every little effort one can make.

Now coming to the other side of the subject, how can one be in tune with the infinite? The nature of being in tune with the infinite can be seen by comparing one's soul to the string of an instrument. It is tied at both sides: one is the infinite and the other is the finite. When a person is conscious all the time of the finite then he or she is tuned with the finite, and the one who is conscious of the infinite is tuned with the infinite. Being in tune with one makes us limited, weak, hopeless, and powerless: by being in tune with the other we obtain the power and strength to pull through life under all adverse conditions.

The work that a Sufi considers his or her sacred work has nothing to do with any particular creed nor with any particular religion; it is only this simple thing which I have just said: to be in rhythm with life's conditions and to be in tune with the infinite.

Practice: ▶ **Ya Kabir** (yaa ka-BEER) / ▶ **Ya Mutakabir** (yaa mu-ta-KAB-bir)

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- Dedication of Merit
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