



A Sufi Message

Outer Light, Inner Light
Teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan
Edited and Presented by Gemma Erickson

The Symbol of the Cross in Nature

Many think that this symbol [of the cross] has existed only from the time of Jesus Christ, and no doubt it became better known after the time of the Master; but in fact this symbol is an ancient one used at different times and in all ages by the mystics. It has many mystical meanings.

The sura of the Qur'an which contains the first revelation of the Prophet includes the verse, "Read in the name of your Lord . . . who taught with the pen." The mystic, therefore, recognizes this manifestation as a written book; they try to read these characters and enjoy what they reveal to them.

Murshid describes 4 aspects of manifestation in Nature as this: Nature of the elements of earth and plant life, Nature of the creatures of earth, nature of human beings and divine nature.

– *Nature Meditations, Hazrat Inayat Khan* –

The cross shows a vertical and a horizontal line. Everything that exists has come from these two lines and extends vertically and horizontally, as may be seen in the leaf which develops in length and in breadth.

We can also see by observing nature's forms - the form of a tree, of a plant, of a flower, the forms of the animals and birds and in the most developed and finished form of the human being - that they all present a cross.

One cross may be seen by observing the formation of man's head. Another cross is suggested by the whole human form. It is always a horizontal line and a perpendicular line that suggest the symbol of the cross...

It is the nature of light to spread its rays, especially when the light is in its perfection. By looking at the sun - at the setting sun in particular - one finds lines forming on the sky and on the earth: first there is one straight line, and if one watches carefully out of that first vertical line a horizontal line develops. By keen observation of light one realizes that it is the nature of light to form a perpendicular and a horizontal line;

If it is the nature of the external light to form a cross it is also the nature of the inner light. The external light is the reflection of the inner light, and it is the nature of the inner light that is expressed in the outer light; by this one can see that the inner light is not only manifested in the outer light, but that the outer light is the picture of the inner light.

... there is no form that has not a horizontal and a perpendicular line; it is these two different aspects or directions which form the cross. In this way one can understand that in the mystery of form the cross is hidden.

In its first meaning, therefore, the cross is the symbol of manifestation; it belongs also to the journey towards the spiritual ideal, and no better picture could be given of this journey than a cross.... – Vol. 8a, *Sufi Teachings, The Symbol of the Cross* –

The External Zikar and the Heart Center

The greatest and most important center in the human body is the heart, which in medical terms, perhaps may be called the solar plexus. The expression of love is often made by pressing one's hand on the breast; in the same way one expresses sorrow and joy ... every kind of feeling first strikes and is felt in the heart. – *Sangatha III, 7* –

Murshid seems to speak of Solar Plexus more as a Solar – or Sun – radiating point, or point of Divine Light within humankind, situated in the center of the breast, at the join of the ribs with the lower breast bone and up-wards – what he indicates to be the 'real Heart Center'.

That which in the West is mostly spoken of as the 'Heart Chakra', slightly to the left side of the breast bone, for him is only a 'reflector point'. Therefore the true central point of Divine Light would be within the dip of the crescent moon, if a crescent moon were drawn starting at the physical heart point, continuing down and round.

– *Telephone conversation with Murshida Shahzadi, 15/2/85 or February 15, 1985* –

Practice: View Video for Guided Practice, External Zikar of Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan.

The Journey towards the Spiritual Ideal

There is in a person a false self and a real self, It is by denying one's little [limited] self, the false self which covers one's real self, in which the essence of divine Being is to be found.

– *Vol. 1, The Purpose of Life, 4. The Desire for Power* –

Symbolic forms, which are sensible aspects of the metaphysical reality of things, exist whether or not man is aware of them—" man does not create symbols, he is transformed by them.

– *The Sense of Unity, Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar* –

In the symbol of the cross of the External Zikar is the divine potential to be transformed.

The horizontal line with the vertical is the cause of resurrection.

– *Nature Meditations, Hazrat Inayat Khan* –

The process of attaining this is called *Fana* by the Sufis. Fana is not necessarily a destruction in God. Fana results in what may be called a resurrection in God, which is symbolized by the picture of Christ. The Christ on the cross is narrative of Fana; it means, "I am not."

– *Vol. 1, The Purpose of Life, 4. The Desire for Power* –

The mystic on the spiritual path perseveres in wiping out this false ego as much as they can, by meditation, by concentration, by prayer, by study, by everything that they do. Their one aim is to wipe out so much that one day reality, which is always there buried under the false ego, may manifest. By calling on the Name of God, in the form of prayer, or in zikr, or in any other form, what the mystic does is to awaken the spirit of the real ego, in order that it may manifest.

It is just like a spring that rises up out of the rock and that, as soon as the water has gained power and strength, breaks even through stone and becomes a stream. So it is with the divine spark in humankind. Through concentration, through meditation, it breaks out and manifests; and where it manifests, it washes away the stains of the false ego and turns into a greater and greater stream. This in turn becomes the source of comfort, consolation, healing and happiness for all who come into contact with that spirit.

– *Vol. 10, Sufi Mysticism, Mysticism* –

This stream is Thy Beauty, Thy Light, Thy Life, and all these are within the All-Pervading Stream of Thy Love. May we be this stream.

Let Thy wish become my desire,
Let Thy will become my deed,
Let Thy word become my speech, Beloved,
And Thy love become my creed.
Let my plant bring forth Thy flowers,
Let my fruits produce Thy seed,
Let my heart become Thy lute, Beloved,
And my body Thy flute of reed.

– *Sayings, Vadan: Ragas: The Human Soul Calling upon the Beloved God* –

Closing Prayer: Khatum