

## Inner Call Podcast #111 Rising Above April 8 2021

As often happens when a group of thoughtful friends get together these days, after exploring various elevated spiritual matters we began to consider the state of the world. There is enough to think about: the pandemic, which continues to spread, the serious climatic and ecological situation, now global and undeniable, the general hyper-materialisation of culture, and the hardening of political divisions within and between nations, all accompanied by a roaring, ricocheting social media output that seems to do little more than increase the noise level – like giving megaphones to a roomful of two year olds. In the face of all this, does the spiritual path – not just the 'Sufi' path, but the sacred path in all its forms – offer any hope?

In truth it offers the only hope, but we need to understand well how to make that hope a reality. Before we begin to proclaim a message of harmony, of love, of beauty, we have to learn how to live it ourselves. What does that mean?

In the prayer Khatum, we entreat God to 'raise us above the distinctions and differences' that divide humanity. In more selfish moments, perhaps we think as we say these words, 'May my neighbour stop being so difficult,' or 'May those ignorant people finally see the light!' And in our better moments, perhaps we grudgingly admit our faults, or some of them, and add ourselves to the list of those needing rehabilitation. If we look more closely at the words of the prayer, though, we are asking for something much more profound.

Distinctions and differences are the inevitable consequence of names and forms that allow us to make comparisons. If we pray to rise above those differences, we are praying to rise beyond form to the Infinite, to the Truth which encompasses all and stands beyond all. Hazrat Inayat Khan was fond of quoting the saying of Jesus, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." We cannot make ourselves perfect - it is futile to try, but it is when we rise above names and forms that we discover perfection, a living perfection that has always been, and which is the peace that the world is longing for.

The more of us that begin to find that peace in our practice and meditation, and then in our daily life, the more the suffering of the world will begin to ease