



Introducing religions

An important shrine in Delhi

Narrator:

This is the Sufi quarter of Delhi. A warren of lanes leading towards the shrine of India's most revered Sufi saint, Hazrat Nizamuddin.

Nizamuddin was a Muslim mystic who died in 1325. He was an aesthetic, who settled outside Delhi to teach a message of peace, forgiveness and devotion to god. Many come to venerate his grave.

Syed Nazim Ali Nizami (Guardian of the Shrine):

Sufism has a very elevated place. When a Sufi does something, he does it in praise of Allah. Normally if a person feeds a beggar, he usually does it because the beggar is hungry. But a Sufi does it because ultimately it pleases god.

There are so many people who come here that need support. Food, water, clothes. So this is a place where people can give donations and large numbers of the poor can be looked after. It is a place of charity.

The essence of Sufism is empathy with all people.

Narrator:

As well as the spiritual side of Sufism there is also a practical side. Followers connect with the saint by throwing flowers and touching the clothes that cover his grave. They may also ask for help with personal problems.

As this is the special month of Ramadan, many people have gathered at the shrine to break their fast. The food distributed has been donated by a rich family. The siren tells the people it's time to begin eating.

Within Islam there are many different branches.

SNAN:

This durga is part of the Chishti branch of Islam, and music is very important here. The Hazrat's dear friend Amir Hussro wrote a lot of poetry and music. And it was sung here in the early days. And slowly worship through music gained importance here.

Narrator:

This family of musicians have lived in the grounds of the shrine for over seven centuries.

SNAN:

The final goal after all is to worship Allah's name. And the Chishti's have their own way of finding spiritual peace through their music.

Narrator:

Rather than emphasising external ritual for its own sake, in Sufism divinity can best be reached through the gateway of the heart. In this way Sufi shrines have attracted Hindi's, Sikh's and Christians as well as Muslims.

Hari Babu:

I am an Indian, a Hindu. But it is here that I learnt that there are no Hindu's or Muslims, Sikh's or Christians. You are simply a human being. All differences end here.

Pritpal Singh Johar:

Yes. This is a mosque where people speak of uniting with God. Uniting with each other. A universal family. There is no talk of different religions. Only love for all in the shade of this place.

HB:

I used to go to temples too. But here I found peace. I found unity. I found love. I get all this here. And all who come here feel it.

PSJ:

I have been coming here for years now and I come here at least five or six times a month. I feel calm here. I get a sense of peace.

SNAN:

The Hazrat spread only the message of love. The message of humanitarianism. And that is why 700 years on, in a country where there is such diversity and so many problems. People come to a place like this in harmony. Hindu's, Muslims, Sikh's, Christians. Rich and poor, all come here as one. Sit together. Eat together and pray together. This is a result of Hazrat's message of love and peace.