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[illegible]

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1910-1911??
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1911??
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(?????) ?45
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??6??

???? ? 9??? ? 10??????? ? 1911??? ????
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???? (???? ? ?????)?48
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???? ? 12??? ? 13??????? ? 1911??? ????
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???? ? 13??????? ? 1911??? ??? ????
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?? (?????)?52
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??9??

???? ? 14??????? ? 1911??? ??? ? ?
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(?????)?
??10??
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???? ? 16??? ? 17??????? ? 1911??? ????
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(???? ? ?

??11??
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???? ? 22??????? ? 1911??? ???? ? ?
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???? ? 23??????? ? 1911??? ?????? ?? ????
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??13??

???? ? 29???????? ? 1911??? ?????? ??? ??
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??14??

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? ???? ?? ?????? ??? (???????)?65
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??15??

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??16??

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(???????)?71
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??17??

???? ? ? ???? ? 1911??? ?????? ??? ???
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??18??

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??19??

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.....) 1911?
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[???? ???] ? ???? :????? ????? ?
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???? (????)?105
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??22??

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.....?? ??23??

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(????)?108
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.?? ??25??

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??26??

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??27??

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?????)?124
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??31??

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? ??32??

???? ? 24???? ? 1911?? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
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??33??

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?(???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?)?134

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????? (?????)?144

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?(????? ? ????????)?150

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(?????)?153

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???? ? 2??????? ? 1911??? ?????? :???????

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??46??

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(???????)?164

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??51??

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??52??

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??53??

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??54??

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??56??

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??57??

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(???? ? ????????)?204

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??58??

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(???? ? ????????)?207

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??59??

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??60??

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??61??

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(???? ? ???????)?221

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??63??

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??66??

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??67??

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??70??

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??71??

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??74??

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(?????)?265??

??76??

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????? (?????)?270??

??78??

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(?????)?279
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(???????)?283??
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:?????? ? ? ? ? ? (???????)?289
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[?????????] ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ??????
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(?????????) ?291??
??90??

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??91??

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??92??
?(?????)?297

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1911??
????? ? 4????? ? 1912??? ??? ?????????? ??
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??94??

????? ? 20????? ? 1912??? ??? ?????????? ??
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1912??

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??96??

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????? (?????)?314??

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(???? ? ?

??98??

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??99??

? ? 100???? ? 12??? ? 13???? ? 1912???

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?????)?322??

?? 101???? ? 13??? ? 15????? ? 1912??
???? ???? ???? ? ???? :???? ????
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.....â€–â€

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????)?333??

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[?? ?] ? ? ? ? ?
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?(????)?337
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(????) ?342
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?(????)?344
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(?????)?
??349

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[???? ????] ? ???? :???? ????
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?? 111???? ? 20???? ? 1912?? ?????
???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
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??? (???? ? ?????)?354
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.....â€–â

?? 112???? ? 21???? ? 1912?? ????? ?
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?? 113???? ? 21???? ? 1912?? ?????
???????? ? ???? :???? ?
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(???? ?
?????) ?360

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?? 114???? ? 22???? ? 1912?? ???? ?
?? ? ? ? :???? ?
??? ? ? ? ? ? (?????)?366
.....??

?? 115???? ? 23???? ? 1912?? ?????
???????? [???????? ?
???? :???? ? ? ? ? ? (???? ?

???????) ?368??

?? 116???? ? 23???? ? 1912?? ???? ???? ?
?? ???? ? ???? :???? ???? ?
?? ???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ? ?
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???? ???? (?????)?372

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?? 117???? ? 23???? ? 1912?? ???? ????
?? ? ???? ???? ???? ?
???? :???? ???? ? ???? ?
??? ????? ? ?
???? ???? (?????)?374

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?? 118???? ? 23???? ? 1912?? ???? ?
?? ? ???? ???? :????
???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ????
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???? ???? (?????)?377

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?? 119???? ? 24???? ? 1912?? ???? ????
?? ???? ? ? ???? :???? ????
???? ???? (?????)?379
.....??

?? 120???? ? 24???? ? 1912?? ???? ?
?? ???? ? ???? :???? ????
???? ? ???? ???? ???? (?????) ?381
.....??

?? 121???? ? 24???? ? 1912?? ???? ?
???? ? ???? :???? ????
???? (?????)?383
.....??

?? 122???? ? 25???? ? 1912?? ????
???? ? ???? ? ? ????
???? :???? ? ????
(?????) ?385??

?? 123???? ? 25???? ? 1912???? ??
???????????? ? ???? ???? ? ??? ????? ?
???????? :????? ???? ???? ????
(?????)?387??

?? 124???? ? 25???? ? 1912??? ???? ???? ?
??? ????? ? ???? :????? ????
????? ???? ???? (?????) ?388
.....??

?? 125???? ? 25???? ? 1912??? ?????? ??
???? ???? ???? [???? ???? ?????] ??
???????? :????? ???? ???? ????? ? ????
???? ??????
?(????)?390
.....
.....
.....??

?? 126???? ? 26???? ? 1912??? ??????
????? [?? ??] ?? ????? :????? ??
????? ???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ????
(????)?392??

?? 127???? ? 30???? ? 1912??? ???? ????
?? ????? :????? ???? ???? ????
???? (????) ?394
.....??

?? 128???? ? 30???? ? 1912??? ????
????? ???? ???? ? ???? ?????? ?
????? :????? ???? ???? ???? ??????
(?????)?396??

?? 129???? ? 30???? ? 1912??? ??? ???? ?
????? :????? ???? ? ???? ? ????
????? ? ? ? ???? (?????)?398
.....??

?? 130???? ? 30???? ? 1912??? ????
????? ???? ? ? ???? ? ? ????
:????? ???? ? ? ? ???? ? ? ? ????
(?????)?
??400
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.....
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?? 131???? ? 1??? ? 1912??? ???? ????
????? ? ???? :????? ???? ????
????? ???? ? ???? ???? ???? ??

(???????)?402??

?? 132???? ? 2??? ? 1912??? ??? ??? ????
[?????] ?? ?????? :????? ??? ? ??????
?? ????? (?????) ?403??

?? 133???? ? 2??? ? 1912??? ??????
????? ???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
:????? ???? ???? ? ? ? ? ?
???? (?????)?
??405

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.....
.....??

?? 134???? ? 2??? ? 1912??? ????? ????
???? ? ? ? ? ? :?????
??? ????? ? ? ? ? ?
(?????)?408??

?? 135???? ? 2??? ? 1912??? ??? ??? ????
[????] ?? ?????? :????? ??? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? (?????) ?409
.....??

?? 136???? ? 2??? ? 1912??? ??? ??? ????
[????] ?? ?????? :????? ??? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
(?????)?
??410

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.....
.....??

?? 137???? ? 3??? ? 1912??? ??? ??? ????
[????] ?? ?????? :????? ??? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? (?????) ?413
.....??

?? 138???? ? 3??? ? 1912??? ??? ??? ????
[????] ?? ?????? :????? ??? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? (?????) ?414
.....??

?? 139???? ? 4??? ? 1912??? ?????
???????? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
:????? ? ? ? (?????) ?416
.....??

?? 140???? ? 5??? ? 1912??? ????? ? ?
?? ? ? ? [????] ?? ?????? :?????

????? ???? ? ???? ? ?????? (????? ? ????????)?

??420

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.....
.....??

?? 141????? ? 5??? ? 1912??? ?????? ????????

?? ??????? :??????? ?????? ????? ? ???

????? ?????? (???????)?423

.....??

?? 142????? ? 5??? ? 1912??? ?????? ???????

[?? ???] ?? ??????? :??????? ?????? ??????

????? ?? ??? ? ?????? (???????)?426

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???????? ?????? ????? ???????????

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?? 143????? ? 6??? ? 1912??? ?????? ?????? ??

????????? :??????? ?????? ?????? ??????

?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????????? ?

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????? (???????) ?429

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.....
.....??

?? 144????? ? 6??? ? 1912??? ?????????? ?????

????????? ?? ?????????? :??????? ?????? ??????

????? ?????? ??????? ? ??????? (???????)?432

.....??

?? 145????? ? 7??? ? 1912??? ??? ????? ??

?????????? :??????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ? ??????

????? ??????? ?????? ?????? ?? ?????? ??

????????? ??????

????? (???????)?433

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.....
.....??

?? 146????? ? 11??? ? 1912??? ??????????

?????? :??????? ?????? ??? ?????? ?????

???????????? ? ??????????? (???????) ?437

.....??

?? 147????? ? 12??? ? 1912??? ?????? ????? ??

????????? :??????? ??? ?????????? ??????

??????? ? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ? ?????? ?????

????? (???????)?

??439

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.....
.....??

?? 148????? ? 12??? ? 1912??? ????? ??? ???

??? ?? ?????? ???? ??????? ?? ????????

:???????? ??? ???? ?????? ? ???? ???? ??????

????? ?????? (????? ? ????????)?441

.....
.....??

?? 149????? ? 13??? ? 1912??? ????? ??????

??? ??????? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ????????

:??????? ?????? ???? ?????? ??? ??????

?(???????)?450

.....
.....
.....??

?? 150????? ? 19??? ? 1912??? ?????? ???

?????? ?? ????????? :??????? ???? ??????

????? ?????? (???????)?453

.....??

?? 151????? ? 19??? ? 1912??? ?????? ??????

?? ????????? :??????? ???? ?????? ? ???? ?

????? (???????)?456??

?? 152????? ? 20??? ? 1912??? ?????? ?? ???

???? ?? ???? ??????????? ?? ????????

:??????? ?????? ???? ???? ? ???? ? ??????????

??? ?? ??????

?????? (???????) ?459

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.....
.....??

?? 153????? ? 22??? ? 1912??? ?????? ??????

?? ???? ?????? ?? ??????? :??????? ???? ?

????? ?????? ? ??? ?????? ???? (????? ?

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??462

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?? 154????? ? 23??? ? 1912??? ??????????

????? ?? ?????? :??????? ?????? ??? ? ????

??????? ?? ?? ????? ????? (?????) ?467

.....??

?? 155????? ? 23??? ? 1912??? ????? ? ???

???? ? ? ?????? :?????? ????? ???? ?

? ????? ? ????? ???? ???? (???? ?

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??470

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?? 156????? ? 24??? ? 1912??? ????? ?????

????? ????? ? ???? ? ? ? ??????

:?????? ????? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

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????? ? ? ????? ???? ???? (?????) ?473

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?? 157????? ? 25??? ? 1912??? ?????

?????????? ? ? ?????? :?????? ????? ?

? ??? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

?? ? ? (???????)?

??476

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?? 158????? ? 26??? ? 1912??? ?????? ?

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???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

(???? ? ?

???????) ?479

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?? 159????? ? 28??? ? 1912??? ?????? ? ?

?????????? ? ? ?????? :?????? ? ? ?

???? (???????) ?485

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?? 160????? ? 29??? ? 1912??? ? ? ? ? ?

???? ? ? ?????? :?????? ? ? ?

?? ????? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

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?(???????)?488

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?? 161???? ? 29??? ? 30??? ? 1912??? ?????
????????? ?? ??? ???? ?????????? ??
????????? :??????? ?????? ?? ??? ???? ????
????? ????
????? ? ??? ???? ?????? (????? ? ????????)
?490

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?? 162????? ? 30??? ? 1912??? ??? ?????? ??
????????? :??????? ??? ? ???? ???? ? ??
???? ? ?????? ?????? ??? ????? ???? ????
(?????)?497??
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?????? ???????

?? 163????? ? 31??? ? 1912??? ???????
????????? ?? ?????? :??????? ??? ???? ??????
? ?????? ???? ? ???? ???? ???? (???????) ?499
.....??

?? 164????? ? 2???? ? 1912??? ?????? ?????
?? ????????? :??????? ??? ? ???? ? ???? ?
???? ?????? ? ?????? ???? ???? ? ??????
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?????? (???????)?501

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?? 165????? ? 3???? ? 1912??? ??? ???? ??
?? ?????? ??????? ? ????????? :???????
????? ?????? ?????? ? ???? ? ???? ??????
(?????) ?507??

?? 166????? ? 6???? ? 1912??? ??? ????
? ??? ????? ? ????????? :??????? ???????
????? ???? (?????) ?515??

?? 167????? ? 8???? ? 1912??? ??? ?????? ??
????????? :??????? ??? ???? ? ???? ?
????? ???? ?????? ?????? ???? ?????? ????
(???????)?
??516

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?? 168???? ? 8??? ? 9???? ? 1912??? ??????
?????? ?? ?????????? :??????? ??? ???????
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?????? ????? (???? ? ??????)?517

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?? 169???? ? 8??? ? 9???? ? 1912??? ??????
??????? ?? ?????????? :??????? ??? ?????
?? ????? ? ??? ? ???? ?????? ? ????? ???
?????? ??????
?????? (???? ? ??????) ?525

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?? 170???? ? 11???? ? 1912??? ??? ?????
??????? ?? ??? ??? ? ?? ??? ? ? ??????
:??????? ??????? ????? ? ? ?????
(???????)?
??535

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?? 171???? ? 11???? ? 1912??? ??? ????? ?
???????? :??????? ??? ????? ? ????? ?
???? ? ???? ???? ???? ????? ? ???? ?????
(???????)?
??536

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?? 172???? ? 11???? ? 1912??? ??? ????? ?
???????? :??????? ????? ????? ????? ?
???? ? ???? ???? (???????)?538
.....??

?? 173???? ? 12???? ? 1912??? ??? ????? ?
???????? :??????? ????? ????? ????
(???????) ?540
.....??

?? 174???? ? 15???? ? 1912??? ??? ????? ?
???????? :??????? ?????? ????? ? ? ?????
?????? (???????) ?541
.....??

?? 175???? ? 16??? ? 1912?? ????? ?
?? :???? ? ? ?
(?)543

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?? 176???? ? 16??? ? 1912?? ? ? ?
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(?)546

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?? 177???? ? 16??? ? 1912?? ????? ?
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???? ? ? ? (?) 548
.....??

?? 178???? ? 16??? ? 18??? ? 1912?? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ?
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???? (? ?) 553

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?? 179???? ? 17??? ? 1912?? ? ? ?
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???? (?) 556
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?? 180???? ? 17??? ? 1912?? ? ? ?
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(?)557

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?? 181???? ? 20??? ? 1912?? ? ? ?
: ? ? ? ?
?? ? ? (?) 559
.....??

?? 182???? ? 23??? ? 1912?? ?
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?? ? ? (?) 561
.....??

?? 183???? ? 29???? ? 1912??? ?????
?? ???? ???? ? ???? ???? ? ????
:???? ???? ? ???? ???? ? ? ? ?
?????
???? ? ???? (?????)?564

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?? 184???? ? 1???? ? 1912??? ????
?? ???? :???? ???? ???? ????
???? (?????)?566
.....??
???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ?

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?? 185???? ? 1???? ? 1912??? ????
?? ???? :???? ???? ???? ? ?
?? ???? ???? ? ? ? ?
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(?????)?568

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?? 186???? ? 3???? ? 1912??? ????
?? ???? :???? ???? ???? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
(?????)?
??569

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?? 187???? ? 5???? ? 1912??? ????
?? ???? :???? ???? ???? ?
???? ???? ? ? ? (?????)?572
.....??

?? 188???? ? 5???? ? 1912??? ????
?? ???? :???? ???? ???? ?
?? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
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(???? ? ?????)?574

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.....
.....??

?? 189???? ? 5??? ? 6???? ? 1912???
???? ? ? ? ? :???? ???? ?

???? ???? ???? ???? (???? ?
?????)?582??

?? 190???? ? 8???? ? 1912?? ??????
:????? ???? ????? ? ????? (????)?587

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?? 191???? ? 12???? ? 1912?? ???? ??
???? ? ??? ????? ?? ??????? :?????
???? ????? ???? ????? ? ?????
(????)?590 ..??

?? 192???? ? 14???? ? 1912?? ?????
???? [?? ??] ?? ?????? :????? ??
?????? ? ??? ???? ???? ???? ????
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?(????)?592

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?? 193???? ? 15???? ? 1912?? ???? ???? ?
??? ???? ? ?????? :????? ????
?????? ? ??? ? ???? (????)?597
.....??

?? 194???? ? 24???? ? 1912?? ??
?????? ? ?????? :????? ???? ???? ??
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?????
?(????)?599

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?? 195???? ? 24???? ? 1912?? ?????
?????? ? ?????? :????? ???? ??
(????) ?601

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?? 196???? ? 24???? ? 1912?? ?????
?????? ? ?????? :????? ???? ? ?
?????? ? (????)?604

.....??

?? 197???? ? 25???? ? 1912?? ??
?????? ? ?????? :????? ??????
???? ? ????? ? ??? ? ???? (????)
?607??

?? 198???? ? 31???? ? 1912?? ???? ???? ?
?? ???? ? ???? :???? ????
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(????)?
??608

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?? 199???? ? 2???? ? 1912?? ???? ???? ?
?? ???? ? ???? :???? ????
???? (????)?611
.....??

?? 200???? ? 4???? ? 1912?? ???? ???? ?
?? ???? ? ???? :???? ????
???? (????)?614
.....??

?? 201???? ? 5???? ? 1912?? ??????
???? ? ???? :???? ????
???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ?????
?? (????)?
??616

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.....
.....??

?? 202???? ? 6???? ? 1912?? ???? ???? ?
?? ???? ? ???? :???? ????
??? ????? (????) ?618
.....??

?? 203???? ? 7???? ? 1912?? ???? ???? ?
?? ???? ? ???? :???? ????
(????) ?622
.....??

?? 204???? ? 11???? ? 1912?? ?????
???? ? ???? :???? ????
???? ? ???? ???? ???? ????
(????) ?625??

?? 205???? ? 16???? ? 1912?? ???? ????
?? ???? :???? ????
???? ???? ? ???? ? ????
(????)?
??630

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?? 206???? ? 17???? ? 1912?? ????
?? :???? ? ? ? ?
???? (????) ?636

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?? 207???? ? 17???? ? 1912?? ????
?? :???? ? ? ? ?
(????)?638

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?? 208???? ? 17???? ? 1912?? ????
?? :???? ? ? ? ?
(????)?640

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?? 209???? ? 17???? ? 1912?? ????
?? :???? ? ? ? ?
?? (????)?644??
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?? 210???? ? 25???? ? 1912?? ????
?? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
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????
???? ? ? ? ? (????)?648

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?? 211???? ? 26???? ? 1912?? ????
???? ? ? :???? ? ?
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(????)?
??652

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?? 212???? ? 27???? ? 1912?? ????
???? ? ? :???? ? ?
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(????)?655

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?? 213???? ? 29???? ? 1912?? ???? ?

???? ? ? ???? :????? ???? ???? ? ??
???? ? ???? ???? ???? ???? (???????)
?659??

??? ??? ? ? ? ? ? :????? (?664
.....) 1912??
?? 214???? ? 1??????? ? 1912?? ?????
????? ? ???? :????? ???? ????
???? ???? (???? ? ?????)?665
.....??

?? 215???? ? 1??????? ? 1912?? ???? ????
? ??? ???? ? ???? :????? ???? ?
???? ???? ???? ???? ???? (???????)
?673??

?? 216???? ? 1??????? ? 1912?? ???? ????
? ??? ???? ? ???? :????? ???? ?
(???????)?676
.....??

?? 217???? ? 2??????? ? 1912?? ???? ????
? ??? ???? ? ???? :????? ????
???? ???? ? ???? ???? ???? (???? ?
???????)?678??

?? 218???? ? 3??????? ? 1912?? ????
???????? ? ???? ? ? ? ? ?
?????? ? ???? :????? ???? ???? ?
???? ???? ????
????? ???? ???? (???????)?684
.....
.....??

?? 219???? ? 5??????? ? 1912?? ????
?? ???? ???? ? ???? :????? ??
????? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
(???????)?
??689
.....
.....
.....??

??? ??? ? ? ? ? ? :????? ? ? ? ?
???? (?694)
1912??
?? 220???? ? 15??????? ? 1912?? ????
?????? ? ???? :????? ???? ? ? ?
? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
???? (?????)?

??695

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.....
.....??

?? 221???? ? 16??????? ? 1912?? ????
???? ???? ? ? ? ? ? :?????
???? ? ? ? ? ? (?????)?697
.....??

?? 222???? ? 18??????? ? 1912?? ????
???? ? ? :???? ? ? ?
???? (????)?700
.....??

?? 223???? ? 20??????? ? 1912?? ???? ????
?? ? ? :???? ? ? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
?????
?(?????)?704

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.....
.....??

?? 224???? ? 20??????? ? 1912?? ???? ????
???? ? ? ? ? :???? ? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
?????
?(?????)?707

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.....
.....??

?? 225???? ? 24??????? ? 1912?? ???? ????
???? ? ? :???? ? ? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
(?????)?710??

?? 226???? ? 25??????? ? 1912?? ????
?? ? ? ? :???? ? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? (?????)?713
.....??

?? 227???? ? 30??????? ? 1912?? ????
???????? ? ? ? ? ?
???? :???? ? ? ? ? ?
????? (?????)?
??717

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.....

.....??

?? 228???? ? 6???? ? 1912?? ?????
????? ? ???? ?????? :????? ???
???? ? ????? ? ???? ???? ? ????? ??
(?????)?719??

?? 229???? ? 7??? ? 9???? ? 1912??
????? ??? ???? ???? ???? ? ????
??????? ? ???? ?????? ? ????
:????? ???? ? ???? ????
???? ? ???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? (???? ?
?????) ?724

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?? 230???? ? 8???? ? 1912?? ?????
????? ?????? ? ???? ???? :?????
???? ? ? ???? ???? ? ???? (???? ?
?????) ?732??

?? 231???? ? 8???? ? 1912?? ?????
????? ? ???? ???? :????? ? ????
???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? (????)
?742??

?? 232???? ? 10???? ? 1912?? ????
????? ? ???? ???? ? ??????????
:????? ???? ???? ? ???? ? ????
??? ? ? ? (?????
? ?????)?746

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?? 233???? ? 12???? ? 1912?? ????
???????? [???? ???? ? ? ??????????
:????? ???? ???? ? ???? ? ????
???? ? ? ?
???? (???? ? ??????)?754

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.....â

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?? 234???? ? 25???? ? 1912?? ??
???????? ? ???? :????? ????
???? ????? ? ???? ???? ???? ?

????? (???????) ?765??

?? 235????? ? 26?????? ? 1912??? ?????
????????? ?? ?????????? ?? ??????????
:??????? ?? ?????? ?? ? ?? ????? ??????
(???????) ?769??

?? 236????? ? 31?????? ? 1912??? ?? ?????
????? [?????] ?? ??????? :?????? ?? ?
????? ??? ??????? (???????) ?772
.....??

?? 237????? ? 1??????? ? 1912??? ??? ?????
?????? ?? ?? ?? ??????? :?????? ?????
???????? ?? ????? ??? ? ?? ? ????? ???
????????? (???????)?
??774

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.....
.....??

?? 238????? ? 3??????? ? 1912??? ?? ??
????? ?????? ??? ? ???? ??????? :??????
?? ????? ????? ? ????? ? ???? ????? ???
????????
?(?????)?777

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.....
.....??

?? 239????? ? 4??????? ? 1912??? ????? ??
?? ?????????? ?? ?? ?????? ? ?????????
:??????? ??? ????? ? ?????? (?????)?778
.....??

?? 240????? ? 5??????? ? 1912??? ????? ??
?? ??????????? :?????? ?????? ????? ??
??? ?? ?????? ? ?????? ?? ??????? ?????? ??
(???????)?780??

?? 241????? ? 6??????? ? 1912??? ??????
?????????????? ?? ????????? :?????? ?????
?????? ????? ? ?????? ?????? ?????? ? ?????
???? ??????? ??????
?????? (???????)?782

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.....??

?? 242????? ? 7??????? ? 1912??? ??? ????? ?
??? ?????? ?? ????????? :?????? ??????

???? ? ???? ???? ???????? ???? ? ????
???? ? ???? ?
???? ? ? ???? (?????)?788

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.....??

? 243???? ? 7???? ? 1912?? ???? ? ?
?? ????? ? ?????? :????? ????? ?
???? ????? ???? ???? ? ? ? ?
(?????)?
??790

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.....??

? 244???? ? 8???? ? 1912?? ????
????? ? ?????? :????? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
(?????)?
??792

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.....??

? 245???? ? 9???? ? 1912?? ???? ? ?
?? ????? ? ?????? :????? ? ?
??? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
(?????)?798

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.....
.....??

? 246???? ? 9???? ? 1912?? ???? ? ?
?? ????? ? ?????? :????? ? ?
? ??? ? (?????)?801

.....??

? 247???? ? 9???? ? 1912?? ???? ? ?
?? ???? ? ? ???? :????? ? ?
?? ? ? ? ? ? ? (?????) ?804

.....??

? 248???? ? 10???? ? 1912?? ???? ? ?
? ? ? ? ? ? :????? ? ?
???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? (?????)
?806??

? 249???? ? 10???? ? 1912?? ???? ? ?
? ? ? ? ? ? :????? ? ?
??? ????? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

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????? (?????) ?809

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.....
.....??

?? 250???? ? 10????? ? 1912?? ??????

:????? ?????? ?? ??? ?? ??? ?????

??????? ? ?????? (?????) ?811

.....??

?? 251???? ? 15????? ? 1912?? ??? ?

?????? ?? ?????? :????? ????? ?

??????? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ?????? ?

????? ?????

?????? ????? (?????)?813

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.....??
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?? 252???? ? 16????? ? 1912?? ??????

:????? ????? ?? ????? ?? ????? ?

(?????)?818

.....??

?? 253???? ? 17????? ? 1912?? ?

?????? ?? ?????? :????? ????? ?

???? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

??? ???? (?????)?

??819

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.....
.....??

?? 254???? ? 18????? ? 1912?? ??? ?

? ??? ???? ?? ?????? ?????? :?????

??? ????? ? ???? ???? ?? ? ???? ?

??? (?????)?

??823

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.....
.....??

?? 255???? ? 23????? ? 1912?? ????? ?

???? ?? ? ? ? ? ? :????? ? ? ?

?????? ????? (?????)?827

.....??

?? 256???? ? 29?????? ? 1912??? ???? ????
? ??? ???? ? ???? :????? ? ??
(?????)?829

.....??

?? 257???? ? 30?????? ? 1912??? ???? ????
? ??? ???? ? ???? :????? ?????? ?
???? ???? ? ???? ???? ???? ????
(?????)?
??832

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?? 258???? ? 2?????? ? 1912??? ???? ???? ?
??? ???? ? ???? :????? ???? ?
???? ? ???? ? ???? ???? (?????)?833
.....??

?? 259???? ? 2?????? ? 1912??? ???? ???? ?
??? ???? ? ???? :????? ???? ????
? ?????? ???? ???? (?????) ?834
.....??

?? 260???? ? 3?????? ? 1912??? ???? ???? ?
??? ???? ? ???? :????? ???? ? ??
???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ???? (???? ?
?????)?
??837

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Twelve table talks given by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in ‘Akká

(Twelve table talks in ‘Akká)

(–1– The Three Kinds of Prophets)

Question: How many kinds of divine Prophets are there?

Answer: There are three kinds of divine Prophets. One kind are the universal Manifestations, which are even as the sun. Through Their advent the world of existence is

renewed, a new cycle is inaugurated, a new religion is revealed, souls are quickened to a new

life, and East and West are flooded with light. These Souls are the universal Manifestations of

God and have been sent forth to the entire world and the generality of mankind.

Another kind of Prophets are followers and promulgators, not leaders and law-givers, but

they are nonetheless the recipients of the hidden inspirations of God. Yet another kind are

Prophets Whose prophethood has been limited to a particular locality. But the universal

Manifestations are all-encompassing: They are like the root, and all others are as the branches;

they are like the sun, and all others are as the moon and the stars.

(–2– Two Kinds of Prophecy)

Question: In the books of the Prophets there are tidings of the future; that is, certain events

and incidents have been explicitly or implicitly announced and unseen matters foretold, which

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in this day are witnessed to have come true in their entirety. How were these events of the

present day foreseen in the past?

Answer: The Prophets of God draw upon both His boundless universal grace and His

particular grace, that is, upon divine revelation and inspiration. They foretell certain events

through revelation and inspiration, which are the heavenly splendours, the intimations of the

heart, and the scattering rays of the light of the Day-Star of Truth. This

grace is like the
resplendent rays of the sun, and the hearts of the Prophets are even as
mirrors. Thus They affirm
that Their words have proceeded from revelation and inspiration.
The second kind of discovery is due to the fact that the Prophets are able
Physicians and
informed of the mysteries of the universe. They have Their finger on the pulse
of the world,
and They diagnose and foresee the ailments and illnesses which are to come. It
is from the
appearance, signs, and conditions of the universe itself that They infer these
mysteries. Thus,
when an able physician notes certain signs and symptoms in the body of a
patient, he diagnoses
future ailments, illnesses, and conditions. This proceeds from his knowledge,
skill, and power
of inference.
But the tidings of the Prophets are all founded upon the scattering rays of the
light of truth
and proceed from pure inspiration and revelation. For past, present, and future
apply only to
the world of creation, not to the world of God. In the realm of Truth, past,
present, and future
are one and the same: The beginning is even as the end and the end even as the
beginning. For
in the eternal and everlasting realm of God, time holds no sway and no
distinction can be made
between past and future, as past and future are contrary to that which has
neither beginning nor
end. In a realm that has no beginning and no end, how can past, present, and
future even be
imagined? Observe that even in an outward sense time has no sway in the world
of the intellect,
even though it holds sway in the mind of an intelligent person, for the power
of the mind has
ever apprehended and encompassed all things and will forever continue to do so.
Consider for example the sun itself: It knows neither morning, nor noon, nor
evening—all
times are one; all moments are the same. But on account of the rising and
setting of the sun,
the inhabitants of the earth see mornings and evenings and reckon the days and
nights. Thus
all these times are one in the sun and all these days are identical and
indistinguishable.
Likewise, in the realm of truth, past, present, and future are the same, and
future events are
even as past and present occurrences. From the perspective of that realm, all

events and incidents take place in the present and are witnessed by the Prophets and the chosen ones. And so it is that the Prophets herald events that will transpire two or three thousand years hence, for they abide in the realm of truth, wherein the mysteries of the universe are revealed and laid bare. Infer from this statement the truth of the spiritual discoveries of the Holy Ones and reflect and ponder thereon—the matter is indeed clear and manifest.

(–3– The Meaning of Speaking in Tongues)¹⁴

Question: What is meant by the Apostles’ speaking in tongues?

An early translation published in Corinne True, Notes Taken at Acca (Chicago: Bahá’í Publishing Society, 1907).

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Answer: The meaning is that the Apostles taught in a spiritual tongue, a tongue that embraces all tongues. For the Word of the Kingdom comprises spiritual meanings and divine mysteries, and whoso attains to this Word will find the realities and mysteries of creation to be clear and evident. The divine inner meanings are the all-encompassing reality of all tongues. Therefore, the Holy Spirit endowed the Apostles with the tongue of the Kingdom, and they spoke with all peoples as if in their own tongue; that is, whenever they conversed with a person of any faith or nation, it was as though they were speaking his own tongue. Were it otherwise, there are at present more than a thousand known languages and it would be fair to expect that the Apostles would have written at least one Gospel in the language of one of the other nations. It is, however, well established that the Gospel was written only in Hebrew and in Greek. No Gospel was even written in Latin, though that was at the time the official language of the land. Yet, as the Apostles were not proficient in Latin, no Gospel was written in that language.

(–4– The Invocation “He Is God”)¹⁵

Question: Why is the expression “He is God” used at the beginning of the Tablets and

Epistles?

Answer: This is a common practice in the East among the Muslims, and their intent is that

one must begin all things with the mention of God. But what is intended in the divine Tablets

is that the reality of the divine Essence is sanctified above all understanding, exalted beyond

all imagination. For whatsoever man may imagine is encompassed by him, and that which

encompasses is without a doubt greater than that which is encompassed. It is therefore clear

that what is imagined is the creation, not the Creator. For the reality of Divinity is sanctified

above all human fancy. In this day all people are worshippers of idle fancies, for they conceive

a god in the realm of imagination and worship him. Thus if you were to ask someone who is

engaged in prayer: "Whom are you worshipping?" he would say: "God."

"What God?" "God

as I imagine Him." Whereas that which is in his imagination is not God. All people are therefore

worshippers of their own thoughts and fancies.

Thus for man there is no path to tread and no place to turn save unto the holy Manifestations.

For, as already mentioned, the reality of Divinity is transcendent, sanctified, and beyond all

imagination. All that can be imagined are the holy and divine Manifestations.

There is nowhere

else for man to direct his gaze, and should he pass beyond this he will fall prey to delusion.

Thus what is meant by the words "He is God" is that that manifest Being is the promised Beauty

and the Day-Star of Truth, the Exponent of the secrets of Lordship and Divinity, the Repository

of the mysteries of the All-Merciful, and the Source of the signs of His Singleness; and that I

have begun my discourse with His blessed Name.

(–5– The Wisdom of Fasting)16

Question: What is the divine wisdom of fasting?

An early translation published in Corinne True, Notes Taken at Acca (Chicago: Bahá'í Publishing Society, 1907).

An early translation published in Corinne True, Notes Taken at Acca (Chicago: Bahá'í Publishing Society, 1907) and Star of the West, volume 4, number 18, page 305.

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Answer: There is many a divine wisdom in fasting. Among them is this: that, in the days

when He Who is the Dayspring of the Sun of Truth engages, through divine inspiration, in

revealing the verses of God, in establishing His religion, and in setting forth His teachings, He

is so enraptured and enkindled as to find no time for food or drink. For example, when Moses

went up to Mount Sinai to establish the religion of God, He fasted for forty days; and fasting

was therefore enjoined upon the Israelites to awaken and admonish them.

Likewise Christ, at

the beginning of the foundation of His divine religion, the establishment of His teachings, and

the formulation of His admonitions, disregarded for forty days all physical necessities and

refrained from food and drink. The Apostles and early Christian believers also fasted, but this

fast was changed by the Church Councils to abstinence from certain foods.

Similarly, the

Qur'án was revealed during the month of Ramadán¹⁷ and therefore the fast was enjoined during

that period. In the same way, in the beginning of His manifestation, the Báb would be so

overcome with emotion at the revelation of the divine verses that for days He would confine

himself to drinking tea. Likewise, in the days when He was instituting the divine teachings,

and when the divine verses would be sent down continuously, Bahá'u'lláh would be so

overwhelmed with the intensity of their influence and the emotions surging within His heart

that He would take but little food.

Our meaning is that it has been enjoined upon the generality of the people to fast likewise

for a few days, that they might follow the example of the divine Manifestations and call to

mind Their state and condition. As history records, the Christians would in the early days

observe a complete fast. For every sincere soul who has a beloved aspires to whatever condition

his beloved is experiencing: If the beloved were sad he would wish for sorrow, and if joyous

he would aspire to joy; if the beloved were at ease he would seek comfort, and

if troubled he
would desire the same. Now, since in those days the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh
would abstain from
food and drink, or would partake of only the least amount, it became incumbent
upon Their
loved ones to follow their example. Even as it is said in the Tablet of
Visitation: "... who, for
love of Thee, have observed all whereunto they were bidden". 18 This is but
one of the wisdoms
of fasting.

The second wisdom is that fasting is conducive to spiritual awareness. One's
heart grows
more tender, one's spirituality is increased, and as a result one's
thoughts become purely
focused on the remembrance of God. Such awareness and awakening leads
inexorably to
spiritual progress.

The third wisdom is this. There are two kinds of fast: material and spiritual.

The material
fast consists in abstaining from food and drink, that is, refraining from
satisfying the physical
appetites. But the true and spiritual fast is for man to forsake covetous
desires, heedlessness,
and evil and animalistic attributes. The material fast is therefore a symbol of
that spiritual fast.

It is like saying: "O Divine Providence! As I am abstaining from bodily
desires and from all
occupation with food and drink, even so purify and sanctify my heart from the
love of anyone
save Thyself, and shield and protect my soul from corrupt inclinations and
satanic qualities,
that my spirit may commune with the breaths of holiness and fast from the
mention of all else
besides Thee."

See Qur'án 2:185.

Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, CLXXX.

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(-6- The Rejection of the Manifestations of God in Every Age)19

When Abraham was sent forth, however much He expounded the truth, established
the
religion of God, disseminated new teachings, and explained the divine
mysteries, the Assyrians
and the Chaldeans would say, "This is but an idle fancy and an empty tale, a
mere figment of

the imagination. It will never come to pass.” Even more, they called it sheer ignorance and counted themselves among the exponents of reason and understanding. But before long it became clear that what Abraham had proclaimed was indeed the truth, and that it was their own thoughts that were the idle fancies. For after a short time the teachings of Abraham were realized in the world: The Holy Land was given to His descendants; the foundations of the religion of God were established; Isaac and Jacob came into the world; Joseph became ruler in Egypt; Ishmael was blessed and illumined Mount Paran; Moses the Interlocutor appeared, beheld in the desert of Sinai the blazing fire of God in the Burning Bush, rescued the Israelites from their oppression and captivity at the hands of the Egyptians, led them to the Holy Land, and, through His teachings and His religion, which were consonant with the needs of the age, founded a mighty nation. Thus did the deniers fully experience their error, yet they were not chastened or admonished.

On the contrary, when Moses appeared they erred anew, for Pharaoh’s people regarded the teachings and the law of Moses as mere fancy and accorded them no importance, considering their own ideas to represent the truth. But after a short time it became clear and evident that what Moses had proclaimed was indeed the truth and had come to pass, that the religion of God had been put into full effect and had secured the honour and advancement of all Israel, and that it was the thoughts and imaginations of the Egyptians that were the idle fancies. This was the second experience and yet the people were still not admonished and awakened, but rather persisted in their ignorance until Jesus appeared with a beauteous countenance and an eloquent tongue, and spread abroad the sweet savours of the rose-garden of divine mysteries and imparted the grace of the Holy Spirit.

The people, notwithstanding their two previous experiences wherein their error had been established, claimed again that the teachings of the glorious Gospel were idle fancies—that they were mere thoughts and imaginations, that they were devoid of all reality,

and that they
lacked in philosophical substance. “These are but vain and idle thoughts,”
they would say,
“whereas we possess true knowledge and lofty ideas, we have wisdom and
discernment, and
we know the ways of sound governance.” But before long their error was
exposed, for what
Jesus had said was sound and true: It was heavenly thoughts and divine
teachings, whereas the
prevailing thoughts of the tribes and nations of the earth were the vain and
idle fancies. This
was the third error and yet another experience which was later also repeated
upon the
appearance of Muhammad and the Báb.
Now Bahá’u’lláh has appeared, the divine teachings and admonitions have
been unveiled,
the call of the oneness of humanity has been sounded, the banner of the kingdom
of peace is
flying, and the tabernacle of love and harmony amongst all mankind has been
raised in the very
heart of the world and is summoning all people. And yet again some ignorant
souls imagine
that these divine teachings are without foundation and regard their own
imaginings as lofty

An early translation published in Corinne True, Notes Taken at Acca (Chicago:
Bahá’í Publishing Society,
1907).

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thoughts. But before long it will become manifest that what He has proclaimed
is sound,
proven, and compelling, and that all other thoughts are vain and idle.

(–7– The Meaning of “Mysteries”)²⁰

Question: What is meant by “mysteries” in the blessed Tablets?

Answer: By “mysteries” is meant such matters and questions as are remote
and hidden from
the minds and understandings of the people, but which can later be grasped by
fair-minded
souls if a perfect Individual unravels and explains them. Thus, the reality of
the advent of Christ
was one of God’s mysteries in the Mosaic Dispensation, which was later
disclosed and
witnessed through the manifestation of Christ.

(–8– The Transformation of Matter across the Kingdoms of Existence)

Throughout this endless universe, the greatest means for the progress and renewal of existence is that all things are eaters and eaten. This is a condition that applies to all the particles of the universe, and it is through this means that created things are renewed, transformed into one another, and endowed with a new reality unlike the previous one. And this indeed is the means of renewal.

For instance, in the mineral kingdom the soil absorbs the air and the water and decomposes the creatures within it, and thus enables the existence of plants. The more microscopic animals exist in the soil, the better the plants will grow. And when the plant has grown, it is consumed by the animal, is incorporated in its body, and is endowed with a new existence. Thus it progresses further and assumes a higher reality than that which it initially possessed. This indeed is the means of progress and renewal from the mineral to the vegetable, from the vegetable to the animal, and from the animal to the human world. For as plants grow they are eaten by the animal and replace those elements which have been depleted in the latter's body.

In this manner the plants enter the animal kingdom. The microscopic organisms in the air, water, and food enter in turn the body of man and replace that which has been assimilated therein.

Thus there is progress in these passages and renewals: The mineral passed from the mineral to the vegetable, then to the animal, and finally to the human realm. And were it not for the cycle of the eater and the eaten, no renewal would take place. Such a renewal, however, is one of the inherent requirements of existence, and all contingent things are bound to pass from one condition to another.

The pain and sting of death consists in the dissolution of what was composed and its passage from one condition to another. When one is accustomed to composition, then decomposition is a painful torment; when one is used to a certain degree and station, it is difficult to take leave of it. It is therefore clear that death is merely the passage from one condition to another. Thus

if a predatory animal devours another animal, the latter has in reality not been abased but has been decomposed and recomposed, found a renewed existence, and passed from one body to another. This motion and renewal of beings gives rise to the orderly arrangement and

An early translation published in Corinne True, Notes Taken at Acca (Chicago: Bahá'í Publishing Society, 1907).

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interconnectedness of all things, and were it not for these passages across the vegetable, animal, and human realms, the chain of being would be broken and the innate order of nature would be disrupted.

(–9– Táhirih and the Conference of Badasht)

Question: Can you provide an account of Táhirih's deliverance from Qazvín, her arrival in

Tihrán, her departure for Badasht, and the events that transpired there?

Answer: In brief, what happened is the following. Those were the early days of the Cause

and no one was informed of the divine teachings. All followed the law of the Qur'án and

regarded warfare, retribution, and retaliation as permissible. In Qazvín, Hájí Mullá Taqí²¹

launched an attack from the pulpit and condemned those two resplendent stars, Shaykh Ahmadi-Ahsá'í and Siyyid Kázim-i-Rashtí. He cursed and reviled them vehemently, saying: "This

affair of the Báb, which is unmitigated error, is a hellish fire that has blazed forth from the

grave of Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kázim." In sum, he uttered the most brazen words and

repeatedly hurled insults and invective at them.

A believer from Shíráz²² was present at his sermon and heard it with his own ears. As he

was unaware of the divine teachings that were yet to be promulgated and the principles upon

which the religion of God was to be established, he concluded that it behoved him to act

according to the law of the Qur'án, and thus he set out to settle the score.

He went before dawn

to the mosque of the said Hájí Mullá Taqí and concealed himself in an alcove. When at dawn

Hájí Mullá Taqí came to the mosque, that individual stabbed him in the

back and in the mouth
with a spear-tipped cane. Hájí Mullá Taqí fell to the ground and his
assailant fled. When the
people arrived, they saw the cleric lying dead.
A great tumult erupted and throughout the city a hue and cry was raised. The
dignitaries of
the town decided in concert that the assassins were Shaykh Rasúl-i-‘Arab and
two other
individuals, whom they viewed as being among the associates of Táhirih. They
immediately
arrested these three individuals, and Táhirih herself was subjected to
severe restrictions. When
that man from Shíráz saw that others had been apprehended in his place, he
felt it unfit to
remain silent and came of his own accord to the seat of the government to
declare that Shaykh
Rasúl and his friends were entirely innocent of the wrongful accusations
levelled against them,
and that he himself was the murderer. He described in full detail what had
transpired, and
confessed, saying: “These people are innocent: Set them free, for I am the
guilty one and it is I
who must be punished.” They arrested him but kept the others captive.
Briefly, they brought these four people from Qazvín to Tihrán. No matter
how much that
man from Shíráz protested that it was he who was guilty and that the others
were entirely
innocent—explaining that he had committed the crime because the victim had
openly cursed
and reviled his master from the pulpit and that, outraged and unable to contain
himself, he had
therefore stabbed him in the mouth with a spearhead—no one listened. To the
contrary, Hájí
Mullá Taqí’s son clamoured before the ministers of the government for the
death of all four.
Sadru’l-‘Ulamá, who was the head of the clergy, sought an audience with
the Sháh and said:
“Hájí Mullá Taqí was an illustrious man, highly renowned in the eyes of
all and deeply revered

The uncle and father-in-law of Táhirih.

Mullá ‘Abdu’lláh; see *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 276.

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by the people of Qazvín. In avenging the murder of such a man, a single
individual is of no
consequence. All four men must be turned over to the heirs of Mullá Taqí and

delivered to

Qazvín, that they may be executed in that city and that its inhabitants may thus be placated.”

Out of regard for Sadru'l-'Ulamá and the people of Qazvín, the Sháh gave word that all four could be executed.

The man from Shíráz, seeing that the others had not been released in spite of his own arrest,

escaped on a snowy night and went to the house of Ridá Khán. Together they made a pact and

departed for Shaykh Tabarsí, where they both met with martyrdom. As to Shaykh Rasúl and

his friends, they were taken to Qazvín, where the populace fell upon them and killed them in

the most horrendous manner.

As a result, Táhirih met with the greatest hardship. No one would associate with her, and

all her relatives—even her husband and two sons—showed the greatest enmity and would

oppress and revile her. Bahá'u'lláh dispatched Áqá Hádíy-i-Qazvíní from Tíhrán and, by an

elaborate stratagem, arranged for Táhirih to be rescued from Qazvín and brought directly to the

private quarters of His house. At first no one knew of this, but when some within the inner

circle of the believers were informed, they came to see her. I was a child, sitting on her lap and

being held in her arms. The curtain was drawn, and those believers were seated in an adjoining

room while she was speaking. The purport of her discourse, which was supported by a range

of arguments, as well as by the Qur'án and the traditions of the Prophet, was that in every age

an illustrious and distinguished Individual must be the focal Centre of the circle of guidance,

the Pole Star of the firmament of the most excellent Law of God, and a perspicuous Leader;

that all may defer to Him; and that in this day that illustrious and distinguished Individual is

the Báb, Who has manifested Himself. Although her speech was eloquent, yet when she

perceived that Bahá'u'lláh was to raise another call and shine forth with another radiance, she

became even more enkindled and reached a state that can hardly be described.

She forsook all

patience and composure and well-nigh rent asunder the veil of concealment.

Night and day she

would at turns speak forth and cry out, laugh aloud, and weep bitterly. Later Bahá'u'lláh sent her with a number of believers towards Badasht. Their first stop was a beautiful and verdant garden. Táhirih and the friends arrived there and were later joined by Bahá'u'lláh, Who rested the night there. In the morning He sent Táhirih and the friends with ample provisions to Badasht. After a few days, Bahá'u'lláh Himself went there. When He reached Badasht, Quddús had returned from Khurásán and he, too, came to Badasht, but he remained concealed. In Badasht there was a field with a stream running through it and gardens to either side. Quddús remained concealed in one of the gardens, and Táhirih resided in the other. A tent had been pitched for Bahá'u'lláh on that field, and the other believers were also housed in tents erected on the same field. In the evenings Bahá'u'lláh, Quddús, and Táhirih would meet. Bahá'u'lláh made a solemn agreement with them that the truth of the Cause would be proclaimed at Badasht, but no specific day was designated. Then, by chance, Bahá'u'lláh fell ill. As soon as he was informed, Quddús emerged from his concealment and entered Bahá'u'lláh's tent. Táhirih sent a message saying: "Either bring Bahá'u'lláh to the garden where I reside or I will come myself." Quddús said: "Bahá'u'lláh is unwell and cannot come", which was a signal. Táhirih, seizing upon the opportunity, arose and, unveiled, came forth from the garden. She proceeded towards the tent of Bahá'u'lláh crying out and proclaiming: "I am the Trumpet-blast; I am the Bugle-call!"—which are two of the signs of the Day of Resurrection mentioned in the Qur'án. Calling out in this fashion, she

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entered the tent of Bahá'u'lláh. No sooner had she entered than Bahá'u'lláh instructed the believers to recite the Súrih of the Event from the Qur'án, a Súrih that describes the upheaval of the Day of Resurrection. In such wise was the Day of Resurrection proclaimed. The believers were seized with such

fear and terror that some fled, others remained bewildered and dumbfounded, and still others wept and lamented. Some were so dismayed that they fell ill, and Hájí Mullá Ismá‘íl was so overcome with fear and terror that he cut his own throat. But after a few days, peace and composure were regained and the confusion and anxiety were dispelled. Most of those who had fled became steadfast again, and the episode of Badasht drew to a close.

(–10– Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kázim)

Question: What is the story of Shaykh Ahmad-i-Ahsá‘í and Siyyid Kázim-i-Rashtí, the journey of their disciples to Shíráz, and their declaration of allegiance to the Báb, and how did these events unfold?

Answer: Know that in the latter days the Shí‘íhs of Persia had forgotten the truth of the religion of God and had become entirely devoid and deprived of the morals of the spiritually minded. They were cleaving to empty husks and remained entirely heedless of the pith and substance. They had nothing to show but outward observances, such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, almsgiving, and the commemoration of the blessed Imáms. The people of true knowledge would therefore call them “Qishrí” (superficial), for amongst them the inner truths and meanings were absent, spiritual perceptions were non-existent, and heavenly morals had become but an idle matter.

When the night of separation approached the dawn—that is, when the concealment of the True One ran its course and the dawn of the morn of God drew nigh—Shaykh Ahmad-i-Ahsá‘í appeared. He guided the people to inner truths and meanings and expounded the secrets and mysteries of the Qur’án. The Shí‘íhs then became divided into two camps: Some followed the august Shaykh and became known as Shaykhís, while others kept to their prior condition and were called “Qishrí”.

The illustrious Shaykh began to invite the people to anticipate the advent of God’s revelation and the blazing of the Fire of Sinai. He proclaimed, in his writings and in his lessons, that the dawn was fast approaching and that the appearance of the promised

Manifestation was imminent. Thus did he seek to instil receptivity in the hearts of the people and admonish them to await day and night the advent of the divine Manifestation. He became most renowned for his knowledge and perfections, not only in Persia but throughout the Shí'ih world. He was mentioned at every gathering and was sought after by all. During his lifetime he trained and instructed Siyyid Kázim-i-Rashtí, and before he died he appointed him as his successor. Siyyid Kázim followed in the footsteps of the illustrious Shaykh and occupied himself night and day with elucidating the inner truths and meanings and in disseminating the secrets and mysteries of the Qur'án. He so imbued the people with anticipation for the coming Revelation that his disciples, in their eagerness, forsook all patience and repose and dispersed in every direction until they found the Promised One.

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Moreover, Siyyid Kázim explicitly specified, in the preamble of his book "Sharh-i-Qasídh"²³, the name of Bahá'u'lláh: "Praise be to God Who hath adorned the preamble of the book of His Essence with the mystery of distinction, the ornament of that Point wherefrom the Há is manifested, with neither assimilation nor separation, through the Alif." To fully explain this expression to you would take a long time, since you are unfamiliar with such words and expressions, and were I to do so it would fill an entire book. But since time is short I will briefly provide a word-for-word translation²⁴ so that you will understand the general meaning. He says: Praise be to God who has adorned the book of existence with the mystery of distinction through degrees, for it is through such differences that the world of existence is adorned. If all things were of one kind and there were no distinctions, existence would be imperfect. The realm of God and the realm of creation, the realm above and the realm below, the realm of truth and the realm of illusion: All these distinctions are among the inherent requirements of existence. He then says that the book of existence is adorned with that Point

wherefrom the
 letter Há' appears and the letter Alif is manifested. And in the same book
 he explains in
 numerous passages that the Point is the letter Bá'. And when the letters
 Bá', Há', and Alif are
 brought together it makes "Bahá."
 Siyyid Kázim also spoke of trilaterals and quadrilaterals. A trilateral is a
 word comprising
 three letters, such as "Alí", and a quadrilateral is a word comprising
 four, such as
 "Muhammad".²⁵ When these two are combined it makes
 "Alí-Muhammad", which is the
 blessed name of the Báb. In numerous passages of the same book he explicitly
 refers to the
 Báb and extols Him with boundless laudations and attributes, saying that the
 mysteries of all
 that has been and all that shall be are found in Him. He also says that all the
 inner truths and
 meanings of the Sacred Scriptures are enfolded and allusively expressed in the
 verse
 "Bismi'lláhi'r-Rahmání'r-Rahím" (In the name of God, the
 Merciful, the Compassionate), that
 all the meanings of "Bismi'lláh" (in the name of God) are encapsulated
 and comprehended in
 the letter Bá', which is the sum total of all truths and mysteries, and that
 the Bá' refers to
 Bahá'u'lláh.
 The late Siyyid had asked the illustrious Shaykh to expound in some way that
 Hidden
 Mystery. The Shaykh wrote in reply: "There must needs be a Seat for this
 Cause and a Place
 for every Announcement." That is, this Cause upon which we have embarked has
 a designated
 Seat and Centre, and every Announcement must be established from a given place,
 meaning a
 centre wherein it is realized. Then he said: "I can say no more; I can
 appoint no time. 'His
 Cause will be made known after a while (Hín)'."²⁶ That is, I cannot
 specify that determined
 Centre and cannot explicitly say Who He is. Then he cites this verse of the
 Qur'án: "His Cause
 will be made known after a while (Hín)."²⁷ The preceding verse is "He,
 verily, is naught but a
 Remembrance unto all the worlds." In the Commentary on the Súrih of Joseph,
 the Báb refers
 to Himself as "the Remembrance of God". The august Shaykh intimates here
 that that "Seat

and Centre” is “the Remembrance of God”, and that the verse “His Cause will be made known after a while (Hín)” means that you will grasp whatsoever that intended Centre will announce

See God Passes By, p. 97.

That is, from Arabic into Persian.

In Arabic, only consonants and long vowels are written, and the word “Muhammad” is therefore spelled with the letters M, H, M, and D.

See The Dawn-Breakers, pp. 17–18, and God Passes By, p. 97.

Qur’án 38:88.

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and proclaim after “Hín”. Now, according to the abjad reckoning, “Hín” is equivalent to sixtyeight and “after Hín” is sixty-nine, the year of Bahá’u’lláh’s revelation. 28 The substance of these words is that whatsoever that Remembrance of God will announce and intimate will

become clear and manifest in the year after Hín, that is, in the year sixty-nine.

As a result of the passionate encouragement of the illustrious Shaykh to anticipate the

advent of God and of his assertion of its imminence, and likewise as a result of the utterances

of the illustrious Siyyid who night and day proclaimed the approach of that advent—going so

far as to instruct his disciples one day to go forth and seek after their Master—Mullá Husayn

and some of the Siyyid’s other disciples set themselves to the search. And since a tradition had

been reported that the Promised One would go to the mosque of Kúfih, they also went to that

mosque and stayed there for a time, awaiting His advent. Even the illustrious Siyyid himself,

at the close of his life, left Karbilá for a visit to Kázimayn and Samarra and returned. In the

course of his journey to Samarra, and in the village of Musayyib he spoke to his disciples of

his own death. When his disciples began to weep and lament, crying out and beseeching him,

he asked them: “Would ye not wish that I pass from this world, that your Master may appear?”

In brief, our meaning is that these two illustrious souls endowed their followers with the

greatest receptivity. That is why after the passing of the late Siyyid his disciples sought with

all their might after the Promised Beauty. Mullá Husayn and some of his disciples departed from Iraq, made for Persia, and were taken up with the search till they entered the city of Shíráz.

As Mullá Husayn had met the Báb before in Karbilá and knew Him, he became His guest. On the night of the fifth of Jamádíyu'l-Avval,²⁹ Mullá Husayn was seated in the presence of the Báb, who was preparing the tea. As the Báb was serving the tea, He recited certain verses.

Mullá Husayn was amazed and astonished to hear a young man, with no religious education or training in the Arabic tongue, recite verses of the utmost eloquence and power, a feat which he could have never thought possible. This led to his awakening and allegiance. The following day he told his disciples and others that he had found the Object of their search and proceeded to describe and portray Him, but he concealed His identity and did not divulge His name.

However, he so extolled His attributes that his disciples and the others were enthralled with this news and with unrelenting thirst continued to search for the life-giving waters. Finally, after a few days, he specified His blessed Name. A great commotion ensued. Seventeen people bore allegiance to Him, and the letter of Táhirih, which was with a certain Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí, was presented to the Báb. For Táhirih had given him this letter and asked him to present it to the Promised One when once they had found Him. In that letter she had included the following ode, the opening of which reads:

The effulgence of Thy face flashed forth,
 And the rays of Thy visage arose on high.
 Then speak the word, 'Am I not your Lord?'
 And 'Thou art, Thou art!' we will all reply. 30

The Islamic year 1269 began on 15 October 1852, the midpoint of Bahá'u'lláh's four-month imprisonment in the Síyáh-Chál. It was in this prison that Bahá'u'lláh received His Prophetic Mission.

23 May 1844.

See The Dawn-Breakers, pp. 81–82.

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Thus Táhirih became the eighteenth believer. The Shí'íhs believed in

fourteen immaculate

Souls and four Gates. The fourteen immaculate Souls are Muhammad, Fátimih, and the twelve

Imáms. The four Gates are the four individuals who succeeded one another as the leaders of

the Shí'íhs after the twelfth Imám. Thus these eighteen souls were

appointed to match those

eighteen—the main intent was the number. The Báb Himself was the nineteenth.

Such is the

basis of the number nineteen that has been mentioned in all the Books and

Tablets of the Báb.

The names of the Letters of the Living are as follows:

1. Mullá Husayn
2. Muhammad-Hasan, his brother
3. Muhammad Báqir, his nephew
4. Mullá 'Alí-i-Bastámí
5. Mullá Khudá-Bakhsh-i-Qúchání, later named Mullá 'Alí
6. Mullá Hasan-i-Bajistání
7. Siyyid Husayn-i-Yazdí
8. Mírzá Muhammad Rawdih-Khán
9. Sa'íd-i-Hindí
10. Mullá Mahmúd-i-Khu'í
11. Mullá Jalíl-i-Urúmí
12. Mullá Muhammad-i-Ibdál-i-Marághi'í
13. Mullá Báqir-i-Tabrízí
14. Mullá Yúsuf-i-Ardibílí
15. Mírzá Hádí, son of Mullá 'Abdu'l-Vahháb-i-Qazvíní
16. Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí-i-Qazvíní
17. Táhirih
18. Quddús

The greatness and glory of most of these Letters of the Living resides solely in the fact that

they professed their faith at the very beginning. Among them and in terms of importance, a few

souls occupy a primary position—Mullá Husayn, Quddús, and Táhirih; a few other blessed

souls occupy a secondary position; and the rest are honoured solely for having believed in the

very beginning—two of them even, like Judas Iscariot, recanted their faith later.

After the blessed person of the Báb came to light and His fame spread, Mullá Husayn

unloosed his tongue and openly taught the Faith, and was charged to go to other provinces and

teach. These in short are the events surrounding the declaration of allegiance of Mullá Husayn

and the other Letters of the Living.

(-11- The Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh)

Question: On what date did the dawning of the Sun of Truth and the advent of the Blessed

Beauty take place?

Answer: From the beginning of His childhood Bahá'u'lláh was possessed of such

astonishing qualities, signs, and utterances as to amaze every soul. All the dignitaries of Persia

would say: "This youth is wrought of a rare substance", and everyone, even the enemies and

the envious, bore witness to His knowledge, grace, wisdom, understanding, intelligence, and

perception. Among other things, it was acknowledged by all that He had neither entered a

school nor received a religious education. Nonetheless, His knowledge and perfections were

well recognized. The learned men of Persia would submit to Him the difficult questions that

perplexed their minds, and He would resolve them. To this day, and in spite of their hostility,

the dignitaries of Persia bear witness to this matter.

In sum, no one, whether in Persia or even throughout the East, denies

Bahá'u'lláh's

knowledge, perfection, greatness, and ability. At most they claim that this Man subverted the

foundations of the Law of God, that by means of His shrewdness, intelligence, knowledge,

wisdom, eloquence, and sagacity He led astray a vast multitude, and that He thus undermined

the perspicuous religion of God. But they do not deny His greatness.

Thus, from the very beginning of the Revelation of the Báb, the believers were humble and

lowly before Bahá'u'lláh, looked to Him for guidance, and were drawn to Him with a heartfelt

attraction. But at Badasht the greatness and majesty of Bahá'u'lláh were manifested to a further

degree. There, a number of believers developed a particular devotion and became wholly

attracted to Him. Whoever met Him and heard His words would be transformed and enthralled,

and could do naught but surrender his will and become aflame with the fire of the love of God.

During His final days in Tihrán, prior to the journey to Baghdád, some of the believers,

such as Muhammad Taqí Khán, Sulaymán Khán, Jináb-i-‘Azím, Mírzá ‘Alí-Muhammad, Mullá ‘Abdu’l-Fattáh, and Mírzá ‘Abdu’l-Vahháb—all of whom were to be later martyred—as well as Mírzá Husayn Kirmání and many other souls, perceived that Bahá’u’lláh occupied a transcendent station and became convinced that He was a Manifestation of God. Bahá’u’lláh had composed an ode from which the fragrance of a heavenly station could be perceived, the opening of which reads: “’Tis from Our rapture that the clouds of realms above are raining down.” All the friends would recite that ode with the utmost fervour and attraction, and all accepted its purport—not a soul voiced an objection. That ode was indeed most enthralling. The first person who recognized the sublimity and holiness of Bahá’u’lláh and became certain that He would manifest a momentous Cause was Mullá ‘Abdu’l-Karím-i-Qazvíní, whom the Báb had named Mírzá Ahmad. He was the intermediary between the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh and was aware of the truth of the matter. 31 After coming to Baghdád from Persia, Bahá’u’lláh declared to a certain extent the nature of His mission in the ninth year after the appearance of the Báb, and became known among the friends as the appearance of Husayn. For the people of Persia believed that the appearance of

See *The Dawn-Breakers*, pp. 162–69.

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the promised Mahdi must be followed by that of Husayn, that is, of Imám Husayn the martyr, to whom they are indeed most attached and bear the greatest allegiance. Now, in all His Books and Scriptures, the Báb heralded that which was to transpire in the year nine. Among them, there abound expressions such as: “In the year nine ye shall attain unto all good.” And such statements as “In the year nine ye shall ...”, and “Then ye shall ...”, and “Then ye shall ...” are numerous. Likewise, He says: “Wait thou until nine will have elapsed from the time of the Bayán. Then exclaim: ‘Blessed, therefore, be God ...’” In sum, the tidings of the Báb regarding the year nine are such as to defy all description.

Nevertheless certain souls
faltered, among them Mírzá Yahyá, Siyyid Muhammad-i-Isfahání, and a
few others. The
Sermon of Salutations (Khutbiy-i-Salavát) was revealed in the year nine,
and likewise the
commentary on the verse of the Qur'án "All food was allowed to the
children of Israel except
what Israel forbade itself" (Lawh-i-Kullu't-Ta'ám) issued forth in
that same year.
Perceiving the covert rebellion of Mírzá Yahyá and others,
Bahá'u'lláh journeyed alone to
Sulaymáníyyih and was absent for two years. During that time, Mírzá
Yahyá was acting with
utmost caution behind a veil of concealment and, fearing the attention of the
General Consul
of Persia in Baghdád, disguised himself, took the name of Hájí 'Alí,
and engaged in selling
shoes and plaster in Basrah and in Súqu'sh-Shuyúkh in the vicinity of
Baghdád. The Cause
became entirely quiescent, the Call ceased to be heard, and all name and trace
thereof wellnigh vanished.
During His sojourn in Sulaymáníyyih, Bahá'u'lláh penned a number of
works, among them
certain prayers of which copies are still extant, and certain epistles on
mystical wayfaring
addressed to the doctors and the learned men of Islam, which are likewise still
extant. In those
epistles certain teachings are expounded, among them words to this effect:
"Were it not
contrary to the perspicuous Law of God, I would have given my would-be murderer
to be my
heir. But what am I to do—I have no worldly possessions, nor hath it been
thus decreed by His
sovereign will."
In any event, all the doctors and learned men of Sulaymáníyyih attested to
the knowledge,
attainments, and perfections of Bahá'u'lláh and developed an affection
for His person; that is,
they would say that this Man was unique and ranked among the chosen ones of
God.
When Bahá'u'lláh returned from Sulaymáníyyih, He illumined Baghdád
with His light:
The call of God was raised anew and a tumult arose in Persia. In Baghdád
Bahá'u'lláh stood
firm before all peoples. The government of Persia was extremely hostile in
those days, and all
were seeking by every means to cause Him suffering and to bring Him to harm. At

last the
 Persian government, having grown alarmed at His influence, said: “Baghdád is
 close to Persia
 and is a place of passage for the Persians. Thus, in order to put out this fire
 Bahá’u’lláh must
 be banished to a distant land.” The Persian government then petitioned the
 Ottoman
 government, and Bahá’u’lláh was as a result transferred with all due
 honour out of Baghdád.
 Leaving the city, Bahá’u’lláh went to the garden of Najíb Páshá and
 resided there for twelve
 days. During that time many people, both high and low, and even the Governor
 and a number
 of other officials, attained His blessed presence. These are the twelve days of
 Ridván.
 In any event, it was by means of hints and allusions that Bahá’u’lláh
 first declared His
 mission during those twelve days. Certain among the friends grasped His intent,
 but others did
 not fully understand. At last Bahá’u’lláh came to Constantinople and the
 Súrih of pilgrimage
 was revealed, wherein the instruction is given to circumambulate the House of
 Baghdád. In
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that Súrih the Cause is openly manifest, but the phrase “He Whom God shall
 make manifest”
 does not appear.
 Subsequently, the Persian government caused Bahá’u’lláh to be further
 banished to
 Adrianople. From there numerous Tablets were revealed day and night to the
 effect that “Since
 We have been expelled from our homeland and banished from Baghdád to a remote
 place, that
 the fire of the love of God might be quenched, the lamp of guidance
 extinguished, the banner
 of God hauled down, and the call of the True One silenced, We have therefore
 chosen to fully
 reveal the Cause, manifest the proof, raise the call, and hoist the banner of
 the Cause of God,
 that all may see that this persecution, enmity, banishment, and exile has only
 deepened the
 influence of the Word of God, that the fame of the Cause has been noised
 abroad, and that the
 tidings of the advent of the Kingdom of God have reached unto both East and
 West.” This

universal declaration took place in the year 1280. All the friends, with the exception of Yahyá and a few of his followers, became firm and devoted believers, and from Adrianople Tablets would ceaselessly flow to Persia.

This is an account, in summary form, of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh.

(–12– Christ and Bahá'u'lláh)

Some have asserted that, while mighty signs and marvellous deeds have appeared from

Bahá'u'lláh, through which His greatness shines forth as resplendent as the sun, yet the

Revelation of Christ is superior to and incommensurate with His.

Indeed the signs of greatness in Christ are beyond the ken of mortal mind and the grasp of

human imagination. And indeed we are most humble and lowly before His sweet and beauteous

countenance, and we love Him with all our heart and soul; nay, should it be called for and

should divine confirmations assist us, we would readily lay down our lives for His sake. For

we regard Him in the light of true greatness and bear allegiance to His truth.

But should

attention be drawn to this assertion, we will, in all sincerity and love, reply to their objection

in the following manner.

Christ was raised among the people of Israel, who lived under Roman rule. Now, in those

days the Romans were world-renowned for their attainments in every field of human

civilization, and so it would not be a cause of great wonder if an eloquent utterance or a novel

teaching were to issue from Christ. Bahá'u'lláh, by contrast, appeared in Persia, where useful

sciences were entirely lacking, except insofar as religious laws and theological studies were

concerned. And thus the appearance of these divine teachings, of these mighty and momentous

signs, from such an individual and in such a land, is indeed cause for wonder.

Moreover, the words and verses of Christ, when taken altogether, would comprise at most

ten pages, whereas if the verses of Bahá'u'lláh were gathered together from beginning to end,

they would fill several trunks. Aside from this, the utterances of Christ in the Gospel are solely

concerned with spiritual admonitions and with the improvement and rectification of human

character, whereas the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh encompass manifold expressions of wisdom and inner meaning, realities and sciences, counsels and admonitions, and explanations and exegeses of the Sacred Scriptures of old. At the time of His ascension, Christ had raised up twelve men and four women. There were to be sure a few others beside these, but they had not reached the station of certitude. And among these twelve men, one became His sworn enemy: Judas Iscariot, who, notwithstanding

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his position as the chief of the Apostles, arose to have Him killed. The most prominent among the remaining eleven was Peter, and even he failed to stand firm in the face of trials, since, according to the explicit text of the Gospel, he thrice denied Christ at the hour of His martyrdom, to the point of entirely recanting his faith in the last instance. It was only after the cock crowed that he was reawakened and made contrite and repentant. Whereas from the inception of this Cause to the present day, perhaps close to twenty thousand men, women, and children have offered up their lives in the path of God. Many of them, under the threat of the sword, raised the cry of “Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!” Many were told that, if they publicly recanted their faith, they would keep both their lives and their possessions, and yet they answered with the cry of “Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!” Thus, at the time of Bahá'u'lláh's ascension, more than two hundred thousand souls had taken shelter beneath His blessed shadow and had attained the station of certitude. The renown of Christ did not even reach, in His own lifetime, Assyria, Chaldea, Asia Minor, or the regions of Syria, whereas Bahá'u'lláh's renown, in His own lifetime, had spread throughout East and West. Christ was not widely known among the people—most would not recognize Him—and He would travel from village to village and from wilderness to wilderness; and so it was that when they set out to arrest Him they knew not where to find Him or how to recognize Him. Judas

Iscariot came to them and said: "I will show Him to you." They said:
 "When we enter that
 place, how will we know who is Christ?" Judas said: "The one whom I will
 kiss is Christ."
 Bahá'u'lláh, however, was standing visibly and openly before His foes,
 was known to all, and
 withstood the onslaught of a mighty nation. The enemy arrayed against Christ
 was the feeble
 Jewish nation which suffered under Roman rule and which, like the present-day
 Jews of
 Tiberias and Safed, was a subjugated people. Bahá'u'lláh's enemies,
 however, were the
 adherents of one of the most powerful nations of the world. When Christ was
 taken before the
 court, He was asked: "Art thou the King of the Jews?" And He replied in all
 meekness: "Thou
 sayest it."³² But, in the great assemblage of Tíhrán, the voice of
 Bahá'u'lláh was raised in
 address to the highest heaven. ³³
 This is the truth of the matter. Consider it and ask the deniers to judge with
 fairness, to
 forsake blind prejudice, and to apprehend the truth by inference from the
 Sacred Scriptures.
 For instance, were you to tell the Christian clergy today that Christ was not
 known to the people
 during His own lifetime, they would be most astonished and deny it—whereas it
 is explicitly
 recorded in the Gospel that Judas Iscariot accepted what indeed was a paltry
 sum to reveal the
 whereabouts of Christ, and that since none among the crowd could recognize Him,
 he said that
 whoever he would kiss was Christ and was to be arrested. And so it came to
 pass.

Matt. 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3.

Cf. The Dawn-Breakers, pp. 648–49.

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Discourse given at Miss E. J. Rosenberg's Unity Meeting

London

September 8th, 1911

(London, pp. 44-45)

Praise be to God, that such a meeting of purity and steadfastness is being held in London.

The hearts of those present are pure, and are turned towards the Kingdom of God. I hope that

all that is contained and established in the Holy books of God may be realized in you. The

Messengers of God are the principal and the first teachers. Whenever this world becomes dark,

and divided in its opinions and indifferent, God will send one of His Holy Messengers.

Moses came during a time of darkness, when ignorance and childishness prevailed amongst

the people, and they were waverers. Moses was the teacher of God; He gave the teachings of

holiness and educated the Israelites. He raised up the people from their degradation and caused

them to be highly honoured. He taught them Sciences and Arts, trained them in civilization and

increased their human virtues. After a while, that which they had thus received from God was

lost; the way was prepared for the return of evil qualities, and the world was oppressed by

tyranny.

Then again the rumour of the Light of Reality and the breathing of the Holy Spirit became

known. The cloud of Bounty showered, the Light of Guidance shone upon the earth. The world

put on a new garment, the people became a new people, the oneness of humanity was

proclaimed. The great unity of thought transformed humanity and created a new world. Again,

after a time, all this was forgotten by the people. The teachings of God no longer influenced

their lives. His prophecies and commandments became fainter and were finally obliterated from

their hearts, and tyranny and thoughtlessness once more prevailed.

Bahá'u'lláh then came and once more renewed the foundation of Faith. He brought back the teachings of God, and the humane practices of the time of Christ. He quenched the thirst of the thirsty, He awakened the careless and called the attention of the heedless to the Divine secrets. He declared the unity of humanity, and spread abroad the teaching of the equality of all men.

Therefore, all of you ought with your hearts and minds to endeavour to win the people with kindness, so that this great Unity may be established, that childish superstitions may pass away, and all may become one.

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Address given by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at the City Temple
 London
 Sunday, September 10th, 1911
 (London, pp. 19-20)

O Noble Friends; seekers after God! Praise be to God! Today the light of Truth
 is shining
 upon the world in its abundance; the breezes of the heavenly garden are blowing
 throughout
 all regions; the call of the Kingdom is heard in all lands, and the breath of
 the Holy Spirit is
 felt in all hearts that are faithful. The Spirit of God is giving eternal life.
 In this wonderful age
 the East is enlightened, the West is fragrant, and everywhere the soul inhales
 the holy perfume.

The sea of the unity of mankind is lifting up its waves with joy, for there is
 real communication
 between the hearts and minds of men. The banner of the Holy Spirit is uplifted,
 and men see it,
 and are assured with the knowledge that this is a new day.
 This is a new cycle of human power. All the horizons of the world are luminous,
 and the
 world will become indeed as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of unity of
 the sons of men
 and of the drawing together of all races and all classes. You are loosed from
 ancient
 superstitions which have kept men ignorant, destroying the foundation of true
 humanity.
 The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of
 mankind and of
 the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by
 the will of God
 the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all
 men will live
 as brothers.
 In the days of old an instinct for warfare was developed in the struggle with
 wild animals;
 this is no longer necessary; nay, rather, co-operation and mutual understanding
 are seen to
 produce the greatest welfare of mankind. Enmity is now the result of prejudice
 only.
 In the Hidden Words Bahá'u'lláh says, "Justice is to be loved above
 all." Praise be to God,
 in this country the standard of justice has been raised; a great effort is
 being made to give all
 souls an equal and a true place. This is the desire of all noble natures; this
 is today the teaching
 for the East and for the West; therefore the East and the West will understand
 each other and
 reverence each other, and embrace like long-parted lovers who have found each
 other.
 There is one God; mankind is one; the foundations of religion are one. Let us
 worship Him,
 and give praise for all His great Prophets and Messengers who have manifested
 His brightness
 and glory.
 The blessing of the Eternal One be with you in all its richness, that each soul
 according to
 his measure may take freely of Him. Amen.
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Thanks be to God, this is a good meeting. It is very enlightened, it is spiritual.

As a Persian Poet has written: —“The Celestial Universe is so formed that the under world reflects the upper world.” That is to say whatever exists in heaven is reflected in this phenomenal world. Now, praise be to God, this meeting of ours is a reflection of the heavenly concourse; it is as though we had taken a mirror and had gazed into it. This reflection from the heavenly concourse we know as love.

As heavenly love exists in the supreme concourse even so it is reflected here. The supreme concourse is filled with the desire for God—thank God, this desire is also here.

Therefore if we say that this meeting is heavenly, it is true. Why? Because we have no other desire except for that which comes from God. We have no other object save the commemoration of God.

Some of the people of the earth desire conquest over others: some of them are longing for rest and ease; others desire a high position; some desire to become famous:—thank God our desire is for spirituality and for union with God.

Now that we are gathered here our wish is to raise the banner of the Unity of

God, to spread
the Light of God, to make the hearts of the people turn to the Kingdom.
Therefore I thank God
that He is causing us to do this great work.
I pray for all of you, that you may become celestial warriors, that you may
everywhere
spread the Unity of God and enlighten the East and West, and that you may give
to all hearts
the love of God. This is my utmost desire, and I pray to God that your desire
may be the same.
I am very happy to be with you all. I am pleased with the English King and
Government,
and with the people.
You may thank God that in this land you are so free. You do not know what lack
of freedom
there is in the East. When anyone comes to this country he is content.
I wish God's protection for you all. Goodbye to you all.
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Discourse of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at St. John’s, Westminster
London
September 17th, 1911
(London, pp. 22-25)

O Noble Friends! O Seekers for the Kingdom of God! Man all over the world is seeking for God. All that exists is God; but the Reality of Divinity is holy above all understanding. The pictures of Divinity that come to our mind are the product of our fancy; they exist in the realm of our imagination. They are not adequate to the Truth; truth in its essence cannot be put into words. Divinity cannot be comprehended because it is comprehending. Man, who has also a real existence, is comprehended by God; therefore, the Divinity which man can understand is partial; it is not complete. Divinity is actual Truth and real existence, and not any representation of it. Divinity itself contains All, and is not contained. Although the mineral, vegetable, animal and man all have actual being, yet the mineral has no knowledge of the vegetable. It cannot apprehend it. It cannot imagine nor understand it.

It is the same with the vegetable. Any progress it may make, however highly it may become developed, it will never apprehend the animal, nor understand it. It is, so to speak, without news of it. It has no ears, no sight, no understanding.

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It is the same with the animal. However much it may progress in its own kingdom, however refined its feelings may become, it will have no real notion of the world of man or of his special intellectual faculties.

The animal cannot understand the roundness of the earth, nor its motion in space, nor the central position of the sun, nor can it imagine such a thing as the all-pervading ether.

Although the mineral, vegetable, animal and man himself are actual beings, the difference

between their kingdoms prevents members of the lower degree from comprehending the

essence and nature of those of the superior degree. This being so, how can the temporal and

phenomenal comprehend the Lord of Hosts?

It is clear that this is impossible!

But the Essence of Divinity, the Sun of Truth, shines forth upon all horizons and is

spreading its rays upon all things. Each creature is the recipient of some portion of that power,

and man, who contains the perfection of the mineral, the vegetable and animal, as well as his

own distinctive qualities, has become the noblest of created beings. It stands written that he is

made in the Image of God. Mysteries that were hidden he discovers; and secrets that were

concealed he brings into the light. By Science and by Art he brings hidden powers into the

region of the visible world. Man perceives the hidden law in created things and co-operates

with it.

Lastly the perfect man, the Prophet, is one who is transfigured, one who has the purity and

clearness of a perfect mirror—one who reflects the Sun of Truth. Of such a one—of such a

Prophet and Messenger—we can say that the Light of Divinity with the heavenly Perfections

dwells in him.

If we claim that the sun is seen in the mirror, we do not mean that the sun itself has descended from the holy heights of his heaven and entered into the mirror! This is impossible.

The Divine Nature is seen in the Manifestations and its Light and Splendor are visible in extreme glory.

Therefore, men have always been taught and led by the Prophets of God. The Prophets of God are the Mediators of God. All the Prophets and Messengers have come from One Holy Spirit and bear the Message of God, fitted to the age in which they appear. The One Light is in them and they are One with each other. But the Eternal does not become phenomenal; neither can the phenomenal become Eternal.

Saint Paul, the great Apostle, said: "We all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of God, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

O GOD the Forgiver! O Heavenly Educator! This assembly is adorned with the mention of thy holy Name. Thy children turn their face towards thy Kingdom, hearts are made happy and souls are comforted.

Merciful God! cause us to repent of our shortcomings! Accept us in thy heavenly Kingdom and give unto us an abode where there shall be no error. Give us peace; give us knowledge, and open unto us the gates of thy heaven.

Thou art the Giver of all! Thou art the Forgiver! Thou art the Merciful! Amen.

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Discourse by 'Abdu'l-Bahá given at the Unity Meeting of Misses Jack and Herrick
 London
 September 22nd, 1911
 (London, pp. 48-49)

It is a cold and miserable day but as I was anxious to see you I came here. For a man who

has love, effort is a rest. He will travel any distance to visit his friends.
Thank God I see you spiritual and at rest; I give you this message from God;
that you must
be turned toward Him. Praise God that you are near Him! The unworthy things of
this world
have not deterred you from seeking the world of Spirit. When in harmony with
that world, you
care not for the things that perish; your desire is for that which never dies
and the Kingdom lies
open before you. I hope that the teaching of God will spread throughout the
world, and will
cause all to be united.
In the time of Jesus Christ there was an outpouring of the Light from East to
West that
brought the people under a heavenly banner and illumined them with divine
insight. Western
lands have been kindled by the Light of the Christ. I pray earnestly that the
Light in this
advanced age will so illumine the world that all may rally under the banner of
Unity and receive
Spiritual education.
Then those problems which cause difference among the peoples of the earth will
be seen
no more, for verily they are not. You are all waves of one sea, mirrors of one
reflection.
This day the countries of Europe are at rest; Education has become widespread.
The light
of liberty is the light of the West, and the intention of government is to work
for truth and
justice in Western countries. But ever the light of spirituality shines from
out of the East. In
this age that light has become dimmed; religion has become a matter of form and
ceremony
and the desire for God's love has been lost.
In very age of great spiritual darkness, a light is kindled in the East. So
once again the light
of the teachings of God has come unto you. Even as education and progress
travel from West
to East, so does the spiritual fire travel from East to West.
I hope that the people of the West may be illumined by the light of God; that
the Kingdom
may come to them, that they may find eternal Life, that the Spirit of God may
spread like a fire
among them, that they may be baptized with the Water of Life and may find a new
birth.
This is my desire; I hope by the will of God, He will cause you to receive it,
and will make

you happy. In the same way that you have education and material progress so may
the light of
God be your portion.
God keep all of you in safety.

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From an Interview given by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the Weekly Budget
(Some of the experiences of His forty years imprisonment)
London
September 23rd, 1911
(London, pp. 114-121)

In an apartment in Cadogan Gardens sits a spiritually illumined Oriental, whose
recent
advent in London marks the latest junction of the East and West.
The teaching of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has already brought about the commingling of
thousands of
Englishmen and Englishwomen with Orientals from every quarter of the East. Upon
the basis
of mutual help and friendship and the worship of God, regardless of creed and
denomination,
they have joined hands with an earnestness and brotherly love contrary to the
theories of certain
cynical poets and philosophers.
Most of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s life has been spent in an Eastern prison, which
he gladly endured
rather than abjure his faith, one of the tenets of which is the absolute
equality of souls regardless
of physical differences, such as sex and colour. He recognizes no class
distinctions except those
conferred by service and the spirit of brotherly love. For this and other like
doctrines he was
held prisoner for forty years in the fortress city of Akká, in Palestine. When
I requested to talk
with him, I was told to come early, and called, according, at nine o’clock,
for an interview. It
was already mid-day to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá who rises at four, and who had seen
eighteen people
before his breakfast at half-past six.
Representatives of many languages and nationalities awaited him in the drawing
room.
We sat in a circle facing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá who inquired if there were any

questions we would
like to ask. I said my editor had sent me to ascertain something of his prison
life, and ‘Abdu’l-
Bahá at once related in a simple impersonal way one of the most remarkable
stories
conceivable.

“At nine years of age, I accompanied my father, Bahá’u’lláh, in his
journey of exile to
Baghdád, seventy of his disciples going with us. This decree of exile, after
persistent
persecution, was intended to effectively stamp out of Persia what the
authorities considered a
dangerous religion. Bahá’u’lláh, with his family and followers, was
banished, and travelled
from one place to another. When I was about twenty-five years old, we were
moved from
Constantinople to Adrianople, and from there went with a guard of soldiers to
the fortified
city of Akká, where we were imprisoned and closely guarded.”

(The First Summer)

“We had no communication whatever with the out-side world. Each loaf of bread
was cut
open by the guard to see that it contained no message. All who believed in the
Bahá’í
manifestation, children, men and women, were imprisoned with us. There were
one-hundred
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and fifty of us together in two rooms and no one was allowed to leave the place
with the
exceptions of four persons, who went to the bazaar to market each morning,
under guard. The
first summer was dreadful. Akká is a fever-ridden town. It was said that a
bird attempting to
fly over it would drop dead. The food was poor and insufficient, the water was
drawn from a
fever-infected well and the climate and conditions were such, that even the
natives of the town
fell ill. Many soldiers succumbed and eight out of ten of our guard died.
During the intense
heat, malaria, typhoid and dysentery attacked the prisoners, so that all, men,
women and
children, were sick at one time. There were no doctors, no medicines, no proper
food, and no
treatment of any kind.

“I used to make broth for the people, and as I had much practice, I make good broth,” said

‘Abdu’l-Bahá laughingly.

At this point one of the Persians explained to me that it was on account of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

wonderful patience, helpfulness, and endurance that he was always called “The Master.” One

could easily feel his mastership in his complete severance from time and place, and absolute

detachment from all that even a Turkish prison could inflict.

(Better Conditions)

“After two years of the strictest confinement permission was granted me to find a house so

that we could live outside the prison walls but still within the fortifications. Many believers

came from Persia to join us but they were not allowed to do so. Nine years passed. Sometimes

we were better off and sometimes very much worse. It depended on the governor, who, if he

happened to be a kind and lenient ruler, would grant us permission to leave the fortification,

and would allow the believers free access to visit the house; but when the governor was more

rigorous, extra guards were placed around us, and often pilgrims who had come from afar were turned away.”

I learned, afterwards, from a Persian, who, during these troublous times, was a member of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s household, that the Turkish government could not credit the fact that the

interest of the English and American visitors was purely spiritual and not political. Often these

pilgrims were refused permission to see him, and, many times, the whole trip from America

would be rewarded merely by a glimpse of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá from his prison window.

The Government thought that the tomb of the Báb, an imposing building on Mount Carmel,

was a fortification erected with the aid of American money, and that it was being armed and

garrisoned secretly. Suspicion grew with each new arrival, resulting in extra spies and guards.

(‘Abdu’l-Hamíd’s Committee)

“One year before ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd was dethroned, he sent an extremely overbearing,

treacherous and insulting committee of investigation. The chairman was one of the governor's staff, Árif Bey, and with him were three army commanders varying in rank. "Immediately upon his arrival, Árif Bey proceeded to denounce me and tried to get proof strong enough to warrant sending me to Fizán, or throwing me into the sea. Fizán is a caravan station on the boundary of Tripoli where there are no houses and no water. It is a month's journey by camel route from Akká.

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"The committee twice sent for me to hear what I had to say in my own defence and twice I

sent back word: 'I know your purpose, I have nothing to say. '

"This so infuriated Árif Bey that he declared he would return to

Constantinople and bring

back an order from the Sultán to have me hanged at the gate of Akká. He and his committee

set sail with their report containing the following accusations:

—'Abdu'l-Bahá is establishing

a new nation of which he is to be the king; 'Abdu'l-Bahá is uplifting the banner of a new

religion; 'Abdu'l-Bahá has built or caused to be built fortifications in

Haifa, a neighbouring

village, and is buying up all the surrounding lands. '

"About this time an Italian ship appeared in the harbour sent by order of the Italian Consul.

It had been planned that I was to escape on it by night. The Bahá'ís in Akká implored me to go

but I sent this message to the captain: 'The Báb did not run away:

Bahá'u'lláh did not run away;

I shall not run away, so the ship sailed away after waiting three days and three nights.

"It was while the Sultán's committee of investigation was homeward bound that the first

shell was dropped into 'Abdu'l-Hamíd's camp and the first gun of freedom was fired into the

home of despotism. That was God's gun," said 'Abdu'l-Bahá, with one of his wonderful smiles.

"When the committee reached the Turkish capital, they had more urgent things to think of.

The city was in a state of uproar and rebellion, and the committee, as members of the

government staff, were delegated to investigate the insurrection. Meanwhile the people were

establishing a constitutional government and ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd was given no chance to act.”

(The Release)

“With the advent of the Young Turks’ supremacy, realized through the Society of Union and Progress, all the political prisoners of the Ottoman Empire were set free. Events took the chains from my neck and placed them about Hamíd’s; ‘Abdu’l-Bahá came out of prison and ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd went in!”

“What became of the committee?” asked someone, breaking the deep silence that followed

the recital of this thrilling page of history. “Árif Bey,” continued ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “was shot with

three bullets, the general was exiled, the next in rank died, and the third ran away to Cairo,

where he sought and received help from the Bahá’ís.”

“Will you tell us how you felt while in prison and how you regard your freedom?” I asked.

“We are glad that you are free.”

“Thank you,” he said graciously, and continuing—

“Freedom is not a matter of place. It is a condition. I was thankful for the prison, and the

lack of liberty was very pleasing to me, for those days were passed in the path of service, under

the utmost difficulties and trials, bearing fruits and results.

“Unless one accepts dire vicissitudes, he will not attain. To me prison is freedom, troubles

rest me, death is life, and to be despised is honour. Therefore, I was happy all that time in

prison. When one is released from the prison of self, that is indeed release, for that is the greater

prison. When this release takes place, then one cannot be outwardly imprisoned. When they

put my feet in stocks, I would say to the guard, ‘You cannot imprison me, for here I have light

and air and bread and water. There will come a time when my body will be in the ground, and

I shall have neither light nor air nor food nor water, but even then I shall not be imprisoned. ’

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The afflictions which come to humanity sometimes tend to centre the consciousness upon the limitations, and this is a veritable prison. Release comes by making of the

will a Door through
which the confirmations of the Spirit come.”
This sounded so like the old theology that the modern in me rose doubting if
the discipline
could be compensated for by the effort. “What do you mean by the
confirmations of the Spirit?”
“The confirmations of the Spirit are all those powers and gifts which some
are born with
(and which men sometimes call genius), but for which others have to strive with
infinite pains.
They come to that man or woman who accepts his life with radiant
acquiescence.”
Radiant acquiescence—that was the quality with which we all suddenly seemed
inspired as
‘Abdu’l-Bahá bade us good-bye.
It was a remarkable experience, hearing one who had passed along the prison
path for
forty years declare “There is no prison but the prison self;” and it drove
conviction to one’s
mind as this white-robed messenger from the East pointed the way out,—not by
the path called
“Renunciation,” but “Unattachment;” Radiant Acquiescence—the Shining
Pathway out of the
“greater prison of self” as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá so beautifully terms those
bars that keep us from our
fulfillment.
Isabel Fraser.

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Farewell Reception

Passmore Edwards’ Settlement

London

September 29th, 1911

(London, pp. 1-2)

O Noble Friends and seekers for the Kingdom of God! About sixty years ago in
the time
when the fire of war was blazing among the nations of the world, and bloodshed
was considered
an honour to mankind; in a time when the carnage of thousands stained the
earth; when children

were rendered fatherless; when fathers were without sons and mothers were spent
 with
 weeping; when the darkness of inter-racial hatred and animosity seemed to
 envelope mankind
 and blot out the divine light; when the wafting of the holy breath of God
 seemed to be cut off—
 in that time Bahá'u'lláh rose like a shining star from the horizon of
 Persia, inspired with the
 message of Peace and of Brotherhood among men.
 He brought the light of guidance to the world; He kindled the fire of love and
 revealed the
 great reality of the True Beloved. He sought to destroy the foundations of
 religious and racial
 prejudice and of political rivalry.
 He likened the world of humanity to a tree, and all the nations to its branches
 and the people
 to its leaves, buds and fruits.
 His mission was to change ignorant fanaticism into Universal love, to establish
 in the minds
 of His followers the basis of the unity of humanity and to bring about in
 practice the equality
 of mankind. He declared that all men were equal under the mercy and bounty of
 God.
 Then was the door of the Kingdom set wide and the light of a new heaven on
 earth revealed
 unto seeing eyes.
 Yet the whole Bahá'u'lláh's life was spent in the midst of great trial
 and cruel tyranny. In
 Persia He was thrown into prison, put into chains, and lived constantly under
 the menace of the
 sword. He was scorned and scourged.
 When He was about thirty years old He was exiled to Baghdád, and from Baghdád
 to
 Constantinople, and from there to Adrianople and lastly to the prison of Akká.
 Yet under chains and from His cell He succeeded in spreading His cause, and
 uplifting the
 banner of the oneness of humanity.
 Now, God be praised, we see the light of Love shining in the East and in the
 West; and the
 tent of fellowship is raised in the midst of all the peoples for the drawing
 together of all hearts
 and souls.
 The call of the Kingdom has been sounded, and the annunciation of the world's
 need for
 Universal Peace has enlightened the world's conscience.
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My hope is that through the zeal and ardour of the pure of heart, the darkness of hatred and difference will be entirely abolished, and the light of love and unity shall shine; this world shall become a new world; things material shall become the mirror of the divine; human hearts shall meet and embrace each other; the whole world become as a man's native country and the different races be counted as one race. Then disputes and differences will vanish, and the Divine Beloved be revealed on this earth. As the East and the West are illumined by one sun, so all races, nations, and creeds shall be seen as the servants of the One God. The whole earth is one home, and all peoples, did they but know it, are bathed in the oneness of God's mercy. God created all. He gives sustenance to all. He guides and trains all under the shadow of his bounty. We must follow the example God Himself gives us, and do away with all disputations and quarrels. Praise be to God! the signs of friendship are appearing, and as a proof of this I, today, coming from the East, have met in this London of the West with extreme kindness, regard and love, and I am deeply thankful and happy. I shall never forget this time I am spending with you. Forty years I endured in a Turkish prison. Then in 1908 the Young Turks "Committee of Union and Progress" shook the gates of despotism and set all prisoners free, myself among them. I pray that blessing may be upon all who work for Union and Progress. In the future untrue reports will be spread regarding Bahá'u'lláh in order to hinder the spread of Truth. I tell you this, that you may be awake and prepared. I leave you with prayer that all the beauty of the Kingdom may be yours. In deep regret at our separation, I bid you good-bye.

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A Message from 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Written for The Christian Commonwealth and published September 29th, 1911
(London, pp. 42-43)

God sends Prophets for the education of the people and the progress of mankind.
Each such

Manifestation of God has raised humanity. They serve the whole world by the
bounty of God.

The sure proof that they are the Manifestations of God is in the education and
progress of the
people. The Jews were in the lowest condition of ignorance, and captives under
Pharaoh when

Moses appeared and raised them to a high state of civilization. Thus was the
reign of Solomon

brought about and science and art were made known to mankind. Even Greek
philosophers

became students of Solomon's teaching. Thus was Moses proved to be a Prophet.
After the lapse of time the Israelites deteriorated, and became subject to the
Romans and

the Greeks. Then the brilliant Star of Jesus rose from the horizon upon the
Israelites,

brightening the world, until all sects and creeds and nations were taught the
beauty of unity.

There cannot be any better proof than this that Jesus was the Word of God.

So it was with the Arabian nations who, being uncivilized, were oppressed by
the Persian

and Greek governments. When the Light of Muhammad shone forth all Arabia was
brightened.

These oppressed and degraded peoples became enlightened and cultured; so much
so, indeed,

that other nations imbibed Arabian civilization from Arabia. This was the proof
of

Muhammad's divine mission.

All the teaching of the Prophets is one; one faith; one Divine light shining
throughout the

world. Now, under the banner of the oneness of humanity all people of all
creeds should turn

away from prejudice and become friends and believers in all the Prophets. As
Christians believe

in Moses, so the Jews should believe in Jesus. As the Muhammadans believe in
Christ and

Moses, so likewise the Jews and the Christians should believe in Muhammad.

Then all disputes

would disappear, all then would be united. Bahá'u'lláh came for this
purpose. He has made the

three religions one. He has uplifted the standard of the oneness of faith and
the honour of

humanity in the centre of the world. Today we must gather round it, and try

with heart and soul
to bring about the union of mankind.
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Discourse of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá given at the Theosophical Head Quarters
 London
 September 30th, 1911
 (London, pp. 27-30)

O Respected Assembly! O friends of Truth! The inherent nature of fire is to
 burn, the
 inherent nature of electricity is to give light, the inherent nature of the sun
 is to shine, and the
 inherent nature of the organic earth is the power of growth.
 There is no separation between a thing and its inherent qualities.
 It is the inherent nature of things on this earth to change, thus we see around
 us the change
 of the seasons. Every spring is followed by a summer and every autumn brings a
 winter—every
 day a night and every evening a morning. There is a sequence in all things.
 Thus when hatred and animosity, fighting, slaughtering, and great coldness of
 heart were
 governing this world, and darkness had overcome the nations, Bahá’u’lláh,
 like a bright star,
 rose from the horizon of Persia and shone with the great Light of Guidance,
 giving heavenly
 radiance and establishing the new Teaching.
 He declared the most human virtues; He manifested the Spiritual powers, and put
 them into
 practice in the world around Him.

Firstly: He lays stress on the search for Truth. This is most important, because the people are too easily led by tradition. It is because of this that they are often antagonistic to each other, and dispute with one another. But the manifesting of Truth discovers the darkness and becomes the cause of Oneness of faith and belief: because Truth cannot be two! That is not possible.

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Secondly: Bahá'u'lláh taught the Oneness of humanity; that is to say, all the children of men are under the mercy of the Great God. They are the sons of one God; they are trained by God. He has placed the crown of humanity on the head of every one of the servants of God. Therefore all nations and peoples must consider themselves brethren. They are all descendants from Adam. They are the branches, leaves, flowers and fruits of One Tree. They are pearls from one shell. But the children of men are in need of education and civilization, and they require to be polished, till they become bright and shining. Man and woman both should be educated equally and equally regarded. It is racial, patriotic, religious and class prejudice, that has been the cause of the destruction of Humanity.

Thirdly: Bahá'u'lláh taught, that Religion is the chief foundation of Love and Unity and the cause of Oneness. If a religion become the cause of hatred and disharmony, it would be better that it should not exist. To be without such a religion is better than to be with it.

Fourthly: Religion and Science are inter-twined with each other and cannot be separated. These are the two wings with which humanity must fly. One wing is not enough. Every religion which does not concern itself with Science is mere tradition, and that is not the essential. Therefore science, education and civilization are most important necessities for the full religious life.

Fifthly: The Reality of the divine Religions is one, because the Reality is one and cannot be two. All the prophets are united in their message, and unshaken. They are like the sun; in

different seasons they ascend from different rising points on the horizon.

Therefore every

ancient prophet gave the glad tidings of the future, and every future has accepted the past.

Sixthly: Equality and Brotherhood must be established among all members of mankind.

This is according to Justice. The general rights of mankind must be guarded and preserved.

All men must be treated equally. This is inherent in the very nature of humanity.

Seventhly: The arrangements of the circumstances of the people must be such that poverty

shall disappear, and that every one as far as possible, according to his position and rank, shall

be comfortable. Whilst the nobles and others in high rank are in easy circumstances, the poor

also should be able to get their daily food and not be brought to the extremities of hunger.

Eighthly: Bahá'u'lláh declared the coming of the Most Great Peace. All the nations and

peoples will come under the shadow of the Tent of the Great Peace and Harmony—that is to

say, by general election a Great Board of Arbitration shall be established, to settle all

differences and quarrels between the Powers; so that disputes shall not end in war.

Ninthly: Bahá'u'lláh taught that hearts must receive the Bounty of the Holy Spirit, so that

Spiritual civilization may be established. For material civilization is not adequate for the needs

of mankind and cannot be the cause of its happiness. Material civilization is like the body and

spiritual civilization is like the soul. Body without soul cannot live.

This is a short summary of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. To establish this Bahá'u'lláh

underwent great difficulties and hardships. He was in constant confinement and He suffered

great persecution. But in the fortress (Akká) He reared a spiritual palace and from the darkness

of His prison He sent out a great light to the world.

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It is the ardent desire of the Bahá'ís to put these teachings into common practice: and they

will strive with soul and heart to give up their lives for this purpose, until the heavenly light

brightens the whole world of humanity.

I am very happy that I have been able to talk with you in this gathering: and hope that this

deep consciousness of mine is acceptable to you.

I pray for you, that you may succeed in your aspirations and that the bounties of the

Kingdom may be yours.

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Discourse to an assembly of Theosophists

London

September, 1911

(London, pp. 58-59)

These are wonderful days! We see an Eastern guest received with love and courtesy in the

West. I have been drawn here, in spite of indisposition, by the magnet of your love and

sympathy.

Some years ago an Ambassador was sent from Persia to London where he stayed five years.

(His name was ‘Abdu’l Hasan Khán). When he returned to Persia they asked him to tell them

about the English people. He answered: “I do not know the English people, although I have

been in London for years I have only met the people of the Court.” This man was a great man

in Persia, and was sent to England by princes, and yet he did not know the people, although he

had lived among them five years. Now, I—long a prisoner, come to England for the first time,

and although my visit is so short, I have already met many dear friends, and I can say I know

the people. Those I have met are true souls working for peace and unity.

—Think what a

difference there is between this time we are living in now, and seventy years ago! Think of the

progress! the progress towards unity and peace.

It is God’s will that the differences between nations should disappear. Those who help on

the cause of unity are doing God’s work. Unity is the Divine Bounty for this luminous century.

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London

September, 1911

(London, pp. 51-113)

(The Arrival in London)

The evening of his arrival in London, Monday, September 4th, 1911,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

Heaven has blessed this day. It was said that London should be a place for a great proclamation of the Faith. I was tired when I went on board the steamer, but when I reached London and beheld the faces of the friends my fatigue left me. Your great love refreshes me. I am very pleased with the English friends.

The feeling that existed between the East and the West is changing in the Light of

Bahá’u’lláh’s teaching. It used to be such that if an Occidental drank from the cup of an Oriental the cup would be considered polluted and would be broken. Now when a Western Bahá’í dines with an Eastern Bahá’í the vessels and the plates that he has used are kept apart and revered in his memory. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá then gave this historic instance of wonderful brotherly love:

One day some soldiers came to the house of a Bahá’í and demanded that one of the guests should be given up for execution, according to their warrant. The host took his guest’s place and died in his stead.

(London)

The magnet of your love brought me to this country. My hope is that the Divine Light may shine here, and that the Heavenly Star of Bahá’u’lláh may strengthen you, so that you may be the cause of the oneness of humanity, that you may help to make the darkness of superstition and prejudice disappear and unite all creeds and nations.

This is a brilliant century. Eyes are now open to the beauty of the oneness of humanity, of love and of brotherhood. The darkness of suppression will disappear and the light of unity will shine. We cannot bring love and unity to pass merely by talking of it.

Knowledge is not enough.

Wealth, science, education are good, we know: but we must also work and study to bring to maturity the fruit of knowledge.

Knowledge is the first step; resolve, the second step; action, its fulfillment, is the third step.

To construct a building one must first of all make a plan, then one must have the power

(money), then one can build. A society of Unity is formed, that is good—but meetings and

discussions are not enough. In Egypt these meetings take place but there is only talk and no result. These meetings here in London are good, the knowledge and the intention are good, but how can there be a result without action? Today the force for Unity is the Holy Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh. He manifested this spirit of Unity. Bahá'u'lláh brings East and West together. Go back, search history, you will not find a precedent for this.
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(Differences)

God has created the world as one—the boundaries are marked out by man. God has not divided the lands, but each man has his house and meadow; horses and dogs do not divide the fields into parts. That is why Bahá'u'lláh says: “Let not a man glory in that he loves his country, but that he loves his kind.” All are of one family, one race; all are human beings. Differences as to the partition of lands should not be the cause of separation among the people. One of the great reasons of separation is colour. Look how this prejudice has power in America, for instance. See how they hate one another! Animals do not quarrel because of their colour! Surely man who is so much higher in creation, should not be lower than the animals. Think over this. What ignorance exists! White doves do not quarrel with blue doves because of their colour, but white men fight with dark-coloured men. This racial prejudice is the worst of all. The Old Testament says that God created man like unto His own image; in the Qur'an it says: “There is no difference in the Creation of God!” Think well, God has created all, cares for all, and all are under His protection. The policy of God is better than our policy. We are not as wise as God!

(Religion)

To most men who have not heard the message of this teaching, religion seems an outward form, a pretence, merely a seal of respectability. Some priests are in holy office for no other

reason than to gain their living. They themselves do not believe in the religion they pretend to teach. Would these men lay down their lives for their faith? Ask a Christian of this kind to deny Christ in order to save his life, and he will do it. Ask a Bahá'í to deny any of the great Prophets, to deny his faith or to deny Moses, Muhammad or Christ, and he will say: I would rather die. So a Muhammadan Bahá'í is a better Christian than many so called Christians. A Bahá'í denies no religion; he accepts the Truth in all, and would die to uphold it. He loves all men as his brothers, of whatever class, of whatever race or nationality, of whatever creed or colour, whether good or bad, rich or poor, beautiful or hideous. He commits no violence; if he is struck he does not return the blow. He calls nothing bad, following the example of the Lord Bahá'u'lláh. As a safeguard against intemperance he does not drink wine or spirits. Bahá'u'lláh has said it is not good for a sane man to take that which will destroy his health and sense. The religion of God has two aspects in this world. The spiritual (the real) and the formal (the outward). The formal side changes, as man changes from age to age. The spiritual side which is the Truth, never changes. The Prophets and Manifestations of God bring always the same teaching; at first men cling to the Truth but after a time they disfigure it. The Truth is distorted by man-made outward forms and material laws. The veil of substance and worldliness is drawn across the reality of Truth. As Moses and Jesus brought their Message to the people, so Bahá'u'lláh brings the same Message.

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Each time God sends a Great One to us we are given new life, but the Truth each Manifestation brings is the same. The Truth never changes but man's vision changes. It is dulled and confused by the complication of outward forms. The Truth is easy to understand although the outward forms in which it is expressed bewilder the intelligence. As men grow they see the futility of man-made forms

and despise them. Therefore many leave the churches, because the latter often emphasize the external only.

(Prejudices)

The Universal Races Congress was good, for it was intended for the furtherance and

progress of unity among all nations and a better international understanding.

The purpose was

good. The causes of dispute among different nations are always due to one of the following

classes of prejudice: racial, lingual, theological, personal, and prejudices of custom and

tradition. It requires a universal active force to overcome these differences.

A small disease

needs a small remedy, but a disease which pervades the whole body needs a very strong

remedy. A small lamp may light a room, a larger would light a house, a larger still might shine

through the city, but the sun is needed to light the whole world.

The differences in language cause disunion between nations. There must be one universal

language. The diversity in Faiths is also a cause of separation. The true foundation of all faiths

must be established, the outer differences abolished. There must be a Oneness of Faith. To end

all these differences is a very hard task. The whole world is sick, and needs the power of the

Great Healer.

These meetings teach us that Unity is good, and that suppression (slavery under the yoke

of tradition and prejudice) is the cause of disunion. To know this is not enough. All knowledge

is good, but it can bear no fruit except by action. It is well to know that riches are good, but

that knowledge will not make a man rich; he must work, he must put his knowledge into

practice. We hope the people realize and know that unity is good, and we also hope that they

will not be content to stand still in that knowledge. Do not only say that Unity, Love and

Brotherhood are good; you must work for their realization.

The Czar of Russia suggested the Hague Peace Conference and proposed a decrease in

armament for all nations. In this Conference it was proved that Peace was beneficial to all

countries, and that war destroyed trade, etc. The Czar's words were admirable

though after the
 conference was over he himself was the first to declare war (against Japan).
 Knowledge is not enough; we hope by the Love of God we shall put it into
 practice. A
 spiritual universal Force is needed for this. Meetings are good for engendering
 spiritual force.
 To know that it is possible to reach a state of perfection, is good; to march
 forward on the path
 is better. We know that to help the poor and to be merciful is good and pleases
 God, but
 knowledge alone does not feed the starving man, nor can the poor be warmed by
 knowledge or
 words in the bitter winter; we must give the practical help of Loving-kindness.
 What of the Peace Congress?
 It resembles many drunkards gathered together to protest against the drinking
 of alcohol.
 They say drink is horrible and they straightway go out from the house to drink
 again.
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(Theosophy)

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was asked if he recognized the good which the
 Theosophical Society
 has done. He replied:
 I know it; I think a great deal of it. I know that their desire is to serve
 mankind. I thank this
 noble Society in the name of all Bahá’ís and for myself. I hope that by
 God’s help these friends
 will succeed in bringing about love and unity. It is a great work and needs the
 effort of all the
 servants of God!

(Peace)

During the last six thousand years nations have hated one another, it is now
 time to stop.
 War must cease. Let us be united and love one another and await the result. We
 know the
 effects of war are bad. So let us try, as an experiment, peace, and if the
 results of peace are bad,
 then we can choose if it would be better to go back to the old state of war!
 Let us in any case
 make the experiment. If we see that unity brings Light we shall continue it.
 For six thousand
 years we have been walking on the left-hand path; let us walk on the right-hand
 path now. We
 have passed many centuries in darkness, let us advance towards the light.

Question. —(It was remarked, Theosophy teaches that truth in all the religions is the same):

Does the task of unifying all religions have ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s sympathy?

Answer. —Surely.

Question. —Can ‘Abdu’l-Bahá suggest any lines on which it could best be worked out?

Answer. —Search for truth. Seek the realities in all religions. Put aside all superstitions.

Many of us do not realize the Reality of all Religions.

(Divine Manifestations)

Question. —What is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s teaching concerning the different Divine manifestations?

Answer. —The Reality of all is One. Truth is one. Religions are like the branches of one

Tree. One branch is high, one is low and one in the centre, yet all draw their life from the one

stem. One branch bears fruit and others are not laden so abundantly. All the Prophets are lights,

they only differ in degree; they shine like brilliant heavenly bodies, each have their appointed

place and time of ascension. Some are like lamps, some like the moon, some like distant stars,

and a few are like the sun, shining from one end of the earth to the other. All have the same

Light to give, yet they are different in degree.

(Buddhism)

Some referred to the teaching of Buddha. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: The real teaching of Buddha

is the same as the teaching of Jesus Christ. The teachings of all the Prophets are the same in

character. Now men have changed the teaching. If you look at the present practice of the

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Buddhist religion, you will see that there is little of the Reality left. Many worship idols

although their teaching forbids it.

Buddha had disciples and he wished to send them out into the world to teach, so he asked

them questions to see if they were prepared as he would have them be. “When you go to the

East and to the West,” said the Buddha, “and the people shut their doors to you and refuse to

“speak to you, what will you do?”—The disciples answered and said: “We shall be very thankful that they do us no harm.”—“Then if they do you harm and mock, what will you do?”—“We shall be very thankful that they do not give us worse treatment.”—“If they throw you into prison?”—“We shall still be grateful that they do not kill us.”—“What if they were to kill you?” the Master asked for the last time. “Still,” answered the disciples, “we will be thankful, for they cause us to be martyrs. What more glorious fate is there than this, to die for the glory of God?” And the Buddha said: “Well done!” The teaching of Buddha was like a young and beautiful child, and now it has become as an old and decrepit man. Like the aged man it cannot see, it cannot hear, it cannot remember anything. Why go so far back? Consider the laws of the Old Testament: the Jews do not follow Moses as their example nor keep his commands. So it is with many other religions. How can we get the power to follow the right path? By putting the teaching into practice power will be given. You know which path to follow: you cannot be mistaken, for there’s a great distinction between God and evil, between Light and darkness, Truth and falsehood, Love and hatred, Generosity and meanness, Education and ignorance, Faith in God and superstition, good Laws and unjust laws.

(Faith)

How can one increase in faith? You must strive. A child does not know, in learning he obtains knowledge. search for Truth. There are three kinds of Faith: first, that which is from tradition and birth. For example: a child is born of Muhammadan parents, he is a Muhammadan. This faith is weak traditional faith: second, that which comes from Knowledge, and is the faith of understanding. This is good, but there is a better, the faith of practice. This is real faith. We hear there is an invention, we believe it is good; then we come and see it. We hear that there is wealth, we see it; we work hard for it, and become rich ourselves and so help others. We know and we see the Light, we go close to it, are warmed by it, and reflect its rays on

others; this is real faith, and thus we receive power to become the eternal sons of God.

(Healing)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: Disease is of two kinds: material and spiritual. Take for instance, a cut hand; if you pray for the cut to be healed and do not stop its bleeding, you will not do much good; a material remedy is needed. ?????? ?????? ???? ??????????

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Sometimes if the nervous system is paralyzed through fear, a spiritual remedy is necessary.

Madness, incurable otherwise, can be cured through prayer. It often happens that sorrow makes one ill, this can be cured by spiritual means.

(Philanthropic Societies)

Someone asked if the Humanitarian Society was good. —Yes all societies, all organizations, working for the betterment of the human race are good, very good. All who work for their brothers and sisters have Bahá’u’lláh’s blessing. They will surely succeed.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: It makes me happy to see all the believers in London. You are all, of every race and creed, members of one family. The teaching of Bahá’u’lláh constrains you to realize your brotherhood to one another.

(Man’s Comprehension of God and of Higher Worlds)

To man, the Essence of God is incomprehensible, so also are the worlds beyond this, and their condition. It is given to man to obtain knowledge, to attain to great spiritual perfection, to discover hidden truths and to manifest even the attributes of God; but still man cannot comprehend the Essence of God. Where the ever-widening circle of man’s knowledge meets the spiritual world a Manifestation of God is sent to mirror forth His splendour.

(Divine Manifestations)

Is the Divine Manifestation, God? Yes, and yet not in Essence. A Divine Manifestation is as a mirror reflecting the light of the Sun. The light is the same and yet the mirror is not the Sun. All the Manifestations of God

bring the same Light; they only differ in degree, not in reality. The Truth is one. The light is the same though the lamps may be different; we must look at the Light not at the Lamp. If we accept the Light in one, we must accept the Light in all; all agree, because all are the same. The teaching is ever the same, it is only the outward forms that change. The Manifestations of God are as the heavenly bodies. All have their appointed place and time of ascension, but the Light they give is the same. if one wishes to look for the sun rising, one does not look always at the same point because that point changes with the seasons. When one sees the sun rise further in the north one recognizes it, though it has risen at a different point.

(Notes of a conversation with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá)

A COLOURED man from South Africa who was visiting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, said that even now no white people really cared very much for the black man. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replies: Compare the present time and the feeling towards the coloured people now, with the state of feeling two or three hundred years ago, and see how much better it is at present. In a short time the relationship between the coloured and white people will still

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further improve, and by and by no difference will be felt between them. White doves and purple doves exist, but both kinds are doves. Bahá’u’lláh once compared the coloured people to the black pupil of the eye surrounded by the white. In this black pupil you see the reflection of that which is before it, and through it the light of the Spirit shines forth. In the sight of God colour makes no difference at all, He looks at the hearts of men. That which God desires from men is the heart. A black man with a good character is far superior to a white man with a character that is less good.

(Ideals of East and West)

One of the organizers of the Races Congress present spoke of the Western ideals of

Bahá'u'lláh as differing from those of former prophets which were tinged with the ideas and civilization of the East. He then asked whether Bahá'u'lláh had made a special study of Western writings, and founded his teachings in accordance with them. 'Abdu'l-Bahá laughed heartily, and said that the books of Bahá'u'lláh, written and printed sixty years ago, contained the ideals now so familiar to the West, but, at that time, they had not been printed or thought of in the West. Besides, he continued, supposing that a very advanced thinker from the West had gone to visit Bahá'u'lláh and to teach Him, would the name of such a great man and the fact of his visit have been unknown and unrecorded? No! In former days, in the time of the Buddha and Zoroaster, civilization in Asia and in the East was very much higher than in the West and ideas and thoughts of the Eastern peoples were much in advance of, and nearer to the thoughts of God than those of the West. But since that time superstitions had crept into the religion and ideals of the East, and from many differing causes the ideals and characters of the Eastern peoples had gone down and down, lower and lower, while the Western peoples had been constantly advancing and struggling towards the Light. Consequently, in these days, the civilization of the West was much higher than that of the East, and the ideas and thoughts of the people of the West were much nearer to the thought of God than those of the East. Therefore, the ideals of Bahá'u'lláh had been more quickly realized in the West. 'Abdu'l-Bahá showed further how Bahá'u'lláh had exactly described in one of his books what has since been carried out in the International Council of Arbitration, describing its various functions, some of which have not yet been realized and he ('Abdu'l-Bahá) would describe them to us now, so that when they were fulfilled, as they would be in the near future, we might know that they had been prophesied by Bahá'u'lláh. War was the greatest calamity that could overtake the nations, because the people usually employed in agriculture, trades, commerce, and other useful arts, were taken away from their various occupations and turned into soldiers, so that there was great waste and

loss, in addition
to the destruction and carnage of war.
Bahá'u'lláh had said that the functions of the International Court would
be to settle disputes
that arose from time to time between the nations; to define the exact
boundaries of the different
countries, and to decide what number of soldiers and guns should be maintained
by each nation,
according to its population, in order to preserve internal order. For instance,
one country might
have ten thousand soldiers, another twenty thousand, another fifteen thousand,
and so on, in
accordance with the size and population of the nation; also if any people
rebelled against the
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decision of the Court and rejected it, the Court would empower the others to
join their forces
and to endorse their decision, if need be, by united action.
We had not seen any of these things actualized as yet, but we should do so in
the future.

(Science and Faith)

The gentleman then put a question which he said he considered of very great
importance in
connection with a religious movement, claiming to be universal. What position
he asked, if
any, did Bahá'u'lláh given to the modern ideas and conceptions of Science
in his teachings.
The whole structure of modern civilization is based upon the results and the
knowledge
obtained through laborious and patient observation of facts collected by men of
Science: in
some cases through hundreds of years of painstaking investigation. To make his
meaning
clearer, he instanced the ethic, and the moral teachings of the Chinese
philosophers, than which
he could conceive nothing higher. However, these teachings had very little
effect outside of
China, for the reason he considered, that they were not primarily based on the
teachings of
Science.
‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied that a very great importance was given to Science and
knowledge in
the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, who wrote that, if a man educated the
children of the poor, who

could not themselves afford to do so, it was, in the sight of God, as if he had educated the Son of God.

If any religion rejected Science and knowledge, that religion was false.

Science and

Religion should go forward together; indeed, they should be like two fingers of one hand.

Bahá'u'lláh had also in His writings given a most important place to Art, and the practice

of skilled trades. He had stated that the practice of an Art or Trade in the true spirit of service

was identical with the worship of God.

A gentleman connected with the work of a Settlement then asked what was the best method

of raising up and civilizing the very lowest and most degraded and ignorant of the people and

would their education come about gradually through the enlightenment of the Spirit, or was

there any special means we could adopt to further this end?

'Abdu'l-Bahá replied that the best way was to give them spiritual teachings and

enlightenment. He also remarked that the way to broaden the outlook of the very narrowhearted and prejudiced, and to make them listen to a wider teaching, was by showing towards

them the greatest kindness and love. The example of our lives was of more value than words.

(Converse with Departed Persons)

The question was asked if it were possible to establish communication with the dead, and

whether it was wise or advisable to attend séances or to engage in table-turning, spirit-rapping, etc.

The Master said these rappings, etc. , were all material things, and of the body. What is

needed is to rise above the material to the realms of the purely Spiritual.

Table-turning and

such like were material, a natural result, and not spiritual.

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But it was possible to communicate with the dead through the condition of the character

and the heart.

(Are Superstitions Useful)

A lady enquired whether some superstitions might not be good for ignorant

people, who, if
they were without them might perhaps be without beliefs of any kind?
'Abdu'l-Bahá replied that superstitions were of two kinds; those that were
harmful and
dangerous, and those that were harmless and produced certain good effects.
For example, there were some poor people who believed that misfortunes and
punishments
were caused by a Great Angel with a sword in his hand, who struck down those
who stole, and
committed murder and crimes.
They thought the flashes of lightning were the weapons of this angel, and that
if they did
wrong they would be struck by lightning. This belief caused them to refrain
from evil actions.
The Chinese held a superstition that if they burn certain pieces of paper this
will drive the
devils away; they sometimes burnt these pieces of paper on board ships when
they were
travelling in order to drive away devils, and by so doing they set fire to the
ships and destroyed
many lives. This was a type of dangerous and harmful superstition.

(The Life After Death)

Mrs. S. asked some questions with reference to the conditions of existence in
the next
world, and the life after death; she said that having recently lost a very near
relative, she had
given much thought to this subject. Many thought that re-union with those we
had loved, and
who had passed on to the future life, would only take place after a long period
of time had
elapsed. She wished to know whether one would be re-united with those who had
gone before
immediately after death.
'Abdu'l-Bahá answered that this would depend upon the respective stations
of the two. If
both had the same degree of development, they would be re-united immediately
after death.
The questioner then said, how could this state of development be acquired?
'Abdu'l-Bahá
replied, by unceasing effort, striving to do right, and to attain spiritual
qualities.
The questioner remarked that many differing opinions were held as to the
conditions of the
future life. Some thought that all would have exactly the same perfections and
virtues; that all
would be equal and alike.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said there would be variety, and differing degrees of attainment, as in this world.

The question was then asked as to how it would be possible with no material bodies or environment to recognize different entities and characters, when all would be in the same conditions and on the same plane of existence.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said if several people look into a mirror at the same moment, they behold all the different personalities, their characteristics and movements; the glass of the mirror into which they look is one. In your mind you have a variety of thoughts, but all these thoughts are
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separate and distinct. Also you may perhaps have hundreds of friends; but when you call them before your memory you do not confuse them one with another: each one is separate and distinct, having their own individualities and characteristics.

Replying to another questioner, he said that when two people, husband and wife for instance, have been completely united in this life their souls being as one soul, then after one of them has passed away, this union of heart and soul would remain unbroken.

(Spiritual Relationship)

In the evening of September 28th, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was with a number of assembled guests.

He said all of you here are sisters. Bodily relationships may pass; even two sisters may be inimical to each other, but the spiritual relationship is eternal, and brings about mutual love and service.

Be always kind to everyone and a refuge for those who are without shelter.

Be daughters to those who are older than you.

Be sisters to those who are of your own age.

Be mothers to those who are younger than yourselves.

Be nurses to the sick, treasurers for the poor, and supply heavenly food to the hungry.

A Persian doctor from Qazvín said this was a great work of God that the East and the West

had become so united, and we must always thank God that the Bahá’í cause had produced such

great harmony and union between us. The result of this visit of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the West would
be very great.

(A Bahá’í Wedding)

QUITE an oriental note was struck toward the end of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s
London visit, by the
marriage of a young Persian couple who had sought his presence for the
ceremony, the bride
journeying from Baghdad accompanied by her uncle in order to meet her fiancé
here and be
married before ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s departure. The bride’s father and
grandfather had been
followers of Bahá’u’lláh during the time of his banishment.
We hesitate to alter the bridegroom’s description of the service and
therefore print it in his
own simple and beautiful language. It will serve to show a side not touched on
elsewhere, and
without which no idea of his visit is complete. We refer to the attitude of
reverence with which
people from the East who came to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá regard their great
teacher. They invariably
rise and stand with bowed heads whenever he enters the room.

Mírzá Dáwúd writes: —

On Sunday morning, the 1st of October, 1911, A. D. , equal to the 9th Tishri
5972 (Hebrew
Era), Regina Núr Mahal Khánúm, and Mírzá Yuhanna Dáwúd were admitted into
the holy
presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: may my life be a sacrifice to Him!
After receiving us, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, “You are very welcome and it
makes me happy to
see you here in London.”

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Looking at me he said, “Never have I united anyone in marriage before, except
my own
daughters, but as I love you much, and you have rendered a great service to the
Kingdom of
Abhá, both in this country and in other lands, I will perform your marriage
ceremony today. It
is my hope that you may both continue in the blessed path of service.”
Then, first, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá took Núr Mahal Khánúm into the next room and
said to her, “Do
you love Mírzá Yuhanna Dáwúd with all your heart and soul?” She answered,
“Yes, I do.”
Then ‘Abdu’l-Bahá called me to him and put a similar question, that is to
say, “Do you love

Núr Mahal Khánúm with all your heart and soul?" I answered "Yes, I do."
We re-entered the
room together and 'Abdu'l-Bahá took the right hand of the bride and gave
it into that of the
bridegroom and asked us to say after him, "We do all to please God."
We all sat down and 'Abdu'l-Bahá continued; "Marriage is a holy
institution and much
encouraged in this blessed cause. Now you two are no longer two, but one.
Bahá'u'lláh's wish
is that all men be of one mind and consider themselves of one great household,
that the mind
of mankind be not divided against itself.
"It is my wish and hope that you may be blessed in your life. May God help
you to render
great service to the kingdom of Abhá and may you become a means of its
advancement.
"May joy be increased to you as the years go by, and may you become thriving
trees bearing
delicious and fragrant fruits which are the blessings in the path of
service."
When we came out, all the assembled friends both of Persia and London
congratulated us
on the great honour that had been bestowed upon us, and we were invited to dine
by the kind
hostess.
After a little while we gathered around the table with him. During the meal one
of the
friends asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá how he enjoyed his stay in London, and what he
thought of the
English people. I acted as interpreter. 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied: "I have
enjoyed London very
much and the bright faces of the friends have delighted my heart. I was drawn
here by their
unity and love. In the world of existence there is no more powerful magnet than
the magnet of
love. These few days will pass away, but their import shall be remembered by
God's friends in
all ages and in all lands.
There are living nations and dead nations. Syria lost its civilization through
lethargy of
spirit. The English nation is a living one, and when in this spiritual
springtime the divine truth
come forth with renewed vitality, the English will be like fruitful trees, and
the Holy Spirit will
enable them to flourish in abundance. Then will they gain not only materially,
but in that which
is far more important, spiritual progress, which will enable them to render a

greater service to
the world of humanity.”

Another asked why the teachings of all religions are expressed largely by
parables and
metaphors and not in the plain language of the people.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied: —“Divine things are too deep to be expressed by
common words.

The heavenly teachings are expressed in parable in order to be understood and
preserved for

ages to come. When the spiritually minded dive deeply into the ocean of their
meaning they

bring to the surface the pearls of their inner significance. There is no
greater pleasure than to

study God’s Word with a spiritual mind.”

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“The object of God’s teaching to man is that man may know himself in order
to comprehend

the greatness of God. The Word of God is for agreement and concord. If you go
to Persia where

the friends of Abhá are many, you will at once realize the unifying force of
God’s work. They

are doing their utmost to strengthen this bond of amity. There, people of
different nationalities

gather in one meeting and chant the divine tablets with one accord. It might be
supposed that

they were all brethren. We do not consider anyone a stranger, for it is said by
Bahá’u’lláh ‘Ye

are all the rays of one sun; the fruits of one tree; and the leaves of one
branch. ’ We desire the

true brotherhood of humanity. This shall be so, and it has already begun.

Praise to be God, the

Helper, the Pardoner!”

(The visit to Bristol)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spent the week end of September 23rd to 25th, at the Clifton
Guest House at

Clifton, Bristol.

On the first afternoon, while driving, he expressed much interest in rural
England,

marvelling at the century-old trees, and the vivid green of the woods and
downs, so unlike the

arid East. “Though it is autumn it seems like spring,” he said. The houses
with their little plots

of ground, suggested a quotation which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave from
Bahá’u’lláh’s writings in

which the latter alludes to each family having a house with a piece of land.
'Abdu'l-Bahá likened the country to the soul and the city to the body of man, saying, "The body without the soul cannot live. It is good," he remarked, "to live under the sky, in the sunshine and fresh air."
Observing a young woman who rode by on horseback with her hair flying free and several who bicycled past on their bicycles unattended, he said, "This is the age of woman. She should receive the same education as her brother and enjoy the same privilege; for all souls are equal before God. Sex, in its relation to the exigencies of the physical plane, has no connection with the Spirit. In this age of spiritual awakening, the world has entered upon the path of progress into the arena of development, where the power of the spirit surpasses that of the body. Soon the spirit will have dominion over the world of humanity."
In the evening greetings were cabled to the Bahá'ís of Tíhrán informing them of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence in Bristol. He sent his love and wished them to know that he was well and happy with the Clifton friends. This was sent in reply to a cablegram previously received from Tíhrán congratulating the people of the Guest House on his prospective visit.
Later on a general reception was held, ninety people coming to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá who spoke to them with impressive earnestness.
'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "You are very welcome. I have come far to see you. I praise God that after forty years of waiting I am permitted at last to come and bring my message. This is an assembly full of spirituality. Those who are present have turned their hearts towards God. They are looking and longing for glad tidings. We have gathered here by the power of the Spirit, therefore our hearts are stirred with thanksgiving. 'Send out Thy Light and Thy Truth O God: Let them lead us to the Holy Mountains!' May we be refreshed by the holy springs that are renewing the life of the world! As day follows night, and after sunset comes the dawn, so Jesus Christ appeared on the horizon of this world like a Sun of Truth; even so when the people—after forgetting the teachings of Christ and His example of love to all

humanity—had again
grown tired of material things, a heavenly Star shone once more in Persia, a
new illumination
appeared and now a great light is spreading throughout all lands.
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“Men keep their possessions for their own enjoyment and do not share
sufficiently with
others the bounty received from God. Spring is thus changed into the winter of
selfishness and
egotism. Jesus Christ said ‘Ye must be born again’ so that divine Life may
spring anew within
you. Be kind to all around and serve one another; love to be just and true in
all your dealings;
pray always and so live your life that sorrow cannot touch you. Look upon the
people of your
own race and those of other races as members of one organism; sons of the same
Father; let it
be known by your behaviour that you are indeed the people of God. Then wars and
disputes
shall cease and over the world will spread the Most Great Peace.”
After ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had retired Tamaddun’ul-Mulk and Mr. W. Tudor Pole
gave short
addresses in which references were made to the martyrdom of the faithful in
Persia, special
mention being made of the eminent poetess Qurratu’l-‘Ayn.
The next day was a bright Sunday and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went out with his
friends driving and
walking on the downs. Afterwards he gathered the servants of the house
together, spoke of the
dignity of labour and thanked them for their service, giving to each some
remembrance of his
visit. He went over the Guest house and blessed it as a centre for pilgrims
from every part of
the world, and said it would become indeed a House of Rest.
On the morning of the third day, a Canon of the Anglican Church met him at
breakfast. The
conversation turned on the reluctance of the rich to part with their
possessions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,
quoting the saying of Jesus, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter
into the Kingdom of
Heaven.” He remarked that only when the true seeker finds that attachments to
the material are
keeping him from his spiritual heritage, will he gladly enter the way of
renunciation. Then will
the rich man joyfully share his worldly possessions with the needy.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá contrasted
the unpretentious hospitality before him with the costly banquets of the
wealthy, who too often
sit at their feasts forgetting the hungry multitudes.
He urged his hearers to spread the light in their own homes so that finally it
would
illuminate the whole community.
‘Abdu’l-Bahá then returned to London. It was the earnest wish of those who
had the
privilege of meeting him that his followers in other lands should know how much
the Clifton
people appreciated his visit and realized his spiritual power and love.
Thomas Pole.

(At Byfleet)

ON the afternoon of September 9th, a number of working women of the Passmore
Edwards’
Settlement, who were spending their holidays with Miss Schepel and Miss Buckton
at Vanners,
in Byfleet, a village some twenty miles out of London, had the great privilege
of meeting
‘Abdu’l-Bahá. They wrote a short record of his sayings to keep for
themselves. The following
is an extract: —
We gathered round him in a circle, and he made us sit beside him in the window
seat. One
of the members, who was ill, had a specially beautiful greeting from him.
‘Abdu’l-Bahá began
by saying, as he seated himself: “Are you happy?” and our faces must have
shown him that we
were. He then said: “I love you all, you are the children of the Kingdom, and
you are accepted
of God. Though you may be poor here, you are rich in the treasures of the
Kingdom. I am the
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Servant of the poor. Remember how His Holiness Jesus said: ‘Blessed are the
poor!’ If all the
queens of the earth were gathered here, I could not be more glad!”
‘Abdu’l-Bahá knew that we had a treasury box from which we try to help
people less
fortunate than ourselves. Presently he rose, and said: “You are dear to me. I
want to do
something for you! I cannot cook for you (he had previously seen us busy in the
kitchen) but
here is something for your fund.” He went round the circle to each, with a

beautiful smile,
shaking hands with all, and giving the Bahá'í greeting:
“Alláh'u'Abhá!”

Later on he walked in the village, and many poor children came to him, and mothers with sick babies and men out of work. He spoke to them all, through an interpreter. At tea-time other friends joined us. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá liked the cottage garden at Vanners, the little orchard and the roses. He said: “This is like a Persian garden. The air is very pure.”

On leaving for London he presented every one with a purple heartsease from the garden, and said again and again: “Good-bye” in English.

On the 28th September, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá again visited Vanners, the little farmhouse on the old royal manor that dates back to the time of Edward II. He motored down from London and stayed over night, returning on the evening of the second day.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was much struck during the drive by two detachments of Boy Scouts tramping the road. When told of the Scouts’ motto, “Be Prepared,” and that an act of kindness each day is one of their laws and that some of these boys had put out a fire and assisted at a recent railway accident, he said. “This makes me very happy.”

Arriving at Vanners, he found a large, strangely mixed crowd, assembled about the gate to welcome him, from the quite poor to the wealthy who had motored over from their country places. A great number followed him and as many as could do so pressed into the garden and sat down around him. The silence was most impressive. The same attention and eagerness to hear was noticed among the people each time ‘Abdu’l-Bahá appeared in the village.

After expressing his joy at being with them, he began to speak to the little group in answer to a question about the elaborate civilization of the West.

(The Captivity of Man)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: —“Luxuries cut off the freedom of communication. One who is imprisoned by desires is always unhappy; the children of the Kingdom have unchained themselves from their desires. Break all fetters and seek for spiritual joy and enlightenment; then, though you walk on this earth, you will perceive yourselves to be within

the divine
horizon. To man alone is this possible. When we look about us we see every
other creature
captive to his environment.
“The bird is a captive in the air and the fish a captive in the sea. Man
alone stands apart and
says to the elements, I will make you my servants! I can govern you! He takes
electricity, and
through his ingenuity imprisons it and makes of it a wonderful power for
lighting, and a means
of communication to a distance of thousands of miles. But man himself may
become a captive
to the things he has invented. His true second birth occurs when he is freed
from all material
things: for he only is free who is not a captive to his desires. He has then as
Jesus has said,
become captive to the Holy Spirit.”

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(The Power of God)

A friend asked ‘Abdu’l-Bahá how far the individual could attain to that
Christ
consciousness in himself of which St. Paul speaks as our hope of Glory.
‘Abdu’l-Bahá turned with a look of great joy and said with an impressive
gesture: “The
bounty and power of God is limitless for each human soul. Consider what was the
quickenings
power of the Christ when He was on earth. Look at His disciples! They were poor
and
uncultured men. Out of the rough fisherman He made the great Peter, and out of
the poor village
girl of Magdala He made one who is a power in all the world today. Many queens
have reigned
who are remembered by their dates in history, and nothing more is known of
them. But Mary
the Magdalene is greater than them all. It was she whose love strengthened the
disciples when
their faith was failing. What she did for the world cannot be measured. See
what a divine power
was enkindled in her by the power of God!”

(Inspired Messengers)

When asked if it would be always necessary for prophets to come from time to
time—
“would not the world in the course of events through progress reach to a full
realization of

God?”—‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied: “Mankind needs a universal motive power to quicken it. The inspired messenger who is directly assisted by the power of God brings about universal results.

Bahá’u’lláh rose as a light in Persia and now that light is going out to the whole world.”

“Is this what is meant by the Second Coming of Christ?” “Christ is an Expression of the Divine Reality, the Single Essence and Heavenly Entity, which hath no beginning or ending. It has appearance, arising, and manifestation and setting in each one of the Cycles.”

Those who have been with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá notice how, often, after speaking earnestly with people, he will suddenly turn and walk away to be alone. At such times no one follows him.

On this occasion, when he finished speaking and went out through the orchard gate into the village, all were struck with his free and wonderful walk which has been described by one of our American friends as that of a shepherd or a king.

As he passed along the ragged children clustered about him by dozens, the boys saluting

him as they had been taught in school, showing how instinctively they felt the greatness of his

presence. Most noticeable was the silence of even the roughest men when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

appeared. One poor tramp exclaimed “He is a good man,” and added, “Ay, he’s suffered!”

He took particular interest in the sick, crippled and poorly nourished children. Mothers

carrying their little ones followed him, and a friend explained that this great visitor had come

over the seas from the Holy Land where Jesus was born.

All day long people of every condition gathered about the gate for a chance of seeing him,

and more than sixty drove or cycled to Vanners to see him, many wishing to question him on

some special subject. Among them were the clergy of several denominations, a head master of

a boys’ public school, a member of Parliament, a doctor, a famous political writer, the vicechancellor of a University, several journalists, a well known poet, and a magistrate from London.

He will long be remembered as he sat in the bow window in the afternoon sunshine, his

arm round a very ragged but very happy little boy, who had come to ask

‘Abdu’l-Bahá for
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sixpence for his money box and for his invalid mother, whilst round him in the room were gathered men and women discussing Education, Socialism, the first Reform Bill, and the relation of submarines and wireless telegraphy to the new era on which man is entering. During the evening a young betrothed couple in the village, who had read some of the Bahá’í books, begged permission to come to him. They entered shyly, the man, led by the girl. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rose to greet them, and made them take a place in the circle. He talked earnestly to them upon the sacredness of marriage, the beauty of a real union, and the importance of the little child and its education. Before they left he blessed them, and touched their hair and foreheads with a Persian perfume.

(Education)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá laid great stress on Education. He said “The girl’s education is of more importance today than the boy’s, for she is the mother of the future race. It is the duty of all to look after the children. Those without children should, if possible, make themselves responsible for the education of a child.” The condition of the destitute in the country villages as well as in London impressed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá greatly. In an earnest talk with the Rector of a Parish, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “I find England awake; there is spiritual life here. But your poor are so very poor! This should not be. On the one hand you have wealth, and great luxury; on the other hand men and women are living in the extremities of hunger and want. This great contrast of life is one of the blots on the civilization of this enlightened age. “You must turn attention more earnestly to the betterment of the conditions of the poor. Do not be satisfied until each one with whom you are concerned is to you as a member of your family. Regard each one either as a father, or as a brother, or as a sister, or as a mother, or as a

child. If you can attain to this, your difficulties will vanish, you will know what to do. This is the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh."

(The Change of Heart)

To one who spoke of the people's desire to possess the land, and of the strong under-current of rebellion on the part of the labouring classes, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said: "Fighting, and the employment of force, even for the right cause, will not bring about good results. The oppressed who have right on their side, must not take that right by force; the evil would continue. Hearts must be changed. The rich must wish to give! Life in man should be like a flame, warming all with whom it comes into contact. The spiritually awakened are like to bright torches in the sight of God, they give light and comfort to their fellows." When asked if he did not find the manners of the English rude and awkward, compared with those of the East, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said he had not felt this. As a nation increases in spirituality, the the manners become different.

(Christ and Bahá'u'lláh)

A friend asked how the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh contrasted with the teachings of Jesus Christ. "The teachings are the same," declared 'Abdu'l-Bahá; "It is the same foundation and

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the same temple. Truth is one, and without division. The teachings of Jesus are in a concentrated form. Men do not agree to this day as to the meaning of many of His sayings. His teachings are as a flower in the bud. Today, the bud is unfolding into a flower! Bahá'u'lláh has expanded and fulfilled the teachings, and has applied them in detail to the whole world.

"There are no solitaries and no hermits among the Bahá'ís. Man must work with his fellows.

Everyone should have some trade, or art or profession, be he rich or poor, and with this he must serve humanity. This service is acceptable as the highest form of worship."

(Art)

A painter asked: "Is art a worthy vocation?" 'Abdu'l-Bahá turning to her impressively,
said: "Art is worship."
An actor mentioned the drama, and its influence. "The drama is of the utmost importance."
said 'Abdu'l-Bahá. "It has been a great educational power in the past; it will be so again." He
described how as a young boy he witnessed the Mystery Play of 'Alí's Betrayal and Passion,
and how it affected him so deeply that he wept and could not sleep for many nights.

(Symbols)

Someone wished to know if it were a good custom to wear a symbol, as, for instance, a
cross. He said: "You wear the cross for remembrance, it concentrates your thoughts; it has no
magical power. Bahá'ís often wear a stone with the greatest name engraved on it: there is no
magical influence in the stone; it is a reminder, and companion. If you are about to do some
selfish or hasty action, and your glance falls on the ring on your hand, you will remember and
change your intention."

(Esperanto)

A friend enquired concerning Bahá'u'lláh's prophecy in the Words of Paradise, that a
universal language would be formed, and desired to know if Esperanto would be the language
chosen.
"The love and effort put into Esperanto will not be lost," he answered,
"but no one person
can construct a Universal Language. It must be made by a Council representing all countries,
and must contain words from different languages. It will be governed by the simplest rules, and
there will be no exceptions; neither will there be gender, nor extra and silent letters. Everything
indicated will have but one name. In Arabic there are hundreds of names for the camel! In the
schools of each nation the mother tongue will be taught, as well as the revised Universal
Language."

(Tolstoy)

The same questioner said: "I have read much of Tolstoy and I see a parallel

between his
 teachings and yours. In one of his books he speaks of the Enigma of Life, and
 describes how
 life is wasted in our endeavour to find the Key. But Tolstoy goes on to say:
 ‘There is a man in
 Persia who holds the secret. ’”
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“Yes,” said ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “I received a letter from Tolstoy, and in
 it he said that he wished
 to write a book upon Bahá’u’lláh.”

(Healing)

A friend interested in healing quoted the words of Bahá’u’lláh: “If one
 is sick, let him go
 to the greatest physician.”
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “There is but one power which heals—that is God.
 The state or
 condition through which the healing takes place is the confidence of the heart.
 By some this
 state is reached through pills, powders, and physicians. By others through
 hygiene, fasting, and
 prayer. By others through direct perception.”
 On another occasion ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said with regard to the same subject,
 “All that we see
 around us is the work of mind. It is mind in the herb and in the mineral that
 acts on the human
 body, and changes its condition.” The talk developed into a learned
 dissertation on the
 Philosophy of Aristotle.

(Death)

A friend asked: “How should one look forward to death?”
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá answered: “How does one look forward to the goal of any
 journey? With
 hope and with expectation. It is even so with the end of this earthly journey.
 In the next world,
 man will find himself freed from many of the disabilities under which he now
 suffers. Those
 who have passed on through death, have a sphere of their own. It is not removed
 from ours;
 their work, the work of the Kingdom, is ours; but it is sanctified from what we
 call ‘time and
 place. ’ Time with us is measured by the sun. When there is no more sunrise,
 and no more
 sunset, that kind of time does not exist for man. Those who have ascended have

different
 attributes from those who are still on earth, yet there is no real separation.
 “In prayer there is a mingling of station, a mingling of condition. Pray for
 them as they pray
 for you! When you do not know it, and are in a receptive attitude, they are
 able to make
 suggestions to you, if you are in difficulty. This sometimes happens in sleep.
 but there is no
 phenomenal intercourse! That which seems like phenomenal intercourse has
 another
 explanation.” The questioner exclaimed; “But I have heard a voice!”
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “Yes,
 that is possible; we hear voices clearly in dreams. It is not with the physical
 ear that you heard;
 the spirit of those that have passed on are freed from sense-life, and do not
 use physical means.
 It is not possible to put these great matters into human words; the language of
 man is the
 language of children, and man’s explanation often leads astray.”
 Someone present asked how it was that in prayer and meditation the heart often
 turns with
 instinctive appeal to some friend who has passed into the next life.
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá answered: “It is a law of God’s creation that the weak
 should lean upon the
 strong. Those to whom you turn may be the mediators of God’s power to you,
 even as when
 on earth. But it is the One Holy Spirit that strengthens all men.” Hereupon
 another friend
 referred to the communing of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses
 and Elijah;
 and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “The faithful are ever sustained by the presence
 of the Supreme
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Concourse. In the Supreme Concourse are Jesus, and Moses, and Elijah, and
 Bahá’u’lláh, and
 other supreme Souls: there, also, are the martyrs.”
 When asked about the individual persistence of the animal’s personality after
 death,
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “Even the most developed dog has not the immortal
 soul of the man; yet
 the dog is perfect in its own place. You do not quarrel with a rose-tree
 because it cannot sing!”

(A True Bahá’í)

A student of the modern methods of the higher criticism asked ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

if he would
do well to continue in the church with which he had been associated all his
life, and whose
language was full of meaning to him. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá answered: “You must
not dissociate
yourself from it. Know this; the Kingdom of God is not in any Society; some
seekers go through
many Societies as a traveller goes through many cities till he reach his
destination. If you
belong to a Society already do not forsake your brothers. You can be a
Bahá’í-Christian, a
Bahá’í-Freemason, a Bahá’í-Jew, a Bahá’í-Muhammadán. The number
nine contains eight, and
seven, and all the other numbers, and does not deny any of them. Do not
distress or deny anyone
by saying ‘He is not a Bahá’í!’ He will be known by his deeds. There
are no secrets among
Bahá’ís; a Bahá’í does not hide anything.”

(Spreading the Teaching)

When asked by an American friend: “Which is the best way to spread the
teaching?” he
said: “By deeds. This way is open to all, and deeds are understood by all.
Join yourselves to
those who work for the poor, the weak and the unfortunate; this is greatly to
be commended.
To teach by words requires the skill of a wise physician. He does not offer
help to those who
do not want treatment. Do not press help on those who do not need your help.
The work of
teaching is not for all.”
The following incident shows how ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s attention is given to
the smallest details
where others are involved. On hearing that some of his friends had come down
from London,
and had planned to stop the night in the village so as to be near him
‘Abdu’l-Bahá immediately
made them his guests at the Inn, and being concerned for their comfort, went
over personally
to inspect the rooms, as the nights were getting cold.

(At Brooklands)

The morning of the second day, a neighbour sent over her car asking if
‘Abdu’l-Bahá would
not like to take his guests to the Brooklands aviation ground. Though it was
windy, an aviator
was on the track, when he heard who the visitor was offered to fly for him.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left
 his friends and walked out into the middle of the course, where he stood alone
 watching the
 biplane making wide circles above him.
 A Hindu who was learning to fly at the school joined ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s
 friends and asked:
 “Who is the man in Eastern dress?”
 When told, he exclaimed, “Oh I know him very well through his teachings,
 which I have
 studied,” and immediately he went to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.
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They talked together for some time in Arabic, the young man showing great joy
 at being in
 his presence. He afterwards said that for many years he had longed for this
 moment.
 While having tea out of doors, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the young Hindu, sitting
 at the head of
 the long benches that has been arranged, talked merrily to everyone.
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá noticed two of the airmen who were wrestling on the grounds,
 and when they
 stopped, he went to them clapping his hands and crying in English, “Bravo!
 Bravo! that is good
 exercise.”
 Since his return to Egypt, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has sent a kind message of
 remembrance to the
 people of Byfleet, saying that he will never forget them.

(Days in London)

DURING ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s stay in Cadogan Gardens people arrived all day and
 every day,
 from early morning to nightfall, hoping for the privilege of seeing him and of
 hearing him talk.
 Many were the gatherings round the board of that hospitable house and hundreds
 of people
 were made welcome. Many came without introduction and no one was refused. Among
 them
 were clergy of various denominations, members of Parliament, magistrates, and
 literary men.
 The visitors were not only English; numerous Persians had journeyed from
 Tihrán and other
 Eastern cities to meet freely one who had so long been withheld from them by
 his captivity.
 The editor of a journal printed in Japan, altered his return route to Tokyo in
 order that he
 might spend the night near ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and a late visit was paid by a

Zoroastrian physician
of Bombay, on the eve of his return to India.

(Woman's Work)

'Abdu'l-Bahá's interest in women's work and progress is well known, and among the notable leaders who came to see him, may be mentioned Mrs. Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society, the organizers of various suffrage bodies, civic and philanthropic workers, the principals of several woman's colleges and lady doctors. A spirited conversation due to the visit of an ardent suffragist will be long remembered by those who had the privilege of being present. The room was full of men and women, many Persians being seated in their familiar respectful attitude on the floor. After contrasting the general position of the Eastern and the Western women, and then describing how in many respects the Eastern woman has the advantage of her Western sister, 'Abdu'l-Bahá turned and said to the visitor: "Give me your reasons for believing that woman today should have the vote?" Answer: "I believe that humanity is a divine humanity and that it must rise higher and higher; but it cannot soar with only one wing." 'Abdu'l-Bahá expressed his pleasure at this answer, and smiling, replied: "But what will you do if one wing is stronger than the other?" Answer: "Then we must strengthen the weaker wing, otherwise the flight will always be hampered."

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'Abdu'l-Bahá smiled and asked: "What will you say if I prove to you that the woman is the stronger wing?" The answer came in the same bright vein: "You will earn my eternal gratitude!" at which all the company made merry. 'Abdu'l-Bahá then continued more seriously: "The woman is indeed of the greater importance to the race. She has the greater burden and the greater work. Look at the vegetable and the animal worlds. The palm which carries the fruit is the tree most prized by the date

grower. The Arab knows that for a long journey the mare has the longest wind.
For her greater
strength and fierceness, the lioness is more feared by the hunter than the
lion.

“The mere size of the brain has been proved to be no measure of superiority.

The woman

has greater moral courage than the man; she has also special gifts which enable
her to govern

in moments of danger and crisis. If necessary she can become a warrior.”

(Zenobia)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked the company if they remembered the story of Zenobia and
of the fall

of Palmyra. He then continued as follows, using his hands in the grave and
simple

gesticulations characteristic of him:

“There was once a Governor in Ancient Syria, who had a beautiful and clever
wife. She

was so capable that when the Governor died, she was made ruler in his stead.

The land

prospered under her sway, and men acknowledged that she was a better ruler than
her husband.

After a time the legions of Rome invaded the country, but again and again she
drove them out

with great confusion. She let down her beautiful hair, and herself rode at the
head of her army,

clad in a scarlet cloak, wearing a crown of gold, and wielding a two-edged
sword in her hand.

The Roman Caesar then withdrew his strength from five other provinces in order
to subdue

her. After a long and brave fight Zenobia retired into the city of Palmyra,
which she

strengthened with wonderful fortifications, and there she endured a siege of
four months,

Caesar being unable to dislodge her. The food she had stored within the walls
at last was gone,

and the misery of her starving and plague-stricken people compelled her to
surrender.

“Caesar was full of admiration for this great woman, because of her courage
and endurance,

and he asked her to become his wife. But she refused, saying that she would
never consent to

take as her husband the enemy of her people. Thereupon, Caesar was enraged, and
determined

to humble her. He took her back with him in his ships to Rome. For his
triumphal entry a great

procession was prepared, and the streets were filled with people. In the

procession came first
 elephants, after the elephants came the camels, after the camels came the
 tigers and the
 leopards, after the leopards came the monkeys, and lastly, after the monkeys,
 walked Zenobia
 with a gold chain round her neck. Still she carried her head high, and was firm
 in her
 determination. Nothing could break her spirit! She refused to become the
 Empress of Caesar,
 so she was thrown into a dungeon, and eventually she died.”
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ceased. Silence fell upon the room, and it was some time
 before it was
 broken.

Upon another occasion ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said to a group of friends around him:
 “Taken in
 general, women today have a stronger sense of religion than men. The woman’s
 intuition is
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more correct; she is more receptive and her intelligence is quicker. The day is
 coming when
 woman will claim her superiority to man.
 “Woman has everywhere been commended for her faithfulness. After the Lord
 Christ
 suffered, the disciples wept, and gave way to their grief. They thought that
 their hopes were
 shattered, and that the Cause was utterly lost, till Mary Magdalene came to
 them and
 strengthened them saying: ‘Do you mourn the body of Our Lord or His Spirit?
 If you mourn
 His Spirit, you are mistaken, for Jesus lives! His Spirit will never leave
 us!’ Thus through her
 wisdom and encouragement the Cause of Christ was upheld for all the days to
 come. Her
 intuition enabled her to grasp the spiritual fact.”
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá then added: “But in the sight of God sex makes no
 difference. He or she is
 greatest who is nearest to God.”
 One morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, on entering the room looked about and said:
 “It is just like a
 miracle, our being here together. There is no racial, political or patriotic
 tie. We are drawn
 together by the words of Bahá’u’lláh, and in like manner will all the
 races of the earth be drawn
 together. Of this, rest assured!”

(The True Bahá’í)

“I have never heard of Bahá’u’lláh,” said a young man. I have only recently read about this movement, but I recognize the mission of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and desire to be a disciple. I have always believed in the brotherhood of man as the ultimate solvent of all our national and international difficulties.”

“It makes no difference whether you have ever heard of Bahá’u’lláh or not,” was the answer, “the man who lives the life according to the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh is already a Bahá’í. On the other hand a man may call himself a Bahá’í for fifty years and if he does not live the life he is not a Bahá’í. An ugly man may call himself handsome, but he deceives no one, and a black man may call himself white yet he deceives no one: not even himself!”

(The Coming of Peace)

“By what process” continued the questioner, “will this peace on earth be established? Will it come at once after a universal declaration of the Truth?”

“No, it will come about gradually,” said ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. “A plant that grows too quickly lasts but a short time. You are my family” and he looked about with a smile, “my new children! if a family lives in unison, great results are obtained. Widen the circle; when a city lives in intimate accord greater results will follow, and a continent that is fully united will likewise unite all other continents. Then will be the time of the greatest results, for all the inhabitants of the earth belong to one native land.”

(The Pure Heart)

When asked for a definition of a pure heart, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, “The pure heart is one that is entirely cut away from self. To be selfless is to be pure.”

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(True Spirituality)

Another morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá began at once to speak as he joined the group of seekers.

He said: “Praise be to God, this century is a glorious century; may love increase every day; may it strike fire to light the candle in the darkness, like a gift and mercy

of God.

“Know, O thou possessors of insight, that true spirituality is like unto a lake of clear water which reflects the divine. Of such was the spirituality of Jesus Christ. There is another kind which is like a mirage, seeming to be spiritual when it is not. That which is truly spiritual must light the path to God, and must result in deeds. We cannot believe the call to be spiritual when there is no result. Spirit is reality, and when the spirit in each of us seeks to join itself with the Great Reality, it must in turn give life. The Jews in the time of Christ were dead, having no real life, and Jesus actually wafted a new breath into their bodies. Behold what has been accomplished since!”

(Knowledge must result in Action)

A representative from a well known society made reference to its meetings for the purpose of a search into the reality of truth, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said “I know of your work. I think a great deal of it. I know your desire is to serve mankind, and to draw together Humanity under the banner of Oneness; but its members must beware lest it become only a discussion. Look about you. How many committees have been formed, and living for a little while, have died!

Committees and Societies can not create or give life.

“People get together and talk, but it is God’s Word alone that is powerful in its results.

Consider for a moment: you would not trade together if you had no income from it and derived

no benefit! Look at the followers of Christ. Their power was due to their ardour and their deeds.

Every effort must have its result, else it is not a true effort. You must become the means of

lighting the world of humanity. This is the infallible proof and sign. Every progress depends

on two things, knowledge and practice. First acquire knowledge, and, when conviction is reached, put it into practice.

“Once a learned man journeyed to see me to receive my blessing, saying he knew and

comprehended the Bahá’í teachings. When I told him that he could receive the blessings of the

Holy Spirit at any time when he put himself in a receptive attitude to accept

them, he said he
 was always in a receptive attitude.
 “‘What would you do,’ I asked ‘if I were to suddenly turn and strike
 you?’ He instantly
 flared with indignation and strode angrily about the room.
 “After a little I went over and took his arm, saying, ‘But you must return
 good for evil.
 Whether I honoured you or despised you, you should follow the teachings; now
 you merely
 read them. Remember the words of Jesus who said, ‘The first shall be last,
 and the last first. ’
 The man turned, shook my hand and departed, and I have since heard of many kind
 acts he has
 done.”
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When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was addressed by the name of prophet, he answered, “My
 name is
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the Servant of God” [literally, the Slave of Glory.]37

(Visit to the Lord Mayor)

At the express wish of the Lord Mayor, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá paid him a visit early
 one morning
 at the Mansion House. The talk turned chiefly upon the social conditions of
 great cities, and
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said that London was the best regulated city he had seen.
 He said: “Every man walking in the street is free as if he were in his own
 kingdom. There
 is a great spiritual light in London. The effort made for justice is real and
 in this country the
 law is the same for the poor as for the rich.” He took great interest in
 hearing of the care that is
 taken of prisoners as they leave jail, and spoke of the land being happy where
 the magistrates
 are as fathers to the people.
 Before ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left London, he went to an East-end hospital to visit
 there a young
 writer lying seriously ill, who was very anxious to see him.

(Some Personal Characteristics)

There is a note in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s character that has not been
 emphasized, and with which
 no idea of him is complete. The impressive dignity which distinguishes his
 presence and
 bearing is occasionally lighted by a delicate and tactful humour, which is as
 unaffected as it is

infectious and delightful.

On his last afternoon in London, a reporter called to ask him of his future plans, finding him surrounded by a number of friends who had called to bid him good-bye. When, in answer to this query, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá told in perfect English of his intention to visit Paris and go from there to Alexandria, the press representative evinced surprise at his faultless pronunciation.

Thereupon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá proceeded to march with a free stride up and down the flower-scented drawing room, his Oriental garb contrasting strangely with his modern surroundings; and, to the amusement of the assembly, uttered a string of elaborate English words, laughingly ending, “Very difficult English words I speak!” Then, a moment later, with the swift transition of one who knows both how to be grave and gay, he showed himself terribly in earnest. He had left orders that none were to be turned away, but one who had twice vainly sought his presence, and was, through some oversight, prevented from seeing him, wrote a heartbreaking letter showing that he thought himself rebuffed. It was translated by the Persian interpreter. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at once put on his coat, and, turning towards the door, said, with an expression of unspeakable sadness, “A friend of mine has been martyred, and I am very

Compare:—“My Name is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. My Reality is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: and Service to all the human race is my perpetual Religion... ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is the Banner of the Most Great Peace... The Herald of the Kingdom is he, so that he may awaken the people of the East and the West. The Voice of Friendship, of Truth, and of Reconciliation is he, quickening all regions. No name, no title will he ever have, except ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. This is my longing. This is my Supreme height. O ye friends of God! ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is the manifestation of Service, and not Christ. The Servant of humanity is he, and not a chief. Summon ye the people to the station of Service of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and not his Christhood.” (From a letter sent to the friends in New York, January 1st, 1907.)

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grieved. I go out alone.” and he swept down the steps. One could then see how well the title of

“Master” became him.

Another phase of his character which none who saw him could ever forget was his attitude

towards children who were brought to him. Many of his talks were given as he sat with his arm

encircling one of them.

He invariably admonished the parents thus: “Give this child a good education; make every

effort that it may have the best you can afford, so that it may be enabled to enjoy the advantage

of this glorious age. Do all you can to encourage spirituality in them.”

One who sought the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá realized the father-like sympathy which is

his. Speaking of his and others’ love for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the reply was:

“I know that you love

me, I can see that it is so. I will pray for you that you may be firm and serve in the Cause,

becoming a true servant to Bahá’u’lláh. Though I go away I will always be present with you

all.” These words were spoken with the greatest loving sympathy and understanding of

difficulties; during the moments of this little talk ‘Abdu’l-Bahá held and stroked the speaker’s

hands, and at the end took his head and with a gentle touch drew it to him kissing the forehead

of the young man, who felt that he had found a father and a friend.

(The Farewell)

On the last morning of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s stay in London many friends gathered both at

Cadogan Gardens and at the station to bid him farewell. An impressive and interesting

ceremony was performed at the house by a Zoroastrian (a physician), who sent an elaborate

telegram to some Parsis in Bombay, saying: “The Torch of Truth has been lighted again in the

East and the West by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.” Instructed by his brethren, this follower of one of the

most ancient religions in the world had brought with him a sacred oil of a rare perfume, with

which he anointed the head and breast of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, afterwards touching the hands of all

present. He then placed around ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s neck and shoulders an exquisite garland of

rose-buds and lilies.

The last glimpse which the friends had at Victoria Station was that of the venerable face

and form standing at the window, gazing out with a look of benevolence and
wonderful
tenderness on those he was leaving.

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Paris

October 16th and 17th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 15-17)

When a man turns his face to God he finds sunshine everywhere. All men are his brothers.

Let not conventionality cause you to seem cold and unsympathetic when you meet strange

people from other countries. Do not look at them as though you suspected them of being

evildoers, thieves and boors. You think it necessary to be very careful, not to expose yourselves

to the risk of making acquaintance with such, possibly, undesirable people.

I ask you not to think only of yourselves. Be kind to the strangers, whether come they from

Turkey, Japan, Persia, Russia, China or any other country in the world.

Help to make them feel at home; find out where they are staying, ask if you may render

them any service; try to make their lives a little happier.

In this way, even if, sometimes, what you at first suspected should be true, still go out of

your way to be kind to them—this kindness will help them to become better.

After all, why should any foreign people be treated as strangers?

Let those who meet you know, without your proclaiming the fact, that you are indeed a

Bahá'í.

Put into practice the Teaching of Bahá'u'lláh, that of kindness to all nations. Do not be

content with showing friendship in words alone, let your heart burn with loving kindness for

all who may cross your path.

Oh, you of the Western nations, be kind to those who come from the Eastern world to

sojourn among you. Forget your conventionality when you speak with them; they are not

accustomed to it. To Eastern peoples this demeanor seems cold, unfriendly.

Rather let your

manner be sympathetic. Let it be seen that you are filled with universal love.

When you meet

a Persian or any other stranger, speak to him as to a friend; if he seems to be lonely try to help

him, give him of your willing service; if he be sad console him, if poor succor

him, if oppressed

rescue him, if in misery comfort him. In so doing you will manifest that not in words only, but

in deed and in truth, you think of all men as your brothers.

What profit is there in agreeing that universal friendship is good, and talking

of the
solidarity of the human race as a grand ideal? Unless these thoughts are
translated into the
world of action, they are useless.
The wrong in the world continues to exist just because people talk only of
their ideals, and
do not strive to put them into practice. If actions took the place of words,
the world's misery
would very soon be changed into comfort.
A man who does great good, and talks not of it, is on the way to perfection.
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The man who has accomplished a small good and magnifies it in his speech is
worth very
little.
If I love you, I need not continually speak of my love—you will know without
any words.
On the other hand if I love you not, that also will you know—and you would
not believe me,
were I to tell you in a thousand words, that I loved you.
People make much profession of goodness, multiplying fine words because they
wish to be
thought greater and better than their fellows, seeking fame in the eyes of the
world. Those who
do most good use fewest words concerning their actions.
The children of God do the works without boasting, obeying His laws.
My hope for you is that you will ever avoid tyranny and oppression; that you
will work
without ceasing till justice reigns in every land, that you will keep your
hearts pure and your
hands free from unrighteousness.
This is what the near approach to God requires from you, and this is what I
expect of you.

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The Power and Value of True Thought Depend upon Its Manifestation in Action
Paris
October 18th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 17-19)

The reality of man is his thought, not his material body. The thought force and
the animal
force are partners. Although man is part of the animal creation, he possesses a
power of thought

superior to all other created beings.
 If a man's thought is constantly aspiring towards heavenly subjects then does he become
 saintly; if on the other hand his thought does not soar, but is directed downwards to center itself
 upon the things of this world, he grows more and more material until he arrives at a state little
 better than that of a mere animal.
 Thoughts may be divided into two classes:
 (1st) Thought that belongs to the world of thought alone.
 (2nd) Thought that expresses itself in action.
 Some men and women glory in their exalted thoughts, but if these thoughts never reach the
 plane of action they remain useless: the power of thought is dependent on its manifestation in
 deeds. A philosopher's thought may, however, in the world of progress and evolution, translate
 itself into the actions of other people, even when they themselves are unable or unwilling to
 show forth their grand ideals in their own lives. To this class the majority of philosophers
 belong, their teachings being high above their actions. This is the difference between
 philosophers who are Spiritual Teachers, and those who are mere philosophers: the Spiritual
 Teacher is the first to follow His own teaching; He brings down into the world of action His
 spiritual conceptions and ideals. His Divine thoughts are made manifest to the world. His
 thought is Himself, from which He is inseparable. When we find a philosopher emphasizing
 the importance and grandeur of justice, and then encouraging a rapacious monarch in his
 oppression and tyranny, we quickly realize that he belongs to the first class: for he thinks
 heavenly thoughts and does not practice the corresponding heavenly virtues. This state is impossible with Spiritual Philosophers, for they ever express
 their high and noble thoughts in actions.

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God Is the Great Compassionate Physician Who Alone Gives True Healing

Paris

October 19th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 19-21)

All true healing comes from God! There are two causes for sickness, one is material, the other spiritual. If the sickness is of the body, a material remedy is needed, if of the soul, a spiritual remedy.

If the heavenly benediction be upon us while we are being healed then only can we be made

whole, for medicine is but the outward and visible means through which we obtain the heavenly

healing. Unless the spirit be healed, the cure of the body is worth nothing.

All is in the hands

of God, and without Him there can be no health in us!

There have been many men who have died at last of the very disease of which they have

made a special study. Aristotle, for instance, who made a special study of the digestion, died

of a gastric malady. Avicenna was a specialist of the heart, but he died of heart disease. God is

the great compassionate Physician who alone has the power to give true healing.

All creatures are dependent upon God, however great may seem their knowledge, power

and independence.

Behold the mighty kings upon earth, for they have all the power in the world that man can

give them, and yet when death calls they must obey, even as the peasants at their gates.

Look also at the animals, how helpless they are in their apparent strength! For the elephant,

the largest of all animals, is troubled by the fly, and the lion cannot escape the irritation of the

worm. Even man, the highest form of created beings, needs many things for his very life; first

of all he needs air, and if he is deprived of it for a few minutes, he dies. He is also dependent

on water, food, clothing, warmth, and many other things. On all sides he is surrounded by

dangers and difficulties, against which his physical body alone cannot cope. If a man looks at

the world around him, he will see how all created things are dependent and are captive to the

laws of Nature.

Man alone, by his spiritual power, has been able to free himself, to soar above the world of

matter and to make it his servant.

Without the help of God man is even as the beasts that perish, but God has bestowed such wonderful power upon him that he might ever look upward, and receive, among other gifts, healing from His divine Bounty. But alas! man is not grateful for this supreme good, but sleeps the sleep of negligence, being careless of the great mercy which God has shown towards him, turning his face away from the light and going on his way in darkness.

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It is my earnest prayer, that ye be not like unto this, but rather that ye keep your faces steadfastly turned to the light, so that ye may be as lighted torches in the dark places of life.

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The Need for Union between the Peoples of the East and West

Paris

Friday, October 20th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 21-22)

In the past, as in the present, the Spiritual Sun of Truth has always shone from the horizon of the East.

Abraham appeared in the East. In the East Moses arose to lead and teach the people. On the

Eastern horizon arose the Lord Christ. Muhammad was sent to an Eastern nation. The Báb

arose in the Eastern land of Persia. Bahá'u'lláh lived and taught in the East. All the great

Spiritual Teachers arose in the Eastern world. But although the Sun of Christ dawned in the

East the radiance thereof was apparent in the West, where the effulgence of its glory was more

clearly seen. The divine light of His Teaching shone with a greater force in the Western world,

where it has made a more rapid headway than in the land of its birth.

In these days the East is in need of material progress and the West is in want of a spiritual

idea. It would be well for the West to turn to the East for illumination, and to give in exchange its scientific knowledge. There must be this interchange of gifts. The East and the West must unite to give to each other what is lacking. This union will bring about a true civilization, where the spiritual is expressed and carried out in the material. Receiving thus the one from the other the greatest harmony will prevail, all people will be united, a state of great perfection will be attained, there will be a firm cementing, and this world will become a shining mirror for the reflection of the attributes of God. We all, the Eastern with the Western nations, must strive day and night with heart and soul to achieve this high ideal, to cement the unity between all the nations of the earth. Every heart will then be refreshed, all eyes will be opened, the most wonderful power will be given, the happiness of humanity will be assured. We must pray that by the Bounty of God, Persia will be enabled to receive the material and mental civilization of the West, and by Divine Grace to give in return her spiritual light. The devoted energetic work of the united peoples, occidentals and orientals, will succeed in establishing this result, for the force of the Holy Spirit will aid them. The principles of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh should be carefully studied, one by one, until they are realized and understood by mind and heart—so will you become strong followers of the light, truly spiritual, heavenly soldiers of God, acquiring and spreading the true civilization in Persia, in Europe, and in the whole world. This will be the paradise which is to come on earth, when all mankind will be gathered together under the tent of unity in the Kingdom of Glory.

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God Comprehends All; He Cannot Be Comprehended

Paris

Friday evening, October 20th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 23-27)

Numerous meetings are held in Paris every day for different purposes, to discuss politics, commerce, education, art, science and many other subjects. All these meetings are good: but this assembly has met together to turn their faces towards God, to learn how best to work for the good of humanity, to seek how prejudices may be abolished, and the seed of love and universal brotherhood sown in the heart of man. God approves of the motive of our gathering together and gives us His blessing. In the Old Testament we read that God said, "Let us make man in Our own image." In the Gospel, Christ said, "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me."³⁸ In the Qur'án, God says, "Man is my Mystery and I am his." Bahá'u'lláh writes that God says, "Thy heart is My home; purify it for My descent. Thy spirit is My place of revelation; cleanse it for My manifestation." All these sacred words show us that man is made in God's image: yet the Essence of God is incomprehensible to the human mind, for the finite understanding cannot be applied to this infinite Mystery. God contains all: He cannot be contained. That which contains is superior to that which is contained. The whole is greater than its parts. Things which are understood by men cannot be outside their capacity for understanding, so that it is impossible for the heart of man to comprehend the nature of the Majesty of God. Our imagination can only picture that which it is able to create. The power of the understanding differs in degree in the various kingdoms of creation. The mineral, vegetable, and animal realms are each incapable of understanding any creation beyond their own. The mineral cannot imagine the growing power of the plant. The tree cannot understand the power of movement in the animal, neither can it comprehend what it would mean to possess sight, hearing or the sense of smell. These all belong to the physical creation. Man also shares in this creation; but it is not possible for either of the lower kingdoms to understand that which takes place in the mind of man. The animal cannot realize the intelligence of a human being, he only knows that which is perceived by his animal senses, he cannot imagine anything in the abstract. An animal could not learn that the

world is round, that
the earth revolves round the sun, or the construction of the electric
telegraph. These things are
only possible to man. Man is the highest work of creation, the nearest to God
of all creatures.
All superior kingdoms are incomprehensible to the inferior; how therefore could
it be
possible that the creature, man, should understand the almighty Creator of all?
That which we imagine, is not the Reality of God; He, the Unknowable, the
Unthinkable,
is far beyond the highest conception of man.

John 14:11

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All creatures that exist are dependent upon the Divine Bounty. Divine Mercy
gives life
itself. As the light of the sun shines on the whole world, so the Mercy of the
infinite God is
shed on all creatures. As the sun ripens the fruits of the earth, and gives
life and warmth to all
living beings, so shines the Sun of Truth on all souls, filling them with the
fire of Divine love
and understanding.
The superiority of man over the rest of the created world is seen again in
this, that man has
a soul in which dwells the divine spirit; the souls of the lower creatures are
inferior in their
essence.
There is no doubt then, that of all created beings man is the nearest to the
nature of God,
and therefore receives a greater gift of the Divine Bounty.
The mineral kingdom possesses the power of existing. The plant has the power of
existing
and growing. The animal, in addition to existence and growth, has the capacity
of moving
about, and the use of the faculties of the senses. In the human kingdom we find
all the attributes
of the lower worlds, with much more added thereto. Man is the sum of every
previous creation,
for he contains them all.
To man is given the special gift of the intellect by which he is able to
receive a larger share
of the light Divine. The Perfect Man is as a polished mirror reflecting the Sun
of Truth,
manifesting the attributes of God.
The Lord Christ said, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father”—God

manifested in
man.

The sun does not leave his place in the heavens and descend into the mirror,
for the actions
of ascent and descent, coming and going, do not belong to the Infinite, they
are the methods of
finite beings. In the Manifestation of God, the perfectly polished mirror,
appear the qualities of
the Divine in a form that man is capable of comprehending.

This is so simple that all can understand it, and that which we are able to
understand we
must perforce accept.

Our Father will not hold us responsible for the rejection of dogmas which we
are unable
either to believe or comprehend, for He is ever infinitely just to His
children.

This example is, however, so logical that it can easily be grasped by all minds
willing to
give it their consideration.

May each one of you become a shining lamp, of which the flame is the Love of
God. May

your hearts burn with the radiance of unity. May your eyes be illumined with
the effulgence of
the Sun of Truth!

The city of Paris is very beautiful, a more civilized and well-appointed town
in all material

development it would be impossible to find in the present world. But the
spiritual light has not

shone upon her for a long time: her spiritual progress is far behind that of
her material

civilization. A supreme power is needed to awaken her to the reality of
spiritual truth, to breathe

the breath of life into her dormant soul. You must all unite in this work of
arousing her, in

reanimating her people by the help of that Superior Force.

When an illness is slight a small remedy will suffice to heal it, but when the
slight illness

becomes a terrible disease, then a very strong remedy must be used by the
Divine Healer. There

are some trees that blossom and bear fruit in a cool climate, others there are
which need the

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hottest rays of the sun to bring them to perfect maturity. Paris is one of
those trees for whose
spiritual unfoldment a great flaming Sun of the Divine Power of God is needed.

I ask you all, each one of you, to follow well the light of truth, in the Holy Teachings, and
God will strengthen you by His Holy Spirit so that you will be enabled to overcome the
difficulties, and to destroy the prejudices which cause separation and hatred amongst the
people. Let your hearts be filled with the great love of God, let it be felt by all; for every man
is a servant of God, and all are entitled to a share of the Divine Bounty.
Especially to those whose thoughts are material and retrograde show the utmost love and
patience, thereby winning them into the unity of fellowship by the radiance of your kindness.
If you are faithful to your great work, following the Holy Sun of Truth without swerving,
then will the blessed day of universal brotherhood dawn on this beautiful city.
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I hope you are all happy and well. I am not happy, but very sad. The news of the Battle of Benghazi grieves my heart. I wonder at the human savagery that still exists in the world! How

is it possible for men to fight from morning until evening, killing each other,
shedding the blood
of their fellowmen: And for what object? To gain possession of a part of the
earth! Even the
animals, when they fight, have an immediate and more reasonable cause for their
attacks! How
terrible it is that men, who are of the higher kingdom, can descend to slaying
and bringing
misery to their fellow-beings, for the possession of a tract of land!
The highest of created beings fighting to obtain the lowest form of matter,
earth! Land
belongs not to one people, but to all people. This earth is not man's home,
but his tomb. It is
for their tombs these men are fighting. There is nothing so horrible in this
world as the tomb,
the abode of the decaying bodies of men.
However great the conqueror, however many countries he may reduce to slavery,
he is
unable to retain any part of these devastated lands but one tiny portion—his
tomb! If more land
is required for the improvement of the condition of the people, for the spread
of civilization
(for the substitution of just laws for brutal customs)—surely it would be
possible to acquire
peaceably the necessary extension of territory.
But war is made for the satisfaction of men's ambition; for the sake of
worldly gain to the
few, terrible misery is brought to numberless homes, breaking the hearts of
hundreds of men
and women!
How many widows mourn their husbands, how many stories of savage cruelty do we
hear!
How many little orphaned children are crying for their dead fathers, how many
women are
weeping for their slain sons!
There is nothing so heartbreaking and terrible as an outburst of human
savagery!
I charge you all that each one of you concentrate all the thoughts of your
heart on love and
unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A
thought of
hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love. Thoughts of war
bring
destruction to all harmony, well-being, restfulness and content.
Thoughts of love are constructive of brotherhood, peace, friendship, and
happiness.
When soldiers of the world draw their swords to kill, soldiers of God clasp

each other's
hands! So may all the savagery of man disappear by the Mercy of God, working
through the
pure in heart and the sincere of soul. Do not think the peace of the world an
ideal impossible
to attain!

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Nothing is impossible to the Divine Benevolence of God.
If you desire with all your heart, friendship with every race on earth, your
thought, spiritual
and positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing
stronger and stronger,
until it reaches the minds of all men.
Do not despair! Work steadily. Sincerity and love will conquer hate. How many
seemingly
impossible events are coming to pass in these days! Set your faces steadily
towards the Light
of the World. Show love to all; "Love is the breath of the Holy Spirit in the
heart of Man."
Take courage! God never forsakes His children who strive and work and pray! Let
your hearts
be filled with the strenuous desire that tranquillity and harmony may encircle
all this warring
world. So will success crown your efforts, and with the universal brotherhood
will come the
Kingdom of God in peace and goodwill.
In this room today are members of many races, French, American, English,
German, Italian,
brothers and sisters meeting in friendship and harmony! Let this gathering be a
foreshadowing
of what will, in very truth, take place in this world, when every child of God
realizes that they
are leaves of one tree, flowers in one garden, drops in one ocean, and sons and
daughters of
one Father, whose name is love!

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The Sun of Truth

Paris

October 22nd, 1911

(Paris, pp. 30-33)

It is a lovely day, the sun shines brightly upon the earth, giving light and warmth to all creatures. The Sun of Truth is also shining, giving light and warmth to the souls of men. The sun is the life-giver to the physical bodies of all creatures upon earth; without its warmth their growth would be stunted, their development would be arrested, they would decay and die. Even so do the souls of men need the Sun of Truth to shed its rays upon their souls, to develop them, to educate and encourage them. As the sun is to the body of a man so is the Sun of Truth to his soul.

A man may have attained to a high degree of material progress, but without the light of truth his soul is stunted and starved. Another man may have no material gifts, may be at the bottom of the social ladder, but, having received the warmth of the Sun of Truth his soul is great and his spiritual understanding is enlightened.

A Greek philosopher living in the days of the youth of Christianity, being full of the

Christian element, though not a professing Christian, wrote thus: "It is my belief that religion is the very foundation of true civilization." For, unless the moral character of a nation is

educated, as well as its brain and its talents, civilization has no sure basis.

As religion inculcates morality, it is therefore the truest philosophy, and on it is built the

only lasting civilization. As an example of this, he points out the Christians of the time whose

morality was on a very high level. The belief of this philosopher conforms to the truth, for the

civilization of Christianity was the best and most enlightened in the world.

The Christian

Teaching was illumined by the Divine Sun of Truth, therefore its followers were taught to love

all men as brothers to fear nothing, not even death! To love their neighbors as themselves, and

to forget their own selfish interests in striving for the greater good of humanity. The grand aim

of the religion of Christ was to draw the hearts of all men nearer to God's effulgent Truth.

If the followers of the Lord Christ had continued to follow out these principles with

steadfast faithfulness, there would have been no need for a renewal of the Christian Message, no necessity for a reawakening of His people, for a great and glorious civilization would now be ruling the world and the Kingdom of Heaven would have come on earth. But instead of this, what has taken place! Men turned away their faces from following the divinely illuminated precepts of their Master, and winter fell upon the hearts of men. For, as the body of man depends for life upon the rays of the sun, so cannot the celestial virtues grow in the soul without the radiance of the Sun of Truth. God leaves not His children comfortless, but, when the darkness of winter overshadows them, then again He sends His Messengers, the Prophets, with a renewal of the blessed spring. The Sun of Truth appears again on the horizon of the world shining into the eyes of those who

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sleep, awaking them to behold the glory of a new dawn. Then again will the tree of humanity blossom and bring forth the fruit of righteousness for the healing of the nations. Because man has stopped his ears to the Voice of Truth and shut his eyes to the Sacred Light, neglecting the Law of God, for this reason has the darkness of war and tumult, unrest and misery, desolated the earth. I pray that you will all strive to bring each child of God into the radiance of the Sun of Truth, that the darkness may be dissipated by the penetrating rays of its glory, and the winter's hardness and cold may be melted away by the merciful warmth of its shining.

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The Light of Truth Is Now Shining upon the East and the West

Paris

Monday, October 23rd, 1911

(Paris, pp. 33-35)

When a man has found the joy of life in one place, he returns to that same spot to find more

joy. When a man has found gold in a mine, he returns again to that mine to dig for more gold.

This shows the internal force and natural instinct which God has given to man, and the power of vital energy which is born in him.

The West has always received spiritual enlightenment from the East. The Song of the

Kingdom is first heard in the East, but in the West the greater volume of sound bursts upon the listening ears.

The Lord Christ arose as a bright Star in the Eastern sky, but the light of His Teaching

shone more perfectly in the West, where His influence has taken root more firmly and His

Cause has spread to a greater degree than in the land of His birth.

The sound of the Song of Christ has echoed over all the lands of the Western World and

entered the hearts of its people.

The people of the West are firm, and the foundations on which they build are of rock; they

are steadfast, and do not easily forget.

The West is like a strong sturdy plant; when the rain falls gently upon it to give it

nourishment and the sun shines upon it, then does it blossom in due time and bring forth good

fruit. It is a long time since the Sun of Truth mirrored forth by the Lord Christ has shed its

radiance upon the West, for the Face of God has been veiled by the sin and forgetfulness of

man. But now again, praise be to God, the Holy Spirit speaks anew to the world!

The

constellation of love and wisdom and power is once more shining from the Divine Horizon to

give joy to all who turn their faces to the Light of God. Bahá'u'lláh has rent the veil of prejudice

and superstition which was stifling the souls of men. Let us pray to God that the breath of the

Holy Spirit may again give hope and refreshment to the people, awakening in them a desire to

do the Will of God. May heart and soul be vivified in every man: so will they all rejoice in a

new birth.

Then shall humanity put on a new garment in the radiance of the love of God, and it shall

be the dawn of a new creation! Then will the Mercy of the Most Merciful be showered upon

all mankind and they will arise to a new life.

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God's Greatest Gift to Man
Paris
Thursday, October 26th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 41-43)

God's greatest gift to man is that of intellect, or understanding.
The understanding is the power by which man acquires his knowledge of the
several
kingdoms of creation, and of various stages of existence, as well as of much
which is invisible.
Possessing this gift, he is, in himself, the sum of earlier creations—he is
able to get into
touch with those kingdoms; and by this gift, he can frequently, through his
scientific
knowledge, reach out with prophetic vision.
Intellect is, in truth, the most precious gift bestowed upon man by the Divine
Bounty. Man
alone, among created beings, has this wonderful power.
All creation, preceding Man, is bound by the stern law of nature. The great
sun, the
multitudes of stars, the oceans and seas, the mountains, the rivers, the trees,
and all animals,
great or small—none is able to evade obedience to nature's law.
Man alone has freedom, and, by his understanding or intellect, has been able to
gain control
of and adapt some of those natural laws to his own needs. By the power of his
intellect he has
discovered means by which he not only traverses great continents in express
trains and crosses
vast oceans in ships, but, like the fish he travels under water in submarines,
and, imitating the
birds, he flies through the air in airships.
Man has succeeded in using electricity in several ways—for light, for motive
power, for
sending messages from one end of the earth to the other—and by electricity he
can even hear
a voice many miles away!

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By this gift of understanding or intellect he has also been able to use the rays of the sun to picture people and things, and even to capture the form of distant heavenly bodies.

We perceive in what numerous ways man has been able to bend the powers of nature to his will.

How grievous it is to see how man has used his God-given gift to frame instruments of war, for breaking the Commandment of God "Thou shalt not kill," and for defying Christ's injunction to "Love one another."

God gave this power to man that it might be used for the advancement of civilization, for the good of humanity, to increase love and concord and peace. But man prefers to use this gift to destroy instead of to build, for injustice and oppression, for hatred and discord and devastation, for the destruction of his fellow-creatures, whom Christ has commanded that he should love as himself!

I hope that you will use your understanding to promote the unity and tranquillity of mankind, to give enlightenment and civilization to the people, to produce love in all around you, and to bring about the universal peace.

Study the sciences, acquire more and more knowledge. Assuredly one may learn to the end of one's life! Use your knowledge always for the benefit of others; so may war cease on the face of this beautiful earth, and a glorious edifice of peace and concord be raised. Strive that your high ideals may be realized in the Kingdom of God on earth, as they will be in Heaven.

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??The Universal Love??

??Paris??

??October 24th, 1911??

?)?(Paris, pp. 35-39??

??An Indian said to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:??

?”?“My aim in life is to transmit as far as in me lies the message of Krishna to the world.??

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‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: The Message of Krishna is the message of love. All

God’s prophets

have brought the message of love. None has ever thought that war and hate are good. Everyone

agrees in saying that love and kindness are best.

Love manifests its reality in deeds, not only in words—these alone are without effect. In

order that love may manifest its power there must be an object, an instrument, a motive.

There are many ways of expressing the love principle; there is love for the family, for the

country, for the race, there is political enthusiasm, there is also the love of community of interest in service. These are all ways and means of showing the power of love. Without any such means, love would be unseen, unheard, unfelt—altogether unexpressed, unmanifested! Water shows its power in various ways, in quenching thirst, causing seed to grow, etc. Coal expresses one of its principles in gaslight, while one of the powers of electricity is shown in the electric light. If there were neither gas nor electricity, the nights of the world would be darkness! So, it is necessary to have an instrument, a motive for love's manifestation, an object, a mode of expression. We must find a way of spreading love among the sons of humanity. Love is unlimited, boundless, infinite! Material things are limited, circumscribed, finite. You cannot adequately express infinite love by limited means. The perfect love needs an unselfish instrument, absolutely freed from fetters of every kind. The love of family is limited; the tie of blood relationship is not the strongest bond. Frequently members of the same family disagree, and even hate each other. Patriotic love is finite; the love of one's country causing hatred of all others, is not perfect love! Compatriots also are not free from quarrels amongst themselves. The love of race is limited; there is some union here, but that is insufficient. Love must be free from boundaries! To love our own race may mean hatred of all others, and even people of the same race often dislike each other. Political love also is much bound up with hatred of one party for another; this love is very limited and uncertain. The love of community of interest in service is likewise fluctuating; frequently competitions arise, which lead to jealousy, and at length hatred replaces love. A few years ago, Turkey and Italy had a friendly political understanding; now they are at war! All these ties of love are imperfect. It is clear that limited material ties are insufficient to adequately express the universal love. The great unselfish love for humanity is bounded by none of these imperfect, semi-selfish

bonds; this is the one perfect love, possible to all mankind, and can only be achieved by the power of the Divine Spirit. No worldly power can accomplish the universal love. Let all be united in this Divine power of love! Let all strive to grow in the light of the Sun of Truth, and reflecting this luminous love on all men, may their hearts become so united that they may dwell evermore in the radiance of the limitless love.
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Remember these words which I speak unto you during the short time I am amongst you in Paris. I earnestly exhort you: let not your hearts be fettered by the material things of this world; I charge you not to lie contentedly on the beds of negligence, prisoners of matter, but to arise and free yourselves from its chains! The animal creation is captive to matter, God has given freedom to man. The animal cannot escape the law of nature, whereas man may control it, for he, containing nature, can rise above it. The power of the Holy Spirit, enlightening man's intelligence, has enabled him to discover means of bending many natural laws to his will. He flies through the air, floats on the sea, and even moves under the waters. All this proves how man's intelligence has been enabled to free him from the limitations of nature, and to solve many of her mysteries. Man, to a certain extent, has broken the chains of matter. The Holy Spirit will give to man greater powers than these, if only he will strive after the things of the spirit and endeavor to attune his heart to the Divine infinite love. When you love a member of your family or a compatriot, let it be with a ray of the Infinite Love! Let it be in God, and for God! Wherever you find the attributes of God love that person, whether he be of your family or of another. Shed the light of a boundless love on every human being whom you meet, whether of your country, your race, your political party, or of any other nation, color or shade of political opinion. Heaven will support you while you work in this

ingathering of the scattered peoples of the world beneath the shadow of the
almighty tent of
unity.

You will be servants of God, who are dwelling near to Him, His divine helpers
in the
service, ministering to all Humanity. All Humanity! Every human being! Never
forget this!

Do not say, he is an Italian, or a Frenchman, or an American, or an Englishman,
remember

only that he is a son of God, a servant of the Most High, a man! All are men!

Forget

nationalities; all are equal in the sight of God!

Remember not your own limitations; the help of God will come to you. Forget
yourself.

God's help will surely come!

When you call on the Mercy of God waiting to reinforce you, your strength will
be tenfold.

Look at me: I am so feeble, yet I have had the strength given me to come
amongst you: a

poor servant of God, who has been enabled to give you this message! I shall not
be with you

long! One must never consider one's own feebleness, it is the strength of the
Holy Spirit of

Love, which gives the power to teach. The thought of our own weakness could
only bring

despair. We must look higher than all earthly thoughts; detach ourselves from
every material

idea, crave for the things of the spirit; fix our eyes on the everlasting
bountiful Mercy of the

Almighty, who will fill our souls with the gladness of joyful service to His
command "Love

One Another."

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The Imprisonment of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris

Wednesday, October 25th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 39-41)

I regret much that I have kept you waiting this morning, but I have so much to do in a short

time for the Cause of the love of God.

You will not mind having waited a little to see me. I have waited years and years in prison,

that I might come to see you now.

Above all, God be praised, our hearts are always in unison, and with one aim are drawn to

the love of God. By the Bounty of the Kingdom our desires, our hearts, our spirits, are they not

united in one bond? Our prayers, are they not for the gathering together of all men in harmony?

Therefore are we not always together?

Yesterday evening when I came home from the house of Monsieur Dreyfus I was very tired—yet I did not sleep, I lay awake thinking.

I said, O God, Here am I in Paris! What is Paris and who am I? Never did I dream that from the darkness of my prison I should ever be able to come to you, though when they read me my sentence I did not believe in it.

They told me that ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd had ordered my everlasting imprisonment, and I said,

“This is impossible! I shall not always be a prisoner. If ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd were immortal, such a sentence might possibly be carried out. It is certain that one day I shall be free. My body may be captive for a time, but ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd has no power over my spirit—free it must remain—that can no man imprison.”

Released from my prison by the Power of God I meet here the friends of God, and I am thankful unto Him.

Let us spread the Cause of God, for which I suffered persecution.

What a privilege it is for us to meet here in freedom. How happy for us that God has so

decided that we may work together for the coming of the Kingdom!

Are you pleased to receive such a guest, freed from his prison to bring the glorious Message

to you? He who never could have thought such a meeting possible! Now by the Grace of God,

by His wonderful Power, I, who was condemned to perpetual imprisonment in a far off town

of the East, am here in Paris talking with you!

Henceforward we shall always be together, heart and soul and spirit, pressing forward in

the work till all men are gathered together under the tent of the Kingdom, singing the songs of

peace.

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The Clouds That Obscure the Sun of Truth
4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris
Morning of Friday, October 27th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 43-45)

The day is fine, the air is pure, the sun shines, no mist nor cloud obscures its radiance.
These brilliant rays penetrate into all parts of the city; so may the Sun of Truth illumine the minds of men.
Christ said, “They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven.”³⁹ Bahá’u’lláh said, “When Christ came for the first time He came upon the clouds.”⁴⁰
Christ said that He had come from the sky, from Heaven—that He came forth from God—while He was born of Mary, His Mother. But when He declared that He had come from Heaven, it is clear that He did not mean the blue firmament but that He spoke of the Heaven of the Kingdom of God, and that from this Heaven He descended upon the clouds. As clouds are obstacles to the

shining of the
 sun, so the clouds of the world of humanity hid from the eyes of men the
 radiance of the
 Divinity of Christ.
 Men said, "He is of Nazareth, born of Mary, we know Him and we know His
 brethren.
 What can He mean? What is He saying? That He came forth from God?"
 The Body of Christ was born of Mary of Nazareth, but the Spirit was of God. The
 capacities
 of His human body were limited but the strength of His spirit was vast,
 infinite, immeasurable.
 Men asked, "Why does He say He is of God?" If they had understood the
 reality of Christ,
 they would have known that the body of His humanity was a cloud that hid His
 Divinity. The
 world only saw His human form, and therefore wondered how He could have "come
 down
 from Heaven."
 Bahá'u'lláh said, "Even as the clouds hide the sun and the sky from our
 gaze, even so did
 the humanity of Christ hide from men His real Divine character."
 I hope that you will turn with unclouded eyes towards the Sun of Truth,
 beholding not the
 things of earth, lest your hearts be attracted to the worthless and passing
 pleasures of the world;

Matthew 24:30, 16:27

John 3:13

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let that Sun give you of His strength, then will not the clouds of prejudice
 veil His illumination
 from your eyes! Then will the Sun be without clouds for you.
 Breathe the air of purity. May you each and all share in the Divine Bounties of
 the Kingdom
 of Heaven. May the world be for you no obstacle hiding the truth from your
 sight, as the human
 body of Christ hid His Divinity from the people of His day. May you receive the
 clear vision
 of the Holy Spirit, so that your hearts may be illumined and able to recognize
 the Sun of Truth
 shining through all material clouds, His splendor flooding the universe.
 Let not the things of the body obscure the celestial light of the spirit, so
 that, by the Divine
 Bounty, you may enter with the children of God into His Eternal Kingdom.
 This is my prayer for you all.
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Religious Prejudices

Paris

October 27th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 45-49)

The basis of the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the Unity of Mankind, and His greatest desire was that love and goodwill should live in the heart of men. As He exhorted the people to do away with strife and discord, so I wish to explain to you the principal reason of the unrest among nations. The chief cause is the misrepresentation of religion by the religious leaders and teachers. They teach their followers to believe that their own form of religion is the only one pleasing to God, and that followers of any other persuasion are condemned by the All-Loving Father and deprived of His Mercy and Grace. Hence arise among the peoples, disapproval, contempt, disputes and hatred. If these religious prejudices could be swept away, the nations would soon enjoy peace and concord. I was once at Tiberias where the Jews have a Temple. I was staying in a house just opposite the Temple, and there I saw and heard a Rabbi speaking to his congregation of Jews, and he spoke thus: "O Jews, you are in truth the people of God! All other races and religions are of the devil. God has created you the descendants of Abraham, and He has showered His blessings upon you. Unto you God sent Moses, Jacob and Joseph, and many other great prophets. These prophets, one and all, were of your race. "It was for you that God broke the power of Pharaoh and caused the Red Sea to dry up; to you also He sent manna from above to be your food, and out of the stony rock did He give you water to quench your thirst. You are indeed the chosen people of God, you are above all the races of the earth! Therefore, all other races are abhorrent to God, and condemned by Him. In truth you will govern and subdue the world, and all men shall become your

slaves.

“Do not profane yourselves by consorting with people who are not of your own religion,
make not friends of such men.”

When the Rabbi had finished his eloquent discourse, his hearers were filled with joy and

satisfaction. It is impossible to describe to you their happiness!

Alas! It is misguided ones like these who are the cause of division and hatred upon earth.

Today there are millions of people who still worship idols, and the great religions of the world

are at war among themselves. For 1,300 years, Christians and Muslims have been quarreling,

when with very little effort their differences and disputes could be overcome and peace and

harmony could exist between them and the world could be at rest!

In the Qur’án we read that Muhammad spoke to His followers, saying:

“Why do you not believe in Christ, and in the Gospel? Why will you not accept Moses and

the Prophets, for surely the Bible is the Book of God? In truth, Moses was a sublime Prophet,

and Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit. He came to the world through the Power of God, born

of the Holy Spirit and of the blessed Virgin Mary. Mary, His mother, was a saint from Heaven.

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She passed her days in the Temple at prayer and food was sent to her from above. Her father,

Zacharias, came to her and asked her from whence the food came, and Mary made answer,

‘From on high. ’ Surely God made Mary to be exalted above all other women.”

This is what Muhammad taught His people concerning Jesus and Moses, and He reproached them for their lack of faith in these great Teachers, and taught them the lessons of

truth and tolerance. Muhammad was sent from God to work among a people as savage and

uncivilized as the wild beasts. They were quite devoid of understanding, nor had they any

feelings of love, sympathy and pity. Women were so degraded and despised that a man could

bury his daughter alive, and he had as many wives to be his slaves as he chose.

Among these half animal people Muhammad was sent with His divine Message. He taught

the people that idol worship was wrong, and that they should reverence Christ,

Moses and the
Prophets. Under His influence they became a more enlightened and civilized
people and arose
from the degraded state in which He found them. Was not this a good work, and
worthy of all
praise, respect and love?
Look at the Gospel of the Lord Christ and see how glorious it is! Yet even
today men fail
to understand its priceless beauty, and misinterpret its words of wisdom.
Christ forbade war! When the disciple Peter, thinking to defend his Lord, cut
off the ear of
the servant of the High Priest, Christ said to him: "Put up thy sword into
the sheath."⁴¹ Yet, in
spite of the direct command of the Lord they profess to serve—men still
dispute, make war,
and kill one another, and His counsels and teaching seem quite forgotten.
But do not therefore attribute to the Masters and Prophets the evil deeds of
their followers.
If the priests, teachers and people, lead lives which are contrary to the
religion they profess to
follow, is that the fault of Christ or the other Teachers?
The people of Islám were taught to realize how Jesus came from God and was
born of the
Spirit, and that He must be glorified of all men. Moses was a prophet of God,
and revealed in
His day and for the people to whom He was sent, the Book of God.
Muhammad recognized the sublime grandeur of Christ and the greatness of Moses
and the
prophets. If only the whole world would acknowledge the greatness of Muhammad
and all the
Heaven-sent Teachers, strife and discord would soon vanish from the face of the
earth, and
God's Kingdom would come among men.
The people of Islám who glorify Christ are not humiliated by so doing.
Christ was the Prophet of the Christians, Moses of the Jews—why should not
the followers
of each prophet recognize and honor the other prophets also? If men could only
learn the lesson
of mutual tolerance, understanding, and brotherly love, the unity of the world
would soon be
an established fact.
Bahá'u'lláh spent His life teaching this lesson of Love and Unity. Let us
then put away
from us all prejudice and intolerance, and strive with all our hearts and souls
to bring about
understanding and unity between Christians and Muslims.

John 18:11

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The Benefits of God to Man

4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris

October 27th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 49-51)

God alone ordereth all things and is all-powerful. Why then does He send trials to His servants?

The trials of man are of two kinds.

(a) The consequences of his own actions. If a man eats too much, he ruins his digestion; if

he takes poison he becomes ill or dies. If a person gambles he will lose his money; if he drinks

too much he will lose his equilibrium. All these sufferings are caused by the man himself, it is

quite clear therefore that certain sorrows are the result of our own deeds.

(b) Other sufferings there are, which come upon the Faithful of God. Consider the great

sorrows endured by Christ and by His apostles!

Those who suffer most, attain to the greatest perfection.

Those who declare a wish to suffer much for Christ's sake must prove their sincerity; those

who proclaim their longing to make great sacrifices can only prove their truth by their deeds.

Job proved the fidelity of his love for God by being faithful through his great adversity, as well

as during the prosperity of his life. The apostles of Christ who steadfastly bore all their trials

and sufferings—did they not prove their faithfulness? Was not their endurance the best proof?

These griefs are now ended.

Caiaphas lived a comfortable and happy life while Peter's life was full of sorrow and trial;

which of these two is the more enviable? Assuredly we should choose the present state of Peter,

for he possesses immortal life whilst Caiaphas has won eternal shame. The trials of Peter tested

his fidelity. Tests are benefits from God, for which we should thank Him. Grief and sorrow do

not come to us by chance, they are sent to us by the Divine Mercy for our own

perfecting.

While a man is happy he may forget his God; but when grief comes and sorrows overwhelm

him, then will he remember his Father who is in Heaven, and who is able to deliver him from

his humiliations.

Men who suffer not, attain no perfection. The plant most pruned by the gardeners is that

one which, when the summer comes, will have the most beautiful blossoms and the most

abundant fruit.

The laborer cuts up the earth with his plough, and from that earth comes the rich and

plentiful harvest. The more a man is chastened, the greater is the harvest of spiritual virtues

shown forth by him. A soldier is no good General until he has been in the front of the fiercest

battle and has received the deepest wounds.

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The prayer of the prophets of God has always been, and still is: Oh God, I long to lay down

my life in the path to Thee! I desire to shed my blood for Thee, and to make the supreme

sacrifice.

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Beauty and Harmony in Diversity

Paris

October 28th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 51-54)

The Creator of all is One God.

From this same God all creation sprang into existence, and He is the one goal,
towards

which everything in nature yearns. This conception was embodied in the words of
Christ, when

He said, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." Man is
the sum of

Creation, and the Perfect Man is the expression of the complete thought of the
Creator—the

Word of God.

Consider the world of created beings, how varied and diverse they are in

species, yet with
one sole origin. All the differences that appear are those of outward form and
color. This
diversity of type is apparent throughout the whole of nature.
Behold a beautiful garden full of flowers, shrubs, and trees. Each flower has a
different
charm, a peculiar beauty, its own delicious perfume and beautiful color. The
trees too, how
varied are they in size, in growth, in foliage—and what different fruits they
bear! Yet all these
flowers, shrubs and trees spring from the self-same earth, the same sun shines
upon them and
the same clouds give them rain.
So it is with humanity. It is made up of many races, and its peoples are of
different color,
white, black, yellow, brown and red—but they all come from the same God, and
all are servants
to Him. This diversity among the children of men has unhappily not the same
effect as it has
among the vegetable creation, where the spirit shown is more harmonious. Among
men exists
the diversity of animosity, and it is this that causes war and hatred among the
different nations
of the world.
Differences which are only those of blood also cause them to destroy and kill
one another.
Alas! that this should still be so. Let us look rather at the beauty in
diversity, the beauty of
harmony, and learn a lesson from the vegetable creation. If you beheld a garden
in which all
the plants were the same as to form, color and perfume, it would not seem
beautiful to you at
all, but, rather, monotonous and dull. The garden which is pleasing to the eye
and which makes
the heart glad, is the garden in which are growing side by side flowers of
every hue, form and
perfume, and the joyous contrast of color is what makes for charm and beauty.
So is it with
trees. An orchard full of fruit trees is a delight; so is a plantation planted
with many species of
shrubs. It is just the diversity and variety that constitutes its charm; each
flower, each tree, each
fruit, beside being beautiful in itself, brings out by contrast the qualities
of the others, and shows
to advantage the special loveliness of each and all.
Thus should it be among the children of men! The diversity in the human family
should be

the cause of love and harmony, as it is in music where many different notes
blend together in
the making of a perfect chord. If you meet those of different race and color
from yourself, do

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not mistrust them and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality, but
rather be glad
and show them kindness. Think of them as different colored roses growing in the
beautiful
garden of humanity, and rejoice to be among them.
Likewise, when you meet those whose opinions differ from your own, do not turn
away
your face from them. All are seeking truth, and there are many roads leading
thereto. Truth has
many aspects, but it remains always and forever one.
Do not allow difference of opinion, or diversity of thought to separate you
from your
fellowmen, or to be the cause of dispute, hatred and strife in your hearts.
Rather, search diligently for the truth and make all men your friends.
Every edifice is made of many different stones, yet each depends on the other
to such an
extent that if one were displaced the whole building would suffer; if one is
faulty the structure
is imperfect.
Bahá'u'lláh has drawn the circle of unity, He has made a design for the
uniting of all the
peoples, and for the gathering of them all under the shelter of the tent of
universal unity. This
is the work of the Divine Bounty, and we must all strive with heart and soul
until we have the
reality of unity in our midst, and as we work, so will strength be given unto
us. Leave all
thought of self, and strive only to be obedient and submissive to the Will of
God. In this way
only shall we become citizens of the Kingdom of God, and attain unto life
everlasting.

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The True Meaning of the Prophecies Concerning the Coming of Christ
Paris

October 30th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 54-57)

In the Bible there are prophecies of the coming of Christ. The Jews still await the coming of the Messiah, and pray to God day and night to hasten His advent. When Christ came they denounced and slew Him, saying: "This is not the One for whom we wait. Behold when the Messiah shall come, signs and wonders shall testify that He is in truth the Christ. We know the signs and conditions, and they have not appeared. The Messiah will arise out of an unknown city. He shall sit upon the throne of David, and behold, He shall come with a sword of steel, and with a scepter of iron shall He rule! He shall fulfill the law of the Prophets, He shall conquer the East and the West, and shall glorify His chosen people the Jews. He shall bring with Him a reign of peace, during which even the animals shall cease to be at enmity with man. For behold the wolf and the lamb shall drink from the same spring, and the lion and the doe shall lie down in the same pasture, the serpent and the mouse shall share the same nest, and all God's creatures shall be at rest." According to the Jews, Jesus the Christ fulfilled none of these conditions, for their eyes were holden and they could not see. He came from Nazareth, no unknown place. He carried no sword in His hand, nor even a stick. He did not sit upon the Throne of David, He was a poor man. He reformed the Law of Moses, and broke the Sabbath Day. He did not conquer the East and the West, but was Himself subject to the Roman Law. He did not exalt the Jews, but taught equality and brotherhood, and rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees. He brought in no reign of peace, for during His lifetime injustice and cruelty reached such a height that even He Himself fell a victim to it, and died a shameful death upon the cross. Thus the Jews thought and spoke, for they did not understand the Scriptures nor the glorious truths that were contained in them. The letter they knew by heart, but of the life-giving spirit they understood not a word. Harken, and I will show you the meaning thereof. Although He came from

Nazareth,
 which was a known place, He also came from Heaven. His body was born of Mary,
 but His
 Spirit came from Heaven. The sword He carried was the sword of His tongue, with
 which He
 divided the good from the evil, the true from the false, the faithful from the
 unfaithful, and the
 light from the darkness. His Word was indeed a sharp sword! The Throne upon
 which He sat
 is the Eternal Throne from which Christ reigns forever, a heavenly throne, not
 an earthly one,
 for the things of earth pass away but heavenly things pass not away. He
 reinterpreted and
 completed the Law of Moses and fulfilled the Law of the Prophets. His word
 conquered the
 East and the West. His Kingdom is everlasting. He exalted those Jews who
 recognized Him.
 They were men and women of humble birth, but contact with Him made them great
 and gave
 them everlasting dignity. The animals who were to live with one another
 signified the different

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sects and races, who, once having been at war, were now to dwell in love and
 charity, drinking
 together the water of life from Christ the Eternal Spring.
 Thus, all the spiritual prophecies concerning the coming of Christ were
 fulfilled, but the
 Jews shut their eyes that they should not see, and their ears that they should
 not hear, and the
 Divine Reality of Christ passed through their midst unheard, unloved and
 unrecognized.
 It is easy to read the Holy Scriptures, but it is only with a clean heart and a
 pure mind that
 one may understand their true meaning. Let us ask God's help to enable us to
 understand the
 Holy Books. Let us pray for eyes to see and ears to hear, and for hearts that
 long for peace.
 God's eternal Mercy is immeasurable. He has always chosen certain souls upon
 whom He
 has shed the Divine Bounty of His heart, whose minds He has illumined with
 celestial light, to
 whom He has revealed the sacred mysteries, and kept clear before their sight
 the Mirror of
 Truth. These are the disciples of God, and His goodness has no bounds. You who
 are servants

of the Most High may be disciples also. The treasures of God are limitless.
The Spirit breathing through the Holy Scriptures is food for all who hunger.
God Who has
given the revelation to His Prophets will surely give of His abundance daily
bread to all those
who ask Him faithfully.

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The Holy Spirit, the Intermediary Power between God and Man
4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris
October 31st, 1911
(Paris, pp. 57-59)

The Divine Reality is Unthinkable, Limitless, Eternal, Immortal and Invisible.
The world of creation is bound by natural law, finite and mortal.

The Infinite Reality cannot be said to ascend or descend. It is beyond the understanding of man, and cannot be described in terms which apply to the phenomenal sphere of the created world.

Man, then, is in extreme need of the only Power by which he is able to receive help from the Divine Reality, that Power alone bringing him into contact with the Source of all life.

An intermediary is needed to bring two extremes into relation with each other. Riches and

poverty, plenty and need: without an intermediary power there could be no relation between

these pairs of opposites.

So we can say there must be a Mediator between God and Man, and this is none other than

the Holy Spirit, which brings the created earth into relation with the “Unthinkable One,” the

Divine Reality.

The Divine Reality may be likened to the sun and the Holy Spirit to the rays of the sun. As the

rays of the sun bring the light and warmth of the sun to the earth, giving life to all created

beings, so do the “Manifestations”⁴² bring the power of the Holy Spirit from the Divine Sun of

Reality to give light and life to the souls of men.

Behold, there is an intermediary necessary between the sun and the earth; the sun does not

descend to the earth, neither does the earth ascend to the sun. This contact is made by the rays

of the sun which bring light and warmth and heat.

The Holy Spirit is the Light from the Sun of Truth bringing, by its infinite power, life and

illumination to all mankind, flooding all souls with Divine Radiance, conveying the blessings

of God’s Mercy to the whole world. The earth, without the medium of the warmth and light of

the rays of the sun, could receive no benefits from the sun.

Manifestations of God

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Likewise the Holy Spirit is the very cause of the life of man; without the Holy Spirit he

would have no intellect, he would be unable to acquire his scientific knowledge by which his

great influence over the rest of creation is gained. The illumination of the

Holy Spirit gives to
man the power of thought, and enables him to make discoveries by which he bends
the laws of
nature to his will.

The Holy Spirit it is which, through the mediation of the Prophets of God,
teaches spiritual
virtues to man and enables him to attain Eternal Life.

All these blessings are brought to man by the Holy Spirit; therefore we can
understand that

the Holy Spirit is the Intermediary between the Creator and the created. The
light and heat of

the sun cause the earth to be fruitful, and create life in all things that
grow; and the Holy Spirit
quicken the souls of men.

The two great apostles, St. Peter and St. John the Evangelist, were once
simple, humble

workmen, toiling for their daily bread. By the Power of the Holy Spirit their
souls were

illuminated, and they received the eternal blessings of the Lord Christ.

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The Two Natures in Man

Paris

November 1st, 1911

(Paris, pp. 60-62)

Today is a day of rejoicing in Paris! They are celebrating the Festival of
 "All Saints." Why
 do you think that these people were called "Saints?" The word has a very
 real meaning. A saint
 is one who leads a life of purity, one who has freed himself from all human
 weaknesses and
 imperfections.
 In man there are two natures; his spiritual or higher nature and his material
 or lower nature.
 In one he approaches God, in the other he lives for the world alone. Signs of
 both these natures
 are to be found in men. In his material aspect he expresses untruth, cruelty
 and injustice; all
 these are the outcome of his lower nature. The attributes of his Divine nature
 are shown forth
 in love, mercy, kindness, truth and justice, one and all being expressions of

his higher nature.

Every good habit, every noble quality belongs to man's spiritual nature, whereas all his

imperfections and sinful actions are born of his material nature. If a man's Divine nature

dominates his human nature, we have a saint.

Man has the power both to do good and to do evil; if his power for good predominates and

his inclinations to do wrong are conquered, then man in truth may be called a saint. But if, on

the contrary, he rejects the things of God and allows his evil passions to conquer him, then he

is no better than a mere animal.

Saints are men who have freed themselves from the world of matter and who have overcome sin. They live in the world but are not of it, their thoughts being continually in the

world of the spirit. Their lives are spent in holiness, and their deeds show forth love, justice

and godliness. They are illumined from on high; they are as bright and shining lamps in the

dark places of the earth. These are the saints of God. The apostles, who were the disciples of

Jesus Christ, were just as other men are; they, like their fellows, were attracted by the things of

the world, and each thought only of his own advantage. They knew little of justice, nor were

the Divine perfections found in their midst. But when they followed Christ and believed in

Him, their ignorance gave place to understanding, cruelty was changed to justice, falsehood to

truth, darkness into light. They had been worldly, they became spiritual and divine. They had

been children of darkness, they became sons of God, they became saints! Strive therefore to

follow in their steps, leaving all worldly things behind, and striving to attain to the Spiritual

Kingdom.

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Pray to God that He may strengthen you in divine virtue, so that you may be as angels in

the world, and beacons of light to disclose the mysteries of the Kingdom to those with

understanding hearts.

God sent His Prophets into the world to teach and enlighten man, to explain to him the

mystery of the Power of the Holy Spirit, to enable him to reflect the light,
and so in his turn, to
be the source of guidance to others. The Heavenly Books, the Bible, the
Qur'án, and the other
Holy Writings have been given by God as guides into the paths of Divine virtue,
love, justice
and peace.

Therefore I say unto you that ye should strive to follow the counsels of these
Blessed Books,
and so order your lives that ye may, following the examples set before you,
become yourselves
the saints of the Most High!

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Material and Spiritual Progress

Paris

November 2nd, 1911

(Paris, pp. 62-64)

How beautiful the weather is today, the sky is clear, the sun shines, and the heart of man is made glad thereby!
Such bright and beautiful weather gives new life and strength to man, and if he has been sick, he feels once more in his heart the joyous hope of health renewed. All these gifts of nature

concern the physical side of man, for it is only his body that can receive material benefits.

If a man is successful in his business, art, or profession he is thereby enabled to increase his physical wellbeing and to give his body the amount of ease and comfort in which it delights.

All around us today we see how man surrounds himself with every modern convenience and

luxury, and denies nothing to the physical and material side of his nature.

But, take heed, lest

in thinking too earnestly of the things of the body you forget the things of the soul: for material

advantages do not elevate the spirit of a man. Perfection in worldly things is a joy to the body

of a man but in no wise does it glorify his soul.

It may be that a man who has every material benefit, and who lives surrounded by all the

greatest comfort modern civilization can give him, is denied the all important gift of the Holy

Spirit.

It is indeed a good and praiseworthy thing to progress materially, but in so doing, let us not

neglect the more important spiritual progress, and close our eyes to the Divine light shining in

our midst.

Only by improving spiritually as well as materially can we make any real progress, and

become perfect beings. It was in order to bring this spiritual life and light into the world that

all the great Teachers have appeared. They came so that the Sun of Truth might be manifested,

and shine in the hearts of men, and that through its wondrous power men might attain unto

Everlasting Light.

When the Lord Christ came He spread the light of the Holy Spirit on all around Him, and

His disciples and all who received His illumination became enlightened, spiritual beings.

It was to manifest this light that Bahá'u'lláh was born, and came into the world. He taught

Eternal Truth to men, and shed the rays of Divine Light in all lands.

Alas! behold how man disregards this Light. He still goes on his way of darkness, and

disunity, and quarrels and fierce war are still rife.

He uses material progress to gratify his lust for war, and he makes destructive implements

and appliances to destroy his brother man.

But let us rather exert ourselves for the attainment of spiritual advantages,
for this is the
only way of true progress, that which cometh from God and is alone Godly.

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I pray for you one and all that you may receive the Bounties of the Holy
Spirit; so will you
become in truth enlightened, and progress ever onward and upward to the Kingdom
of God.

Then shall your hearts be prepared to receive the glad tidings, your eyes shall
be opened and
you will see the Glory of God; your ears shall be unstopped and you will hear
the call of the
Kingdom, and with tongue made eloquent shall you call men to the realization of
the Divine

Power and Love of God!

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The Evolution of Matter and Development of the Soul

Paris

November 3rd, 1911

(Paris, pp. 64-67)

Paris is becoming very cold, so cold that I shall soon be obliged to go away,
 but the warmth
 of your love still keeps me here. God willing, I hope to stay among you yet a
 little while; bodily

cold and heat cannot affect the spirit, for it is warmed by the fire of the
 Love of God. When we

understand this, we begin to understand something of our life in the world to
 come.

God, in His Bounty, has given us a foretaste here, has given us certain proofs
 of the

difference that exists between body, soul and spirit.

We see that cold, heat, suffering, etc. , only concern the body, they do not
 touch the spirit.

How often do we see a man, poor, sick, miserably clad, and with no means of
 support, yet

spiritually strong. Whatever his body has to suffer, his spirit is free and
 well! Again, how often

do we see a rich man, physically strong and healthy, but with a soul sick unto
 death.

It is quite apparent to the seeing mind that a man's spirit is something very different from his physical body.

The spirit is changeless, indestructible. The progress and development of the soul, the joy

and sorrow of the soul, are independent of the physical body.

If we are caused joy or pain by a friend, if a love prove true or false, it is the soul that is

affected. If our dear ones are far from us—it is the soul that grieves, and the grief or trouble of

the soul may react on the body.

Thus, when the spirit is fed with holy virtues, then is the body joyous; if the soul falls into

sin, the body is in torment!

When we find truth, constancy, fidelity, and love, we are happy; but if we meet with lying,

faithlessness, and deceit, we are miserable.

These are all things pertaining to the soul, and are not bodily ills. Thus, it is apparent that

the soul, even as the body, has its own individuality. But if the body undergoes a change, the

spirit need not be touched. When you break a glass on which the sun shines, the glass is broken,

but the sun still shines! If a cage containing a bird is destroyed, the bird is unharmed! If a lamp

is broken, the flame can still burn bright!

The same thing applies to the spirit of man. Though death destroy his body, it has no power

over his spirit—this is eternal, everlasting, both birthless and deathless.

As to the soul of man after death, it remains in the degree of purity to which it has evolved

during life in the physical body, and after it is freed from the body it remains plunged in the

ocean of God's Mercy.

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From the moment the soul leaves the body and arrives in the Heavenly World, its evolution

is spiritual, and that evolution is: The approaching unto God.

In the physical creation, evolution is from one degree of perfection to another. The mineral

passes with its mineral perfections to the vegetable; the vegetable, with its perfections, passes

to the animal world, and so on to that of humanity. This world is full of seeming contradictions;

in each of these kingdoms (mineral, vegetable and animal) life exists in its

degree; though when
compared to the life in a man, the earth appears to be dead, yet she, too,
lives and has a life of
her own. In this world things live and die, and live again in other forms of
life, but in the world
of the spirit it is quite otherwise.
The soul does not evolve from degree to degree as a law—it only evolves
nearer to God,
by the Mercy and Bounty of God.
It is my earnest prayer that we may all be in the Kingdom of God, and near Him.
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The Spiritual Meetings in Paris
November 4th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 67-68)

All over Europe today one hears of meetings and assemblies, and societies of all kinds are formed. There are those interested in commerce, science, and politics, and many others. All these are for material service, their desire being for the progress and enlightenment of the world of matter. But rarely does a breath from the spirit world breathe upon them. They seem unconscious of the Divine Voice, careless concerning the things of God. But this meeting in Paris is a truly spiritual one. The Divine Breath is poured forth in your midst, the light of the Kingdom is shining in all hearts. The Divine love of God is a power among you, and with souls athirst, ye receive the glad tidings of great joy.

You are all met here with one accord, heart drawn to heart, souls overflowing
with Divine
love, working and longing for the unity of the world.
Verily this assembly is a spiritual one! It is like unto a beautiful perfumed
garden! On it the
Heavenly Sun sheds the golden rays, and the warmth thereof penetrates and
gladdens each
waiting heart. The love of Christ, which passeth all knowledge, is among you,
the Holy Spirit
is your help.
Day by day this meeting will grow and become more powerful until gradually its
spirit will
conquer the whole world!
Try with all your hearts to be willing channels for God's Bounty. For I say
unto you that
He has chosen you to be His messengers of love throughout the world, to be His
bearers of
spiritual gifts to man, to be the means of spreading unity and concord on the
earth. Thank God
with all your hearts that such a privilege has been given unto you. For a life
devoted to praise
is not too long in which to thank God for such a favor.
Lift up your hearts above the present and look with eyes of faith into the
future! Today the
seed is sown, the grain falls upon the earth, but behold the day will come when
it shall rise a
glorious tree and the branches thereof shall be laden with fruit. Rejoice and
be glad that this
day has dawned, try to realize its power, for it is indeed wonderful! God has
crowned you with
honor and in your hearts has He set a radiant star; verily the light thereof
shall brighten the
whole world!

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The Two Kinds of Light

Paris

November 5th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 68-70)

Today the weather is gloomy and dull! In the East there is continual sunshine, the stars are never veiled, and there are very few clouds. Light always rises in the East and sends forth its radiance into the West.

There are two kinds of light. There is the visible light of the sun, by whose aid we can discern the beauties of the world around us—without this we could see nothing.

Nevertheless, though it is the function of this light to make things visible to us, it cannot give us the power to see them or to understand what their various charms may be, for this light has no intelligence, no consciousness. It is the light of the intellect which gives us knowledge and understanding, and without this light the physical eyes would be useless. This light of the intellect is the highest light that exists, for it is born of the Light Divine.

The light of the intellect enables us to understand and realize all that exists, but it is only the Divine Light that can give us sight for the invisible things, and which enables us to see truths that will only be visible to the world thousands of years hence. It was the Divine Light which enabled the prophets to see two thousand years in advance what was going to take place and today we see the realization of their vision. Thus it is this

Light which we must strive to seek, for it is greater than any other.
 It was by this Light that Moses was enabled to see and comprehend the Divine
 Appearance,
 and to hear the Heavenly Voice which spoke to Him from the Burning Bush. 43
 It is of this Light Muhammad is speaking when He says, "Alláh is the light
 of the Heavens,
 and of the Earth."
 Seek with all your hearts this Heavenly Light, so that you may be enabled to
 understand
 the realities, that you may know the secret things of God, that the hidden ways
 may be made
 plain before your eyes.
 This light may be likened unto a mirror, and as a mirror reflects all that is
 before it, so this
 Light shows to the eyes of our spirits all that exists in God's Kingdom and
 causes the realities
 of things to be made visible. By the help of this effulgent Light all the
 spiritual interpretation

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of the Holy Writings has been made plain, the hidden things of God's Universe
 have become
 manifest, and we have been enabled to comprehend the Divine purposes for man.
 I pray that God in His mercy may illumine your hearts and souls with His
 glorious Light,
 then shall each one of you shine as a radiant star in the dark places of the
 world.

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Spiritual Aspiration in the West

Paris

1911

(Paris, pp. 70-72)

You are very welcome! From Eastern lands I have come to the West to sojourn
awhile

among you. In the East it is often said that the people of the West are without
spirituality, but

I have not found it thus. Thank God, I see and feel that there is much

spiritual aspiration among
the Western peoples, and that in some cases their spiritual perception is even
keener than among
their Eastern brothers. If the teaching given in the East had been
conscientiously spread in the
West the world today would be a more enlightened place.
Although in the past all the great Spiritual Teachers have arisen in the East,
there are still
many men there who are quite devoid of spirituality. With regard to the things
of the spirit they
are as lifeless as a stone; nor do they wish to be otherwise, for they consider
that man is only a
higher form of animal and that the things of God concern him not.
But man's ambition should soar above this—he should ever look higher than
himself, ever
upward and onward, until through the Mercy of God he may come to the Kingdom of
Heaven.
Again, there are men whose eyes are only open to physical progress and to the
evolution in the
world of matter. These men prefer to study the resemblance between their own
physical body
and that of the ape, rather than to contemplate the glorious affiliation
between their spirit and
that of God. This is indeed strange, for it is only physically that man
resembles the lower
creation, with regard to his intellect he is totally unlike it.

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Man is always progressing. His circle of knowledge is ever widening, and his
mental
activity flows through many and varied channels. Look what man has accomplished
in the field
of science, consider his many discoveries and countless inventions and his
profound
understanding of natural law.
In the world of art it is just the same, and this wonderful development of
man's faculties
becomes more and more rapid as time goes on. If the discoveries, inventions and
material
accomplishments of the last fifteen hundred years could be put together, you
would see that
there has been greater advancement during the last hundred years than in the
previous fourteen
centuries. For the rapidity with which man is progressing increases century by
century.
The power of the intellect is one of God's greatest gifts to men, it is the

power that makes
him a higher creature than the animal. For whereas, century by century and age
by age man's
intelligence grows and becomes keener, that of the animal remains the same.
They are no more
intelligent today than they were a thousand years ago! Is there a greater proof
than this needed
to show man's dissimilarity to the animal creation? It is surely as clear as
day.
As for the spiritual perfections they are man's birthright and belong to him
alone of all
creation. Man is, in reality, a spiritual being, and only when he lives in the
spirit is he truly
happy. This spiritual longing and perception belongs to all men alike, and it
is my firm
conviction that the Western people possess great spiritual aspiration.
It is my fervent prayer that the star of the East will shed its brilliant rays
on the Western
world, and that the people of the West may arise in strength, earnestness, and
courage, to help
their brethren in the East.
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Lecture Given at a Studio in Paris
November 6th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 72-74)

This is in truth a Bahá'í house. Every time such a house or meeting place
is founded it
becomes one of the greatest aids to the general development of the town and
country to which
it belongs. It encourages the growth of learning and science and is known for
its intense
spirituality and for the love it spreads among the peoples.
The foundation of such a meeting-place is always followed by the greatest
prosperity. The
first Bahá'í Assembly that existed in Tihrán was singularly blessed! In
one year it had grown
so rapidly that its members had increased to nine times their original number.
Today, in faraway Persia, there are many such assemblies where the friends of
God meet together in the

fullness of joy, love and unity. They teach the Cause of God, educate the ignorant, and draw heart to heart in brotherly kindness. It is they who help the poor and needy and give to them their daily bread. They love and care for the sick and are messengers of hope and consolation to the desolate and oppressed. Oh, ye in Paris, strive that your assemblies may be like unto this, and may bear even greater fruits! Oh, friends of God! If ye will trust in the Word of God and be strong; if ye will follow the precepts of Bahá'u'lláh to tend the sick, raise the fallen, care for the poor and needy, give shelter to the destitute, protect the oppressed, comfort the sorrowful and love the world of humanity with all your hearts, then I say unto you that ere long this meeting-place will see a wonderful harvest. Day by day each member will advance and become more and more spiritual.

But ye must have a firm foundation and your aims and ambitions must be clearly understood by each member. They shall be as follows:

1. To show compassion and goodwill to all mankind.
2. To render service to humanity.
3. To endeavor to guide and enlighten those in darkness.
4. To be kind to everyone, and show forth affection to every living soul.
5. To be humble in your attitude towards God, to be constant in prayer to Him, so as to grow daily nearer to God.
6. To be so faithful and sincere in all your actions that every member may be known as embodying the qualities of honesty, love, faith, kindness, generosity, and courage. To be detached from all that is not God, attracted by the Heavenly Breath—a divine soul; so that the world may know that a Bahá'í is a perfect being.

175)1911(?

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Strive to attain this at these meetings. Then, indeed and in truth will ye, the friends of God, come together with great joy! Render help one to the other, become as one man, having reached perfect unity. I pray to God that daily ye may advance in spirituality, that God's love may be more and

more manifested in you, that the thoughts of your hearts may be purified, and
that your faces
may be ever turned towards Him. May you one and all approach to the threshold
of unity, and
enter into the Kingdom. May each of you be like unto a flaming torch, lighted
and burning
bright with the fire of the Love of God.
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Bahá'u'lláh

Paris

November 7th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 75-79)

I will speak to you today of Bahá'u'lláh. In the third year after the Báb had declared His Mission, Bahá'u'lláh, being accused by fanatical Mullás of believing in the new doctrine, was arrested and thrown into prison. The next day, however, several ministers of the Government and other influential men caused Him to be set free. Later on He was again arrested, and the priests condemned Him to death! The Governor hesitated to have this sentence carried out for fear of a revolution. The priests met together in the Mosque, before which was the place of execution. All the people of the town gathered in crowds outside the Mosque. The carpenters brought their saws and hammers, the butchers came with their knives, the

bricklayers and
 builders shouldered their spades, all these men, incited by the frenzied
 Mullás, were eager to
 share in the honor of killing Him. Inside the Mosque were assembled the doctors
 of religion.
 Bahá'u'lláh stood before them, and answered all their questions with
 great wisdom. The chief
 sage in particular, was completely silenced by Bahá'u'lláh, who refuted
 all his arguments.
 A discussion arose between two of these priests as to the meaning of some words
 in the
 writings of the Báb; accusing Him of inaccuracy, they challenged
 Bahá'u'lláh to defend Him
 if He were able. These priests were entirely humiliated, for Bahá'u'lláh
 proved before the
 whole assembly that the Báb was absolutely right, and that the accusation was
 made in
 ignorance.
 The defeated ones now put Him to the torture of the bastinado, and more
 infuriated than
 before brought Him out before the walls of the Mosque unto the place of
 execution, where the
 misguided people were awaiting His coming.
 Still the Governor feared to comply with the demand of the priests for His
 execution.
 Realizing the danger in which the dignified prisoner was placed, some men were
 sent to rescue
 Him. In this they succeeded by breaking through the wall of the Mosque and
 leading
 Bahá'u'lláh through the opening into a place of safety, but not of
 freedom; for the Governor
 shifted the responsibility from off his own shoulders by sending Him to
 Tíhrán. Here He was
 imprisoned in an underground dungeon, where the light of day was never seen. A
 heavy chain
 was placed about His neck by which He was chained to five other Bábís; these
 fetters were
 locked together by strong, very heavy bolts, and screws. His clothes were torn
 to pieces, also
 His fez. In this terrible condition He was kept for four months.
 During this time none of His friends were able to get access to Him.
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A prison official made an attempt to poison Him but, beyond causing Him great
 suffering,
 this poison had no effect.

After a time the Government liberated Him and exiled Him and His family to Baghdád, where He remained for eleven years. During this time He underwent severe persecutions, being surrounded by the watchful hatred of His enemies. He bore all evils and torments with the greatest courage and fortitude. Often when He arose in the morning, He knew not whether He would live until the sun should set. Meanwhile, each day, the priests came and questioned Him on religion and metaphysics. At length the Turkish Governor exiled Him to Constantinople, whence He was sent to Adrianople; here He stayed for five years. Eventually, He was sent to the far off prison fortress of St. Jean d'Acre. Here He was imprisoned in the military portion of the fortress and kept under the strictest surveillance. Words would fail me to tell you of the many trials He had to suffer, and all the misery He endured in that prison. Notwithstanding, it was from this prison that Bahá'u'lláh wrote to all the Monarchs of Europe, and these letters with one exception were sent through the post. The Epistle of Násiri'd-Dín Sháh was confided to a Persian Bahá'í, Mírzá Badí' Khurásání, who undertook to deliver it into the Sháh's own hands. This brave man waited in the neighborhood of Tihrán for the passing of the Sháh, who had the intention to journey by that way to his Summer Palace. The courageous messenger followed the Sháh to his Palace, and waited on the road near the entrance for several days. Always in the same place was he seen waiting on the road, until the people began to wonder why he should be there. At last the Sháh heard of him, and commanded his servants that the man should be brought before him. "Oh! servants of the Sháh, I bring a letter, which I must deliver into his own hands," Badí' said, and then Badí' said to the Sháh, "I bring you a letter from Bahá'u'lláh!" He was immediately seized and questioned by those who wished to elicit information which would help them in the further persecutions of Bahá'u'lláh. Badí' would not answer a word; then they tortured him, still he held his peace! After three days they killed him, having failed

to force him to speak! These cruel men photographed him whilst he was under torture. 44

The Sháh gave the letter from Bahá'u'lláh to the priests that they might explain it to him.

After some days these priests told the Sháh that the letter was from a political enemy. The Sháh grew angry and said, "This is no explanation. I pay you to read and answer my letters, therefore obey!"

The spirit and meaning of the Tablet to Násiri'd-Dín Sháh was, in short, this: "Now that the time has come, when the Cause of the Glory of God has appeared, I ask that I may be allowed to come to Tíhrán and answer any questions the priests may put to Me.

"I exhort you to detach yourself from the worldly magnificence of your Empire. Remember all those great kings who have lived before you—their glories have passed away!"

A certain man who was present when Badí' was told he should carry the Epistle to the Sháh saw him transfigured; he became radiant.

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The letter was written in a most beautiful manner, and continued warning the King and telling him of the future triumph of the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh, both in the Eastern and in the Western World.

The Sháh paid no attention to the warning of this letter and continued to live in the same fashion until the end.

Although Bahá'u'lláh was in prison the great Power of the Holy Spirit was with Him!

None other in prison could have been like unto Him. In spite of all the hardships He suffered, He never complained.

In the dignity of His Majesty, He always refused to see the Governor, or the influential people of the town.

Although the surveillance was unremittingly strict, He came and went as He wished! He

died in a house situated about three kilometers from St. Jean d'Acre.

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Good Ideas Must Be Carried into Action

Paris

November 8th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 79-81)

All over the world one hears beautiful sayings extolled and noble precepts
admired. All
men say they love what is good, and hate everything that is evil! Sincerity is
to be admired,
whilst lying is despicable. Faith is a virtue, and treachery is a disgrace to
humanity. It is a

blessed thing to gladden the hearts of men, and wrong to be the cause of pain.
To be kind and
merciful is right, while to hate is sinful. Justice is a noble quality and
injustice an iniquity. That
it is one's duty to be pitiful and harm no one, and to avoid jealousy and
malice at all costs.

Wisdom is the glory of man, not ignorance; light, not darkness! It is a good
thing to turn one's
face toward God, and foolishness to ignore Him. That it is our duty to guide
man upward, and
not to mislead him and be the cause of his downfall. There are many more
examples like unto
these.

But all these sayings are but words and we see very few of them carried into
the world of
action. On the contrary, we perceive that men are carried away by passion and
selfishness, each
man thinking only of what will benefit himself even if it means the ruin of his
brother. They
are all anxious to make their fortune and care little or nothing for the
welfare of others. They
are concerned about their own peace and comfort, while the condition of their
fellows troubles
them not at all.

Unhappily this is the road most men tread.

But Bahá'ís must not be thus; they must rise above this condition. Actions
must be more to
them than words. By their actions they must be merciful and not merely by their
words. They
must on all occasions confirm by their actions what they proclaim in words.
Their deeds must
prove their fidelity, and their actions must show forth Divine light.

Let your actions cry aloud to the world that you are indeed Bahá'ís, for it
is actions that
speak to the world and are the cause of the progress of humanity.

If we are true Bahá'ís speech is not needed. Our actions will help on the
world, will spread
civilization, will help the progress of science, and cause the arts to develop.

Without action

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nothing in the material world can be accomplished, neither can words unaided
advance a man
in the spiritual Kingdom. It is not through lip-service only that the elect of
God have attained
to holiness, but by patient lives of active service they have brought light

into the world.

Therefore strive that your actions day by day may be beautiful prayers. Turn towards God,

and seek always to do that which is right and noble. Enrich the poor, raise the fallen, comfort

the sorrowful, bring healing to the sick, reassure the fearful, rescue the oppressed, bring hope

to the hopeless, shelter the destitute!

This is the work of a true Bahá'í, and this is what is expected of him. If we strive to do all

this, then are we true Bahá'ís, but if we neglect it, we are not followers of the Light, and we

have no right to the name.

God, who sees all hearts, knows how far our lives are the fulfillment of our words.

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In the Gospel according to St. John, Christ has said: “Except a man be born of water and
the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.”⁴⁵ The priests have
interpreted this into
meaning that baptism is necessary for salvation. In another Gospel it is said:
“He shall baptize

you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”⁴⁶

Thus the water of baptism and the fire are one! It cannot mean that the “water” spoken of

is physical water, for it is the direct opposite of “fire,” and one destroys the other. When in the

Gospels, Christ speaks of “water,” He means that which causes life, for without water no

worldly creature can live—mineral, vegetable, animal and man, one and all, depend upon water

for their very being. Yes, the latest scientific discoveries prove to us that even mineral has some

form of life, and that it also needs water for its existence.

Water is the cause of life, and when Christ speaks of water, He is symbolizing that which

is the cause of Everlasting Life.

This life-giving water of which He speaks is like unto fire, for it is none other than the Love

of God, and this love means life to our souls.

By the fire of the Love of God the veil is burnt which separates us from the Heavenly

Realities, and with clear vision we are enabled to struggle onward and upward, ever progressing

in the paths of virtue and holiness, and becoming the means of light to the world.

There is nothing greater or more blessed than the Love of God! It gives healing to the sick,

balm to the wounded, joy and consolation to the whole world, and through it alone can man

attain Life Everlasting. The essence of all religions is the Love of God, and it is the foundation

of all the sacred teachings.

It was the Love of God that led Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that strengthened Joseph in

Egypt and gave to Moses courage and patience.

Through the Love of God, Christ was sent into the world with His inspiring example of a

perfect life of self-sacrifice and devotion, bringing to men the message of Eternal Life. It was

the Love of God that gave Muhammad power to bring the Arabs from a state of animal

degradation to a loftier state of existence.

God’s Love it was that sustained the Báb and brought Him to His supreme sacrifice, and

made His bosom the willing target for a thousand bullets.

John 3:5

Matthew 3:11

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Finally, it was the Love of God that gave to the East Bahá'u'lláh, and is now sending the

light of His teaching far into the West, and from Pole to Pole.

Thus I exhort each of you, realizing its power and beauty, to sacrifice all your thoughts,

words and actions to bring the knowledge of the Love of God into every heart.

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”?Discourse at “l’Alliance Spiritualiste?
??Salle de l’Athénée, St. Germain, Paris??
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?)?(Paris, pp. 83-88??

??I wish to express my gratitude for your hospitality, and my joy that you
are spiritually??

??minded. I am happy to be present at a gathering such as this, assembled
together to listen to a??

??Divine Message. If you could see with the eye of truth, great waves of
spirituality would be??

??visible to you in this place. The power of the Holy Spirit is here for
all. Praise be to God that??

;;?your hearts are inspired with Divine fervor! Your souls are as waves on

the sea of the spirit??

??although each individual is a distinct wave, the ocean is one, all are united in God.??

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Every heart should radiate unity, so that the Light of the one Divine Source of all may shine forth bright and luminous. We must not consider the separate waves alone, but the entire sea.

We should rise from the individual to the whole. The spirit is as one great ocean and the waves thereof are the souls of men.

We are told in the Holy Scripture that the New Jerusalem shall appear on earth. Now it is

evident that this celestial city is not built of material stones and mortar, but that it is a city not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.

This is a prophetic symbol, meaning the coming again of the Divine Teaching to enlighten

the hearts of men. It is long since this Holy Guidance has governed the lives of humanity. But

now, at last, the Holy City of the New Jerusalem has come again to the world, it has appeared

anew under an Eastern sky; from the horizon of Persia has its effulgence arisen to be a light to

lighten the whole world. We see in these days the fulfillment of the Divine Prophecy. Jerusalem

had disappeared. The heavenly city was destroyed, now it is rebuilt; it was razed to the ground,

but now its walls and pinnacles have been restored, and are towering aloft in their renewed and glorious beauty.

In the Western world material prosperity has triumphed, whilst in the East the spiritual sun

has shone forth. I am very glad to see such an assembly as this in Paris, where spiritual and

material progress are met together in unity.

Man—the true man—is soul, not body; though physically man belongs to the animal

kingdom, yet his soul lifts him above the rest of creation. Behold how the light of the sun

illuminates the world of matter: even so doth the Divine Light shed its rays in the kingdom of

the soul. The soul it is which makes the human creature a celestial entity!

By the power of the Holy Spirit, working through his soul, man is able to perceive the

Divine reality of things. All great works of art and science are witnesses to this power of the Spirit.

The same Spirit gives Eternal Life.

Those alone who are baptized by the Divine Spirit will be enabled to bring all peoples into

the bond of unity. It is by the power of the Spirit that the Eastern World of spiritual thought

can intermingle with the Western realm of action, so that the world of matter may become

Divine.

It follows that all who work for the Supreme Design are soldiers in the army of the Spirit.

The light of the celestial world makes war against the world of shadow and illusion. The

rays of the Sun of Truth dispel the darkness of superstition and misunderstanding.

You are of the Spirit! To you who seek the truth, the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh will come

as a great joy! This teaching is of the Spirit, in it is no precept which is not of the Divine Spirit.

Spirit cannot be perceived by the material senses of the physical body, excepting as it is

expressed in outward signs and works. The human body is visible, the soul is invisible. It is the

soul nevertheless that directs a man's faculties, that governs his humanity.

The soul has two main faculties. (a) As outer circumstances are communicated to the soul

by the eyes, ears, and brain of a man, so does the soul communicate its desires and purposes

through the brain to the hands and tongue of the physical body, thereby expressing itself. The

spirit in the soul is the very essence of life. (b) The second faculty of the soul expresses itself

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in the world of vision, where the soul inhabited by the spirit has its being, and functions without

the help of the material bodily senses. There, in the realm of vision, the soul sees without the

help of the physical eye, hears without the aid of the physical ear, and travels without

dependence upon physical motion. It is, therefore, clear that the spirit in the soul of man can

function through the physical body by using the organs of the ordinary senses, and that it is

able also to live and act without their aid in the world of vision. This proves without a doubt the superiority of the soul of man over his body, the superiority of spirit over matter.

For example, look at this lamp: is not the light within it superior to the lamp which holds

it? However beautiful the form of the lamp may be, if the light is not there its purpose is unfulfilled, it is without life—a dead thing. The lamp needs the light, but the light does not need the lamp.

The spirit does not need a body, but the body needs spirit, or it cannot live.

The soul can

live without a body, but the body without a soul dies.

If a man lose his sight, his hearing, his hand or his foot, should his soul still inhabit the

body he lives, and is able to manifest divine virtues. On the other hand, without the spirit it

would be impossible for a perfect body to exist.

The greatest power of the Holy Spirit exists in the Divine Manifestations of the Truth.

Through the power of the Spirit the Heavenly Teaching has been brought into the World of

Humanity. Through the power of the Spirit life everlasting has come to the children of men.

Through the power of the Spirit the Divine Glory has shone from East to West, and through

the power of the same Spirit will the divine virtues of humanity become manifest.

Our greatest efforts must be directed towards detachment from the things of the world; we

must strive to become more spiritual, more luminous, to follow the counsel of the Divine

Teaching, to serve the cause of unity and true equality, to be merciful, to reflect the love of the

Highest on all men, so that the light of the Spirit shall be apparent in all our deeds, to the end

that all humanity shall be united, the stormy sea thereof calmed, and all rough waves disappear

from off the surface of life's ocean henceforth unruffled and peaceful. Then will the New

Jerusalem be seen by mankind, who will enter through its gates and receive the Divine Bounty.

I thank God that I have been present amongst you this afternoon, and I thank you for your spiritual feeling.

I pray that you may grow in Divine fervor, and that the power of unity in the

Spirit will
augment, so that the prophecies may be fulfilled, and that in this great
century of the Light of
God all the glad tidings written in the Sacred Books may come to pass. This is
the glorious
time of which the Lord Jesus Christ spoke when He told us to pray “Thy
Kingdom come, Thy
Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.” I hope that this is also your
expectation and great
desire.
We are united in the one aim and hope that all shall be as one and every heart
illuminated by
the Love of our Divine Father, God!
May all our actions be spiritual, and all our interests and affections be
centered in the
Kingdom of Glory!

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The Evolution of the Spirit
15 Rue Greuze, Paris
November 10th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 88-94)

Tonight I will speak of the evolution or progress of the spirit.
Absolute repose does not exist in nature. All things either make progress or
lose ground.
Everything moves forward or backward, nothing is without motion. From his
birth, a man
progresses physically until he reaches maturity, then, having arrived at the
prime of his life, he
begins to decline, the strength and powers of his body decrease, and he
gradually arrives at the
hour of death. Likewise a plant progresses from the seed to maturity, then its
life begins to
lessen until it fades and dies. A bird soars to a certain height and having
reached the highest
possible point in its flight, begins its descent to earth.
Thus it is evident that movement is essential to all existence. All material
things progress
to a certain point, then begin to decline. This is the law which governs the
whole physical
creation.
Now let us consider the soul. We have seen that movement is essential to
existence; nothing
that has life is without motion. All creation, whether of the mineral,
vegetable or animal
kingdom, is compelled to obey the law of motion; it must either ascend or
descend. But with

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the human soul, there is no decline. Its only movement is towards perfection;
growth and
progress alone constitute the motion of the soul.
Divine perfection is infinite, therefore the progress of the soul is also
infinite. From the

very birth of a human being the soul progresses, the intellect grows and knowledge increases.

When the body dies the soul lives on. All the differing degrees of created physical beings are limited, but the soul is limitless!

In all religions the belief exists that the soul survives the death of the body. Intercessions

are sent up for the beloved dead, prayers are said for their progress and for the forgiveness of their sins. If the soul perished with the body all this would have no meaning. Further, if it were

not possible for the soul to advance towards perfection after it had been released from the body, of what avail are all these loving prayers, of devotion?

We read in the sacred writings that “all good works are found again.”⁴⁸

Now, if the soul did not survive, this also would mean nothing!

The very fact that our spiritual instinct, surely never given in vain, prompts us to pray for

the welfare of those, our loved ones, who have passed out of the material world: does it not

bear witness to the continuance of their existence?

In the world of spirit there is no retrogression. The world of mortality is a world of

contradictions, of opposites; motion being compulsory everything must either go forward or

retreat. In the realm of spirit there is no retreat possible, all movement is bound to be towards

a perfect state. “Progress” is the expression of spirit in the world of matter. The intelligence of

man, his reasoning powers, his knowledge, his scientific achievements, all these being

manifestations of the spirit, partake of the inevitable law of spiritual progress and are, therefore, of necessity, immortal.

My hope for you is that you will progress in the world of spirit, as well as in the world of

matter; that your intelligence will develop, your knowledge will augment, and your understanding be widened.

You must ever press forward, never standing still; avoid stagnation, the first step to a backward movement, to decay.

The whole physical creation is perishable. These material bodies are composed of atoms;

when these atoms begin to separate decomposition sets in, then comes what we call death. This

composition of atoms, which constitutes the body or mortal element of any created being, is temporary. When the power of attraction, which holds these atoms together, is withdrawn, the body, as such, ceases to exist. With the soul it is different. The soul is not a combination of elements, it is not composed of many atoms, it is of one indivisible substance and therefore eternal. It is entirely out of the order of the physical creation; it is immortal! Scientific philosophy has demonstrated that a simple element ("simple" meaning "not composed") is indestructible, eternal. The soul, not being a composition of elements, is, in character, as a simple element, and therefore cannot cease to exist.

i.e.—All good actions bring their own reward.

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The soul, being of that one indivisible substance, can suffer neither disintegration nor destruction, therefore there is no reason for its coming to an end. All things living show signs of their existence, and it follows that these signs could not of themselves exist if that which they express or to which they testify had no being. A thing which does not exist, can, of course, give no sign of its existence. The manifold signs of the existence of the spirit are forever before us.

The traces of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the influence of His Divine Teaching, are present with us today, and are everlasting.

A nonexistent thing, it is agreed, cannot be seen by signs. In order to write a man must exist—one who does not exist cannot write. Writing is, in itself, a sign of the writer's soul and intelligence. The Sacred Writings (with ever the same Teaching) prove the continuity of the spirit.

Consider the aim of creation: is it possible that all is created to evolve and develop through countless ages with this small goal in view—a few years of a man's life on earth? Is it not unthinkable that this should be the final aim of existence? The mineral evolves till it is absorbed in the life of the plant, the plant progresses till finally

it loses its life in that of the animal; the animal, in its turn, forming part of the food of man, is absorbed into human life.

Thus, man is shown to be the sum of all creation, the superior of all created beings, the goal to which countless ages of existence have progressed.

At the best, man spends four-score years and ten in this world—a short time indeed!

Does a man cease to exist when he leaves the body? If his life comes to an end, then all the

previous evolution is useless, all has been for nothing! Can one imagine that Creation has no

greater aim than this?

The soul is eternal, immortal.

Materialists say, “Where is the soul? What is it? We cannot see it, neither can we touch it.”

This is how we must answer them: However much the mineral may progress, it cannot

comprehend the vegetable world. Now, that lack of comprehension does not prove the

nonexistence of the plant!

To however great a degree the plant may have evolved, it is unable to understand the animal

world; this ignorance is no proof that the animal does not exist!

The animal, be he never so highly developed, cannot imagine the intelligence of man,

neither can he realize the nature of his soul. But, again, this does not prove that man is without

intellect, or without soul. It only demonstrates this, that one form of existence is incapable of

comprehending a form superior to itself.

This flower may be unconscious of such a being as man, but the fact of its ignorance does

not prevent the existence of humanity.

In the same way, if materialists do not believe in the existence of the soul, their unbelief

does not prove that there is no such realm as the world of spirit. The very existence of man’s

intelligence proves his immortality; moreover, darkness proves the presence of light, for

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without light there would be no shadow. Poverty proves the existence of riches, for, without

riches, how could we measure poverty? Ignorance proves that knowledge exists, for without

knowledge how could there be ignorance?
Therefore the idea of mortality presupposes the existence of immortality—for
if there were
no Life Eternal, there would be no way of measuring the life of this world!
If the spirit were not immortal, how could the Manifestations of God endure
such terrible
trials?
Why did Christ Jesus suffer the fearful death on the cross?
Why did Muhammad bear persecutions?
Why did the Báb make the supreme sacrifice and why did Bahá'u'lláh pass
the years of His
life in prison?
Why should all this suffering have been, if not to prove the everlasting life
of the spirit?
Christ suffered, He accepted all His trials because of the immortality of His
spirit. If a man
reflects he will understand the spiritual significance of the law of progress;
how all moves from
the inferior to the superior degree.
It is only a man without intelligence who, after considering these things, can
imagine that
the great scheme of creation should suddenly cease to progress, that evolution
should come to
such an inadequate end!
Materialists who reason in this way, and contend that we are unable to see the
world of
spirit, or to perceive the blessings of God, are surely like the animals who
have no
understanding; having eyes they see not, ears they have, but do not hear. And
this lack of sight
and hearing is a proof of nothing but their own inferiority; of whom we read in
the Qur'án,
“They are men who are blind and deaf to the Spirit.” They do not use that
great gift of God, the
power of the understanding, by which they might see with the eyes of the
spirit, hear with
spiritual ears and also comprehend with a Divinely enlightened heart.
The inability of the materialistic mind to grasp the idea of the Life Eternal
is no proof of
the nonexistence of that life.
The comprehension of that other life depends on our spiritual birth!
My prayer for you is that your spiritual faculties and aspirations may daily
increase, and
that you will never allow the material senses to veil from your eyes the
glories of the Heavenly
Illumination.
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The First Principle—Search after Truth
4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris
November 10th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 135-137)

The first principle of the Teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is:

The Search after Truth

If a man would succeed in his search after truth, he must, in the first place,
shut his eyes to

all the traditional superstitions of the past.

The Jews have traditional superstitions, the Buddhists and the Zoroastrians are
not free

from them, neither are the Christians! All religions have gradually become
bound by tradition
and dogma.

All consider themselves, respectively, the only guardians of the truth, and
that every other

religion is composed of errors. They themselves are right, all others are
wrong! The Jews

believe that they are the only possessors of the truth and condemn all other
religions. The

Christians affirm that their religion is the only true one, that all others are
false. Likewise the

Buddhists and Muhammadans; all limit themselves. If all condemn one another,
where shall

we search for truth? All contradicting one another, all cannot be true. If each
believe his

particular religion to be the only true one, he blinds his eyes to the truth in
the others. If, for

instance, a Jew is bound by the external practice of the religion of Israel, he
does not permit

himself to perceive that truth can exist in any other religion; it must be all
contained in his

own!

We should, therefore, detach ourselves from the external forms and practices of
religion.

We must realize that these forms and practices, however beautiful, are but
garments clothing

the warm heart and the living limbs of Divine truth. We must abandon the

prejudices of
 tradition if we would succeed in finding the truth at the core of all
 religions. If a Zoroastrian
 believes that the Sun is God, how can he be united to other religions? While
 idolaters believe
 in their various idols, how can they understand the oneness of God?
 It is, therefore, clear that in order to make any progress in the search after
 truth we must
 relinquish superstition. If all seekers would follow this principle they would
 obtain a clear
 vision of the truth.
 If five people meet together to seek for truth, they must begin by cutting
 themselves free
 from all their own special conditions and renouncing all preconceived ideas. In
 order to find
 truth we must give up our prejudices, our own small trivial notions; an open
 receptive mind is
 essential. If our chalice is full of self, there is no room in it for the water
 of life. The fact that
 we imagine ourselves to be right and everybody else wrong is the greatest of
 all obstacles in
 the path towards unity, and unity is necessary if we would reach truth, for
 truth is one.

Therefore it is imperative that we should renounce our own particular
 prejudices and
 superstitions if we earnestly desire to seek the truth. Unless we make a
 distinction in our minds
 between dogma, superstition and prejudice on the one hand, and truth on the
 other, we cannot

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succeed. When we are in earnest in our search for anything we look for it
 everywhere. This
 principle we must carry out in our search for truth.
 Science must be accepted. No one truth can contradict another truth. Light is
 good in
 whatsoever lamp it is burning! A rose is beautiful in whatsoever garden it may
 bloom! A star
 has the same radiance if it shines from the East or from the West. Be free from
 prejudice, so
 will you love the Sun of Truth from whatsoever point in the horizon it may
 arise! You will
 realize that if the Divine light of truth shone in Jesus Christ it also shone
 in Moses and in
 Buddha. The earnest seeker will arrive at this truth. This is what is meant by
 the "Search after

Truth.”

It means, also, that we must be willing to clear away all that we have previously learned, all that would clog our steps on the way to truth; we must not shrink if necessary from beginning our education all over again. We must not allow our love for any one religion or any one personality to so blind our eyes that we become fettered by superstition! When we are freed from all these bonds, seeking with liberated minds, then shall we be able to arrive at our goal.

“Seek the truth, the truth shall make you free.” So shall we see the truth in all religions, for truth is in all and truth is one!

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The Second Principle—The Unity of Mankind
Paris
November 11th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 138-140)

I spoke yesterday of the first principle of the Teaching of Bahá'u'lláh,
“The Search for
Truth”; how it is necessary for a man to put aside all in the nature of
superstition, and every
tradition which would blind his eyes to the existence of truth in all
religions. He must not, while
loving and clinging to one form of religion, permit himself to detest all
others. It is essential
that he search for truth in all religions, and, if his seeking be in earnest,
he will assuredly
succeed.
Now the first discovery which we make in our “Search after Truth,” will
lead us to the
second principle, which is the “Unity of Mankind.” All men are servants of
the One God. One
God reigns over all the nations of the world and has pleasure in all His
children. All men are
of one family; the crown of humanity rests on the head of every human being.

In the eyes of the Creator all His children are equal; His goodness is poured forth on all.
 He does not favor this nation nor that nation, all alike are His creatures.
 This being so, why
 should we make divisions, separating one race from another? Why should we create barriers
 of superstition and tradition bringing discord and hatred among the people?
 The only difference between members of the human family is that of degree. Some are like
 children who are ignorant, and must be educated until they arrive at maturity.
 Some are like
 the sick and must be treated with tenderness and care. None are bad or evil! We must not be
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repelled by these poor children. We must treat them with great kindness, teaching the ignorant and tenderly nursing the sick.
 Consider: Unity is necessary to existence. Love is the very cause of life; on the other hand, separation brings death. In the world of material creation, for instance, all things owe their actual life to unity. The elements which compose wood, mineral, or stone, are held together by the law of attraction. If this law should cease for one moment to operate these elements would not hold together, they would fall apart, and the object would in that particular form cease to exist. The law of attraction has brought together certain elements in the form of this beautiful flower, but when that attraction is withdrawn from this center the flower will decompose, and, as a flower, cease to exist.
 So it is with the great body of humanity. The wonderful Law of Attraction, Harmony and Unity, holds together this marvelous Creation.
 As with the whole, so with the parts; whether a flower or a human body, when the attracting principle is withdrawn from it, the flower or the man dies. It is therefore clear that attraction, harmony, unity and Love, are the cause of life, whereas repulsion, discord, hatred and separation bring death.
 We have seen that whatever brings division into the world of existence causes death.
 Likewise in the world of the spirit does the same law operate.

Therefore should every servant of the One God be obedient to the law of love,
avoiding all
hatred, discord, and strife. We find when we observe nature, that the gentler
animals group
themselves together into flocks and herds, whereas the savage, ferocious
creatures, such as the
lion, the tiger, and the wolf, live in wild forests, apart from civilization.
Two wolves, or two
lions, may live amicably together; but a thousand lambs may share the same fold
and a large
number of deer can form one herd. Two eagles can dwell in the same place, but a
thousand
doves can gather into one habitation.
Man should, at least, be numbered among the gentler animals; but when he
becomes
ferocious he is more cruel and malicious than the most savage of the animal
creation!
Now Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed the "Unity of the World of Mankind."
All peoples and
nations are of one family, the children of one Father, and should be to one
another as brothers
and sisters! I hope that you will endeavor in your lives to show forth and
spread this teaching.
Bahá'u'lláh said that we should love even our enemies and be to them as
friends. If all men
were obedient to this principle, the greatest unity and understanding would be
established in
the hearts of mankind.

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The Fourth Principle—The Acceptance of the Relation between Religion and Science

4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris

November 12th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 141-146)

I have spoken to you of some of the principles of Bahá'u'lláh: The Search after Truth and

The Unity of Mankind. I will now explain the Fourth Principle, which is The Acceptance of the Relation between Religion and Science.

There is no contradiction between true religion and science. When a religion is opposed to science it becomes mere superstition: that which is contrary to knowledge is ignorance.

How can a man believe to be a fact that which science has proved to be impossible? If he believes in spite of his reason, it is rather ignorant superstition than faith.

The true principles of all religions are in conformity with the teachings of science. The Unity of God is logical, and this idea is not antagonistic to the conclusions arrived at by scientific study.

All religions teach that we must do good, that we must be generous, sincere, truthful, lawabiding, and faithful; all this is reasonable, and logically the only way in which humanity can progress.

All religious laws conform to reason, and are suited to the people for whom they are framed, and for the age in which they are to be obeyed.

Religion has two main parts:

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(1) The Spiritual.

(2) The Practical.

The spiritual part never changes. All the Manifestations of God and His Prophets have taught the same truths and given the same spiritual law. They all teach the one code of morality.

There is no division in the truth. The Sun has sent forth many rays to illumine human intelligence, the light is always the same.

The practical part of religion deals with exterior forms and ceremonies, and with modes of punishment for certain offences. This is the material side of the law, and guides the customs and manners of the people.

In the time of Moses, there were ten crimes punishable by death. When Christ came this

was changed; the old axiom "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" was converted into

"Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you," the stern old law being changed into one of love, mercy and forbearance!

In the former days the punishment for theft was the cutting off of the right hand; in our time

this law could not be so applied. In this age, a man who curses his father is

allowed to live,
when formerly he would have been put to death. It is therefore evident that
whilst the spiritual
law never alters, the practical rules must change their application with the
necessities of the
time. The spiritual aspect of religion is the greater, the more important of
the two, and this is
the same for all time. It never changes! It is the same, yesterday, today, and
forever! "As it was
the beginning, is now, and ever shall be."
Now, all questions of morality contained in the spiritual, immutable law of
every religion
are logically right. If religion were contrary to logical reason then it would
cease to be a religion
and be merely a tradition. Religion and science are the two wings upon which
man's
intelligence can soar into the heights, with which the human soul can progress.
It is not possible
to fly with one wing alone! Should a man try to fly with the wing of religion
alone he would
quickly fall into the quagmire of superstition, whilst on the other hand, with
the wing of science
alone he would also make no progress, but fall into the despairing slough of
materialism. All
religions of the present day have fallen into superstitious practices, out of
harmony alike with
the true principles of the teaching they represent and with the scientific
discoveries of the time.
Many religious leaders have grown to think that the importance of religion lies
mainly in the
adherence to a collection of certain dogmas and the practice of rites and
ceremonies! Those
whose souls they profess to cure are taught to believe likewise, and these
cling tenaciously to
the outward forms, confusing them with the inward truth.
Now, these forms and rituals differ in the various churches and amongst the
different sects,
and even contradict one another; giving rise to discord, hatred, and disunion.
The outcome of
all this dissension is the belief of many cultured men that religion and
science are contradictory
terms, that religion needs no powers of reflection, and should in no wise be
regulated by
science, but must of necessity be opposed, the one to the other. The
unfortunate effect of this
is that science has drifted apart from religion, and religion has become a mere
blind and more

or less apathetic following of the precepts of certain religious teachers, who insist on their own favorite dogmas being accepted even when they are contrary to science. This is foolishness, for it is quite evident that science is the light, and, being so, religion truly so-called does not oppose knowledge.
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We are familiar with the phrases “Light and Darkness,” “Religion and Science.” But the religion which does not walk hand in hand with science is itself in the darkness of superstition and ignorance. Much of the discord and disunion of the world is created by these man-made oppositions and contradictions. If religion were in harmony with science and they walked together, much of the hatred and bitterness now bringing misery to the human race would be at an end. Consider what it is that singles man out from among created beings, and makes of him a creature apart. Is it not his reasoning power, his intelligence? Shall he not make use of these in his study of religion? I say unto you: weigh carefully in the balance of reason and science everything that is presented to you as religion. If it passes this test, then accept it, for it is truth! If, however, it does not so conform, then reject it, for it is ignorance! Look around and see how the world of today is drowned in superstition and outward forms! Some worship the product of their own imagination: they make for themselves an imaginary God and adore this, when the creation of their finite minds cannot be the Infinite Mighty Maker of all things visible and invisible! Others worship the sun or trees, also stones! In past ages there were those who adored the sea, the clouds, and even clay! Today, men have grown into such adoring attachment to outward forms and ceremonies that they dispute over this point of ritual or that particular practice, until one hears on all sides of wearisome arguments and unrest. There are individuals who have weak intellects and their powers of reasoning have not developed, but the strength and power of religion must not be doubted because of the incapacity of these persons to understand.

A small child cannot comprehend the laws that govern nature, but this is on account of the immature intellect of that child; when he is grown older and has been educated he too will understand the everlasting truths. A child does not grasp the fact that the earth revolves round the sun, but, when his intelligence is awakened, the fact is clear and plain to him.

It is impossible for religion to be contrary to science, even though some intellects are too weak or too immature to understand truth.

God made religion and science to be the measure, as it were, of our understanding. Take

heed that you neglect not such a wonderful power. Weigh all things in this balance.

To him who has the power of comprehension religion is like an open book, but how can it

be possible for a man devoid of reason and intellectuality to understand the Divine Realities of God?

Put all your beliefs into harmony with science; there can be no opposition, for truth is one.

When religion, shorn of its superstitions, traditions, and unintelligent dogmas, shows its

conformity with science, then will there be a great unifying, cleansing force in the world which

will sweep before it all wars, disagreements, discords and struggles—and then will mankind

be united in the power of the Love of God.

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The Fifth Principle—The Abolition of Prejudices

4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris

November 13th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 146-151)

All prejudices, whether of religion, race, politics or nation, must be renounced, for these prejudices have caused the world's sickness. It is a grave malady which, unless arrested, is capable of causing the destruction of the whole human race. Every ruinous war, with its terrible bloodshed and misery, has been caused by one or other of these prejudices. The deplorable wars going on in these days are caused by the fanatical religious hatred of one people for another, or the prejudices of race or color. Until all these barriers erected by prejudice are swept away, it is not possible for humanity to be at peace. For this reason Bahá'u'lláh has said, "These Prejudices are destructive to mankind."

Contemplate first the prejudice of religion: consider the nations of so-called

religious
 people; if they were truly worshippers of God they would obey His law which
 forbids them to
 kill one another.
 If priests of religion really adored the God of love and served the Divine
 Light, they would
 teach their people to keep the chief Commandment, "To be in love and charity
 with all men."
 But we find the contrary, for it is often the priests who encourage nations to
 fight. Religious
 hatred is ever the most cruel!
 All religions teach that we should love one another; that we should seek out
 our own
 shortcomings before we presume to condemn the faults of others, that we must
 not consider
 ourselves superior to our neighbors! We must be careful not to exalt ourselves
 lest we be
 humiliated.
 Who are we that we should judge? How shall we know who, in the sight of God, is
 the most
 upright man? God's thoughts are not like our thoughts! How many men who have
 seemed
 saint-like to their friends have fallen into the greatest humiliation. Think of
 Judas Iscariot; he
 began well, but remember his end! On the other hand, Paul, the Apostle, was in
 his early life
 an enemy of Christ, whilst later he became His most faithful servant. How then
 can we flatter
 ourselves and despise others?
 Let us therefore be humble, without prejudices, preferring others' good to
 our own! Let us
 never say, "I am a believer but he is an infidel," "I am near to God,
 whilst he is an outcast."
 We can never know what will be the final judgment! Therefore let us help all
 who are in need
 of any kind of assistance.
 Let us teach the ignorant, and take care of the young child until he grows to
 maturity. When
 we find a person fallen into the depths of misery or sin we must be kind to
 him, take him by
 the hand, help him to regain his footing, his strength; we must guide him with
 love and
 tenderness, treat him as a friend not as an enemy.
 We have no right to look upon any of our fellow-mortals as evil.
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Concerning the prejudice of race: it is an illusion, a superstition pure and simple! For God created us all of one race. There were no differences in the beginning, for we are all descendants of Adam. In the beginning, also, there were no limits and boundaries between the different lands; no part of the earth belonged more to one people than to another. In the sight of God there is no difference between the various races. Why should man invent such a prejudice? How can we uphold war caused by an illusion? God has not created men that they should destroy one another. All races, tribes, sects and classes share equally in the Bounty of their Heavenly Father. The only difference lies in the degree of faithfulness, of obedience to the laws of God. There are some who are as lighted torches, there are others who shine as stars in the sky of humanity. The lovers of mankind, these are the superior men, of whatever nation, creed, or color they may be. For it is they to whom God will say these blessed words, "Well done, My good and faithful servants." In that day He will not ask, "Are you English, French, or perhaps Persian? Do you come from the East, or from the West?" The only division that is real is this: There are heavenly men and earthly men; selfsacrificing servants of humanity in the love of the Most High, bringing harmony and unity, teaching peace and goodwill to men. On the other hand there are those selfish men, haters of their brethren, in whose hearts prejudice has replaced loving kindness, and whose influence breeds discord and strife. To which race or to which color belong these two divisions of men, to the White, to the Yellow, to the Black, to the East or to the West, to the North or to the South? If these are God's divisions, why should we invent others? Political prejudice is equally mischievous, it is one of the greatest causes of bitter strife amongst the children of men. There are people who find pleasure in breeding discord, who constantly endeavor to goad their country into making war upon other nations—and why? They think to advantage their own country to the detriment of all others. They send armies to harass and destroy the land, in order to become famous in the

world, for the joy of conquest. That it may be said: "Such a country has
 defeated another, and
 brought it under the yoke of their stronger, more superior rule." This
 victory, bought at the
 price of much bloodshed, is not lasting! The conqueror shall one day be
 conquered; and the
 vanquished ones victorious! Remember the history of the past: did not France
 conquer
 Germany more than once—then did not the German nation overcome France?
 We learn also that France conquered England; then was the English nation
 victorious over
 France!
 These glorious conquests are so ephemeral! Why attach so great importance to
 them and to
 their fame, as to be willing to shed the blood of the people for their
 attainment? Is any victory
 worth the inevitable train of evils consequent upon human slaughter, the grief
 and sorrow and
 ruin which must overwhelm so many homes of both nations? For it is not possible
 that one
 country alone should suffer.
 Oh! why will man, the disobedient child of God, who should be an example of the
 power
 of the spiritual law, turn his face away from the Divine Teaching and put all
 his effort into
 destruction and war?
 My hope is that in this enlightened century the Divine Light of love will shed
 its radiance
 over the whole world, seeking out the responsive heart's intelligence of
 every human being;
 that the light of the Sun of Truth will lead politicians to shake off all the
 claims of prejudice

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and superstition, and with freed minds to follow the Policy of God: for Divine
 Politics are
 mighty, man's politics are feeble! God has created all the world, and bestows
 His Divine
 Bounty upon every creature.
 Are we not the servants of God? Shall we neglect to follow our Master's
 Example, and
 ignore His Commands?
 I pray that the Kingdom shall come on Earth, and that all darkness shall be
 driven away by
 the effulgence of the Heavenly Sun.

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The Tenth Principle—Equality of Sex
4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris
November 14th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 160-163)

The Tenth Principle of the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the equality of the sexes.
God has created all creatures in couples. Man, beast, or vegetable, all the things of these three kingdoms are of two sexes, and there is absolute equality between them. In the vegetable world there are male plants and female plants; they have equal

rights, and
possess an equal share of the beauty of their species; though indeed the tree
that bears fruit
might be said to be superior to that which is unfruitful.
In the animal kingdom we see that the male and the female have equal rights;
and that they
each share the advantages of their kind.
Now in the two lower kingdoms of nature we have seen that there is no question
of the
superiority of one sex over the other. In the world of humanity we find a great
difference; the
female sex is treated as though inferior, and is not allowed equal rights and
privileges. This
condition is due not to nature, but to education. In the Divine Creation there
is no such
distinction. Neither sex is superior to the other in the sight of God. Why then
should one sex
assert the inferiority of the other, withholding just rights and privileges as
though God had
given His authority for such a course of action? If women received the same
educational
advantages as those of men, the result would demonstrate the equality of
capacity of both for
scholarship.
In some respects woman is superior to man. She is more tenderhearted, more
receptive, her
intuition is more intense.
It is not to be denied that in various directions woman at present is more
backward than
man, also that this temporary inferiority is due to the lack of educational
opportunity. In the
necessity of life, woman is more instinct with power than man, for to her he
owes his very
existence.
If the mother is educated then her children will be well taught. When the
mother is wise,
then will the children be led into the path of wisdom. If the mother be
religious she will show
her children how they should love God. If the mother is moral she guides her
little ones into
the ways of uprightness.
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It is clear therefore that the future generation depends on the mothers of
today. Is not this a
vital responsibility for the woman? Does she not require every possible

advantage to equip her
 for such a task?
 Therefore, surely, God is not pleased that so important an instrument as woman
 should
 suffer from want of training in order to attain the perfections desirable and
 necessary for her
 great life's work! Divine Justice demands that the rights of both sexes
 should be equally
 respected since neither is superior to the other in the eyes of Heaven. Dignity
 before God
 depends, not on sex, but on purity and luminosity of heart. Human virtues
 belong equally to
 all!
 Woman must endeavor then to attain greater perfection, to be man's equal in
 every respect,
 to make progress in all in which she has been backward, so that man will be
 compelled to
 acknowledge her equality of capacity and attainment.
 In Europe women have made greater progress than in the East, but there is still
 much to be
 done! When students have arrived at the end of their school term an examination
 takes place,
 and the result thereof determines the knowledge and capacity of each student.
 So will it be with
 woman; her actions will show her power, there will no longer be any need to
 proclaim it by
 words.
 It is my hope that women of the East, as well as their Western sisters, will
 progress rapidly
 until humanity shall reach perfection.
 God's Bounty is for all and gives power for all progress. When men own the
 equality of
 women there will be no need for them to struggle for their rights! One of the
 principles then of
 Bahá'u'lláh is the equality of sex.
 Women must make the greatest effort to acquire spiritual power and to increase
 in the virtue
 of wisdom and holiness until their enlightenment and striving succeeds in
 bringing about the
 unity of mankind. They must work with a burning enthusiasm to spread the
 Teaching of
 Bahá'u'lláh among the peoples, so that the radiant light of the Divine
 Bounty may envelop the
 souls of all the nations of the world!

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??You are all very welcome, and I love you all most dearly.??
 ??Day and night I pray to Heaven for you that strength may be yours, and
 that, one and all,??
 ??you may participate in the blessings of Bahá'u'lláh, and enter into

the Kingdom.??

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I supplicate that you may become as new beings, illumined with the Divine

Light, like unto

shining lamps, and that from one end of Europe to the other the knowledge of

the Love of God

may spread.

May this boundless love so fill your hearts and minds that sadness may find no room to

enter and may you with joyful hearts soar like birds into the Divine Radiance.

May your hearts become clear and pure like unto polished mirrors in which may be

reflected the full glory of the Sun of Truth.

May your eyes be opened to see the signs of the Kingdom of God, and may your ears be

unstopped so that you may hear with a perfect understanding the Heavenly

Proclamation

sounding in your midst.

May your souls receive help and comfort, and, being so strengthened, may they be enabled

to live in accordance with the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

I pray for each and all that you may be as flames of love in the world, and

that the brightness

of your light and the warmth of your affection may reach the heart of every sad

and sorrowing

child of God.

May you be as shining stars, bright and luminous forever in the Kingdom.

I counsel you that you study earnestly the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, so

that, God helping

you, you may in deed and truth become Bahá'ís.

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of the means of livelihood.

The arrangements of the circumstances of the people must be such that poverty shall

disappear, that everyone, as far as possible, according to his rank and position, shall share in comfort and well-being.

We see amongst us men who are overburdened with riches on the one hand, and on the

other those unfortunate ones who starve with nothing; those who possess several stately

palaces, and those who have not where to lay their head. Some we find with numerous courses

of costly and dainty food; whilst others can scarce find sufficient crusts to keep them alive.

Whilst some are clothed in velvets, furs and fine linen, others have insufficient, poor and thin garments with which to protect them from the cold.

This condition of affairs is wrong, and must be remedied. Now the remedy must be

carefully undertaken. It cannot be done by bringing to pass absolute equality between men.

Equality is a chimera! It is entirely impracticable! Even if equality could be achieved it

could not continue—and if its existence were possible, the whole order of the world would be

destroyed. The law of order must always obtain in the world of humanity. Heaven has so

decreed in the creation of man.

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Some are full of intelligence, others have an ordinary amount of it, and others again are

devoid of intellect. In these three classes of men there is order but not equality. How could it

be possible that wisdom and stupidity should be equal? Humanity, like a great army, requires

a general, captains, under-officers in their degree, and soldiers, each with their own appointed

duties. Degrees are absolutely necessary to ensure an orderly organization. An army could not

be composed of generals alone, or of captains only, or of nothing but soldiers without one in

authority. The certain result of such a plan would be that disorder and demoralization would

overtake the whole army.

King Lycurgus, the philosopher, made a great plan to equalize the subjects of

Sparta; with self-sacrifice and wisdom was the experiment begun. Then the king called the people of his kingdom, and made them swear a great oath to maintain the same order of government if he should leave the country, also that nothing should make them alter it until his return. Having secured this oath, he left his kingdom of Sparta and never returned. Lyscurgus abandoned the situation, renouncing his high position, thinking to achieve the permanent good of his country by the equalization of the property and of the conditions of life in his kingdom. All the selfsacrifice of the king was in vain. The great experiment failed. After a time all was destroyed; his carefully thought-out constitution came to an end. The futility of attempting such a scheme was shown and the impossibility of attaining equal conditions of existence was proclaimed in the ancient kingdom of Sparta. In our day any such attempt would be equally doomed to failure. Certainly, some being enormously rich and others lamentably poor, an organization is necessary to control and improve this state of affairs. It is important to limit riches, as it is also of importance to limit poverty. Either extreme is not good. To be seated in the mean⁴⁹ is most desirable. If it be right for a capitalist to possess a large fortune, it is equally just that his workman should have a sufficient means of existence. A financier with colossal wealth should not exist whilst near him is a poor man in dire necessity. When we see poverty allowed to reach a condition of starvation it is a sure sign that somewhere we shall find tyranny. Men must bestir themselves in this matter, and no longer delay in altering conditions which bring the misery of grinding poverty to a very large number of the people. The rich must give of their abundance, they must soften their hearts and cultivate a compassionate intelligence, taking thought for those sad ones who are suffering from lack of the very necessities of life. There must be special laws made, dealing with these extremes of riches and of want. The members of the Government should consider the laws of God when they are framing plans for the ruling of the people. The general rights of mankind must be guarded and

preserved.

The government of the countries should conform to the Divine Law which gives equal

justice to all. This is the only way in which the deplorable superfluity of great wealth and

miserable, demoralizing, degrading poverty can be abolished. Not until this is done will the

Law of God be obeyed.

“Give me neither poverty nor riches.”—Proverbs 30:8.

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Concerning Body, Soul and Spirit
4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris
Friday morning, November 17th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 96-99)

There are in the world of humanity three degrees; those of the body, the soul, and spirit.
The body is the physical or animal degree of man. From the bodily point of view man is a sharer of the animal kingdom. The bodies alike of men and animals are composed of elements held together by the law of attraction.
Like the animal, man possesses the faculties of the senses, is subject to heat, cold, hunger, thirst, etc. ; unlike the animal, man has a rational soul, the human intelligence.
This intelligence of man is the intermediary between his body and his spirit. When man allows the spirit, through his soul, to enlighten his understanding, then does he contain all Creation; because man, being the culmination of all that went before and thus superior to all previous evolutions, contains all the lower world within himself. Illumined by the spirit through the instrumentality of the soul, man's radiant intelligence makes him the crowning-point of Creation.
But on the other hand, when man does not open his mind and heart to the blessing of the spirit, but turns his soul towards the material side, towards the bodily part of his nature, then is he fallen from his high place and he becomes inferior to the inhabitants of the lower animal kingdom. In this case the man is in a sorry plight! For if the spiritual qualities of the soul, open to the breath of the Divine Spirit, are never used, they become atrophied, enfeebled, and at last

incapable; whilst the soul's material qualities alone being exercised, they become terribly powerful—and the unhappy, misguided man, becomes more savage, more unjust, more vile, more cruel, more malevolent than the lower animals themselves. All his aspirations and desires
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being strengthened by the lower side of the soul's nature, he becomes more and more brutal, until his whole being is in no way superior to that of the beasts that perish. Men such as this plan to work evil, to hurt and to destroy; they are entirely without the spirit of Divine compassion, for the celestial quality of the soul has been dominated by that of the material. If, on the contrary, the spiritual nature of the soul has been so strengthened that it holds the material side in subjection, then does the man approach the Divine; his humanity becomes so glorified that the virtues of the Celestial Assembly are manifested in him; he radiates the Mercy of God, he stimulates the spiritual progress of mankind, for he becomes a lamp to show light on their path. You perceive how the soul is the intermediary between the body and the spirit. In like manner is this tree⁵⁰ the intermediary between the seed and the fruit. When the fruit of the tree appears and becomes ripe, then we know that the tree is perfect; if the tree bore no fruit it would be merely a useless growth, serving no purpose! When a soul has in it the life of the spirit, then does it bring forth good fruit and become a Divine tree. I wish you to try to understand this example. I hope that the unspeakable goodness of God will so strengthen you that the celestial quality of your soul, which relates it to the spirit, will forever dominate the material side, so entirely ruling the senses that your soul will approach the perfections of the Heavenly Kingdom. May your faces, being steadfastly set towards the Divine Light, become so luminous that all your thoughts, words and actions will shine with the Spiritual Radiance dominating your souls, so that in the gatherings of the world

you will show perfection in your life.
Some men's lives are solely occupied with the things of this world; their minds are so circumscribed by exterior manners and traditional interests that they are blind to any other realm of existence, to the spiritual significance of all things! They think and dream of earthly fame, of material progress. Sensuous delights and comfortable surroundings bound their horizon, their highest ambitions center in successes of worldly conditions and circumstances!
They curb not their lower propensities; they eat, drink, and sleep! Like the animal, they have no thought beyond their own physical well-being. It is true that these necessities must be dispatched. Life is a load which must be carried on while we are on earth, but the cares of the lower things of life should not be allowed to monopolize all the thoughts and aspirations of a human being. The heart's ambitions should ascend to a more glorious goal, mental activity should rise to higher levels! Men should hold in their souls the vision of celestial perfection, and there prepare a dwelling-place for the inexhaustible bounty of the Divine Spirit.
Let your ambition be the achievement on earth of a Heavenly civilization! I ask for you the supreme blessing, that you may be so filled with the vitality of the Heavenly Spirit that you may be the cause of life to the world.

A small orange-tree on the table nearby.

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(Paris, pp. 157-160)

In the conduct of life, man is actuated by two main motives: “The Hope for Reward” and “The Fear of Punishment.”

This hope and this fear must consequently be greatly taken into account by those in authority who have important posts under Government. Their business in life is to consult together for the framing of laws, and to provide for their just administration. The tent of the order of the world is raised and established on the two pillars of “Reward and Retribution.”

In despotic Governments carried on by men without Divine faith, where no fear of spiritual retribution exists, the execution of the laws is tyrannical and unjust. There is no greater prevention of oppression than these two sentiments, hope and fear. They have both political and spiritual consequences.

If administrators of the law would take into consideration the spiritual consequences of their decisions, and follow the guidance of religion, “They would be Divine agents in the world of action, the representatives of God for those who are on earth, and they would defend, for the love of God, the interests of His servants as they would defend their own.” If a governor realizes his responsibility, and fears to defy the Divine Law, his judgments will be just. Above all, if he believes that the consequences of his actions will follow him beyond his earthly life, and that “as he sows so must he reap,” such a man will surely avoid injustice and tyranny.

Should an official, on the contrary, think that all responsibility for his actions must end with his earthly life, knowing and believing nothing of Divine favors and a spiritual kingdom of joy, he will lack the incentive to just dealing, and the inspiration to destroy oppression and unrighteousness.

When a ruler knows that his judgments will be weighed in a balance by the Divine Judge, and that if he be not found wanting he will come into the Celestial Kingdom and that the light of the Heavenly Bounty will shine upon him, then will he surely act with justice and equity.

Behold how important it is that Ministers of State should be enlightened by

religion!

With political questions the clergy, however, have nothing to do! Religious matters should

not be confused with politics in the present state of the world (for their interests are not identical).

Religion concerns matters of the heart, of the spirit, and of morals.

Politics are occupied with the material things of life. Religious teachers should not invade

the realm of politics; they should concern themselves with the spiritual education of the people;

they should ever give good counsel to men, trying to serve God and humankind; they should

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endeavor to awaken spiritual aspiration, and strive to enlarge the understanding and knowledge

of humanity, to improve morals, and to increase the love for justice.

This is in accordance with the Teaching of Bahá'u'lláh. In the Gospel also it is written,

“Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s.”

In Persia there are some amongst the important Ministers of State who are religious, who

are exemplary, who worship God, and who fear to disobey His Laws, who judge justly and rule

their people with Equity. Other Governors there are in this land who have no fear of God before

their eyes, who think not of the consequences of their actions, working for their own desires,

and these have brought Persia into great trouble and difficulty.

Oh, friends of God, be living examples of justice! So that by the Mercy of God, the world

may see in your actions that you manifest the attributes of justice and mercy.

Justice is not limited, it is a universal quality. Its operation must be carried out in all classes,

from the highest to the lowest. Justice must be sacred, and the rights of all the people must be

considered. Desire for others only that which you desire for yourselves. Then shall we rejoice

in the Sun of Justice, which shines from the Horizon of God.

Each man has been placed in a post of honor, which he must not desert. A humble workman

who commits an injustice is as much to blame as a renowned tyrant. Thus we all have our

choice between justice and injustice.

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The Eleventh Principle—The Power of the Holy Spirit
4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris
November 18th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 163-166)

In the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh, it is written: “By the Power of the Holy Spirit alone is man able to progress, for the power of man is limited and the Divine Power is boundless.” The reading of history brings us to the conclusion that all truly great men, the benefactors of the human race, those who have moved men to love the right and hate the wrong and who have

caused real progress, all these have been inspired by the force of the Holy Spirit.

The Prophets of God have not all graduated in the schools of learned philosophy; indeed they were often men of humble birth, to all appearance ignorant, unknown men of no importance in the eyes of the world; sometimes even lacking the knowledge of reading and writing.

That which raised these great ones above men, and by which they were able to become

Teachers of the truth, was the power of the Holy Spirit. Their influence on humanity, by virtue of this mighty inspiration, was great and penetrating.

The influence of the wisest philosophers, without this Spirit Divine, has been comparatively unimportant, however extensive their learning and deep their scholarship.

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The unusual intellects, for instance, of Plato, Aristotle, Pliny and Socrates, have not influenced men so greatly that they have been anxious to sacrifice their lives for their teachings; whilst some of those simple men so moved humanity that thousands of men have become willing martyrs to uphold their words; for these words were inspired by the Divine Spirit of God! The prophets of Judah and Israel, Elijah, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel, were humble men, as were also the apostles of Jesus Christ.

Peter, the chief of the apostles, used to divide the proceeds of his fishing into seven parts, and when, having taken one part for each day's use, he arrived at the seventh portion, he knew it was the Sabbath day. Consider this! and then think of his future position; to what glory he attained because the Holy Spirit wrought great works through him.

We understand that the Holy Spirit is the energizing factor in the life of man. Whosoever

receives this power is able to influence all with whom he comes into contact. The greatest philosophers without this Spirit are powerless, their souls lifeless, their hearts

dead! Unless the Holy Spirit breathes into their souls, they can do no good work. No system of philosophy has ever been able to change the manners and customs of a people for the better.

Learned philosophers, unenlightened by the Divine Spirit, have often been men of inferior morality; they have not proclaimed in their actions the reality of their beautiful phrases.

The difference between spiritual philosophers and others is shown by their lives. The Spiritual Teacher shows His belief in His own teaching, by Himself being what He recommends to others.

A humble man without learning, but filled with the Holy Spirit, is more powerful than the most nobly-born profound scholar without that inspiration. He who is educated by the Divine Spirit can, in his time, lead others to receive the same Spirit.

I pray for you that you may be informed by the life of the Divine Spirit, so that you may be the means of educating others. The life and morals of a spiritual man are, in themselves, an education to those who know him.

Think not of your own limitations, dwell only on the welfare of the Kingdom of Glory.

Consider the influence of Jesus Christ on His apostles, then think of their effect upon the world.

These simple men were enabled by the power of the Holy Spirit to spread the glad tidings!

So may you all receive Divine assistance! No capacity is limited when led by the Spirit of God!

The earth of itself has no properties of life, it is barren and dry, until fertilized by the sun and the rain; still the earth need not bewail its own limitations.

May you be given life! May the rain of the Divine Mercy and the warmth of the Sun of

Truth make your gardens fruitful, so that many beautiful flowers of exquisite fragrance and

love may blossom in abundance. Turn your faces away from the contemplation of your own

finite selves and fix your eyes upon the Everlasting Radiance; then will your souls receive in

full measure the Divine Power of the Spirit and the Blessings of the Infinite Bounty.

If you thus keep yourselves in readiness, you will become to the world of humanity a

burning flame, a star of guidance, and a fruitful tree, changing all its darkness and woe into

light and joy by the shining of the Sun of Mercy and the infinite blessings of the Glad Tidings.

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This is the meaning of the power of the Holy Spirit, which I pray may be
bountifully
showered upon you.

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The Bahá'ís Must Work with Heart and Soul to Bring About a Better Condition
in the World
Paris
November 19th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 99-101)

How joyful it is to see such a meeting as this, for it is in truth a gathering
together of
“heavenly men.”
We are all united in one Divine purpose, no material motive is ours, and our
dearest wish
is to spread the Love of God throughout the world!
We work and pray for the unity of mankind, that all the races of the earth may
become one
race, all the countries one country, and that all hearts may beat as one heart,
working together
for perfect unity and brotherhood.
Praise be to God that our efforts are sincere and that our hearts are turned to
the Kingdom.
Our greatest longing is that truth may be established in the world, and in this
hope we draw
near to one another in love and affection. Each and all are wholehearted and
selfless, willing
to sacrifice all personal ambition to the grand ideal towards which they
strive: Brotherly love
and peace and union among men!
Doubt not that God is with us, on our right hand and on our left, that day by
day He will
cause our numbers to increase, and that our meetings will grow in strength and
usefulness.
It is my dearest hope that you may all become a blessing to others, that you
may give sight
to the spiritually blind, hearing to the spiritually deaf and life to those who
are dead in sin.
May you help those sunk in materiality to realize their Divine son-ship, and
encourage them
to arise and be worthy of their birthright; so that by your endeavor the world
of humanity may
become the Kingdom of God and of His elect.
I thank God that we are at one in this grand ideal, that my longings are also

yours and that
we work together in perfect unity.

237)1911(?

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Today, upon the earth, one sees the sad spectacle of cruel war! Man slays his
brother man
for selfish gain, and to enlarge his territories! For this ignoble ambition
hate has taken
possession of his heart, and more and more blood is shed!
Fresh battles are fought, the armies are increased, more cannon, more guns,
more
explosives of all kinds are sent out—so does bitterness and hate augment from
day to day!
But this assembly, thank God, longs only for peace and unity, and must work
with heart
and soul to bring about a better condition in the world.
You who are the servants of God fight against oppression, hate and discord, so
that wars
may cease and God's laws of peace and love may be established among men.
Work! Work with all your strength, spread the Cause of the Kingdom among men;
teach
the self-sufficient to turn humbly towards God, the sinful to sin no more, and
await with glad
expectation the coming of the Kingdom.
Love and obey your Heavenly Father, and rest assured that Divine help is yours.
Verily I
say unto you that you shall indeed conquer the world!
Only have faith, patience and courage—this is but the beginning, but surely
you will
succeed, for God is with you!

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On Calumny

Paris

Monday, November 20th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 102-106)

From the beginning of the world until the present time each
 “Manifestation”⁵¹ sent from
 God has been opposed by an embodiment of the “Powers of Darkness.”
 This dark power has always endeavored to extinguish the light. Tyranny has ever
 sought to
 overcome justice. Ignorance has persistently tried to trample knowledge
 underfoot. This has,
 from the earliest ages, been the method of the material world.
 In the time of Moses, Pharaoh set himself to prevent the Mosaic Light being
 spread abroad.
 In the day of Christ, Annas and Caiaphas inflamed the Jewish people against Him
 and the
 learned doctors of Israel joined together to resist His Power. All sorts of
 calumnies were
 circulated against Him. The Scribes and Pharisees conspired to make the people
 believe Him
 to be a liar, an apostate, and a blasphemer. They spread these slanders
 throughout the whole
 Eastern world against Christ, and caused Him to be condemned to a shameful
 death!
 In the case of Muhammad also, the learned doctors of His day determined to
 extinguish the

light of His influence. They tried by the power of the sword to prevent the spread of His teaching.

In spite of all their efforts the Sun of Truth shone forth from the horizon. In every case the army of light vanquished the powers of darkness on the battlefield of the world, and the radiance of the Divine Teaching illumined the earth. Those who accepted the Teaching and worked for the Cause of God became luminous stars in the sky of humanity. Now, in our own day, history repeats itself. Those who would have men believe that religion is their own private property once more bring their efforts to bear against the Sun of Truth: they resist the Command of God; they invent

i.e.—Divine Manifestation.

241)1911(?

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calumnies, not having arguments against it, neither proofs. They attack with masked faces, not daring to come forth into the light of day.

Our methods are different, we do not attack, neither calumniate; we do not wish to dispute with them; we bring forth proofs and arguments; we invite them to confute our statements.

They cannot answer us, but instead, they write all they can think of against the Divine Messenger, Bahá'u'lláh.

Do not let your hearts be troubled by these defamatory writings! Obey the words of Bahá'u'lláh and answer them not. Rejoice, rather, that even these falsehoods will result in the spread of the truth. When these slanders appear inquiries are made, and those who inquire are led into a knowledge of the Faith.

If a man were to declare, "There is a lamp in the next room which gives no light," one hearer might be satisfied with his report, but a wiser man goes into the room to judge for himself, and behold, when he finds the light shining brilliantly in the lamp, he knows the truth!

Again, a man proclaims: "There lies a garden in which there are trees with broken branches bearing no fruit, and the leaves thereof are faded and yellow! In that garden, also, there are flowering plants with no blooms, and rose bushes withered and dying—go not

into that
 garden!" A just man, hearing this account of the garden, would not be content
 without seeing
 for himself whether it be true or not. He, therefore, enters the garden, and
 behold, he finds it
 well tilled; the branches of the trees are sturdy and strong, being also loaded
 with the sweetest
 of ripe fruits amongst the luxuriance of beautiful green leaves. The flowering
 plants are bright
 with many-hued blossoms; the rose bushes are covered with fragrant and lovely
 roses and all
 is verdant and well tended. When the glory of the garden is spread out before
 the eyes of the
 just man, he praises God that, through unworthy calumny, he has been led into a
 place of such
 wondrous beauty!
 This is the result of the slanderer's work: to be the cause of guiding men to
 a discovery of
 the truth.
 We know that all the falsehoods spread about Christ and His apostles and all
 the books
 written against Him, only led the people to inquire into His doctrine; then,
 having seen the
 beauty and inhaled the fragrance, they walked evermore amidst the roses and the
 fruits of that
 celestial garden.
 Therefore, I say unto you, spread the Divine Truth with all your might that
 men's
 intelligence may become enlightened; this is the best answer to those who
 slander. I do not
 wish to speak of those people nor to say anything ill of them—only to tell
 you that slander is
 of no importance!
 Clouds may veil the sun, but, be they never so dense, his rays will penetrate!
 Nothing can
 prevent the radiance of the sun descending to warm and vivify the Divine
 Garden.
 Nothing can prevent the fall of the rain from Heaven.
 Nothing can prevent the fulfillment of the Word of God!
 Therefore when you see books and papers written against the Revelation, be not
 distressed,
 but take comfort in the assurance that the cause will thereby gain strength.
 No one casts stones at a tree without fruit. No one tries to extinguish a lamp
 without light!
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Regard the former times. Had the calumnies of Pharaoh any effect? He affirmed
 that Moses
 was a murderer, that he had slain a man and deserved to be executed! He also
 declared that
 Moses and Aaron were fomenters of discord, that they tried to destroy the
 religion of Egypt
 and therefore must be put to death. These words of Pharaoh were vainly spoken.
 The light of
 Moses shone. The radiance of the Law of God has encircled the world!
 When the Pharisees said of Christ that He had broken the Sabbath Day, that He
 had defied
 the Law of Moses, that He had threatened to destroy the Temple and the Holy
 City of
 Jerusalem, and that He deserved to be crucified—We know that all these
 slanderous attacks
 had no result in hindering the spread of the Gospel!
 The Sun of Christ shone brilliantly in the sky, and the breath of the Holy
 Spirit wafted over
 the whole earth!
 And I say unto you that no calumny is able to prevail against the Light of God;
 it can only
 result in causing it to be more universally recognized. If a cause were of no
 significance, who
 would take the trouble to work against it!
 But always the greater the cause the more do enemies arise in larger and larger
 numbers to
 attempt its overthrow! The brighter the light the darker the shadow! Our part
 it is to act in
 accordance with the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh in humility and firm
 steadfastness.

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There Can Be No True Happiness and Progress without Spirituality

Paris

November 21st, 1911

(Paris, pp. 106-109)

Ferocity and savagery are natural to animals, but men should show forth the qualities of love and affection. God sent all His Prophets into the world with one aim, to sow in the hearts of men love and goodwill, and for this great purpose they were willing to suffer and to die. All the sacred Books were written to lead and direct man into the ways of love and unity; and yet, in spite of all this, we have the sad spectacle of war and bloodshed in our

midst.

When we look into the pages of history, past and present, we see the black earth reddened by human blood. Men kill each other like the savage wolves, and forget the laws of love and tolerance.

Now this luminous age has come, bringing with it wonderful civilization and material progress. Men's intellects have widened, their perceptions grown, but alas, in spite of all this, fresh blood is being spilt day by day. Look at the present Turco-Italian war; consider for a moment the fate of these unhappy people! How many have been killed during this sad time? How many homes are ruined, wives desolate, and children orphans! And what is to be gained in exchange for all this anguish and heartache? Only a corner of the earth! This all shows that material progress alone does not tend to uplift man. On the contrary, the more he becomes immersed in material progress, the more does his spirituality become obscured.

In times gone by progress on the material plane was not so rapid, neither was there bloodshed in such profusion. In ancient warfare there were no cannons, no guns, no dynamite, no shells, no torpedo boats, no battleships, no submarines. Now, owing to material civilization, we have all these inventions, and war goes from bad to worse! Europe itself has become like one immense arsenal, full of explosives, and may God prevent its ignition—for, should this happen, the whole world would be involved.

I want to make you understand that material progress and spiritual progress are two very different things, and that only if material progress goes hand in hand with spirituality can any real progress come about, and the Most Great Peace reign in the world. If men followed the Holy Counsels and the Teachings of the Prophets, if Divine Light shone in all hearts and men were really religious, we should soon see peace on earth and the Kingdom of God among men.

The laws of God may be likened unto the soul and material progress unto the body. If the body were not animated by the soul, it would cease to exist. It is my earnest prayer that spirituality

may ever grow and increase in the world, so that customs may become enlightened
and peace
and concord may be established.
War and rapine with their attendant cruelties are an abomination to God, and
bring their
own punishment, for the God of love is also a God of justice and each man must
inevitably
reap what he sows. Let us try to understand the commands of the Most High and
to order our
lives as He directs. True happiness depends on spiritual good and having the
heart ever open
to receive the Divine Bounty.
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If the heart turns away from the blessings God offers how can it hope for
happiness? If it
does not put its hope and trust in God's Mercy, where can it find rest? Oh,
trust in God! for His
Bounty is everlasting, and in His Blessings, for they are superb. Oh! put your
faith in the
Almighty, for He faileth not and His goodness endureth forever! His Sun giveth
Light
continually, and the Clouds of His Mercy are full of the Waters of Compassion
with which He
waters the hearts of all who trust in Him. His refreshing Breeze ever carries
healing in its wings
to the parched souls of men! Is it wise to turn away from such a loving Father,
Who showers
His blessings upon us, and to choose rather to be slaves of matter?
God in His infinite goodness has exalted us to so much honor, and has made us
masters
over the material world. Shall we then become her slaves? Nay, rather let us
claim our
birthright, and strive to live the life of the spiritual sons of God. The
glorious Sun of Truth has
once again risen in the East. From the far horizon of Persia its radiance is
spreading far and
wide, dispersing the dense clouds of superstition. The light of the unity of
mankind is beginning
to illumine the world, and soon the banner of Divine harmony and the solidarity
of nations will
be flying high in the Heavens. Yea, the breezes of the Holy Spirit will inspire
the whole world!
Oh, peoples and nations! Arise and work and be happy! Gather together under the
tent of
the unity of mankind!

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??Pain and Sorrow??

??Paris??

??November 22nd, 1911??

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??In this world we are influenced by two sentiments, Joy and Pain.??

??Joy gives us wings! In times of joy our strength is more vital, our intellect keener, and our??

??understanding less clouded. We seem better able to cope with the world and to find our sphere??

??of usefulness. But when sadness visits us we become weak, our strength leaves us, our??

??comprehension is dim and our intelligence veiled. The actualities of life seem to elude our??

??grasp, the eyes of our spirits fail to discover the sacred mysteries, and we become even as dead??

??beings.??

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There is no human being untouched by these two influences; but all the sorrow and the grief that exist come from the world of matter—the spiritual world bestows only the joy!

If we suffer it is the outcome of material things, and all the trials and troubles come from this world of illusion.

For instance, a merchant may lose his trade and depression ensues. A workman is dismissed and starvation stares him in the face. A farmer has a bad harvest, anxiety fills his mind. A man builds a house which is burnt to the ground and he is straightway homeless, ruined, and in despair.

All these examples are to show you that the trials which beset our every step, all our sorrow, pain, shame and grief, are born in the world of matter; whereas the spiritual Kingdom never causes sadness. A man living with his thoughts in this Kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ills all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene.

Today, humanity is bowed down with trouble, sorrow and grief, no one escapes; the world is wet with tears; but, thank God, the remedy is at our doors. Let us turn our hearts away from the world of matter and live in the spiritual world! It alone can give us freedom! If we are hemmed in by difficulties we have only to call upon God, and by His great Mercy we shall be helped.

If sorrow and adversity visit us, let us turn our faces to the Kingdom and heavenly consolation will be outpoured.

If we are sick and in distress let us implore God's healing, and He will answer our prayer.

When our thoughts are filled with the bitterness of this world, let us turn our eyes to the sweetness of God's compassion and He will send us heavenly calm! If we are imprisoned in the material world, our spirit can soar into the Heavens and we shall be free indeed!

When our days are drawing to a close let us think of the eternal worlds, and we shall be full of joy!

You see all round you proofs of the inadequacy of material things—how joy, comfort, peace and consolation are not to be found in the transitory things of the world. Is it not then foolishness to refuse to seek these treasures where they may be found? The doors of the spiritual Kingdom are open to all, and without is absolute darkness.

Thank God that you in this assembly have this knowledge, for in all the sorrows of life you can obtain supreme consolation. If your days on earth are numbered, you know that everlasting life awaits you. If material anxiety envelops you in a dark cloud, spiritual radiance lightens your path. Verily, those whose minds are illumined by the Spirit of the Most High have supreme consolation.

I myself was in prison forty years—one year alone would have been impossible to bear—nobody survived that imprisonment more than a year! But, thank God, during all those forty years I was supremely happy! Every day, on waking, it was like hearing good tidings, and every night infinite joy was mine. Spirituality was my comfort, and turning to God was my greatest joy. If this had not been so, do you think it possible that I could have lived through those forty years in prison?

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Thus, spirituality is the greatest of God's gifts, and "Life Everlasting" means "Turning to God." May you, one and all, increase daily in spirituality, may you be strengthened in all goodness, may you be helped more and more by the Divine consolation, be made free by the Holy Spirit of God, and may the power of the Heavenly Kingdom live and work among you.

This is my earnest desire, and I pray to God to grant you this favor.

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The Perfect Human Sentiments and Virtues

Paris

November 23rd, 1911

(Paris, pp. 112-114)

You should all be very happy and thankful to God for the great privilege that is yours.

This is purely a spiritual meeting! Praise be to God, your hearts are turned to Him, your

souls are attracted to the Kingdom, you have spiritual aspirations, and your thoughts soar above the world of dust.

You belong to the world of purity, and are not content to live the life of the animal, spending

your days in eating, drinking, and sleeping. You are indeed men! Your thoughts and ambitions

are set to acquire human perfection. You live to do good and to bring happiness

to others. Your
greatest longing is to comfort those who mourn, to strengthen the weak, and to
be the cause of
hope to the despairing soul. Day and night your thoughts are turned to the
Kingdom, and your
hearts are full of the Love of God.
Thus you know neither opposition, dislike, nor hatred, for every living
creature is dear to
you and the good of each is sought.
These are perfect human sentiments and virtues. If a man has none of these, he
had better
cease to exist. If a lamp has ceased to give light, it had better be destroyed.
If a tree bear no
fruit, it had better be cut down, for it only cumbereth the ground.
Verily, it is better a thousand times for a man to die than to continue living
without virtue.
We have eyes wherewith to see, but if we do not use them how do they profit us?
We have
ears wherewith to hear, but if we are deaf of what use are they?
We have a tongue wherewith to praise God and proclaim the good tidings, but if
we are
dumb how useless it is!
The All-Loving God created man to radiate the Divine light and to illumine the
world by
his words, action and life. If he is without virtue he becomes no better than a
mere animal, and
an animal devoid of intelligence is a vile thing.
The Heavenly Father gave the priceless gift of intelligence to man so that he
might become
a spiritual light, piercing the darkness of materiality, and bringing goodness
and truth into the
world. If ye will follow earnestly the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, ye shall
indeed become the light
of the world, the soul for the body of the world, the comfort and help for
humanity, and the
source of salvation for the whole universe. Strive therefore, with heart and
soul, to follow the

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precepts of the Blessed Perfection, and rest assured that if ye succeed in
living the life he marks
out for you, Eternal Life and everlasting joy in the Heavenly Kingdom will be
yours, and
celestial sustenance will be sent to strengthen you all your days.
It is my heartfelt prayer that each one of you may attain to this perfect joy!
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The Cruel Indifference of People towards the Suffering of Foreign Races
Paris
November 24th, 1911
(Paris, pp. 114-116)

I have just been told that there has been a terrible accident in this country.
A train has fallen
into the river and at least twenty people have been killed. This is going to be
a matter for
discussion in the French Parliament today, and the Director of the State
Railway will be called
upon to speak. He will be cross-examined as to the condition of the railroad
and as to what
caused the accident, and there will be a heated argument. I am filled with
wonder and surprise
to notice what interest and excitement has been aroused throughout the whole
country on
account of the death of twenty people, while they remain cold and indifferent
to the fact that
thousands of Italians, Turks, and Arabs are killed in Tripoli! The horror of
this wholesale
slaughter has not disturbed the Government at all! Yet these unfortunate people
are human
beings too.
Why is there so much interest and eager sympathy shown towards these twenty
individuals,
while for five thousand persons there is none? They are all men, they all
belong to the family
of mankind, but they are of other lands and races. It is no concern of the
disinterested countries
if these men are cut to pieces, this wholesale slaughter does not affect them!
How unjust, how
cruel is this, how utterly devoid of any good and true feeling! The people of
these other lands
have children and wives, mothers, daughters, and little sons! In these

countries today there is
 hardly a house free from the sound of bitter weeping, scarcely can one find a
 home untouched
 by the cruel hand of war.
 Alas! we see on all sides how cruel, prejudiced and unjust is man, and how slow
 he is to
 believe in God and follow His commandments.
 If these people would love and help one another instead of being so eager to
 destroy with
 sword and cannon, how much nobler would it be! How much better if they would
 live like a
 flock of doves in peace and harmony, instead of being like wolves and tearing
 each other to
 pieces.
 Why is man so hard of heart? It is because he does not yet know God. If he had
 knowledge
 of God he could not act in direct opposition to His laws; if he were
 spiritually minded such a
 line of conduct would be impossible to him. If only the laws and precepts of
 the prophets of
 God had been believed, understood and followed, wars would no longer darken the
 face of the
 earth.

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If man had even the rudiments of justice, such a state of things would be
 impossible.
 Therefore, I say unto you pray—pray and turn your faces to God, that He, in
 His infinite
 compassion and mercy, may help and succor these misguided ones. Pray that He
 will grant
 them spiritual understanding and teach them tolerance and mercy, that the eyes
 of their minds
 may be opened and that they may be endued with the gift of the spirit. Then
 would peace and
 love walk hand in hand through the lands, and these poor unhappy people might
 have rest.
 Let us all strive night and day to help in the bringing about of better
 conditions. My heart
 is broken by these terrible things and cries aloud—may this cry reach other
 hearts!
 Then will the blind see, the dead will be raised, and Justice will come and
 reign upon the
 earth.

I beseech you all to pray with heart and soul that this may be accomplished.

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Paris

November 25th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 116-118)

When Christ appeared He manifested Himself at Jerusalem. He called men to the Kingdom

of God, He invited them to Eternal Life and He told them to acquire human perfections. The

Light of Guidance was shed forth by that radiant Star, and He at length gave His life in sacrifice

for humanity.

All through His blessed life He suffered oppression and hardship, and in spite of all this

humanity was His enemy!

They denied Him, scorned Him, ill-treated Him and cursed Him. He was not treated like a

man—and yet in spite of all this He was the embodiment of pity and of supreme goodness and

love.

He loved all humanity, but they treated Him as an enemy and were incapable of appreciating Him. They set no value on His words and were not illumined by the flame of His

love.

Later they realized who He was; that He was the Sacred and Divine Light, and that His

words held Eternal Life.

His heart was full of love for all the world, His goodness was destined to reach each one—

and as they began to realize these things, they repented—but He had been crucified!

It was not until many years after His ascension that they knew who He was, and at the time

of His ascension He had only a very few disciples; only a comparatively small following

believed His precepts and followed His laws. The ignorant said, “Who is this individual; He

has only a few disciples!” But those who knew said: “He is the Sun who will shine in the East

and in the West, He is the Manifestation who shall give life to the world.”

What the first disciples had seen the world realized later.

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Therefore, you who are in Europe, do not be discouraged because you are few or because

people think that your Cause is of no importance. If few people come to your gatherings do not

lose heart, and if you are ridiculed and contradicted be not distressed, for

the apostles of Christ
had the same to bear. They were reviled and persecuted, cursed and ill-treated,
but in the end
they were victorious and their enemies were found to be wrong.
If history should repeat itself and all these same things should happen to you,
do not be
saddened but be full of joy, and thank God that you are called upon to suffer
as holy men of
old suffered. If they oppose you be gentle with them, if they contradict be
firm in your faith, if
they desert you and flee from before you, seek them out and treat them kindly.
Do harm to
nobody; pray for all; try to make your light shine in the world and let your
banner fly high in
the Heavens. The beautiful perfume of your noble lives will permeate
everywhere. The light of
truth kindled in your hearts will shine out to the distant horizon!
The indifference and scorn of the world matters not at all, whereas your lives
will be of the
greatest importance.
All those who seek truth in the Heavenly Kingdom shine like the stars; they are
like fruit
trees laden with choice fruit, like seas full of precious pearls.
Only have faith in the Mercy of God, and spread the Divine Truth.

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Words Spoken by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Pastor Wagner’s Church (Foyer de
 l’Ame) in Paris
 November 26th, 1911
 (Paris, pp. 119-123)

I am deeply touched by the sympathetic words which have been addressed to me,
 and I
 hope that day by day true love and affection may grow among us. God has willed
 that love
 should be a vital force in the world, and you all know how I rejoice to speak
 of love.
 All down the ages the prophets of God have been sent into the world to serve

the cause of
truth—Moses brought the law of truth, and all the prophets of Israel after
him sought to spread
it.
When Jesus came He lighted the flaming torch of truth, and carried it aloft so
that the whole
world might be illumined thereby. After Him came His chosen apostles, and they
went far and
wide, carrying the light of their Master’s teaching into a dark world—and,
in their turn, passed
on.
Then came Muhammad, who in His time and way spread the knowledge of truth
among a
savage people; for this has always been the mission of God’s elect.
So, at last, when Bahá’u’lláh arose in Persia, this was His most ardent
desire, to rekindle
the waning light of truth in all lands. All the holy ones of God have tried
with heart and soul to

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spread the light of love and unity throughout the world, so that the darkness
of materiality
might disappear and the light of spirituality might shine forth among the
children of men. Then
would hate, slander and murder disappear, and in their stead love, unity and
peace would reign.
All the Manifestations of God came with the same purpose, and they have all
sought to lead
men into the paths of virtue. Yet we, their servants, still dispute among
ourselves! Why is it
thus? Why do we not love one another and live in unity?
It is because we have shut our eyes to the underlying principle of all
religions, that God is
one, that He is the Father of us all, that we are all immersed in the ocean of
His mercy and
sheltered and protected by His loving care.
The glorious Sun of Truth shines for all alike, the waters of Divine Mercy
immerse each
one, and His Divine favor is bestowed on all His children.
This loving God desires peace for all His creatures—why, then, do they spend
their time in
war?
He loves and protects all His children—why do they forget Him?
He bestows His Fatherly care on us all—why do we neglect our brothers?
Surely, when we realize how God loves and cares for us, we should so order our
lives that

we may become more like Him.
 God has created us, one and all—why do we act in opposition to His wishes,
 when we are
 all His children, and love the same Father? All these divisions we see on all
 sides, all these
 disputes and opposition, are caused because men cling to ritual and outward
 observances, and
 forget the simple, underlying truth. It is the outward practices of religion
 that are so different,
 and it is they that cause disputes and enmity—while the reality is always the
 same, and one.
 The Reality is the Truth, and truth has no division. Truth is God's guidance,
 it is the light of
 the world, it is love, it is mercy. These attributes of truth are also human
 virtues inspired by the
 Holy Spirit.
 So let us one and all hold fast to truth, and we shall be free indeed!
 The day is coming when all the religions of the world will unite, for in
 principle they are
 one already. There is no need for division, seeing that it is only the outward
 forms that separate
 them. Among the sons of men some souls are suffering through ignorance, let us
 hasten to teach
 them; others are like children needing care and education until they are grown,
 and some are
 sick—to these we must carry Divine healing.
 Whether ignorant, childish or sick, they must be loved and helped, and not
 disliked because
 of their imperfection.
 Doctors of religion were instituted to bring spiritual healing to the peoples
 and to be the
 cause of unity among the nations. If they become the cause of division they had
 better not exist!
 A remedy is given to cure a disease, but if it only succeeds in aggravating the
 complaint, it is
 better to leave it alone. If religion is only to be a cause of disunion it had
 better not exist.
 All the Divine Manifestations sent by God into the world would have gone
 through their
 terrible hardships and sufferings for the single hope of spreading Truth, unity
 and concord
 among men. Christ endured a life of sorrow, pain and grief, to bring a perfect
 example of love
 into the world—and in spite of this we continue to act in a contrary spirit
 one towards the other!
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Love is the fundamental principle of God's purpose for man, and He has commanded us to love each other even as He loves us. All these discords and disputes which we hear on all sides only tend to increase materiality. The world for the most part is sunk in materialism, and the blessings of the Holy Spirit are ignored. There is so little real spiritual feeling, and the progress of the world is for the most part merely material. Men are becoming like unto beasts that perish, for we know that they have no spiritual feeling—they do not turn to God, they have no religion! These things belong to man alone, and if he is without them he is a prisoner of nature, and no whit better than an animal. How can man be content to lead only an animal existence when God has made him so high a creature? All creation is made subject to the laws of nature, but man has been able to conquer these laws. The sun, in spite of its power and glory, is bound by the laws of nature, and cannot change its course by so much as a hair's breadth. The great and mighty ocean is powerless to change the ebb and flow of its tides—nothing can stand against nature's laws but man! But to man God has given such wonderful power that he can guide, control and overcome nature. The natural law for man is to walk on the earth, but he makes ships and flies in the air! He is created to live on dry land, but he rides on the sea and even travels under it! He has learnt to control the power of electricity, and he takes it at his will and imprisons it in a lamp! The human voice is made to speak across short distances, but man's power is such that he has made instruments and can speak from East to West! All these examples show you how man can govern nature, and how, as it were, he wrests a sword from the hand of nature and uses it against herself. Seeing that man has been created master of nature, how foolish it is of him to become her slave! What ignorance and stupidity it is to worship and adore nature, when God in His goodness has made us masters thereof. God's power is visible to all, yet men

shut their eyes and see it not. The Sun of Truth is shining in all His
splendor, but man with fast
shut eyes cannot behold His glory! It is my earnest prayer to God that by His
Mercy and Loving
Kindness you may all be united, and filled with the utmost joy.
I beseech you, one and all, to add your prayers to mine to the end that war and
bloodshed
may cease, and that love, friendship, peace and unity may reign in the world.
All down the ages we see how blood has stained the surface of the earth; but
now a ray of
greater light has come, man's intelligence is greater, spirituality is
beginning to grow, and a
time is surely coming when the religions of the world will be at peace. Let us
leave the
discordant arguments concerning outward forms, and let us join together to
hasten forward the
Divine Cause of unity, until all humanity knows itself to be one family, joined
together in love.

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Message to the London Bahá'ís for the Day of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Specially
given to
Mrs. Enthoven
Paris
November 26th, 1911
(London, pp. 126-127)

GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 The doors of the Kingdom of God are open!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 Armies of Angels are descending from Heaven!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 The Sun of Truth is rising!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 Heavenly food is being sent from above!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 The Trumpet is sounding!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 The Banner of the Great Peace is floating far and wide!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 The Light of the Lamp of the Oneness of Humanity is shining bright!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 The fire of the Love of God is blazing!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 The Holy Spirit is being outpoured!
 GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!
 For Everlasting Life is here!
 O Ye that sleep, Awake!
 O ye heedless ones, Learn wisdom!
 O Blind, receive your sight!

269)1911(?

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O Deaf, Hear!
 O Dumb, Speak!
 O Dead, Arise!
 Be Happy!
 Be Happy!
 Be full of Joy!

This is the day of the Proclamation of the Báb!
 It is the Festival of the Forerunner of the Blessed Beauty (Bahá'u'lláh).
 It is the day of the dawning of the Morning of Guidance.

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This Great and Glorious Cause

4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris

November 28th, 1911

(Paris, pp. 167-168)

In these gatherings where we have met and spoken together you have all become acquainted

with the principles of this dispensation, and with the reality of facts. Unto you it has been given

to know these things, but there are many still unenlightened and submerged in superstition.

They have heard but little of this great and glorious Cause, and the knowledge they have is for

the most part based only on hearsay. Alas, poor souls, the knowledge they have
 is not based on
 truth, the foundation of their belief is not the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh!
 There is, assuredly, a
 certain amount of truth in what they have been told, but for the most part
 their information has
 been inaccurate.
 The true principles of the blessed Cause of God are the eleven rules which I
 have given
 you, and I have carefully explained these, one by one.
 You must endeavor always to live and act in direct obedience to the teachings
 and laws of
 Bahá'u'lláh, so that every individual may see in all the acts of your
 life that in word and in
 deed you are followers of the Blessed Perfection.
 Exert yourselves so that this glorious teaching may encircle the globe, and
 that spirituality
 may be infused into the hearts of men.
 The breath of the Holy Spirit shall confirm you, and although many will arise
 against you,
 they shall not prevail!
 When the Lord Christ was crowned with thorns, He knew that all the diadems of
 the world
 were at His feet. All earthly crowns, however brilliant, powerful and
 resplendent, bowed in
 adoration before the crown of thorns! It was from this sure and certain
 knowledge He spoke,
 when He said: "All power is given unto Me, in Heaven and in earth."⁵²
 Now I say unto you, bear this on your hearts and in your minds. Verily your
 light shall
 illumine the whole world, your spirituality shall affect the heart of things.
 You shall in truth
 become the lighted torches of the globe. Fear not, neither be dismayed, for
 your light shall
 penetrate the densest darkness. This is the Promise of God, which I give unto
 you. Rise! and
 serve the Power of God!

Matthew 18:18

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Theosophical Society, Paris
(Paris, pp. 127-134)

Since my arrival in Paris, I have been told of the Theosophical Society, and I know that it is composed of honored and respected men. You are men of intellect and thought, men with spiritual ideals, and it is a great pleasure for me to be among you. Let us thank God who has drawn us together this evening. It gives me great joy, for I see that you are seekers after truth. You are not held in bondage by the chains of prejudice, and your greatest longing is to know the truth. Truth may be likened to the sun!

The sun is the
 luminous body that disperses all shadows; in the same way does truth scatter
 the shadows of
 our imagination. As the sun gives life to the body of humanity so does truth
 give life to their
 souls. Truth is a sun that rises from different points on the horizon.
 Sometimes the sun rises from the center of the horizon, then in summer it rises
 farther north,
 in winter farther south—but it is always the self-same sun, however different
 are the points of
 its rising.
 In like manner truth is one, although its manifestations may be very different.
 Some men
 have eyes and see. These worship the sun, no matter from which point on the
 horizon it may
 dawn; and when the sun has left the winter sky to appear in the summer one,
 they know how
 to find it again. Others there are who worship only the spot from which the sun
 arose, and when
 it arises in its glory from another place they remain in contemplation before
 the spot of its
 former rising. Alas! these men are deprived of the blessings of the sun. Those
 who in truth
 adore the sun itself will recognize it from whatsoever dawning-place it may
 appear, and will
 straightway turn their faces towards its radiance.
 We must adore the sun itself and not merely the place of its appearance. In the
 same way
 men of enlightened heart worship truth on whatever horizon it appears. They are
 not bound by
 personality, but they follow the truth, and are able to recognize it no matter
 from whence it may
 come. It is this same truth which helps humanity to progress, which gives life
 to all created
 beings, for it is the Tree of Life!
 In His teaching Bahá'u'lláh gives us the explanation of truth, and I wish
 to speak to you
 briefly about this, for I see that you are capable of understanding.
 The first principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:
 The Search for Truth
 Man must cut himself free from all prejudice and from the result of his own
 imagination,
 so that he may be able to search for truth unhindered. Truth is one in all
 religions, and by means
 of it the unity of the world can be realized.
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All the peoples have a fundamental belief in common. Being one, truth cannot be divided,
and the differences that appear to exist among the nations only result from their attachment to
prejudice. If only men would search out truth, they would find themselves united.

The second principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

The Unity of Mankind

The one all-loving God bestows His divine Grace and Favor on all mankind; one and all

are servants of the Most High, and His Goodness, Mercy and loving Kindness are showered

upon all His creatures. The glory of humanity is the heritage of each one.

All men are the leaves and fruit of one same tree, they are all branches of the tree of Adam,

they all have the same origin. The same rain has fallen upon them all, the same warm sun makes

them grow, they are all refreshed by the same breeze. The only differences that exist and that

keep them apart are these: there are the children who need guidance, the ignorant to be

instructed, the sick to be tended and healed; thus, I say that the whole of humanity is enveloped

by the Mercy and Grace of God. As the Holy Writings tell us: All men are equal before God.

He is no respecter of persons.

The third principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

Religion should be the Cause of Love and Affection

Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the

earth, give birth to spirituality, and bring life and light to each heart. If

religion becomes a cause

of dislike, hatred and division, it were better to be without it, and to withdraw from such a

religion would be a truly religious act. For it is clear that the purpose of a remedy is to cure;

but if the remedy should only aggravate the complaint it had better be left alone. Any religion

which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion. All the holy prophets were as doctors to

the soul; they gave prescriptions for the healing of mankind; thus any remedy that causes

disease does not come from the great and supreme Physician.

The fourth principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

The Unity of Religion and Science

We may think of science as one wing and religion as the other; a bird needs two wings for

flight, one alone would be useless. Any religion that contradicts science or that is opposed to it, is only ignorance—for ignorance is the opposite of knowledge. Religion which consists only of rites and ceremonies of prejudice is not the truth. Let us earnestly endeavor to be the means of uniting religion and science. ‘Alí, the son-in-law of Muhammad, said: “That which is in conformity with science is also in conformity with religion.” Whatever the intelligence of man cannot understand, religion ought not to accept. Religion and science walk hand in hand, and any religion contrary to science is not the truth.

The fifth principle of Bahá’u’lláh is:

Prejudices of Religion, Race or Sect destroy the foundation of Humanity
All the divisions in the world, hatred, war and bloodshed, are caused by one or other of these prejudices.

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The whole world must be looked upon as one single country, all the nations as one nation, all men as belonging to one race. Religions, races, and nations are all divisions of man’s making only, and are necessary only in his thought; before God there are neither Persians, Arabs, French nor English; God is God for all, and to Him all creation is one. We must obey God, and strive to follow Him by leaving all our prejudices and bringing about peace on earth.

The sixth principle of Bahá’u’lláh is:

Equal opportunity of the means of Existence

Every human being has the right to live; they have a right to rest, and to a certain amount

of well-being. As a rich man is able to live in his palace surrounded by luxury and the greatest

comfort, so should a poor man be able to have the necessities of life. Nobody should die of

hunger; everybody should have sufficient clothing; one man should not live in excess while

another has no possible means of existence.

Let us try with all the strength we have to bring about happier conditions, so that no single

soul may be destitute.

The seventh principle of Bahá’u’lláh is:

The Equality of Men—equality before the Law

The Law must reign, and not the individual; thus will the world become a place of beauty and true brotherhood will be realized. Having attained solidarity, men will have found truth.

The eighth principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

Universal Peace

A Supreme Tribunal shall be elected by the peoples and governments of every nation, where members from each country and government shall assemble in unity. All disputes shall be brought before this Court, its mission being to prevent war.

The ninth principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

That Religion should not concern itself with Political Questions

Religion is concerned with things of the spirit, politics with things of the world. Religion

has to work with the world of thought, whilst the field of politics lies with the world of external conditions.

It is the work of the clergy to educate the people, to instruct them, to give them good advice and teaching so that they may progress spiritually. With political questions they have nothing to do.

The tenth principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

Education and Instruction of Women

Women have equal rights with men upon earth; in religion and society they are a very important element. As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs.

The eleventh principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

The Power of the Holy Spirit, by which alone Spiritual Development is achieved
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It is only by the breath of the Holy Spirit that spiritual development can come about. No

matter how the material world may progress, no matter how splendidly it may adorn itself, it

can never be anything but a lifeless body unless the soul is within, for it is the soul that animates

the body; the body alone has no real significance. Deprived of the blessings of the Holy Spirit

the material body would be inert.

Here are, very briefly explained, some of the principles of Bahá'u'lláh.

In short, it behooves us all to be lovers of truth. Let us seek her in every season and in every

country, being careful never to attach ourselves to personalities. Let us see the light wherever it shines, and may we be enabled to recognize the light of truth no matter where it may arise. Let us inhale the perfume of the rose from the midst of thorns which surround it; let us drink the running water from every pure spring. Since I arrived in Paris, it has given me much pleasure to meet such Parisians as you are, for praise be to God, you are intelligent, unprejudiced, and you long to know the truth. You have in your hearts the love of humanity, and as far as you are able, you exert yourselves in the cause of charitable work and in the bringing about of unity; this is especially what Bahá'u'lláh desired. It is for this reason that I am so happy to be among you, and I pray for you, that you may be receptacles for the Blessings of God, and that you may be the means of spreading spirituality throughout this country. You already have a wonderful material civilization and in like manner shall spiritual civilization be yours. Monsieur Bleck thanked 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and He replied: "I am very grateful to you for the kind sentiments which you have just uttered. I hope that these two movements will ere long be spread all over the earth. Then will the unity of humanity have pitched its tent in the center of the world."

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The Seventh Principle—Equality of Men

Paris

(Paris, pp. 154-155)

"The Laws of God are not imposition of will, or of power, or pleasure, but the resolutions of truth, reason and justice."

All men are equal before the law, which must reign absolutely.

The object of punishment is not vengeance, but the prevention of crime.

Kings must rule with wisdom and justice; prince, peer and peasant alike have

equal rights
to just treatment, there must be no favor shown to individuals. A judge must be
no “respector
of persons,” but administer the law with strict impartiality in every case
brought before him.
If a person commit a crime against you, you have not the right to forgive him;
but the law
must punish him in order to prevent a repetition of that same crime by others,
as the pain of the
individual is unimportant beside the general welfare of the people.
When perfect justice reigns in every country of the Eastern and Western World,
then will
the earth become a place of beauty. The dignity and equality of every servant
of God will be
acknowledged; the ideal of the solidarity of the human race, the true
brotherhood of man, will
be realized; and the glorious light of the Sun of Truth will illumine the souls
of all men.

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The Eighth Principle—Universal Peace
4 Avenue de Camoëns, Paris
(Paris, pp. 155-157)

A Supreme Tribunal shall be established by the peoples and Governments of every
nation,
composed of members elected from each country and Government. The members of
this Great
Council shall assemble in unity. All disputes of an international character
shall be submitted to
this Court, its work being to arrange by arbitration everything which otherwise
would be a
cause of war. The mission of this Tribunal would be to prevent war.
One of the great steps towards universal peace would be the establishment of a
universal
language. Bahá'u'lláh commands that the servants of humanity should meet
together, and
either choose a language which now exists, or form a new one. This was revealed
in the Kitábi-Aqdas forty years ago. It is there pointed out that the question
of diversity of tongues is a very
difficult one. There are more than eight hundred languages in the world, and no

person could
acquire them all.

The races of mankind are not isolated as in former days. Now, in order to be in close relationship with all countries it is necessary to be able to speak their tongues.

A universal language would make intercourse possible with every nation. Thus it would be needful to know two languages only, the mother tongue and the universal speech. The latter

would enable a man to communicate with any and every man in the world!

A third language would not be needed. To be able to talk with a member of any race and

country without requiring an interpreter, how helpful and restful to all!

Esperanto has been drawn up with this end in view: it is a fine invention and a splendid

piece of work, but it needs perfecting. Esperanto as it stands is very difficult for some people.

An international Congress should be formed, consisting of delegates from every nation in

the world, Eastern as well as Western. This Congress should form a language that could be

acquired by all, and every country would thereby reap great benefit.

Until such a language is in use, the world will continue to feel the vast need of this means

of intercourse. Difference of speech is one of the most fruitful causes of dislike and distrust

that exists between nations, which are kept apart by their inability to understand each other's

language more than by any other reason.

If everybody could speak one language, how much more easy would it be to serve humanity!

Therefore appreciate "Esperanto," for it is the beginning of the carrying out of one of the

most important of the Laws of Bahá'u'lláh, and it must continue to be improved and perfected.

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Evil

Paris

(Paris, pp. 177-178)

"What is evil?"

'Abdu'l-Bahá: "Evil is imperfection. Sin is the state of man in the

world of the baser nature,
 for in nature exist defects such as injustice, tyranny, hatred, hostility,
 strife: these are
 characteristics of the lower plane of nature. These are the sins of the world,
 the fruits of the tree
 from which Adam did eat. Through education we must free ourselves from these
 imperfections.
 The Prophets of God have been sent, the Holy Books have been written, so that
 man may be
 made free. Just as he is born into this world of imperfection from the womb of
 his earthly
 mother, so is he born into the world of spirit through divine education. When a
 man is born
 into the world of phenomena he finds the universe; when he is born from this
 world to the
 world of the spirit, he finds the Kingdom.”

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The Progress of the Soul
 Paris
 (Paris, pp. 178-179)

“Does the soul progress more through sorrow or through the joy in this
 world?”
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “The mind and spirit of man advance when he is tried by
 suffering. The
 more the ground is ploughed the better the seed will grow, the better the
 harvest will be. Just
 as the plough furrows the earth deeply, purifying it of weeds and thistles, so
 suffering and
 tribulation free man from the petty affairs of this worldly life until he
 arrives at a state of
 complete detachment. His attitude in this world will be that of divine
 happiness. Man is, so to
 speak, unripe: the heat of the fire of suffering will mature him. Look back to
 the times past and
 you will find that the greatest men have suffered most.”
 “He who through suffering has attained development, should he fear
 happiness?”
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “Through suffering he will attain to an eternal
 happiness which nothing can
 take from him. The apostles of Christ suffered: they attained eternal

happiness.”

“Then it is impossible to attain happiness without suffering?”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “To attain eternal happiness one must suffer. He who has reached the state

of self-sacrifice has true joy. Temporal joy will vanish.”

“Can a departed soul converse with someone still on earth?”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “A conversation can be held, but not as our conversation. There is no doubt

that the forces of the higher worlds interplay with the forces of this plane.

The heart of man is

open to inspiration; this is spiritual communication. As in a dream one talks with a friend while

the mouth is silent, so is it in the conversation of the spirit. A man may converse with the ego

within him saying: ‘May I do this? Would it be advisable for me to do this work?’ Such as this

is conversation with the higher self.”

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Paris

October and November, 1911

(London, pp. 122-125)

(A Loving Farewell Greeting)

After leaving London and during his two months stay in Paris, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá frequently

sent back messages to his English friends, some of whom journeyed over to take advantage of

the conferences there. On the eve of his departure for Alexandria, he gave the following

admonitory farewell to the people of England and France.

“Work,” he said unceasingly, “for the day of Universal Peace. Strive always that you may

be united. Kindness and love in the path of service must be your means.

“I bid a loving farewell to the people of France and England. I am very much pleased with

them. I counsel them that they may day by day strengthen the bond of love and amity to this

end,—that they may become the sympathetic embodiment of one nation. —That they may

extend themselves to a Universal Brotherhood to guard and protect the interests and rights of

all the nations of the East,—that they may unfurl the Divine Banner of justice,—that they may treat each nation as a family composed of the individual children of God and may know that before the sight of God the rights of all are equal. For all of us are the children of one Father. God is at peace with all his children; why should they engage in strife and warfare among themselves? God is showering down kindness; why should the inhabitants of this world exchange unkindness and cruelty?”
 “I will pray for you that you may be illumined with the Light of the Eternal.”

(Greetings by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá from Paris to London - October 1911)

Spoken to Mrs. Enthoven for conveyance to all the friends, and now written from memory.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá sent his greetings to all, begging all to go on acquiring strength in their belief and courage in its proclamation.

He spoke much of the pleasure he had felt in the atmosphere of England. He said there was

a strength of purpose in the English people and a firmness which he liked and admired, There

was honesty and uprightness. They were slow in starting a new idea, but, when they did, it was

only because their minds and common-sense had told them that the idea was sound.

The English as a nation had pleased him greatly.

Believers, he added, must show their belief in their daily lives, so that the world might see

the light shining in their faces. A bright and happy face cheers people on their way. If you are

sad, and pass a child who is laughing, the child, seeing your sad face, will cease to laugh, not

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knowing why. If the day be dark, how much a gleam of sunshine is prized; so let believers wear

smiling happy faces, gleaming like sunshine in the darkness. Let the Light of Truth and Honesty

shine from them, so that all who behold them may know that their word in business or pleasure

will be a word to trust and depend upon.

Forget self and work for the whole race. Remember always that one is working for the

world, not for a town or even for a country; because, as all are brethren, so every country is, as it were, one's own. Remember, above all, the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh concerning gossip and unseemly talk about others. Stories repeated about others are seldom good. A silent tongue is the safest. Even good may be harmful, if spoken at the wrong time, or to the wrong person. Finally 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent his greetings and blessings to all, and assured me he was constantly thinking and praying for all. To a gentleman who was questioning him, he remarked "The beginnings of all great religions were pure; but priests, taking possession of the minds of the people, filled them with dogmas and superstitions, so that religion became gradually corrupt. I come to teach no new religion. 'My only desire is, through the blessing of God, to show the road to the Great Light.'" Touching the gentleman gently on his shoulder, as a loving father might touch a son, he went on to say, "I am no Prophet, only a man like yourself."

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The Last Meeting
15 Rue Greuze, Paris
December 1st, 1911
(Paris, pp. 168-172)

When I arrived in Paris some time ago for the first time, I looked around me with much interest, and in my mind I likened this beautiful city to a large garden. With loving care and much thought I examined the soil, and found it to be very good and full of possibility for steadfast faith and firm belief, for a seed of God's

love has been cast into
 the ground.
 Clouds of Heavenly Mercy showered their rain upon it, and the Sun of Truth fell
 warmly
 upon the young seeds, and today one can see in your midst the birth of belief.
 The seed cast
 into the ground has begun to spring up, and day by day you will see it grow.
 The bounties of
 the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh shall indeed bring forth a wondrous harvest!
 Behold! I bring you glad and joyful tidings! Paris will become a garden of
 roses! All kinds
 of beautiful flowers will spring up and flourish in this garden, and the fame
 of their fragrance
 and beauty will be spread in all lands. When I think of Paris in the future, I
 seem to see her
 bathed in the light of the Holy Spirit! Verily, the day is dawning when Paris
 will receive her
 illumination, and the Goodness and Mercy of God will be visible to every living
 creature.

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Do not allow your minds to dwell on the present, but with eyes of faith look
 into the future,
 for in truth the Spirit of God is working in your midst.
 Since my arrival a few weeks ago, I can see the growth of spirituality. At the
 beginning
 only a few souls came to me for Light, but during my short sojourn among you
 the numbers
 have increased and doubled. This is a promise for the future!
 When Christ was crucified and left this world, He had only eleven disciples and
 a very few
 followers; but as He served the Cause of truth, look today at the result of His
 life's work! He
 has illumined the world, and given life to dead humanity. After His ascension
 little by little His
 Cause grew, the souls of His followers became more and more luminous, and the
 exquisite
 perfume of their saintly lives spread on all sides.
 Now today, thank God, a similar condition has begun in Paris. There are many
 souls who
 have turned to the Kingdom of God, and who are attracted to unity, love and
 truth.
 Try so to work that the goodness and mercy of the Most Glorious may enfold the
 whole of
 Paris. The Breath of the Holy Spirit will help you, the Celestial Light of the
 Kingdom will shine

in your hearts, and the blessed angels of God from Heaven will bring you strength and will succor you. Then thank God with all your hearts that you have attained to this supreme benefit.

A great part of the world is plunged in sleep, but you have been awakened. Many are blind, but you see!

The call of the Kingdom is heard in your midst. Glory be to God, you have been born again, you have been baptized by the fire of the Love of God; you have been plunged in the Sea of Life and regenerated by the Spirit of Love!

Having received such favor be thankful unto God, and never doubt His Goodness and Loving Kindness but have undying faith in the Bounties of the Kingdom. Consort together in brotherly love, be ready to lay down your lives one for the other, and not only for those who are dear to you, but for all humanity. Look upon the whole human race as members of one family, all children of God; and, in so doing, you will see no difference between them.

Humanity may be likened to a tree. This tree has branches, leaves, buds and fruit. Think of all men as being flowers, leaves or buds of this tree, and try to help each and all to realize and enjoy God's blessings. God neglects none: He loves all.

The only real difference that exists between people is that they are at various stages of development. Some are imperfect—these must be brought to perfection. Some are asleep—they must be awakened; some are negligent—they must be roused; but one and all are the children of God. Love them all with your whole heart; no one is a stranger to the other, all are friends. Tonight I come to say farewell to you—but bear this in your minds, that although our bodies may be far apart, in spirit we shall always be together.

I bear you one and all in my heart, and will forget none of you—and I hope that none of you will forget me.

I in the East, and you in the West, let us try with heart and soul that unity may dwell in the world, that all the peoples may become one people, and that the whole surface of the earth may be like one country—for the Sun of Truth shines on all alike.

All the Prophets of God came for love of this one great aim.

Look how Abraham strove to bring faith and love among the people; how Moses tried to unite the people by sound laws; how the Lord Christ suffered unto death to bring the light of love and truth into a darkened world; how Muhammad sought to bring unity and peace between the various uncivilized tribes among whom He dwelt. And last of all, Bahá'u'lláh has suffered forty years for the same cause—the single noble purpose of spreading love among the children of men—and for the peace and unity of the world the Báb gave up His life. Thus, strive to follow the example of these Divine Beings, drink from Their fountain, be illumined by Their Light, and to the world be as symbols of the Mercy and Love of God. Be unto the world as rain and clouds of mercy, as suns of truth; be a celestial army, and you shall indeed conquer the city of hearts. Be thankful unto God that Bahá'u'lláh has given us a firm and solid foundation. He left no place for sadness in hearts, and the writings of His sacred pen contain consolation for the whole world. He had the words of truth, and anything that is contrary to His teaching is false. The chief aim of all His work was to do away with division. The testament of Bahá'u'lláh is a Rain of Goodness, a Sun of Truth, Water of Life, the Holy Spirit. Thus open your hearts to receive the full power of His Beauty, and I will pray for you all that this joy may be yours. Now I say “Good-bye.” This I say only to your outer selves; I do not say it to your souls, for our souls are always together. Be comforted, and rest assured that day and night I shall turn to the Kingdom of the Most Glorious in supplication for you, that day by day you may grow better and holier, nearer to God, and more and more illumined by the radiance of His Love.

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advised and insisted, the greater became my longing to take this trip, and now I have come to

America to meet the friends of God. This long voyage will prove how great is my love for you.

There were many troubles and vicissitudes, but, in the thought of meeting you, all these things vanished and were forgotten.

I am greatly pleased with the city of New York. Its harbor entrance, its piers, buildings and

broad avenues are magnificent and beautiful. Truly, it is a wonderful city. As New York has

made such progress in material civilization, I hope that it may also advance spiritually in the

Kingdom and Covenant of God so that the friends here may become the cause of the

illumination of America, that this city may become the city of love and that the fragrances of

God may be spread from this place to all parts of the world. I have come for this. I pray that

you may be manifestations of the love of Bahá'u'lláh, that each one of you may become like a

clear lamp of crystal from which the rays of the bounties of the Blessed Perfection may shine

forth to all nations and peoples. This is my highest aspiration.

It was a long, long trip. The more we traveled, the greater seemed the expanse of the sea.

The weather was brilliant and fine throughout; there was no storm and no end to the sea.

I am very happy to meet you all here today. Praise be to God that your faces are shining

with the love of Bahá'u'lláh. To behold them is the cause of great spiritual happiness. We have

arranged to meet you every day at the homes of the friends.

In the East people were asking me, "Why do you undertake this long voyage?"

Your body

cannot endure such hardships of travel." When it is necessary, my body can endure everything.

It has withstood forty years of imprisonment and can still undergo the utmost trials.

I will see you again. Now I will greet each one of you personally. It is my hope that you will

all be happy and that we may meet again and again.

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12 April 1912

Talk at Studio of Miss Phillips

39 West Sixty-seventh Street, New York

Notes by John G. Grundy

(Promulgation, pp. 7-9)

I give you greeting in love and unity. The affairs of this world are to be accounted as nothing compared to the joy and heavenly happiness of meeting the friends of God. It is to experience this great joy and blessing that I have come here although weary from my long voyage upon the sea. Tonight I am in the greatest happiness, looking upon this concourse of God. Your meeting here is surely an evidence that you are upholding the Cause of God, that you are aiding and assisting in establishing the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the culmination of my happiness is to look upon your faces and realize that you have been brought together by the power of the Blessed Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh. In this meeting you are upholding His standard and assisting His Cause. Therefore, I behold in you the making of a goodly tree upon which divine fruits will appear to give sustenance to the world of humanity. With hearts set aglow by the fire of the love of God and spirits refreshed by the food of the heavenly spirit you must go forth as the disciples nineteen hundred years ago, quickening the hearts of men by the call of glad tidings, the light of God in your faces, severed from everything save God. Therefore, order your lives in accordance with the first principle of the divine teaching, which is love. Service to humanity is service to God. Let the love and light of the Kingdom radiate through you until all who look upon you shall be illumined by its reflection.

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Be as stars, brilliant and sparkling in the loftiness of their heavenly station. Do you appreciate

the Day in which you live?

This is the century of the Blessed Perfection!

This is the cycle of the light of His beauty!

This is the consummate day of all the Prophets!

These are the days of seed sowing. These are the days of tree planting. The bountiful

bestowals of God are successive. He who sows a seed in this day will behold his reward in the

fruits and harvest of the heavenly Kingdom. This timely seed, when planted in the hearts of the

beloved of God, will be watered by showers of divine mercy and warmed by the sunshine of

divine love. Its fruitage and flower shall be the solidarity of mankind, the perfection of justice

and the praiseworthy attributes of heaven manifest in humanity. All who sow such a seed and

plant such a tree according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh shall surely witness this divine

outcome in the degrees of its perfection and will attain unto the good pleasure of the Merciful

One.

Today the nations of the world are self-engaged, occupied with mortal and transitory

accomplishments, consumed by the fires of passion and self. Self is dominant; enmity and

animosity prevail. Nations and peoples are thinking only of their worldly interests and

outcomes. The clash of war and din of strife are heard among them. But the friends of the

Blessed Perfection have no thoughts save the thoughts of heaven and the love of God.

Therefore, you must without delay employ your powers in spreading the effulgent glow of the

love of God and so order your lives that you may be known and seen as examples of its

radiance. You must deal with all in loving-kindness in order that this precious seed entrusted

to your planting may continue to grow and bring forth its perfect fruit. The love and mercy of

God will accomplish this through you if you have love in your own heart.

The doors of the Kingdom are opened. The lights of the Sun of Truth are shining. The

clouds of divine mercy are raining down their priceless jewels. The zephyrs of a new and divine

springtime are wafting their fragrant breaths from the invisible world. Know ye then the value

of these days.

Awake ye to the realization of this heavenly opportunity. Strive with all the power of your souls, your deeds, actions and words to assist the spread of these glad tidings and the descent of this merciful bounty. You are the reality and expression of your deeds and actions. If you abide by the precepts and teachings of the Blessed Perfection, the heavenly world and ancient Kingdom will be yours—eternal happiness, love and everlasting life. The divine bounties are flowing. Each one of you has been given the opportunity of becoming a tree yielding abundant fruits. This is the springtime of Bahá'u'lláh. The verdure and foliage of spiritual growth are appearing in great abundance in the gardens of human hearts. Know ye the value of these passing days and vanishing nights. Strive to attain a station of absolute love one toward another. By the absence of love, enmity increases. By the exercise of love, love strengthens and enmities dwindle away. Consider me—in the years of my advanced age, burdened with physical infirmities—crossing the wide ocean to look upon your faces. It is my hope that through the life of the spirit you may all become as one soul, as one tree adorning the rose garden of the Kingdom. It is my hope that the endless treasures of the bestowals of God may be yours here and hereafter. It is

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my prayer that the Supreme Concourse may be illumined by your brilliant lights shining forever in the heavens of eternal glory.

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12 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard MacNutt

935 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 4-7)

This is a most happy visit. I have crossed the sea from the land of the Orient for the joy of meeting the friends of God. Although I am weary after my long journey, the light of the spirit shining in your faces brings me rest and reward. In this meeting the divine susceptibilities are radiant. This is a spiritual house, the home of the spirit. There is no discord here; all is love and unity. When souls are gathered together in this way, the divine bestowals descend. The purpose of the creation of man is the attainment of the supreme virtues of humanity through descent of the heavenly bestowals. The purpose of man's creation is, therefore, unity and harmony, not discord and separateness. If the atoms which compose the kingdom of the minerals were without affinity for each other, the earth would never have been formed, the universe could not have been created. Because they have affinity for each other, the power of life is able to manifest itself, and the organisms of the phenomenal world become possible. When this attraction or atomic affinity is destroyed, the power of life ceases to manifest; death and nonexistence result. It is so, likewise, in the spiritual world. That world is the Kingdom of complete attraction and affinity. It is the Kingdom of the One Divine Spirit, the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the affinity and love manifest in this meeting, the divine susceptibilities witnessed here are not of this world but of the world of the Kingdom. When the souls become separated and selfish, the divine bounties do not descend, and the lights of the Supreme Concourse are no longer reflected even though the bodies meet together. A mirror with its back turned to the sun has no power to reflect the sun's effulgence. Praise be to God! The purpose of this assembly is love and unity. The divine Prophets came to establish the unity of the Kingdom in human hearts. All of them proclaimed the glad tidings of the divine bestowals to the world of mankind. All brought the same message of divine love to the world. Jesus Christ gave His life upon the cross for the

unity of mankind. Those who believed in Him likewise sacrificed life, honor, possessions, family, everything, that this human world might be released from the hell of discord, enmity and strife. His foundation was the oneness of humanity. Only a few were attracted to Him.

They were not the kings and rulers of His time. They were not rich and important people. Some of them were catchers of fish. Most of them were ignorant men, not trained in the knowledge of this world. One of the greatest of them, Peter, could not remember the days of the week. All of them were men of the least consequence in the eyes of the world. But their hearts were pure and attracted by the fires of the Divine Spirit manifested in Christ. With this small army Christ conquered the world of the East and the West. Kings and nations rose against Him.

Philosophers and the greatest men of learning assailed and blasphemed His Cause. All were defeated and overcome, their tongues silenced, their lamps extinguished, their hatred quenched;
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no trace of them now remains. They have become as nonexistent, while His Kingdom is triumphant and eternal.

The brilliant star of His Cause has ascended to the zenith, while night has enveloped and eclipsed His enemies. His name, beloved and adored by a few disciples, now commands the reverence of kings and nations of the world. His power is eternal; His sovereignty will continue forever, while those who opposed Him are sleeping in the dust, their very names unknown, forgotten. The little army of disciples has become a mighty cohort of millions. The Heavenly Host, the Supreme Concourse are His legions; the Word of God is His sword; the power of God is His victory.

Jesus Christ knew this would come to pass and was content to suffer. His abasement was His glorification; His crown of thorns, a heavenly diadem. When they pressed it upon His blessed head and spat in His beautiful face, they laid the foundation of His everlasting

Kingdom. He still reigns, while they and their names have become lost and unknown. He is eternal and glorious; they are nonexistent. They sought to destroy Him, but they destroyed themselves and increased the intensity of His flame by the winds of their opposition.

Through His death and teachings we have entered into His Kingdom. His essential teaching was the unity of mankind and the attainment of supreme human virtues through love. He came to establish the Kingdom of peace and everlasting life. Can you find in His words any justification for discord and enmity? The purpose of His life and the glory of His death were to set mankind free from the sins of strife, war and bloodshed. The great nations of the world boast that their laws and civilization are based upon the religion of Christ. Why then do they make war upon each other? The Kingdom of Christ cannot be upheld by destroying and disobeying it. The banners of His armies cannot lead the forces of Satan. Consider the sad picture of Italy carrying war into Tripoli. If you should announce that Italy was a barbarous nation and not Christian, this would be vehemently denied. But would Christ sanction what they are doing in Tripoli? Is this destruction of human life obedience to His laws and teachings? Where does He command it? Where does He consent to it? He was killed by His enemies; He did not kill. He even loved and prayed for those who hung Him on the cross. Therefore, these wars and cruelties, this bloodshed and sorrow are Antichrist, not Christ. These are the forces of death and Satan, not the hosts of the Supreme Concourse of heaven. No less bitter is the conflict between sects and denominations. Christ was a divine Center of unity and love. Whenever discord prevails instead of unity, wherever hatred and antagonism take the place of love and spiritual fellowship, Antichrist reigns instead of Christ. Who is right in these controversies and hatreds between the sects? Did Christ command them to love or to hate each other? He loved even His enemies and prayed in the hour of His crucifixion for those who killed Him. Therefore, to be a Christian is not merely to bear the name of Christ and say,

“I belong to a Christian government.” To be a real Christian is to be a servant in His Cause and Kingdom, to go forth under His banner of peace and love toward all mankind, to be selfsacrificing and obedient, to become quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit, to be mirrors reflecting the radiance of the divinity of Christ, to be fruitful trees in the garden of His planting, to refresh the world by the water of life of His teachings—in all things to be like Him and filled with the spirit of His love. Praise be to God! The light of unity and love is shining in these faces. These spiritual susceptibilities are the real fruits of heaven. The Báb and Bahá’u’lláh over sixty years ago proclaimed the glad tidings of universal peace. The Báb was martyred in the Cause of God.

Bahá’u’lláh suffered forty years as a prisoner and exile in order that the Kingdom of love might

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be established in the East and West. He has made it possible for us to meet here in love and unity. Because He suffered imprisonment, we are free to proclaim the oneness of the world of humanity for which He stood so long and faithfully. He was chained in dungeons, He was without food, His companions were thieves and criminals, He was subjected to every kind of abuse and infliction, but throughout it all He never ceased to proclaim the reality of the Word of God and the oneness of humanity. We have been brought together here by the power of His Word—you from America, I from Persia—all in love and unity of spirit. Was this possible in former centuries? If it is possible now after fifty years of sacrifice and teaching, what shall we expect in the wonderful centuries coming? Therefore, let your faces be more radiant with hope and heavenly determination to serve the Cause of God, to spread the pure fragrances of the divine rose garden of unity, to awaken spiritual susceptibilities in the hearts of mankind, to kindle anew the spirit of humanity with divine fires and to reflect the glory of heaven to this gloomy world of materialism. When you possess these divine susceptibilities, you will be able to awaken and develop

them in others.

We cannot give of our wealth to the poor unless we possess it. How can the poor give to the

poor? How can the soul that is deprived of the heavenly bounties develop in other souls capacity

to receive those bounties?

Array yourselves in the perfection of divine virtues. I hope you may be quickened and

vivified by the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Then shall ye indeed become the angels of heaven

whom Christ promised would appear in this Day to gather the harvest of divine planting. This

is my hope. This is my prayer for you.

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13 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Morten

141 East Twenty-first Street, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 9-11)

Praise be to God! This is a radiant gathering. The faces are brilliant with the light of God.

The hearts are attracted to the Kingdom of Bahá. I beg of God that day by day your faces may

become brighter; day by day you may draw nearer to God; day by day you may take a greater

portion from the outpourings of the Holy Spirit so that you may become encircled by the

bounties of heaven.

The spiritual world is like unto the phenomenal world. They are the exact counterpart of each other. Whatever objects appear in this world of existence are the outer pictures of the world of heaven. When we look upon the phenomenal world, we perceive that it is divided into four seasons; one is the season of spring, another the season of summer, another autumn and then these three seasons are followed by winter. When the season of spring appears in the arena of existence, the whole world is rejuvenated and finds new life. The soul-refreshing breeze is wafted from every direction; the soul-quickenings bounty is everywhere; the cloud of mercy showers down its rain, and the sun shines upon everything. Day by day we perceive that the signs of vegetation are all about us. Wonderful flowers, hyacinths and roses perfume the nostrils. The trees are full of leaves and blossoms, and the blossoms are followed by fruit. The spring and summer are followed by autumn and winter. The flowers wither and are no more; the leaves turn gray and life has gone. Then comes another springtime; the former springtime is renewed; again a new life stirs within everything. The appearances of the Manifestations of God are the divine springtime. When Christ appeared in this world, it was like the vernal bounty; the outpouring descended; the effulgences of the Merciful encircled all things; the human world found new life. Even the physical world partook of it. The divine perfections were upraised; souls were trained in the school of heaven so that all grades of human existence received life and light. Then by degrees these fragrances of heaven were discontinued; the season of winter came upon the world; the beauties of spring vanished; the excellences and perfections passed away; the lights and quickenings were no longer evident; the phenomenal world and its materialities conquered everything; the spiritualities of life were lost; the world of existence became like unto a lifeless body; there was no trace of the spring left. Bahá'u'lláh has come into this world. He has renewed that springtime. The same fragrances are wafting; the same heat of the Sun is giving life; the same cloud is pouring

its rain, and with
our own eyes we see that the world of existence is advancing and progressing.
The human
world has found new life.
I hope that each and all of you may become like unto verdant and green trees so
that through
the breezes of the divine spring, the outpouring of heaven, the heat of the Sun
of Truth, you
may become eternally refreshed; that you may bear blossoms and become fruitful;
that you
may not be as fruitless trees. Fruitless trees do not bring forth fruits or
flowers. I hope that all
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of you may become friends of the paradise of Abhá, appearing with the utmost
freshness and
spiritual beauty. I pray in your behalf and beg of God confirmation and
assistance.
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??15 April 1912??

??Talk at Home of Mountfort Mills??

??327 West End Avenue, New York??

??Compiled from Stenographic Notes by Howard MacNutt??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 16-18??

??A few days ago I arrived in New York, coming direct from Alexandria. On a former trip I??

??traveled to Europe, visiting Paris and London. Paris is most beautiful in outward appearance.??

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The evidences of material civilization there are very great, but the spiritual civilization is far behind. I found the people of that city submerged and drowning in a sea of materialism. Their conversations and discussions were limited to natural and physical phenomena, without mention of God. I was greatly astonished. Most of the scholars, professors and learned men proved to be materialists. I said to them, "I am surprised and astonished that men of such perceptive caliber and evident knowledge should still be captives of nature, not recognizing the self-evident Reality."

The phenomenal world is entirely subject to the rule and control of natural law. These myriad suns, satellites and heavenly bodies throughout endless space are all captives of nature. They cannot transgress in a single point or particular the fixed laws which govern the physical universe. The sun in its immensity, the ocean in its vastness are incapable of violating these universal laws. All phenomenal beings—the plants in their kingdom, even the animals with their intelligence—are nature's subjects and captives. All live within the bounds of natural law, and nature is the ruler of all except man. Man is not the captive of nature, for although according to natural law he is a being of the earth, yet he guides ships over the ocean, flies through the air in airplanes, descends in submarines; therefore, he has overcome natural law and made it subservient to his wishes. For instance, he imprisons in an incandescent lamp

the illimitable
natural energy called electricity—a material force which can cleave
mountains—and bids it
give him light. He takes the human voice and confines it in the phonograph for
his benefit and
amusement. According to his natural power man should be able to communicate a
limited
distance, but by overcoming the restrictions of nature he can annihilate space
and send
telephone messages thousands of miles. All the sciences, arts and discoveries
were mysteries
of nature, and according to natural law these mysteries should remain latent,
hidden; but man
has proceeded to break this law, free himself from this rule and bring them
forth into the realm
of the visible. Therefore, he is the ruler and commander of nature. Man has
intelligence; nature
has not. Man has volition; nature has none. Man has memory; nature is without
it. Man has the
reasoning faculty; nature is deprived. Man has the perceptive faculty; nature
cannot perceive.
It is therefore proved and evident that man is nobler than nature.
If we accept the supposition that man is but a part of nature, we are
confronted by an
illogical statement, for this is equivalent to claiming that a part may be
endowed with qualities
which are absent in the whole. For man who is a part of nature has perception,
intelligence,
memory, conscious reflection and susceptibility, while nature itself is quite
bereft of them. How
is it possible for the part to be possessed of qualities or faculties which are
absent in the whole?
The truth is that God has given to man certain powers which are supernatural.
How then can
man be considered a captive of nature? Is he not dominating and controlling
nature to his own
uses more and more? Is he not the very divinity of nature? Shall we say nature
is blind, nature
is not perceptive, nature is without volition and not alive, and then relegate
man to nature and
its limitations? How can we answer this question? How will the materialists and
scholastic
atheists prove and support such a supposition? As a matter of fact, they
themselves make
natural laws subservient to their own wish and purpose. The proof is complete
that in man there
is a power beyond the limitations of nature, and that power is the bestowal of

God.

In New York I find the people more endowed with spiritual susceptibilities.

They are not

mere captives of nature's control; they are rising out of the bonds and

burden of captivity. For

this reason I am very happy and hopeful that, God willing, in this populous

country, in this vast

continent of the West, the virtues of the world of humanity shall become

resplendent; that the

oneness of human world-power, the love of God, may enkindle the hearts, and

that international

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peace may hoist its standards, influencing all other regions and countries from

here. This is my

hope.

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??14 April 1912??

??Talk at Union Meeting of Advanced Thought Centers??

??Carnegie Lyceum??

??West Fifty-seventh Street, New York??

??Notes by Mountfort Mills and Howard MacNutt??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 14-16??

??I have come from distant lands to visit the meetings and assemblies of this country. In every??

??meeting I find people gathered, loving each other; therefore, I am greatly pleased. The bond of??

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union is evidenced in this assembly today, where the power of God has brought together in

faith, agreement and concord those who are engaged in furthering the development of the

human world. It is my hope that all mankind may become similarly united in the bond and

agreement of love. Unity is the expression of the loving power of God and reflects the reality

of Divinity. It is resplendent in this Day through the bestowals of light upon humanity.

Throughout the universe the divine power is effulgent in endless images and pictures. The

world of creation, the world of humanity may be likened to the earth itself and the divine power

to the sun. This Sun has shone upon all mankind. In the endless variety of its reflections the

divine Will is manifested. Consider how all are recipients of the bounty of the same Sun. At

most the difference between them is that of degree, for the effulgence is one effulgence, the

one light emanating from the Sun. This will express the oneness of the world of humanity. The

body politic, or the social unity of the human world, may be likened to an ocean, and each

member, each individual, a wave upon that same ocean.

The light of the sun becomes apparent in each object according to the capacity of that

object. The difference is simply one of degree and receptivity. The stone would be a recipient

only to a limited extent; another created thing might be as a mirror wherein the sun is fully

reflected; but the same light shines upon both.

The most important thing is to polish the mirrors of hearts in order that they may become illumined and receptive of the divine light. One heart may possess the capacity of the polished mirror; another, be covered and obscured by the dust and dross of this world. Although the same Sun is shining upon both, in the mirror which is polished, pure and sanctified you may behold the Sun in all its fullness, glory and power, revealing its majesty and effulgence; but in the mirror which is rusted and obscured there is no capacity for reflection, although so far as the Sun itself is concerned it is shining thereon and is neither lessened nor deprived. Therefore, our duty lies in seeking to polish the mirrors of our hearts in order that we shall become reflectors of that light and recipients of the divine bounties which may be fully revealed through them.

This means the oneness of the world of humanity. That is to say, when this human body politic reaches a state of absolute unity, the effulgence of the eternal Sun will make its fullest light and heat manifest. Therefore, we must not make distinctions between individual members of the human family. We must not consider any soul as barren or deprived. Our duty lies in educating souls so that the Sun of the bestowals of God shall become resplendent in them, and this is possible through the power of the oneness of humanity. The more love is expressed among mankind and the stronger the power of unity, the greater will be this reflection and revelation, for the greatest bestowal of God is love. Love is the source of all the bestowals of God. Until love takes possession of the heart, no other divine bounty can be revealed in it.

All the Prophets have striven to make love manifest in the hearts of men. Jesus Christ sought to create this love in the hearts. He suffered all difficulties and ordeals that perchance the human heart might become the fountain source of love. Therefore, we must strive with all our heart and soul that this love may take possession of us so that all humanity—whether it be in the East or in the West—may be connected through the bond of this divine affection; for we

are all the waves of one sea; we have come into being through the same bestowal
and are
recipients from the same center. The lights of earth are all acceptable, but
the center of
effulgence is the sun, and we must direct our gaze to the sun. God is the
Supreme Center. The
more we turn toward this Center of Light, the greater will be our capacity.
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In the Orient there were great differences among races and peoples. They hated
each other,
and there was no association among them. Various and divergent sects were
hostile,
irreconcilable. The different races were in constant war and conflict. About
sixty years ago
Bahá'u'lláh appeared upon the eastern horizon. He caused love and unity
to become manifest
among these antagonistic peoples. He united them with the bond of love; their
former hatred
and animosity passed away; love and unity reigned instead. It was a dark world;
it became
radiant. A new springtime appeared through Him, for the Sun of Truth had risen
again. In the
fields and meadows of human hearts variegated flowers of inner significance
were blooming,
and the good fruits of the Kingdom of God became manifest.
I have come here with this mission: that through your endeavors, through your
heavenly
morals, through your devoted efforts a perfect bond of unity and love may be
established
between the East and the West so that the bestowals of God may descend upon all
and that all
may be seen to be the parts of the same tree—the great tree of the human
family. For mankind
may be likened to the branches, leaves, blossoms and fruit of that tree.
The favors of God are unending, limitless. Infinite bounties have encompassed
the world.
We must emulate the bounties of God, and just as each one of them—the bounty
of life, for
instance—surrounds and encompasses all, so likewise must we be connected and
blended
together until each part shall become the expression of the whole.
Consider: We plant a seed. A complete and perfect tree appears from it, and
from each seed
of this tree another tree can be produced. Therefore, the part is expressive of
the whole, for this

seed was a part of the tree, but therein potentially was the whole tree. So
each one of us may
become expressive or representative of all the bounties of life to mankind.
This is the unity of
the world of humanity. This is the bestowal of God. This is the felicity of the
human world,
and this is the manifestation of the divine favor.

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14 April 1912

Talk at Church of the Ascension

Fifth Avenue and Tenth Street, New York

Notes by Ahmad Sohráb and Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 11-13)

In his scriptural lesson this morning the revered doctor read a verse from the Epistle of St.

Paul to the Corinthians, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."

The light of truth has heretofore been seen dimly through variegated glasses, but now the

splendors of Divinity shall be visible through the translucent mirrors of pure hearts and spirits.

The light of truth is the divine teaching, heavenly instruction, merciful principles and spiritual

civilization. Since my arrival in this country I find that material civilization has progressed

greatly, that commerce has attained the utmost degree of expansion; arts, agriculture and all

details of material civilization have reached the highest stage of perfection, but spiritual

civilization has been left behind. Material civilization is like unto the lamp,

while spiritual
 civilization is the light in that lamp. If the material and spiritual
 civilization become united,
 then we will have the light and the lamp together, and the outcome will be
 perfect. For material
 civilization is like unto a beautiful body, and spiritual civilization is like
 unto the spirit of life.
 If that wondrous spirit of life enters this beautiful body, the body will
 become a channel for the
 distribution and development of the perfections of humanity.
 Jesus Christ came to teach the people of the world this heavenly civilization
 and not
 material civilization. He breathed the breath of the Holy Spirit into the body
 of the world and
 established an illumined civilization. Among the principles of divine
 civilization He came to
 proclaim is the Most Great Peace of mankind. Among His principles of spiritual
 civilization is
 the oneness of the kingdom of humanity. Among the principles of heavenly
 civilization He
 brought is the virtue of the human world. Among the principles of celestial
 civilization He
 announced is the improvement and betterment of human morals.
 Today the world of humanity is in need of international unity and conciliation.
 To establish
 these great fundamental principles a propelling power is needed. It is
 self-evident that the unity
 of the human world and the Most Great Peace cannot be accomplished through
 material means.
 They cannot be established through political power, for the political interests
 of nations are
 various and the policies of peoples are divergent and conflicting. They cannot
 be founded
 through racial or patriotic power, for these are human powers, selfish and
 weak. The very nature
 of racial differences and patriotic prejudices prevents the realization of this
 unity and
 agreement. Therefore, it is evidenced that the promotion of the oneness of the
 kingdom of
 humanity, which is the essence of the teachings of all the Manifestations of
 God, is impossible
 except through the divine power and breaths of the Holy Spirit. Other powers
 are too weak and
 are incapable of accomplishing this.

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For man two wings are necessary. One wing is physical power and material civilization;
the other is spiritual power and divine civilization. With one wing only, flight is impossible.
Two wings are essential. Therefore, no matter how much material civilization advances, it cannot attain to perfection except through the uplift of spiritual civilization.
All the Prophets have come to promote divine bestowals, to found the spiritual civilization and teach the principles of morality. Therefore, we must strive with all our powers so that spiritual influences may gain the victory. For material forces have attacked mankind. The world of humanity is submerged in a sea of materialism. The rays of the Sun of Reality are seen but dimly and darkly through opaque glasses. The penetrative power of the divine bounty is not fully manifest.
In Persia among the various religions and sects there were intense differences. Bahá'u'lláh appeared in that country and founded the spiritual civilization. He established affiliation among the various peoples, promoted the oneness of the human world and unfurled the banner of the Most Great Peace. He wrote special Epistles covering these facts to all the kings and rulers of nations. Sixty years ago He conveyed His message to the leaders of the political world and to high dignitaries of the spiritual world. Therefore, spiritual civilization is progressing in the Orient, and oneness of humanity and peace among the nations is being accomplished step by step. Now I find a strong movement for universal peace emanating from America. It is my hope that this standard of the oneness of the world of humanity may be upraised with the utmost solidity so that the Orient and Occident may become perfectly reconciled and attain complete intercommunication, the hearts of the East and West become united and attracted, real union become unveiled, the light of guidance shine, divine effulgences be seen day by day so that the world of humanity may find complete tranquillity, the eternal happiness of man become evident and the hearts of the people of the world be as mirrors in which the rays of the Sun of Reality

may be reflected. Consequently, it is my request that you should strive so that
the light of reality
may shine and the everlasting felicity of the world of man become apparent.
I will pray for you so you may attain this everlasting happiness. When I
arrived in this city,
I was made very happy, for I perceived that the people here have capacity for
divine bestowals
and have worthiness for the civilization of heaven. I pray that you may attain
to all merciful
bounties.

O Almighty! O God! O Thou compassionate One! This servant of Thine has hastened
to
the regions of the West from the uttermost parts of the East that, perchance,
these nostrils may
be perfumed by the fragrances of Thy bestowals; that the breeze of the rose
garden of guidance
may blow over these cities; that the people may attain to the capacity of
receiving Thy favors;
that the hearts may be rejoiced through Thy glad tidings; that the eyes may
behold the light of
reality; that the ears may hearken to the call of the Kingdom. O Almighty!
Illumine the hearts.

O kind God! Make the souls the envy of the rose garden and the meadow. O
incomparable
Beloved! Waft the fragrance of Thy bounty. Radiate the lights of compassion so
that the hearts
may be cleansed and purified and that they may take a share and portion from
Thy
confirmations. Verily, this congregation is seeking Thy path, searching for Thy
mystery,
beholding Thy face and desiring to be characterized with Thine attributes.
O Almighty! Confer Thou infinite bounties. Bestow Thine inexhaustible treasury
so that
these impotent ones may become powerful.
Verily, Thou art the Kind. Thou art the Generous. Thou art the Omniscient, the
Omnipotent.

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??16 April 1912??

??Talk at Hotel Ansonia to Bahá'í Friends of New Jersey??

??Broadway and Seventy-third Street, New York??

??Notes by Ahmad Sohráb??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 18-20??

??Souls from the East and West have been brought together here through the power of the??

??Holy Spirit. Such a gathering as this would be impossible through material means. A meeting??

??of this kind has never been established in New York, for here tonight we find people from??

??remote regions of the earth, associated with the people of America in the utmost love and??

??spiritual unity. This is only possible through the power of God. Christ appeared in this world??

??nineteen hundred years ago to establish ties of unity and bonds of love between the various??

??nations and different communities. He cemented together the sciences of Rome and the??

??splendors of the civilization of Greece. He also accomplished affiliation between the Assyrian??

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kingdom and the power of Egypt. The blending of these nations in unity, love and agreement

had been impossible, but Christ through divine power established this condition among the children of men.

A much greater difficulty confronts us today when we endeavor to establish unity between

the Orient and the Occident. Bahá'u'lláh through the power of heaven has brought the East and

the West together. Ere long we shall know that they have been cemented by the power of God.

The oneness of the kingdom of humanity will supplant the banner of conquest, and all

communities of the earth will gather under its protection. No nation with separate and restricted boundaries—such as Persia, for instance—will exist. The United States of America will be known only as a name. Germany, France, England, Turkey, Arabia—all these various nations will be welded together in unity. When the people of the future are asked, “To which nationality do you belong?” the answer will be, “To the nationality of humanity. I am living under the shadow of Bahá’u’lláh. I am the servant of Bahá’u’lláh. I belong to the army of the Most Great Peace.” The people of the future will not say, “I belong to the nation of England, France or Persia”; for all of them will be citizens of a universal nationality—the one family, the one country, the one world of humanity—and then these wars, hatreds and strifes will pass away.

Bahá’u’lláh appeared in a country which was the center of prejudice. In that country were many different communities, religions, sects and denominations. All the animosities of past centuries existed among them. They were ready to kill each other. They considered the killing of others who did not agree with them in religious belief an act of worship. Bahá’u’lláh established such unity and agreement between these various communities that the greatest love and amity are now witnessed among them.

Today the Bahá’ís of the East are longing with deep desire to see you face to face. Their highest hope and fondest wish is that the day may come when they will be gathered together in an assembly with you. Consider well the power that accomplished this wonderful transformation.

The body of the human world is sick. Its remedy and healing will be the oneness of the kingdom of humanity. Its life is the Most Great Peace. Its illumination and quickening is love. Its happiness is the attainment of spiritual perfections. It is my wish and hope that in the bounties and favors of the Blessed Perfection we may find a new life, acquire a new power and attain to a wonderful and supreme source of energy so that the Most Great Peace of divine intention shall be established upon the foundations of the unity of the world of men with God.

May the love of God be spread from this city, from this meeting to all the surrounding countries.
 Nay, may America become the distributing center of spiritual enlightenment, and all the world receive this heavenly blessing! For America has developed powers and capacities greater and more wonderful than other nations. While it is true that its people have attained a marvelous material civilization, I hope that spiritual forces may animate this great body and a corresponding spiritual civilization be established. May the inhabitants of this country become like angels of heaven with faces turned continually toward God. May all of them become the servants of the Omnipotent One. May they rise from present material attainments to such a height that heavenly illumination may stream from this center to all the peoples of the world. The divine Jerusalem has come down from heaven. The bride of Zion has appeared. The voice of the Kingdom of God has been raised. May you attain supreme capacity and magnetic attraction in this realm of might and power—manifesting new energy and wonderful accomplishment, for God is your Assister and Helper. The breath of the Holy Spirit is your

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comforter, and the angels of heaven surround you. I desire this power for you. Rest assured that these bounties now overshadow you.
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17 April 1912
 Talk at Hotel Ansonia
 Broadway and Seventy-third Street, New York
 Notes by Howard MacNutt
 (Promulgation, pp. 20-22)

During my visit to London and Paris last year I had many talks with the materialistic philosophers of Europe. The basis of all their conclusions is that the

acquisition of knowledge
of phenomena is according to a fixed, invariable law—a law mathematically
exact in its
operation through the senses. For instance, the eye sees a chair; therefore,
there is no doubt of
the chair's existence. The eye looks up into the heavens and beholds the sun;
I see flowers upon
this table; I smell their fragrance; I hear sounds outside, etc. This, they
say, is a fixed
mathematical law of perception and deduction, the operation of which admits of
no doubt
whatever; for inasmuch as the universe is subject to our sensing, the proof is
self-evident that
our knowledge of it must be gained through the avenues of the senses. That is
to say, the
materialists announce that the criterion and standard of human knowledge is
sense perception.
Among the Greeks and Romans the criterion of knowledge was reason—that
whatever is
provable and acceptable by reason must necessarily be admitted as true. A third
standard or
criterion is the opinion held by theologians that traditions or prophetic
statement and
interpretations constitute the basis of human knowing. There is still another,
a fourth criterion,
upheld by religionists and metaphysicians who say that the source and channel
of all human
penetration into the unknown is through inspiration. Briefly then, these four
criteria according
to the declarations of men are: first, sense perception; second, reason; third,
traditions; fourth,
inspiration.

In Europe I told the philosophers and scientists of materialism that the
criterion of the
senses is not reliable. For instance, consider a mirror and the images
reflected in it. These
images have no actual corporeal existence. Yet if you had never seen a mirror,
you would
firmly insist and believe that they were real. The eye sees a mirage upon the
desert as a lake of
water, but there is no reality in it. As we stand upon the deck of a steamer,
the shore appears to
be moving, yet we know the land is stationary and we are moving. The earth was
believed to
be fixed and the sun revolving about it, but although this appears to be so,
the reverse is now
known to be true. A whirling torch makes a circle of fire appear before the

eye, yet we realize
there is but one point of light. We behold a shadow moving upon the ground, but
it has no
material existence, no substance. In deserts the atmospheric effects are
particularly productive
of illusions which deceive the eye. Once I saw a mirage in which a whole
caravan appeared
traveling upward into the sky. In the far North other deceptive phenomena
appear and baffle
human vision. Sometimes three or four suns, called by scientists mock suns,
will be shining at
the same time, whereas we know that the great solar orb is one and that it
remains fixed and
single. In brief, the senses are continually deceived, and we are unable to
separate that which
is reality from that which is not.

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As to the second criterion—reason—this likewise is unreliable and not to be
depended
upon. This human world is an ocean of varying opinions. If reason is the
perfect standard and
criterion of knowledge, why are opinions at variance and why do philosophers
disagree so
completely with each other? This is a clear proof that human reason is not to
be relied upon as
an infallible criterion. For instance, great discoveries and announcements of
former centuries
are continually upset and discarded by the wise men of today. Mathematicians,
astronomers,
chemical scientists continually disprove and reject the conclusions of the
ancients; nothing is
fixed, nothing final; everything is continually changing because human reason
is progressing
along new roads of investigation and arriving at new conclusions every day. In
the future much
that is announced and accepted as true now will be rejected and disproved. And
so it will
continue ad infinitum.
When we consider the third criterion—traditions—upheld by theologians as
the avenue and
standard of knowledge, we find this source equally unreliable and unworthy of
dependence.
For religious traditions are the report and record of understanding and
interpretation of the
Book. By what means has this understanding, this interpretation been reached?

By the analysis
of human reason. When we read the Book of God, the faculty of comprehension by
which we
form conclusions is reason. Reason is mind. If we are not endowed with perfect
reason, how
can we comprehend the meanings of the Word of God? Therefore, human reason, as
already
pointed out, is by its very nature finite and faulty in conclusions. It cannot
surround the Reality
Itself, the Infinite Word. Inasmuch as the source of traditions and
interpretations is human
reason, and human reason is faulty, how can we depend upon its findings for
real knowledge?
The fourth criterion I have named is inspiration through which it is claimed
the reality of
knowledge is attainable. What is inspiration? It is the influx of the human
heart. But what are
satanic promptings which afflict mankind? They are the influx of the heart
also. How shall we
differentiate between them? The question arises: How shall we know whether we
are following
inspiration from God or satanic promptings of the human soul? Briefly, the
point is that in the
human material world of phenomena these four are the only existing criteria or
avenues of
knowledge, and all of them are faulty and unreliable. What then remains? How
shall we attain
the reality of knowledge? By the breaths and promptings of the Holy Spirit,
which is light and
knowledge itself. Through it the human mind is quickened and fortified into
true conclusions
and perfect knowledge. This is conclusive argument showing that all available
human criteria
are erroneous and defective, but the divine standard of knowledge is
infallible. Therefore, man
is not justified in saying, "I know because I perceive through my senses,"
or "I know because
it is proved through my faculty of reason," or "I know because it is
according to tradition and
interpretation of the Holy Book," or "I know because I am inspired." All
human standards of
judgment are faulty, finite.

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17 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney

780 West End Avenue, New York

Notes by John G. Grundy

(Promulgation, pp. 23-25)

In the Holy Books it is recorded that when the Sun of Truth dawns, it will appear in the East, and its light will be reflected in the West. Already its dawning has taken place in the East, and its signs are appearing in the West. Its illumination shall spread rapidly and widely in the Occident. The Sun of Truth has risen in Persia, and its effulgence is now manifest here in America. This is the greatest proof of its appearance in the horizon of the world, as recorded in the heavenly Books. Praise be to God! That which is prophesied in the Holy Books has been fulfilled.

On Sunday last at Carnegie Hall the revered soul who introduced 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave voice to the statement that according to tradition demons would appear from the land of the sunrise, but now we find angels appearing instead. At the time this statement was made a reply was not possible, but today we will speak of it. The great spiritual lights have always appeared in the East. The Blessed Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh, appeared in the East. Jesus Christ dawned upon the horizon of the East. Moses, Aaron, Joseph and all the Israelitish prophets such as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah and others appeared from the Orient. The lights of Muhammad and the Báb shone from the East. The eastern horizon has been flooded with the effulgence of these great lights, and only from the East have they risen to shine upon the West. Now—praise be to God!—you are living in the dawn of a cycle when the Sun of Truth is again shining forth from the East, illumining all regions. The world has become a new world. The darkness of night which has enveloped humanity is passing. A new day has dawned. Divine susceptibilities and heavenly capacities are

developing in human souls under the training of the Sun of Truth. The capacities of souls are different. Their conditions are various. For example, certain minerals come from the stony regions of the earth. All are minerals, all are produced by the same sun, but one remains a stone while another develops the capacity of a glittering gem or jewel. From one plot of land tulips and hyacinths grow; from another, thorns and thistles. Each plot receives the bounty of the sunshine, but the capacity to receive it is not the same. Therefore, it is requisite that we must develop capacity and divine susceptibility in order that the merciful bounty of the Sun of Truth intended for this age and time in which we are living may reflect from us as light from pure crystals.

The bounties of the Blessed Perfection are infinite. We must endeavor to increase our capacity daily, to strengthen and enlarge our capabilities for receiving them, to become as perfect mirrors. The more polished and clean the mirror, the more effulgent is its reflection of the lights of the Sun of Truth. Be like a well-cultivated garden wherein the roses and variegated flowers of heaven are growing in fragrance and beauty. It is my hope that your hearts may become as ready ground, carefully tilled and prepared, upon which the divine showers of the

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bounties of the Blessed Perfection may descend and the zephyrs of this divine springtime may blow with quickening breath. Then will the garden of your hearts bring forth its flowers of delightful fragrance to refresh the nostril of the heavenly Gardener. Let your hearts reflect the glories of the Sun of Truth in their many colors to gladden the eye of the divine Cultivator Who has nourished them. Day by day become more closely attracted in order that the love of God may illumine all those with whom you come in contact. Be as one spirit, one soul, leaves of one tree, flowers of one garden, waves of one ocean. As difference in degree of capacity exists among human souls, as difference in capability

is found, therefore, individualities will differ one from another. But in reality this is a reason for unity and not for discord and enmity. If the flowers of a garden were all of one color, the effect would be monotonous to the eye; but if the colors are variegated, it is most pleasing and wonderful. The difference in adornment of color and capacity of reflection among the flowers gives the garden its beauty and charm. Therefore, although we are of different individualities, different in ideas and of various fragrances, let us strive like flowers of the same divine garden to live together in harmony. Even though each soul has its own individual perfume and color, all are reflecting the same light, all contributing fragrance to the same breeze which blows through the garden, all continuing to grow in complete harmony and accord. Become as waves of one sea, trees of one forest, growing in the utmost love, agreement and unity. If you attain to such a capacity of love and unity, the Blessed Perfection will shower infinite graces of the spiritual Kingdom upon you, guide, protect and preserve you under the shadow of His Word, increase your happiness in this world and uphold you through all difficulties. Therefore, it is my hope that day by day you will become more and more effulgent in the horizon of heaven, advance nearer and nearer toward the Kingdom of Abhá, attain greater and greater bounties of the Blessed Perfection. I am joyful, for I perceive the evidences of great love among you. I go to Chicago, and when I return I hope that love will have become infinite.

Then will it be an eternal joy to me and the friends in the Orient.

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18 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall L. Emery

273 West Ninetieth Street, New York

Notes by Miss Dixon

(Promulgation, pp. 25-29)

Tonight I wish to tell you something of the history of the Bahá'í Revelation.

The Blessed Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh, belonged to the nobility of Persia.

From earliest

childhood He was distinguished among His relatives and friends. They said,

“This child has

extraordinary power.” In wisdom, intelligence and as a source of new

knowledge, He was

advanced beyond His age and superior to His surroundings. All who knew Him were astonished

at His precocity. It was usual for them to say, “Such a child will not

live,” for it is commonly

believed that precocious children do not reach maturity. During the period of youth the Blessed

Perfection did not enter school. He was not willing to be taught. This fact is well established

among the Persians of Tihrán. Nevertheless, He was capable of solving the difficult problems

of all who came to Him. In whatever meeting, scientific assembly or theological discussion He

was found, He became the authority of explanation upon intricate and abstruse questions

presented.

Until His father passed away, Bahá'u'lláh did not seek position or political station

notwithstanding His connection with the government. This occasioned surprise and comment.

It was frequently said, “How is it that a young man of such keen intelligence and subtle

perception does not seek lucrative appointments? As a matter of fact, every position is open to

him.” This is an historical statement fully attested by the people of Persia.

He was most generous, giving abundantly to the poor. None who came to Him were turned

away. The doors of His house were open to all. He always had many guests. This unbounded

generosity was conducive to greater astonishment from the fact that He sought neither position

nor prominence. In commenting upon this His friends said He would become impoverished,

for His expenses were many and His wealth becoming more and more limited.

“Why is he not

thinking of his own affairs?” they inquired of each other; but some who were wise declared,

“This personage is connected with another world; he has something sublime within him that is

not evident now; the day is coming when it will be manifested.” In truth, the

Blessed Perfection

was a refuge for every weak one, a shelter for every fearing one, kind to every indigent one,

lenient and loving to all creatures.

He became well-known in regard to these qualities before the Báb appeared.

Then

Bahá'u'lláh declared the Báb's mission to be true and promulgated His

teachings. The Báb

announced that the greater Manifestation would take place after Him and called the Promised

One "Him Whom God shall make manifest," saying that nine years later the reality of His own

mission would become apparent. In His writings He stated that in the ninth year this expected

One would be known; in the ninth year they would attain to all glory and felicity; in the ninth

year they would advance rapidly. Between Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb there was communication

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privately. The Báb wrote a letter containing three hundred and sixty derivatives of the root

Bahá. The Báb was martyred in Tabríz; and Bahá'u'lláh, exiled into 'Iráq in 1852, announced

Himself in Baghdád. For the Persian government had decided that as long as He remained in

Persia the peace of the country would be disturbed; therefore, He was exiled in the expectation

that Persia would become quiet. His banishment, however, produced the opposite effect. New

tumult arose, and the mention of His greatness and influence spread everywhere throughout

the country. The proclamation of His manifestation and mission was made in Baghdád. He

called His friends together there and spoke to them of God.

At one point He left the city and went alone into the mountains of Kurdistán, where He

made His abode in caves and grottoes. A part of this time He lived in the city of Sulaymáníyyih.

Two years passed during which neither His friends nor family knew just where He was.

Although Bahá'u'lláh was solitary, secluded and unknown in His retirement, the report

spread throughout Kurdistán that this was a most remarkable and learned Personage, gifted

with a wonderful power of attraction. In a short time Kurdistán was magnetized

with His love.

During this period Bahá'u'lláh lived in poverty. His garments were those of the poor and needy.

His food was that of the indigent and lowly. An atmosphere of majesty haloed Him as the sun

at midday. Everywhere He was greatly revered and beloved.

After two years He returned to Baghdád. Friends He had known in

Sulaymáníyyih came to

visit Him. They found Him in His accustomed environment of ease and affluence and were

astonished at the appointments of One Who had lived in seclusion under such frugal conditions

in Kurdistán.

The Persian government believed the banishment of the Blessed Perfection from Persia

would be the extermination of His Cause in that country. These rulers now realized that it

spread more rapidly. His prestige increased; His teachings became more widely circulated. The

chiefs of Persia then used their influence to have Bahá'u'lláh exiled from Baghdád. He was

summoned to Constantinople by the Turkish authorities. While in Constantinople He ignored

every restriction, especially the hostility of ministers of state and clergy.

The official

representatives of Persia again brought their influence to bear upon the Turkish authorities and

succeeded in having Bahá'u'lláh banished from Constantinople to

Adrianople, the object being

to keep Him as far away as possible from Persia and render His communication with that

country more difficult. Nevertheless, the Cause still spread and strengthened.

Finally, they consulted together and said, "We have banished

Bahá'u'lláh from place to

place, but each time he is exiled his cause is more widely extended, his proclamation increases

in power, and day by day his lamp is becoming brighter. This is due to the fact that we have

exiled him to large cities and populous centers. Therefore, we will send him to a penal colony

as a prisoner so that all may know he is the associate of murderers, robbers and criminals; in a

short time he and his followers will perish." The Sultán of Turkey then banished Him to the

prison of 'Akká in Syria.

When Bahá'u'lláh arrived at 'Akká, through the power of God He was able to hoist His

banner. His light at first had been a star; now it became a mighty sun, and the
 illumination of
 His Cause expanded from the East to the West. Inside prison walls He wrote
 Epistles to all the
 kings and rulers of nations, summoning them to arbitration and universal peace.
 Some of the
 kings received His words with disdain and contempt. One of these was the
 Sultán of the
 Ottoman kingdom. Napoleon III of France did not reply. A second Epistle was
 addressed to
 him. It stated, "I have written you an Epistle before this, summoning you to
 the Cause of God,
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but you are of the heedless. You have proclaimed that you were the defender of
 the oppressed;
 now it hath become evident that you are not. Nor are you kind to your own
 suffering and
 oppressed people. Your actions are contrary to your own interests, and your
 kingly pride must
 fall. Because of your arrogance God shortly will destroy your sovereignty.
 France will flee
 away from you, and you will be overwhelmed by a great conquest. There will be
 lamentation
 and mourning, women bemoaning the loss of their sons." This arraignment of
 Napoleon III
 was published and spread.
 Read it and consider: one prisoner, single and solitary, without assistant or
 defender, a
 foreigner and stranger imprisoned in the fortress of 'Akká, writing such
 letters to the Emperor
 of France and Sultán of Turkey. Reflect upon this: how Bahá'u'lláh
 upraised the standard of
 His Cause in prison. Refer to history. It is without parallel. No such thing
 has happened before
 that time nor since—a prisoner and an exile advancing His Cause and spreading
 His teachings
 broadcast so that eventually He became powerful enough to conquer the very king
 who
 banished Him.
 His Cause spread more and more. The Blessed Perfection was a prisoner
 twenty-five years.
 During all this time He was subjected to the indignities and revilement of the
 people. He was
 persecuted, mocked and put in chains. In Persia His properties were pillaged
 and His

possessions confiscated. First, there was banishment from Persia to Baghdád, then to Constantinople, then to Adrianople, finally from Rumelia to the prison fortress of ‘Akká.

During His lifetime He was intensely active. His energy was unlimited. Scarcely one night was passed in restful sleep. He bore these ordeals, suffered these calamities and difficulties in order that a manifestation of selflessness and service might become apparent in the world of humanity; that the Most Great Peace should become a reality; that human souls might appear as the angels of heaven; that heavenly miracles would be wrought among men; that human faith should be strengthened and perfected; that the precious, priceless bestowal of God—the human mind—might be developed to its fullest capacity in the temple of the body; and that man might become the reflection and likeness of God, even as it hath been revealed in the Bible, “Let us make man in our image.”

Briefly, the Blessed Perfection bore all these ordeals and calamities in order that our hearts might become enkindled and radiant, our spirits be glorified, our faults become virtues, our ignorance be transformed into knowledge; in order that we might attain the real fruits of humanity and acquire heavenly graces; in order that, although pilgrims upon earth, we should travel the road of the heavenly Kingdom, and, although needy and poor, we might receive the treasures of eternal life. For this has He borne these difficulties and sorrows.

Trust all to God. The lights of God are resplendent. The blessed Epistles are spreading. The blessed teachings are promulgated throughout the East and West. Soon you will see that the heavenly Words have established the oneness of the world of humanity. The banner of the Most Great Peace has been unfurled, and the great community is appearing.

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19 April 1912

Talk at Earl Hall

Columbia University, New York

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 29-32)

If we look with a perceiving eye upon the world of creation, we find that all existing things may be classified as follows: first, mineral—that is to say, matter or substance appearing in various forms of composition; second, vegetable—possessing the virtues of the mineral plus the power of augmentation or growth, indicating a degree higher and more specialized than the mineral; third, animal—possessing the attributes of the mineral and vegetable plus the power of sense perception; fourth, human—the highest specialized organism of visible creation, embodying the qualities of the mineral, vegetable and animal plus an ideal endowment absolutely absent in the lower kingdoms—the power of intellectual investigation into the mysteries of outer phenomena. The outcome of this intellectual endowment is science, which is especially characteristic of man. This scientific power investigates and apprehends created objects and the laws surrounding them. It is the discoverer of the hidden and mysterious secrets of the material universe and is peculiar to man alone. The most noble and praiseworthy accomplishment of man, therefore, is scientific knowledge and attainment. Science may be likened to a mirror wherein the images of the mysteries of outer phenomena are reflected. It brings forth and exhibits to us in the arena of knowledge all the product of the past. It links together past and present. The philosophical conclusions of bygone centuries, the teachings of the Prophets and wisdom of former sages are crystallized and reproduced in the scientific advancement of today. Science is the discoverer of the past. From its premises of past and present we deduce conclusions as to the future. Science is the governor of nature and its mysteries, the one agency by which man explores the institutions of material creation. All created things are captives of nature and subject to its laws. They cannot

transgress the control
of these laws in one detail or particular. The infinite starry worlds and
heavenly bodies are
nature's obedient subjects. The earth and its myriad organisms, all minerals,
plants and animals
are thralls of its dominion. But man through the exercise of his scientific,
intellectual power
can rise out of this condition, can modify, change and control nature according
to his own
wishes and uses. Science, so to speak, is the breaker of the laws of nature.
Consider, for example, that man according to natural law should dwell upon the
surface of
the earth. By overcoming this law and restriction, however, he sails in ships
over the ocean,
mounts to the zenith in airplanes and sinks to the depths of the sea in
submarines. This is against
the fiat of nature and a violation of her sovereignty and dominion. Nature's
laws and methods,
the hidden secrets and mysteries of the universe, human inventions and
discoveries, all our
scientific acquisitions should naturally remain concealed and unknown, but man
through his
intellectual acumen searches them out of the plane of the invisible, draws them
into the plane
of the visible, exposes and explains them. For instance, one of the mysteries
of nature is
electricity. According to nature this force, this energy, should remain latent
and hidden, but
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man scientifically breaks through the very laws of nature, arrests it and even
imprisons it for
his use.
In brief, man through the possession of this ideal endowment of scientific
investigation is
the most noble product of creation, the governor of nature. He takes the sword
from nature's
hand and uses it upon nature's head. According to natural law night is a
period of darkness and
obscurity, but man by utilizing the power of electricity, by wielding this
electric sword
overcomes the darkness and dispels the gloom. Man is superior to nature and
makes nature do
his bidding. Man is a sensitive being; nature is without sensation. Man has
memory and reason;
nature lacks them. Man is nobler than nature. There are powers within him of

which nature is devoid. It may be claimed that these powers are from nature itself and that man is a part of nature. In answer to this statement we will say that if nature is the whole and man is a part of that whole, how could it be possible for a part to possess qualities and virtues which are absent in the whole? Undoubtedly the part must be endowed with the same qualities and properties as the whole. For example, the hair is a part of the human anatomy. It cannot contain elements which are not found in other parts of the body, for in all cases the component elements of the body are the same. Therefore, it is manifest and evident that man, although in body a part of nature, nevertheless in spirit possesses a power transcending nature; for if he were simply a part of nature and limited to material laws, he could possess only the things which nature embodies. God has conferred upon and added to man a distinctive power—the faculty of intellectual investigation into the secrets of creation, the acquisition of higher knowledge—the greatest virtue of which is scientific enlightenment. This endowment is the most praiseworthy power of man, for through its employment and exercise the betterment of the human race is accomplished, the development of the virtues of mankind is made possible and the spirit and mysteries of God become manifest. Therefore, I am greatly pleased with my visit to this university. Praise be to God that this country abounds in such institutions of learning where the knowledge of sciences and arts may readily be acquired. As material and physical sciences are taught here and are constantly unfolding in wider vistas of attainment, I am hopeful that spiritual development may also follow and keep pace with these outer advantages. As material knowledge is illuminating those within the walls of this great temple of learning, so also may the light of the spirit, the inner and divine light of the real philosophy glorify this institution. The most important principle of divine philosophy is the oneness of the world of humanity, the unity of mankind, the bond conjoining East and West,

the tie of love which blends human hearts.

Therefore, it is our duty to put forth our greatest efforts and summon all our energies in order that the bonds of unity and accord may be established among mankind. For thousands of years we have had bloodshed and strife. It is enough; it is sufficient. Now is the time to associate together in love and harmony. For thousands of years we have tried the sword and warfare; let mankind for a time at least live in peace. Review history and consider how much savagery, how much bloodshed and battle the world has witnessed. It has been either religious warfare, political warfare or some other clash of human interests. The world of humanity has never enjoyed the blessing of universal peace. Year by year the implements of warfare have been increased and perfected. Consider the wars of past centuries; only ten, fifteen or twenty thousand at the most were killed, but now it is possible to kill one hundred thousand in a single day. In ancient times warfare was carried on with the sword; today it is the smokeless gun.

Formerly, battleships were sailing vessels; today they are dreadnoughts.

Consider the increase

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and improvement in the weapons of war. God has created us all human, and all countries of the world are parts of the same globe. We are all His servants. He is kind and just to all. Why should we be unkind and unjust to each other? He provides for all. Why should we deprive one another? He protects and preserves all. Why should we kill our fellow creatures? If this warfare and strife be for the sake of religion, it is evident that it violates the spirit and basis of all religion. All the divine Manifestations have proclaimed the oneness of God and the unity of mankind. They have taught that men should love and mutually help each other in order that they might progress. Now if this conception of religion be true, its essential principle is the oneness of humanity. The fundamental truth of the Manifestations is peace. This underlies all religion, all justice. The divine purpose is that men should live in unity,

concord and agreement
 and should love one another. Consider the virtues of the human world and
 realize that the
 oneness of humanity is the primary foundation of them all. Read the Gospel and
 the other Holy
 Books. You will find their fundamentals are one and the same. Therefore, unity
 is the essential
 truth of religion and, when so understood, embraces all the virtues of the
 human world. Praise
 be to God! This knowledge has been spread, eyes have been opened, and ears have
 become
 attentive. Therefore, we must endeavor to promulgate and practice the religion
 of God which
 has been founded by all the Prophets. And the religion of God is absolute love
 and unity.

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19 April 1912

Talk at Bowery Mission

227 Bowery, New York

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 32-34)

Tonight I am very happy, for I have come here to meet my friends. I consider
 you my
 relatives, my companions; and I am your comrade.
 You must be thankful to God that you are poor, for Jesus Christ has said,
 "Blessed are the
 poor." He never said, "Blessed are the rich." He said, too, that the
 Kingdom is for the poor and
 that it is easier for a camel to enter a needle's eye than for a rich man to
 enter God's Kingdom.
 Therefore, you must be thankful to God that although in this world you are
 indigent, yet the
 treasures of God are within your reach; and although in the material realm you
 are poor, yet in
 the Kingdom of God you are precious. Jesus Himself was poor. He did not belong
 to the rich.
 He passed His time in the desert, traveling among the poor, and lived upon the
 herbs of the
 field. He had no place to lay His head, no home. He was exposed in the open to

heat, cold and
frost—to inclement weather of all kinds—yet He chose this rather than
riches. If riches were
considered a glory, the Prophet Moses would have chosen them; Jesus would have
been a rich
man. When Jesus Christ appeared, it was the poor who first accepted Him, not
the rich.
Therefore, you are the disciples of Jesus Christ; you are His comrades, for He
outwardly was
poor, not rich. Even this earth's happiness does not depend upon wealth. You
will find many
of the wealthy exposed to dangers and troubled by difficulties, and in their
last moments upon
the bed of death there remains the regret that they must be separated from that
to which their
hearts are so attached. They come into this world naked, and they must go from
it naked. All
they possess they must leave behind and pass away solitary, alone. Often at the
time of death
their souls are filled with remorse; and worst of all, their hope in the mercy
of God is less than
ours. Praise be to God! Our hope is in the mercy of God, and there is no doubt
that the divine
compassion is bestowed upon the poor. Jesus Christ said so; Bahá'u'lláh
said so. While
Bahá'u'lláh was in Baghdád, still in possession of great wealth, He left
all He had and went
alone from the city, living two years among the poor. They were His comrades.
He ate with
them, slept with them and gloried in being one of them. He chose for one of His
names the title
of The Poor One and often in His Writings refers to Himself as Darvish, which
in Persian means
poor; and of this title He was very proud. He admonished all that we must be
the servants of
the poor, helpers of the poor, remember the sorrows of the poor, associate with
them; for
thereby we may inherit the Kingdom of heaven. God has not said that there are
mansions
prepared for us if we pass our time associating with the rich, but He has said
there are many
mansions prepared for the servants of the poor, for the poor are very dear to
God. The mercies
and bounties of God are with them. The rich are mostly negligent, inattentive,
steeped in
worldliness, depending upon their means, whereas the poor are dependent upon
God, and their

reliance is upon Him, not upon themselves. Therefore, the poor are nearer the threshold of God and His throne.

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Jesus was a poor man. One night when He was out in the fields, the rain began to fall. He had no place to go for shelter so He lifted His eyes toward heaven, saying, "O Father! For the birds of the air Thou hast created nests, for the sheep a fold, for the animals dens, for the fish places of refuge, but for Me Thou hast provided no shelter. There is no place where I may lay My head. My bed consists of the cold ground; My lamps at night are the stars, and My food is the grass of the field. Yet who upon earth is richer than I? For the greatest blessing Thou hast not given to the rich and mighty but unto Me, for Thou hast given Me the poor. To me Thou hast granted this blessing. They are Mine. Therefore am I the richest man on earth."

So, my comrades, you are following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Your lives are similar to His life; your attitude is like unto His; you resemble Him more than the rich do. Therefore, we will thank God that we have been so blessed with real riches. And in conclusion, I ask you to accept 'Abdu'l-Bahá as your servant. At the end of this meeting, 'Abdu'l-Bahá stood at the Bowery entrance to the Mission hall, shaking hands with four or five hundred men and placing within each palm a piece of silver.

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??20 April 1912??

??Talk at Orient-Occident-Unity Conference??

??Public Library Hall, Washington, D.C.??

??Notes by Joseph H. Hannen??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 35-37??

??Tonight I am most happy in presenting myself before an audience such as this. I am an??

?!?Oriental and have come into the West to meet the people of the Occident. Praise be to God??

??Upon the faces of those assembled here I perceive the light of God. This I consider an evidence??

??of the possibility of uniting the East and the West, of establishing a perfect bond between Persia??

??and America—one of the objects of this conference. For the Persians there is no government??

??better fitted to contribute to the development of their natural resources and the helping of their??

??national needs in a reciprocal alliance than the United States of America, and for the Americans??

??there could be no better industrial outlet and market than the virgin commercial soil of Persia.??

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The mineral wealth of Persia is still latent and untouched. It is my hope that the great American democracy may be instrumental in developing these hidden resources and that a bond of perfect amity and unity may be established between the American republic and the government of Persia. May this bond—whether material or spiritual—be well cemented. May the material civilization of America find complete efficacy and establishment in Persia, and may the spiritual civilization of Persia find acceptance and response in America. Some of the creatures of existence can live solitary and alone. A tree, for instance, may live without the assistance and cooperation of other trees. Some animals are

isolated and lead a
separate existence away from their kind. But this is impossible for man. In his
life and being
cooperation and association are essential. Through association and meeting we
find happiness
and development, individual and collective.
For instance, when there is intercourse and cooperation between two villages,
the
advancement of each will be assured. Likewise, if intercommunication is
established between
two cities, both will benefit and progress. And if a reciprocal basis of
agreement be reached
between two countries, their individual and mutual interests will find great
development.
Therefore, in the unity of this radiant assemblage I behold the link between
Orient and
Occident. Such unity is the means and instrument of cooperation between the
various countries
of the East and West. It is evident, then, that the outcomes from this basis of
agreement and
accord are numberless and unlimited. Surely there will be great harvests of
results forthcoming
for Persia and America. In Persia advanced material civilization will be
established and the
doors thrown open wide to American commerce.
Above and beyond all this, a great love and fountain of affection shall bind
and blend these
two remote peoples, for Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed to the world the
solidarity of nations and
the oneness of humanity. Addressing all mankind He has said, "Ye are all
leaves of one tree
and the drops of one sea." The world of humanity has been expressed by Him as
a unit—as one
family. It is, therefore, hoped that the American and Persian nations may be
conjoined and
united in reciprocal love. May they become one race endowed with the same
susceptibilities.
May these bonds of amity and accord be firmly established.
Bahá'u'lláh passed forty years of His life in prison and exile in order
that He might upraise
the banner of the oneness of the world of men. For this He bore all these
ordeals and difficulties.
He was under the dominion of 'Abdu'l-Hamíd. I, too, was in the prison of
'Abdu'l-Hamíd until
the Committee of Union and Progress hoisted the standard of liberty and my
fetters were
removed. They exhibited great kindness and love toward me. I was made free and

thereby
enabled to come to this country. Were it not for the action of this Committee,
I should not be
with you here tonight. Therefore, you must all ask assistance and confirmation
in behalf of this
Committee through which the liberty of Turkey was proclaimed.
Briefly, I have traveled this long distance, crossed the Atlantic Ocean to this
western
continent in the desire and hope that the strongest bond of unity may be
established between
America and Persia. I know this to be your wish and purpose also and am sure of
your
cooperation. We shall, therefore, offer supplication in the divine threshold
that a great love may
take possession of the hearts of men and unite the nations of the world. We
will pray that the
ensign of international peace may be uplifted and that the oneness of the world
of humanity
may be realized and accomplished. All this is made possible and practicable
through your
efforts. May this American democracy be the first nation to establish the
foundation of
international agreement. May it be the first nation to proclaim the
universality of mankind. May
it be the first to upraise the standard of the Most Great Peace, and through
this nation of

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democracy may these philanthropic intentions and institutions be spread
broadcast throughout
the world. Truly, this is a great and revered nation. Here liberty has reached
its highest degree.
The intentions of its people are most praiseworthy. They are, indeed, worthy of
being the first
to build the Tabernacle of the Most Great Peace and proclaim the oneness of
mankind. I will
supplicate God for assistance and confirmation in your behalf.

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21 April 1912

Talk at Studio Hall

1219 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen
(Promulgation, pp. 37-39)

I have come here to visit you. With the greatest longing I have wished to see you. Realizing it was only with great difficulty that you could come to me and that very few could make the trip, I decided to come to you so that all might have the pleasure of meeting. Praise be to God!

I am here, and I am looking into your faces—faces radiant with inner beauty, hearts attracted to the Kingdom of Abhá, spirits exhilarated through the glad tidings of God. Therefore, I have experienced the greatest possible happiness. And surely this happiness must be mutual, for the hearts are connected with each other and are filled with the same vibration. The flame and the light of love are reflected in all. Spiritual susceptibilities and heart longings fill every heart. If we should offer a hundred thousand thanksgivings every moment to the threshold of God for this love which has blended the Orient and Occident, we would fail to express our gratitude sufficiently. If all the powers of earth should seek to bring about this love between East and West, they would prove incapable. If they wished to establish this unity, it would prove impossible. But Bahá'u'lláh has accomplished both through the power of the Holy Spirit, and this bond of unity through love is indissoluble. It shall continue unto time everlasting, and day by day its power shall increase. Erelong it shall enchain the world, and eventually the hearts of all the nations of the world will be brought together by its constraining clasp. The world of humanity shall become the manifestation of the lights of Divinity, and the bestowals of God shall surround all. From the standpoints of both material and spiritual civilization extraordinary progress and development will be witnessed. In this present cycle there will be an evolution in civilization unparalleled in the history of the world. The world of humanity has, heretofore, been in the stage of infancy; now it is approaching maturity. Just as the individual human organism, having attained the period of maturity, reaches its fullest degree of physical strength

and ripened intellectual faculties so that in one year of this ripened period
there is witnessed an
unprecedented measure of development, likewise the world of humanity in this
cycle of its
completeness and consummation will realize an immeasurable upward progress, and
that
power of accomplishment whereof each individual human reality is the depository
of God—
that outworking Universal Spirit—like the intellectual faculty, will reveal
itself in infinite
degrees of perfection.

Therefore, thank ye God that ye have come into the plane of existence in this
radiant century
wherein the bestowals of God are appearing from all directions, when the doors
of the Kingdom
have been opened unto you, the call of God is being raised, and the virtues of
the human world
are in the process of unfoldment. The day has come when all darkness is to be
dispelled, and
the Sun of Truth shall shine forth radiantly. This time of the world may be
likened to the
equinoctial in the annual cycle. For, verily, this is the spring season of God.

In the Holy Books
a promise is given that the springtime of God shall make itself manifest;
Jerusalem, the Holy

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City, shall descend from heaven; Zion shall leap forth and dance; and the Holy
Land shall be
submerged in the ocean of divine effulgence.
At the time of the vernal equinox in the material world a wonderful vibrant
energy and new
life-quickenings are observed everywhere in the vegetable kingdom; the animal and
human
kingdoms are resuscitated and move forward with a new impulse. The whole world
is born
anew, resurrected. Gentle zephyrs are set in motion, wafting and fragrant;
flowers bloom; the
trees are in blossom, the air temperate and delightful; how pleasant and
beautiful become the
mountains, fields and meadows. Likewise, the spiritual bounty and springtime of
God quicken
the world of humanity with a new animus and vivification. All the virtues which
have been
deposited and potential in human hearts are being revealed from that Reality as
flowers and

blossoms from divine gardens. It is a day of joy, a time of happiness, a period of spiritual growth. I beg of God that this divine spiritual civilization may have the fullest impression and effect upon you. May you become as growing plants. May the trees of your hearts bring forth new leaves and variegated blossoms. May ideal fruits appear from them in order that the world of humanity, which has grown and developed in material civilization, may be quickened in the bringing forth of spiritual ideals. Just as human intellects have revealed the secrets of matter and have brought forth from the realm of the invisible the mysteries of nature, may minds and spirits, likewise, come into the knowledge of the verities of God, and the realities of the Kingdom be made manifest in human hearts. Then the world will be the paradise of Abhá, the standard of the Most Great Peace will be borne aloft, and the oneness of the world of humanity in all its beauty, glory and significance will become apparent. And now in your presence I wish to pray in your behalf. Let your hearts be attentive and directed to the Kingdom of Abhá.

(Prayer in Persian)

It is my hope that the supplication I have offered to the Kingdom of Abhá in your behalf may soon be answered and that its results and effects may become manifest in your hearts and lives.

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??21 April 1912??

??Talk at Universalist Church??

??Thirteenth and L Streets, Washington, D.C.??

??Notes by Joseph H. Hannen??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 39-42??

??The doctrines and creed of this church, so capably expressed by its
revered minister, are??

??truly commendable, sanctified and worthy of praise and glorification, for
these precepts are??

??opposed to the deep-rooted religious prejudices of the day. It is evident
that prejudices arising??

??from adherence to religious forms and imitation of ancestral beliefs have
hindered the progress??

??of humanity thousands of years. How many wars and battles have been
fought, how much??

??division, discord and hatred have been caused by this form of prejudice!
But inasmuch as this??

??century is a century of the revelation of reality—praise be to
God!—the thoughts of men are??

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being directed toward the welfare and unity of humanity. Daily the mirage of
imitations is

passing away, and the ocean of truth is surging more tumultuously. All the
existing nations had

a divine foundation of truth or reality originally, which was intended to be
conducive to the

unity and accord of mankind, but the light of that reality gradually became
obscured. The

darkness of superstitions and imitations came and took its place, binding the
world of humanity

in the chains and fetters of ignorance. Enmity arose among men, increasing to
such an extent

that nation strove against nation in hatred and violence. War has been a
religious and political

human heritage.

Now it is enough! We must investigate reality. We must put away these
superstitions. It is

a self-evident truth that all humanity is the creation of God. All are His
servants and under His

protection. All are recipients of His bestowals. God is kind to all His
servants. At most it is

this: that some are ignorant; they must be educated in order that they may become intelligent.

Some are immature as children; they must be aided and assisted in order that they may become mature. Some are sick and ailing; they must be healed. But the suffering patient must not be tested by false treatment. The child must not be warped and hindered in its development. The ignorant must not be restricted by censure and criticism. We must look for the real, true remedy.

All the Prophets of God, including Jesus Christ, appeared in the world for the education of humanity, to develop immature souls into maturity, to transform the ignorant of mankind into the knowing, thereby establishing love and unity through divine education and training. The Prophets have not come to cause discord and enmity. For God has wished all good for His servants, and he who wishes the servants of God evil is against God; he has not obeyed the will and emulated the example of God; he has followed Satanic leadings and footprints. The attributes of God are love and mercy; the attribute of Satan is hate.

Therefore, he who is merciful and kind to his fellowmen is manifesting the divine attribute, and he who is hating and hostile toward a fellow creature is satanic. God is absolute love, even as Jesus Christ has declared, and Satan is utter hatred. Wherever love is witnessed, know that there is a manifestation of God's mercy; whenever you meet hatred and enmity, know that these are the evidences and attributes of Satan. The Prophets have appeared in this world with the mission that human souls may become the expressions of the Merciful, that they may be educated and developed, attain to love and amity and establish peace and agreement.

In the world of existence the animal is a captive of nature. Its actions are according to the exigencies and requirements of nature. It has no consideration or consciousness of good and evil. It simply follows its natural instinct and inclination. The Prophets of God have come to show man the way of righteousness in order that he may not follow his own natural impulse but govern his action by the light of Their precept and example. According to Their teachings

he should do that which is found to be praiseworthy by the standard of reason and judgment of intellect, even though it be opposed to his natural human inclination; and he should not do that which is found to be unworthy by that same standard, even though it be in the direction of his natural impulse and desire. Therefore, man must follow and manifest the attributes of the Merciful.

The imperfect members of society, the weak souls in humanity, follow their natural trend.

Their lives and actions are in accord with their natural propensities; they are captives of

physical susceptibilities; they are not in touch or in tune with the spiritual bounties. Man has

two aspects: the physical, which is subject to nature, and the merciful or divine, which is

connected with God. If the physical or natural disposition in him should overcome the heavenly

and merciful, he is, then, the most degraded of animal beings; and if the divine and spiritual

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should triumph over the human and natural, he is, verily, an angel. The

Prophets come into the

world to guide and educate humanity so that the animal nature of man may disappear and the

divinity of his powers become awakened. The divine aspect or spiritual nature consists of the

breaths of the Holy Spirit. The second birth of which Jesus has spoken refers to the appearance

of this heavenly nature in man. It is expressed in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and he who is

baptized by the Holy Spirit is a veritable manifestation of divine mercy to mankind. Then he

becomes just and kind to all humanity; he entertains prejudice and ill will toward none; he

shuns no nation or people.

The foundations of the divine religions are one. If we investigate these foundations, we

discover much ground for agreement, but if we consider the imitations of forms and ancestral

beliefs, we find points of disagreement and division; for these imitations differ, while the

sources and foundations are one and the same. That is to say, the fundamentals are conducive

to unity, but imitations are the cause of disunion and dismemberment. Whosoever is lacking in love for humanity or manifests hatred and bigotry toward any part of it violates the foundation and source of his own belief and is holding to forms and imitations. Jesus Christ declares that the sun rises upon the evil and the good, and the rain descends upon the just and the unjust—upon all humanity alike. Christ was a divine mercy which shone upon all mankind, the medium for the descent of the bounty of God, and the bounty of God is transcendent, unrestricted, universal.

The revered minister read from the words of the Gospel, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.” The century has dawned when the Spirit of Truth can reveal these verities to mankind, proclaim that very Word, establish the real foundations of Christianity and deliver the nations and peoples from the bondage of forms and imitations. The cause of discord, prejudice and animosity will be removed, the basis of love and amity be established. Therefore, all of you must strive with heart and soul in order that enmity may disappear entirely and that strife and hatred pass away absolutely from the midst of the human world. You must listen to the admonition of this Spirit of Truth. You must follow the example and footprints of Jesus Christ. Read the Gospels. Jesus Christ was mercy itself, was love itself. He even prayed in behalf of His executioners—for those who crucified Him—saying, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” If they knew what they were doing, they would not have done it.

Consider how kind Jesus Christ was, that even upon the cross He prayed for His oppressors.

We must follow His example. We must emulate the Prophets of God. We must follow Jesus

Christ. We must free ourselves from all these imitations which are the source of darkness in the world.

I shall ask you a question: Did God create us for love or for enmity? Did He create us for peace or discord? Surely He has created us for love; therefore, we should live

in accordance
with His will. Do not listen to anything that is prejudiced, for self-interest
prompts men to be
prejudiced. They are thoughtful only of their own will and purposes. They live
and move in
darkness. Consider how many different nations and divergent religious beliefs
existed when
Christ appeared. Enmity and strife prevailed among them—Romans, Greeks,
Assyrians,
Egyptians—all warring and hostile toward each other. Christ, through the
breaths of the Holy
Spirit, united them, established fellowship among them so that no trace of
strife remained.
Under His standard they became united and lived in peace through His teachings.
Which is
preferable and more commendable? To follow the example of Jesus Christ or to
manifest the
satanic instinct? Let us strive with all our powers to unite the East and West
so that the nations
of the world may be advanced and that all may live according to the one
foundation of the

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religions of God. The essentials of the divine religion are one reality,
indivisible and not
multiple. It is one. And when through investigation we find it to be single, we
have a basis for
the oneness of the world of humanity. I will pray for you, asking confirmation
and assistance
in your behalf.

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22 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons
1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.
Notes by Joseph H. Hannen
(Promulgation, pp. 43-44)

See how good Bahá'u'lláh is to us, how great the power of His Word! From
what distant
parts of the world He has brought us together in this house and caused us to

meet at this
heavenly table, for love has prepared a feast and bidden ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to
let this entertainment
be in His name. What a union of hearts and what a confirmation of
Bahá’u’lláh between East
and West has been established! How His bounty has embraced all! How His favors
have been
perfected for all!

When the Muslims conquered Persia, the chief of the Zoroastrian high priests
went to drink
wine. According to Muslim law wine is forbidden, and he who drinks it must be
punished by
eighty-one strokes of the whip. Therefore, the Muslims arrested the high priest
and whipped
him. At that time the Arabs were considered very low and degraded by the
Persians, scarcely
to be accounted as human beings. As Muhammad was an Arab, the Persians looked
upon Him
with disdain; but when the high priest saw the evidences of a power in
Muhammad which
controlled these despised people, he cried out, “O thou Arabian Muhammad,
what hast thou
done? What hast thou done which has made thy people arrest the chief high
priest of the
Zoroastrians for committing something unlawful in thy religion?” By this
circumstance the
prejudice which caused the Zoroastrian to shun the Muslim had been overcome,
for he
recognized in what had happened to him the great influence Muhammad exercised
over these
people.

Today in this meeting we have an evidence of how Bahá’u’lláh through the
power of the
love of God has exercised a wonderful spiritual influence throughout the world.
From the
remotest parts of Persia and the Orient He has caused men to come to this table
to meet with
the people of the West in the utmost love and affection, union and harmony.
Behold how the
power of Bahá’u’lláh has brought the East and West together. And
‘Abdu’l-Bahá is standing,
serving you. There is neither rod nor blow, whip nor sword; but the power of
the love of God
has accomplished this.

In this world we judge a cause or movement by its progress and development.
Some
movements appear, manifest a brief period of activity, then discontinue. Others

show forth a
greater measure of growth and strength, but before attaining mature
development, weaken,
disintegrate and are lost in oblivion. Neither of these mentioned are
progressive and permanent.
There is still another kind of movement or cause which from a very small,
inconspicuous
beginning goes forward with sure and steady progress, gradually broadening and
widening until
it has assumed universal dimensions. The Bahá'í Movement is of this nature.
For instance,
when Bahá'u'lláh was exiled from Persia with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the
rest of His family, they
traveled the long road from Tihrán to Baghdád, passing through many towns
and villages.

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During the whole of that journey and distance they did not meet a single
believer in the Cause
for which they had been banished. At that time very little was known about it
in any part of the
world. Even in Baghdád there was but one believer who had been taught by
Bahá'u'lláh
Himself in Persia. Later on, two or three others appeared. You will see,
therefore, that at the
beginning the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh was almost unknown, but on account of
being a divine
Movement it grew and developed with irresistible spiritual power until in this
day, wherever
you travel—East or West—and in whatever country you journey, you will meet
Bahá'í
assemblies and institutions. This is an evidence that the Bahá'ís are
spreading the blessings of
unity and progressive development throughout the world under the direction of
divine guidance
and purpose, while other movements which are only temporary in their activities
and
accomplishments have no real, universal significance.

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are one, and that
is the color of servitude to God. Scent and color are not important. The heart
is important. If
the heart is pure, white or black or any color makes no difference. God does
not look at colors;
He looks at the hearts. He whose heart is pure is better. He whose character is
better is more
pleasing. He who turns more to the Abhá Kingdom is more advanced.
In the realm of existence colors are of no importance. Observe in the mineral
kingdom
colors are not the cause of discord. In the vegetable kingdom the colors of
multicolored flowers
are not the cause of discord. Rather, colors are the cause of the adornment of
the garden because
a single color has no appeal; but when you observe many-colored flowers, there
is charm and
display.
The world of humanity, too, is like a garden, and humankind are like the
many-colored
flowers. Therefore, different colors constitute an adornment. In the same way,
there are many
colors in the realm of animals. Doves are of many colors; nevertheless, they
live in utmost
harmony. They never look at color; instead, they look at the species. How often
white doves
fly with black ones. In the same way, other birds and varicolored animals never
look at color;
they look at the species.
Now ponder this: Animals, despite the fact that they lack reason and
understanding, do not
make colors the cause of conflict. Why should man, who has reason, create
conflict? This is
wholly unworthy of him. Especially white and black are the descendants of the
same Adam;
they belong to one household. In origin they were one; they were the same
color. Adam was of
one color. Eve had one color. All humanity is descended from them. Therefore,
in origin they
are one. These colors developed later due to climates and regions; they have no
significance
whatsoever. Therefore, today I am very happy that white and black have gathered
together in
this meeting. I hope this coming together and harmony reaches such a degree
that no
distinctions shall remain between them, and they shall be together in the
utmost harmony and
love.

But I wish to say one thing in order that the blacks may become grateful to the whites and the whites become loving toward the blacks. If you go to Africa and see the blacks of Africa, you will realize how much progress you have made. Praise be to God! You are like the whites; there are no great distinctions left. But the blacks of Africa are treated as servants. The first proclamation of emancipation for the blacks was made by the whites of America. How they fought and sacrificed until they freed the blacks! Then it spread to other places. The blacks of Africa were in complete bondage, but your emancipation led to their freedom also—that is, the European states emulated the Americans, and the emancipation proclamation became universal. It was for your sake that the whites of America made such an effort. Were it not for this effort, universal emancipation would not have been proclaimed.

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Therefore, you must be very grateful to the whites of America, and the whites must become very loving toward you so that you may progress in all human grades. Strive jointly to make extraordinary progress and mix together completely. In short, you must be very thankful to the whites who were the cause of your freedom in America. Had you not been freed, other blacks would not have been freed either. Now—praise be to God!—everyone is free and lives in tranquillity. I pray that you attain to such a degree of good character and behavior that the names of black and white shall vanish. All shall be called human, just as the name for a flight of doves is dove. They are not called black and white. Likewise with other birds. I hope that you attain to such a high degree—and this is impossible except through love. You must try to create love between yourselves; and this love does not come about unless you are grateful to the whites, and the whites are loving toward you, and endeavor to promote your advancement and enhance your honor. This will be the cause of love. Differences between black and white will be completely obliterated; indeed, ethnic and national

differences will all
disappear.

I am very happy to see you and thank God that this meeting is composed of
people of both
races and that both are gathered in perfect love and harmony. I hope this
becomes the example
of universal harmony and love until no title remains except that of humanity.
Such a title
demonstrates the perfection of the human world and is the cause of eternal
glory and human
happiness. I pray that you be with one another in utmost harmony and love and
strive to enable
each other to live in comfort.

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23 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons
1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.
Notes by Joseph H. Hannen
(Promulgation, pp. 46-48)

Today I have been speaking from dawn until now, yet because of love, fellowship
and
desire to be with you, I have come here to speak again briefly. Within the last
few days a terrible
event has happened in the world, an event saddening to every heart and grieving
every spirit. I
refer to the Titanic disaster, in which many of our fellow human beings were
drowned, a
number of beautiful souls passed beyond this earthly life. Although such an
event is indeed
regrettable, we must realize that everything which happens is due to some
wisdom and that
nothing happens without a reason. Therein is a mystery; but whatever the reason
and mystery,
it was a very sad occurrence, one which brought tears to many eyes and distress
to many souls.
I was greatly affected by this disaster. Some of those who were lost voyaged on
the Cedric with
us as far as Naples and afterward sailed upon the other ship. When I think of

them, I am very sad indeed. But when I consider this calamity in another aspect, I am consoled by the realization that the worlds of God are infinite; that though they were deprived of this existence, they have other opportunities in the life beyond, even as Christ has said, "In my Father's house are many mansions." They were called away from the temporary and transferred to the eternal; they abandoned this material existence and entered the portals of the spiritual world. Foregoing the pleasures and comforts of the earthly, they now partake of a joy and happiness far more abiding and real, for they have hastened to the Kingdom of God. The mercy of God is infinite, and it is our duty to remember these departed souls in our prayers and supplications that they may draw nearer and nearer to the Source itself. These human conditions may be likened to the matrix of the mother from which a child is to be born into the spacious outer world. At first the infant finds it very difficult to reconcile itself to its new existence. It cries as if not wishing to be separated from its narrow abode and imagining that life is restricted to that limited space. It is reluctant to leave its home, but nature forces it into this world. Having come into its new conditions, it finds that it has passed from darkness into a sphere of radiance; from gloomy and restricted surroundings it has been transferred to a spacious and delightful environment. Its nourishment was the blood of the mother; now it finds delicious food to enjoy. Its new life is filled with brightness and beauty; it looks with wonder and delight upon the mountains, meadows and fields of green, the rivers and fountains, the wonderful stars; it breathes the life-quickenning atmosphere; and then it praises God for its release from the confinement of its former condition and attainment to the freedom of a new realm. This analogy expresses the relation of the temporal world to the life hereafter—the transition of the soul of man from darkness and uncertainty to the light and reality of the eternal Kingdom. At first it is very difficult to welcome death, but after attaining its new condition the soul is grateful, for it has been released from the

bondage of the limited

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to enjoy the liberties of the unlimited. It has been freed from a world of sorrow, grief and trials to live in a world of unending bliss and joy. The phenomenal and physical have been abandoned in order that it may attain the opportunities of the ideal and spiritual. Therefore, the souls of those who have passed away from earth and completed their span of mortal pilgrimage in the Titanic disaster have hastened to a world superior to this. They have soared away from these conditions of darkness and dim vision into the realm of light. These are the only considerations which can comfort and console those whom they have left behind. Furthermore, these events have deeper reasons. Their object and purpose is to teach man certain lessons. We are living in a day of reliance upon material conditions. Men imagine that the great size and strength of a ship, the perfection of machinery or the skill of a navigator will ensure safety, but these disasters sometimes take place that men may know that God is the real Protector. If it be the will of God to protect man, a little ship may escape destruction, whereas the greatest and most perfectly constructed vessel with the best and most skillful navigator may not survive a danger such as was present on the ocean. The purpose is that the people of the world may turn to God, the One Protector; that human souls may rely upon His preservation and know that He is the real safety. These events happen in order that man's faith may be increased and strengthened. Therefore, although we feel sad and disheartened, we must supplicate God to turn our hearts to the Kingdom and pray for these departed souls with faith in His infinite mercy so that, although they have been deprived of this earthly life, they may enjoy a new existence in the supreme mansions of the Heavenly Father. Let no one imagine that these words imply that man should not be thorough and careful in his undertakings. God has endowed man with intelligence so that he may safeguard and protect himself. Therefore, he must provide and surround himself with all that

scientific skill can
produce. He must be deliberate, thoughtful and thorough in his purposes, build
the best ship
and provide the most experienced captain; yet, withal, let him rely upon God
and consider God
as the one Keeper. If God protects, nothing can imperil man's safety; and if
it be not His will
to safeguard, no amount of preparation and precaution will avail.
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23 April 1912

Talk to Bethel Literary Society
Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church
M Street, NW, Washington, D.C.
Notes by Joseph H. Hannen
(Promulgation, pp. 49-52)

As I stand here tonight and look upon this assembly, I am reminded curiously of
a beautiful
bouquet of violets gathered together in varying colors, dark and light. This is
an evidence and
indication that the United States of America is a just and free government, for
I see black and
white seated together in perfect harmony and agreement. Hearts are united. This
just
government makes such a meeting possible. You should thank God continually that
you enjoy
the security and protection of a government which furthers your development and
rules with
impartial equity and equality toward all, even as a father; for in the human
world there is no
greater blessing. This evening I will speak to you upon scientific subjects.
The virtues of humanity are many, but science is the most noble of them all.
The distinction
which man enjoys above and beyond the station of the animal is due to this
paramount virtue.
It is a bestowal of God; it is not material; it is divine. Science is an
effulgence of the Sun of
Reality, the power of investigating and discovering the verities of the
universe, the means by

which man finds a pathway to God. All the powers and attributes of man are human and hereditary in origin—outcomes of nature's processes—except the intellect, which is supernatural. Through intellectual and intelligent inquiry science is the discoverer of all things. It unites present and past, reveals the history of bygone nations and events, and confers upon man today the essence of all human knowledge and attainment throughout the ages. By intellectual processes and logical deductions of reason this superpower in man can penetrate the mysteries of the future and anticipate its happenings. Science is the first emanation from God toward man. All created beings embody the potentiality of material perfection, but the power of intellectual investigation and scientific acquisition is a higher virtue specialized to man alone. Other beings and organisms are deprived of this potentiality and attainment. God has created or deposited this love of reality in man. The development and progress of a nation is according to the measure and degree of that nation's scientific attainments. Through this means its greatness is continually increased, and day by day the welfare and prosperity of its people are assured. All blessings are divine in origin, but none can be compared with this power of intellectual investigation and research, which is an eternal gift producing fruits of unending delight. Man is ever partaking of these fruits. All other blessings are temporary; this is an everlasting possession. Even sovereignty has its limitations and overthrow; this is a kingship and dominion which none may usurp or destroy. Briefly, it is an eternal blessing and divine bestowal, the

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supreme gift of God to man. Therefore, you should put forward your most earnest efforts toward the acquisition of science and arts. The greater your attainment, the higher your standard in the divine purpose. The man of science is perceiving and endowed with vision, whereas he who is ignorant and neglectful of this development is blind. The investigating mind is attentive,

alive; the callous and indifferent mind is deaf and dead. A scientific man is a true index and representative of humanity, for through processes of inductive reasoning and research he is informed of all that appertains to humanity, its status, conditions and happenings. He studies the human body politic, understands social problems and weaves the web and texture of civilization. In fact, science may be likened to a mirror wherein the infinite forms and images of existing things are revealed and reflected. It is the very foundation of all individual and national development. Without this basis of investigation, development is impossible. Therefore, seek with diligent endeavor the knowledge and attainment of all that lies within the power of this wonderful bestowal. We have already stated that science or the attribute of scientific penetration is supernatural and that all other blessings of God are within the boundary of nature. What is the proof of this? All created things except man are captives of nature. The stars and suns swinging through infinite space, all earthly forms of life and existence—whether mineral, vegetable or animal—come under the dominion and control of natural law. Man through scientific knowledge and power rules nature and utilizes her laws to do his bidding. According to natural limitations he is a creature of earth, restricted to life upon its surface, but through scientific utilization of material laws he soars in the sky, sails upon the ocean and dives beneath it. The products of his invention and discovery, so familiar to us in daily life, were once mysteries of nature. For instance, man has brought electricity out of the plane of the invisible into the plane of the visible, harnessed and imprisoned that mysterious natural agent and made it the servant of his needs and wishes. Similar instances are many, but we will not prolong this. Man, as it were, takes the sword out of nature's hand and with it for his scepter of authority dominates nature itself. Nature is without the crown of human faculties and attributes. Man possesses conscious intelligence and reflection; nature does not. This is an established fundamental among

philosophers. Man is endowed with volition and memory; nature has neither. Man
 can seek out
 the mysteries latent in nature, whereas nature is not conscious of her own
 hidden phenomena.
 Man is progressive; nature is stationary, without the power of progression or
 retrogression.
 Man is endowed with ideal virtues—for example, intellection, volition, faith,
 confession and
 acknowledgment of God—while nature is devoid of all these. The ideal
 faculties of man,
 including the capacity for scientific acquisition, are beyond nature's ken.
 These are powers
 whereby man is differentiated and distinguished from all other forms of life.
 This is the
 bestowal of divine idealism, the crown adorning human heads. Notwithstanding
 the gift of this
 supernatural power, it is most amazing that materialists still consider
 themselves within the
 bonds and captivity of nature. The truth is that God has endowed man with
 virtues, powers and
 ideal faculties of which nature is entirely bereft and by which man is
 elevated, distinguished
 and superior. We must thank God for these bestowals, for these powers He has
 given us, for
 this crown He has placed upon our heads.
 How shall we utilize these gifts and expend these bounties? By directing our
 efforts toward
 the unification of the human race. We must use these powers in establishing the
 oneness of the
 world of humanity, appreciate these virtues by accomplishing the unity of
 whites and blacks,
 devote this divine intelligence to the perfecting of amity and accord among all
 branches of the
 human family so that under the protection and providence of God the East and
 West may hold
 each other's hands and become as lovers. Then will mankind be as one nation,
 one race and
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kind—as waves of one ocean. Although these waves may differ in form and
 shape, they are
 waves of the same sea. Flowers may be variegated in colors, but they are all
 flowers of one
 garden. Trees differ though they grow in the same orchard. All are nourished
 and quickened
 into life by the bounty of the same rain, all grow and develop by the heat and

light of the one
sun, all are refreshed and exhilarated by the same breeze that they may bring
forth varied fruits.
This is according to the creative wisdom. If all trees bore the same kind of
fruit, it would cease
to be delicious. In their never-ending variety man finds enjoyment instead of
monotony.
And now as I look into your faces, I am reminded of trees varying in color and
form but all
bearing luscious and delectable fruits, fragrant and delightful to the inner
and outer senses. The
radiance and spirituality of this meeting is through the favor of God. Our
hearts are uplifted in
thankfulness to Him. Praise be to God! You are living upon the great continent
of the West,
enjoying the perfect liberty, security and peace of this just government. There
is no cause for
sorrow or unhappiness anywhere; every means of happiness and enjoyment is about
you, for
in this human world there is no greater blessing than liberty. You do not know.
I, who for forty
years have been a prisoner, do know. I do know the value and blessing of
liberty. For you have
been and are now living in freedom, and you have no fear of anybody. Is there a
greater blessing
than this? Freedom! Liberty! Security! These are the great bestowals of God.
Therefore, praise
ye God! I will now pray in your behalf.

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24 April 1912
Talk at Children's Reception
Studio Hall
1219 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C.
Notes by Joseph H. Hannen
(Promulgation, pp. 52-54)

What a wonderful meeting this is! These are the children of the Kingdom. The song we have just listened to was very beautiful in melody and words. The art of music is divine and effective. It is the food of the soul and spirit. Through the power and charm of music the spirit of man is uplifted. It has wonderful sway and effect in the hearts of children, for their hearts are pure, and melodies have great influence in them. The latent talents with which the hearts of these children are endowed will find expression through the medium of music. Therefore, you must exert yourselves to make them proficient; teach them to sing with excellence and effect. It is incumbent upon each child to know something of music, for without knowledge of this art the melodies of instrument and voice cannot be rightly enjoyed. Likewise, it is necessary that the schools teach it in order that the souls and hearts of the pupils may become vivified and exhilarated and their lives be brightened with enjoyment. Today illumined and spiritual children are gathered in this meeting. They are the children of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of heaven is for such souls as these, for they are near to God. They have pure hearts. They have spiritual faces. The effect of the divine teachings is manifest in the perfect purity of their hearts. That is why Christ has addressed the world, saying, "Except

ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven”—

that is, men must become pure in heart to know God. The teachings have had great effect.

Spiritual souls! Tender souls! The hearts of all children are of the utmost purity. They are mirrors upon which no dust has fallen. But this purity is on account of weakness and innocence, not on account of any strength and testing, for as this is the early period of their childhood, their hearts and minds are unsullied by the world. They cannot display any great intelligence. They have neither hypocrisy nor deceit. This is on account of the child’s weakness, whereas the man becomes pure through his strength. Through the power of intelligence he becomes simple; through the great power of reason and understanding and not through the power of weakness he becomes sincere. When he attains to the state of perfection, he will receive these qualities; his heart becomes purified, his spirit enlightened, his soul is sensitized and tender—all through his great strength. This is the difference between the perfect man and the child. Both have the underlying qualities of simplicity and sincerity—the child through the power of weakness and the man through the power of strength.

I pray in behalf of these children and beg confirmation and assistance for them from the Kingdom of Abhá so that each one may be trained under the shadow of the protection of God, each may become like a lighted candle in the world of humanity, a tender and growing plant in the rose garden of Abhá; that these children may be so trained and educated that they shall give life to the world of humanity; that they may receive insight; that they may bestow hearing upon the people of the world; that they may sow the seeds of eternal life and be accepted in the

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threshold of God; that they may become characterized with such virtues, perfections and qualities that their mothers, fathers and relatives will be thankful to God, well pleased and hopeful. This is my wish and prayer.

I give you my advice, and it is this: Train these children with divine exhortations. From their childhood instill in their hearts the love of God so they may manifest in their lives the fear of God and have confidence in the bestowals of God. Teach them to free themselves from human imperfections and to acquire the divine perfections latent in the heart of man. The life of man is useful if he attains the perfections of man. If he becomes the center of the imperfections of the world of humanity, death is better than life, and nonexistence better than existence. Therefore, make ye an effort in order that these children may be rightly trained and educated and that each one of them may attain perfection in the world of humanity. Know ye the value of these children, for they are all my children.

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24 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 54-56)

You are welcome this afternoon, most welcome. I am ever happy to see you. I ask God that

meeting me may be productive of results; that it may not be like ordinary gatherings, for those

who hold meetings where groups of people assemble usually have some interest to further.

Praise be to God! I have no personal interests. I have an interest in the Kingdom, and this is a

sincere intention. I have perfect love for you; therefore, I have traveled this long distance to

meet and greet you. I hope that these gatherings may be productive of great results, and there

is no greater result than the love of God. There is no greater result than bonds of service in the

divine Kingdom and attainment to the good pleasure of the Lord. Therefore, I desire that your

hearts may be directed to the Kingdom of God, that your intentions may be pure and sincere,
your purposes turned toward altruistic accomplishment unmindful of your own welfare; nay,
rather, may all your intentions center in the welfare of humanity, and may you seek to sacrifice
yourselves in the pathway of devotion to mankind. Even as Jesus Christ forfeited His life, may
you, likewise, offer yourselves in the threshold of sacrifice for the betterment of the world; and
just as Bahá'u'lláh suffered severe ordeals and calamities nearly fifty years for you, may you
be willing to undergo difficulties and withstand catastrophes for humanity in general. May you
bear these trials and tests most willingly and joyously, for every night is followed by a day, and
every day has a night. Every spring has an autumn, and every autumn has its spring. The coming
of a Manifestation of God is the season of spiritual spring. For instance, the appearance of
Christ was a divine springtime. Therefore, it caused a great commotion and vibrant movement
in the world of humanity. The Sun of Reality dawned, the cloud of mercy poured down its rain,
the breezes of providence moved, the world became a new world, mankind reflected an
extraordinary radiance, souls were educated, minds were developed, intelligences became
acute, and the human world attained a new freshness of life, like unto the advent of spring.
Then gradually that spring was followed by the autumn of death and decay. The teachings of
Christ were forgotten. The Christly bounties ceased. Divine moralities disappeared. Day ended
in night. The people became negligent and oblivious. Minds weakened until conditions reached
such a crisis that material science rose in the ascendant. Knowledge and sciences of the
Kingdom became obsolete, the mysteries of God deepened, and the traces of the bounties of
Christ were completely obliterated. The nations were enmeshed in superstition and blind
imitation. Discord and disagreement arose, culminating in strife, war and bloodshed. Hearts
were torn asunder in violence. Various denominations appeared, diverse sects and creeds arose,
and the whole world was plunged into darkness.

At such a time as this Bahá'u'lláh dawned from the horizon of Persia. He reformed and renewed the fundamentals and realities of Christ's teachings. He endured the greatest difficulties and underwent the severest ordeals.
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Praise be to God that the teachings of God are revoiced, the light of reality has dawned again, the effulgence is increasing daily, and the radiance is shining more gloriously in the zenith. From the cloud of mercy a deluge is descending; the Sun of Reality is brilliant in its eternal station. Again we are hopeful that the same springtime may pitch its tent and that these boundless bestowals may appear once more among us. Through your efforts and sincerity this is made possible. If you arise in the Cause of God with divine power, heavenly grace, the sincerity of the Kingdom, a merciful heart and decisive intention, it is certain that the world of humanity will be entirely illumined, the moralities of mankind will become merciful, the foundations of the Most Great Peace will be laid, and the oneness of the kingdom of man will become a reality. This is the great bounty I desire for you, and I pray and supplicate the divine threshold, imploring in your behalf.
O Thou merciful God! O Thou Who art mighty and powerful! O Thou most kind Father!
These servants have gathered together, turning to Thee, supplicating Thy threshold, desiring Thine endless bounties from Thy great assurance. They have no purpose save Thy good pleasure. They have no intention save service to the world of humanity.
O God! Make this assemblage radiant. Make the hearts merciful. Confer the bounties of the Holy Spirit. Endow them with a power from heaven. Bless them with heavenly minds. Increase their sincerity, so that with all humility and contrition they may turn to Thy kingdom and be occupied with service to the world of humanity. May each one become a radiant candle. May each one become a brilliant star. May each one become beautiful in color and redolent of fragrance in the Kingdom of God.

O kind Father! Confer Thy blessings. Consider not our shortcomings. Shelter us under Thy protection. Remember not our sins. Heal us with Thy mercy. We are weak; Thou art mighty. We are poor; Thou art rich. We are sick; Thou art the Physician. We are needy; Thou art most generous. O God! Endow us with Thy providence. Thou art the Powerful. Thou art the Giver. Thou art the Beneficent.

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24 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mrs. Andrew J. Dyer
1937 Thirteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.
Notes by Joseph H. Hannen
(Promulgation, pp. 56-57)

A meeting such as this seems like a beautiful cluster of precious jewels—pearls, rubies, diamonds, sapphires. It is a source of joy and delight. Whatever is conducive to the unity of the world of mankind is most acceptable and praiseworthy; whatever is the cause of discord and disunion is saddening and deplorable. Consider the significance of unity and harmony. This evening I will speak to you upon the subject of existence and nonexistence, life and death. Existence is the expression and outcome of composition and combination. Nonexistence is the expression and outcome of division and disintegration. If we study the forms of existence in the material universe, we find that all created things are the result of composition. Material elements have grouped together in infinite variety and endless forms. Each organism is a compound; each object is an expression of elemental affinity. We find the complex human organism simply an aggregation of cellular structure; the tree is a composite of plant cells; the animal, a combination and grouping of cellular atoms or units, and so on. Existence or the

expression of being is, therefore, composition; and nonexistence is
 decomposition, division,
 disintegration. When elements have been brought together in a certain plan of
 combination, the
 result is the human organism; when these elements separate and disperse, the
 outcome is death
 and nonexistence. Life is, therefore, the product of composition; and death
 signifies
 decomposition.
 Likewise, in the world of minds and souls, fellowship, which is an expression
 of
 composition, is conducive to life, whereas discord, which is an expression of
 decomposition,
 is the equivalent of death. Without cohesion among the individual elements
 which compose
 the body politic, disintegration and decay must inevitably follow and life be
 extinguished.
 Ferocious animals have no fellowship. The vultures and tigers are solitary,
 whereas domestic
 animals live together in complete harmony. The sheep, black and white,
 associate without
 discord. Birds of various species and colors wing their flight and feed
 together without a trace
 of enmity or disagreement. Therefore, in the world of humanity it is wise and
 seemly that all
 the individual members should manifest unity and affinity. In the clustered
 jewels of the races
 may the blacks be as sapphires and rubies and the whites as diamonds and
 pearls. The
 composite beauty of humanity will be witnessed in their unity and blending. How
 glorious the
 spectacle of real unity among mankind! How conducive to peace, confidence and
 happiness if
 races and nations were united in fellowship and accord! The Prophets of God
 were sent into
 the world upon this mission of unity and agreement: that these long-separated
 sheep might
 flock together. When the sheep separate, they are exposed to danger, but in a
 flock and under
 protection of the shepherd they are safe from the attack of all ferocious
 enemies.
 When the racial elements of the American nation unite in actual fellowship and
 accord, the
 lights of the oneness of humanity will shine, the day of eternal glory and
 bliss will dawn, the
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spirit of God encompass, and the divine favors descend. Under the leadership and training of God, the real Shepherd, all will be protected and preserved. He will lead them in green pastures of happiness and sustenance, and they will attain to the real goal of existence. This is the blessing and benefit of unity; this is the outcome of love. This is the sign of the Most Great Peace; this is the star of the oneness of the human world. Consider how blessed this condition will be. I pray for you and ask the confirmation and assistance of God in your behalf.

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25 April 1912

Talk to Theosophical Society

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 58-60)

The greatest power in the realm and range of human existence is spirit—the divine breath which animates and pervades all things. It is manifested throughout creation in different degrees or kingdoms. In the vegetable kingdom it is the augmentative spirit or power of growth, the animus of life and development in plants, trees and organisms of the floral world. In this degree of its manifestation spirit is unconscious of the powers which qualify the kingdom of the animal. The distinctive virtue or plus of the animal is sense perception; it sees, hears, smells, tastes and feels but is incapable, in turn, of conscious ideation or reflection which characterizes and differentiates the human kingdom. The animal neither exercises nor apprehends this distinctive human power and gift. From the visible it cannot draw conclusions regarding the invisible, whereas the human mind from visible and known premises attains knowledge of the unknown and invisible. For instance, Christopher Columbus from information

based upon
known and provable facts drew conclusions which led him unerringly across the
vast ocean to
the unknown continent of America. Such power of accomplishment is beyond the
range of
animal intelligence. Therefore, this power is a distinctive attribute of the
human spirit and
kingdom. The animal spirit cannot penetrate and discover the mysteries of
things. It is a captive
of the senses. No amount of teaching, for instance, would enable it to grasp
the fact that the sun
is stationary, and the earth moves around it. Likewise, the human spirit has
its limitations. It
cannot comprehend the phenomena of the Kingdom transcending the human station,
for it is a
captive of powers and life forces which have their operation upon its own plane
of existence,
and it cannot go beyond that boundary.

There is, however, another Spirit, which may be termed the Divine, to which
Jesus Christ
refers when He declares that man must be born of its quickening and baptized
with its living
fire. Souls deprived of that Spirit are accounted as dead, though they are
possessed of the human
spirit. Jesus Christ has pronounced them dead inasmuch as they have no portion
of the Divine
Spirit. He says, "Let the dead bury their dead." In another instance He
declares, "That which is
born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."
By this He means that
souls, though alive in the human kingdom, are nevertheless dead if devoid of
this particular
spirit of divine quickening. They have not partaken of the divine life of the
higher Kingdom,
for the soul which partakes of the power of the Divine Spirit is, verily,
living.

This quickening spirit emanates spontaneously from the Sun of Truth, from the
reality of
Divinity, and is not a revelation or a manifestation. It is like the rays of
the sun. The rays are
emanations from the sun. This does not mean that the sun has become divisible,
that a part of
the sun has come out into space. This plant beside me has risen from the seed;
therefore, it is a
manifestation and unfoldment of the seed. The seed, as you can see, has
unfolded in
manifestation, and the result is this plant. Every leaf of the plant is a part

of the seed. But the
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reality of Divinity is indivisible, and each individual of humankind cannot be a part of it as is often claimed. Nay, rather, the individual realities of mankind, when spiritually born, are emanations from the reality of Divinity, just as the flame, heat and light of the sun are the effulgence of the sun and not a part of the sun itself. Therefore, a spirit has emanated from the reality of Divinity, and its effulgences have become visible in human entities or realities. This ray and this heat are permanent. There is no cessation in the effulgence. As long as the sun exists, the heat and light will exist, and inasmuch as eternity is a property of Divinity, this emanation is everlasting. There is no cessation in its outpouring. The more the world of humanity develops, the more the effulgences or emanations of Divinity will become revealed, just as the stone, when it becomes polished and pure as a mirror, will reflect in fuller degree the glory and splendor of the sun. The mission of the Prophets, the revelation of the Holy Books, the manifestation of the heavenly Teachers and the purpose of divine philosophy all center in the training of the human realities so that they may become clear and pure as mirrors and reflect the light and love of the Sun of Reality. Therefore, I hope that—whether you be in the East or the West—you will strive with heart and soul in order that day by day the world of humanity may become glorified, more spiritual, more sanctified; and that the splendor of the Sun of Reality may be revealed fully in human hearts as in a mirror. This is worthy of the world of mankind. This is the true evolution and progress of humanity. This is the supreme bestowal. Otherwise, by simple development along material lines man is not perfected. At most, the physical aspect of man, his natural or material conditions, may become stabilized and improved, but he will remain deprived of the spiritual or divine bestowal. He is then like a body without a spirit, a lamp without the light, an

eye without the power of vision, an ear that hears no sound, a mind incapable of perceiving, an intellect minus the power of reason.

Man has two powers; and his development, two aspects. One power is connected with the material world, and by it he is capable of material advancement. The other power is spiritual, and through its development his inner, potential nature is awakened. These powers are like two wings. Both must be developed, for flight is impossible with one wing. Praise be to God!

Material advancement has been evident in the world, but there is need of spiritual advancement in like proportion. We must strive unceasingly and without rest to accomplish the development of the spiritual nature in man, and endeavor with tireless energy to advance humanity toward the nobility of its true and intended station. For the body of man is accidental; it is of no importance. The time of its disintegration will inevitably come. But the spirit of man is essential and, therefore, eternal. It is a divine bounty. It is the effulgence of the Sun of Reality and, therefore, of greater importance than the physical body.

I pray for you. You have come to visit me, and I am most grateful. I shall ask confirmation and assistance for you from God, the Generous, the Bestower, that you may be aided in serving the world of humanity.

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25 April 1912

Message to Esperantists

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 60-61)

Today the greatest need of the world of humanity is discontinuance of the existing misunderstandings among nations. This can be accomplished through the unity of

language.

Unless the unity of languages is realized, the Most Great Peace and the oneness of the human world cannot be effectively organized and established because the function of language is to portray the mysteries and secrets of human hearts. The heart is like a box, and language is the key. Only by using the key can we open the box and observe the gems it contains. Therefore, the question of an auxiliary international tongue has the utmost importance. Through this means international education and training become possible; the evidence and history of the past can be acquired. The spread of the known facts of the human world depends upon language. The explanation of divine teachings can only be through this medium. As long as diversity of tongues and lack of comprehension of other languages continue, these glorious aims cannot be realized. Therefore, the very first service to the world of man is to establish this auxiliary international means of communication. It will become the cause of the tranquillity of the human commonwealth. Through it sciences and arts will be spread among the nations, and it will prove to be the means of the progress and development of all races. We must endeavor with all our powers to establish this international auxiliary language throughout the world. It is my hope that it may be perfected through the bounties of God and that intelligent men may be selected from the various countries of the world to organize an international congress whose chief aim will be the promotion of this universal medium of speech.

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25 April 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 61-64)

In the world of existence the greatest bestowals of God are His teachings. The other bounties of God are limited as regards their benefits and provision. Human existence itself is a divine bestowal, but it is circumscribed with limitations. Sight and hearing are bounties of God; both are limited. And so it is with all the other bestowals; the circle of their operation is confined, restricted, whereas the sphere of the divine teachings is boundless. Centuries and ages pass away, but their efficacy continues like the spirit of life which animates the world of existence. Without the teachings of God the world of humanity is like the animal kingdom. What difference is there between the animal and man? The difference is this: that the animal is not capable of apprehending the divine teachings, whereas man is worthy of them and possesses the capacity to understand. In the animal kingdom there is no such bestowal; therefore, there is limited progression. At most, evolution in that kingdom is a development of the organism. In the beginning it is small, undeveloped; it develops, becomes larger; but its sphere of intellectual growth is limited. Therefore, the teachings of God are the bestowals specialized for man. Although the divine teachings are truth and reality, yet with the passage of time thick clouds envelop and obscure them. These clouds are imitations and superstitions; they are not the fundamentals. Then the Sun of Truth, the Word of God, arises again, shines forth once more in the glory of its power and disperses the enveloping darkness. For a long time the divine precepts of the effulgent Word were obscured by clouds of superstition and error until Bahá'u'lláh appeared upon the horizon of humanity, rent the shadows, scattered the clouds and revealed anew the foundations of the teachings of God. The first teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the duty incumbent upon all to investigate reality. What does it mean to investigate reality? It means that man must forget all hearsay and examine truth himself, for he does not know whether statements he hears are in accordance with reality or not. Wherever he finds truth or reality, he must hold to it, forsaking, discarding all else; for

outside of reality there is naught but superstition and imagination. For example, during the days of Jesus Christ the Jews were expecting the appearance of the Messiah, praying and beseeching God day and night that the Promised One might appear. Why did they reject Him when He did appear? They denied Him absolutely, refused to believe in Him. There was no abuse and persecution which they did not heap upon Him. They reviled Him with curses, placed a crown of thorns upon His head, led Him through the streets in scorn and derision and finally crucified Him. Why did they do this? Because they did not investigate the truth or reality of Christ and were not able to recognize Him as the Messiah of God. Had they investigated sincerely for themselves, they would surely have believed in Him, respected Him and bowed before Him in reverence. They would have considered His manifestation the greatest bestowal upon mankind. They would have accepted Him as the very Savior of man; but, alas, they were veiled, they

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held to imitations of ancestral beliefs and hearsay and did not investigate the truth of Christ.

They were submerged in the sea of superstitions and were, therefore, deprived of witnessing that glorious bounty; they were withheld from the fragrances or breaths of the Holy Spirit and suffered in themselves the greatest debasement and degradation.

Reality or truth is one, yet there are many religious beliefs, denominations, creeds and

differing opinions in the world today. Why should these differences exist?

Because they do not

investigate and examine the fundamental unity, which is one and unchangeable.

If they seek

reality itself, they will agree and be united; for reality is indivisible and not multiple. It is

evident, therefore, that there is nothing of greater importance to mankind than the investigation of truth.

The second teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the oneness of the world of humanity. Every human

creature is the servant of God. All have been created and reared by the power and favor of God;

all have been blessed with the bounties of the same Sun of divine truth; all have quaffed from the fountain of the infinite mercy of God; and all in His estimation and love are equal as servants. He is beneficent and kind to all. Therefore, no one should glorify himself over another; no one should manifest pride or superiority toward another; no one should look upon another with scorn and contempt; and no one should deprive or oppress a fellow creature. All must be considered as submerged in the ocean of God's mercy. We must associate with all humanity in gentleness and kindness. We must love all with love of the heart. Some are ignorant; they must be trained and educated. One is sick; he must be healed. Another is as a child; we must assist him to attain maturity. We must not detest him who is ailing, neither shun him, scorn nor curse him, but care for him with the utmost kindness and tenderness. An infant must not be treated with disdain simply because it is an infant. Our responsibility is to train, educate and develop it in order that it may advance toward maturity. The third teaching or principle of Bahá'u'lláh is that religion and science are in complete agreement. Every religion which is not in accordance with established science is superstition. Religion must be reasonable. If it does not square with reason, it is superstition and without foundation. It is like a mirage, which deceives man by leading him to think it is a body of water. God has endowed man with reason that he may perceive what is true. If we insist that such and such a subject is not to be reasoned out and tested according to the established logical modes of the intellect, what is the use of the reason which God has given man? The eye is the organ of sense by which we view the world of outer phenomena; hearing is the faculty for distinguishing sounds; taste senses the properties of objects, such as bitter, sweet; smell detects and differentiates odors; touch reveals attributes of matter and perfects our communication with the outer world; yet after all, the circle and range of perception by the five senses is exceedingly limited. But the intellectual faculty of man is unlimited in its sphere of action. The eye views

details perhaps a mile, but the intellect can perceive the far East and West.
The ear may hear
tone modulations at one thousand feet, but the mind of man can detect the
harmonies of the
heavenly spheres as they swing in their courses. Mind makes geological
discoveries in
subterranean depths and determines the processes of creation in the earth's
lowest strata. The
sciences and arts, all inventions, crafts, trades and their products have come
forth from the
intellect of man. It is evident that within the human organism the intellect
occupies the supreme
station. Therefore, if religious belief, principle or creed is not in
accordance with the intellect
and the power of reason, it is surely superstition.
At another time I shall speak further of the principles revealed in the
teachings of
Bahá'u'lláh.

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30 April 1912

Talk at Public Meeting Concluding Convention of Bahá'í Temple Unity
 Drill Hall, Masonic Temple, Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 65-67)

Among the institutes of the Holy Books is that of the foundation of places of
 worship. That
 is to say, an edifice or temple is to be built in order that humanity might
 find a place of meeting,
 and this is to be conducive to unity and fellowship among them. The real temple
 is the very
 Word of God; for to it all humanity must turn, and it is the center of unity
 for all mankind. It is
 the collective center, the cause of accord and communion of hearts, the sign of
 the solidarity of
 the human race, the source of eternal life. Temples are the symbols of the

divine uniting force
so that when the people gather there in the House of God they may recall the fact that the law has been revealed for them and that the law is to unite them. They will realize that just as this temple was founded for the unification of mankind, the law preceding and creating it came forth in the manifest Word. Jesus Christ, addressing Peter, said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." This utterance was indicative of the faith of Peter, signifying: This faith of thine, O Peter, is the very cause and message of unity to the nations; it shall be the bond of union between the hearts of men and the foundation of the oneness of the world of humanity. In brief, the original purpose of temples and houses of worship is simply that of unity—places of meeting where various peoples, different races and souls of every capacity may come together in order that love and agreement should be manifest between them. That is why Bahá'u'lláh has commanded that a place of worship be built for all the religionists of the world; that all religions, races and sects may come together within its universal shelter; that the proclamation of the oneness of mankind shall go forth from its open courts of holiness—the announcement that humanity is the servant of God and that all are submerged in the ocean of His mercy. It is the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. The world of existence may be likened to this temple and place of worship. For just as the external world is a place where the people of all races and colors, varying faiths, denominations and conditions come together—just as they are submerged in the same sea of divine favors—so, likewise, all may meet under the dome of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and adore the one God in the same spirit of truth; for the ages of darkness have passed away, and the century of light has come. Ignorant prejudices are being dispelled, and the light of unity is shining. The differences existing between nations and peoples will soon be annulled, and the fundamentals of the divine religions, which are no other than the oneness and solidarity of the human race, are being established. For thousands of years the human race

has been at war. It is enough. Now let mankind, for a time at least, consort in amity and peace.

Enmity and hatred have ruled. Let the world, for a period, exercise love. For thousands of years

the nations have denied each other, considering each other as infidel and inferior. It is sufficient.

We must now realize that we are the servants of one God, that we turn to one beneficent Father,

live under one divine law, seek one reality and have one desire. Thus may we live in the utmost

friendship and love, and in return the favors and bounties of God shall surround us; the world

of humanity will be reformed; mankind, enjoy a new life; eternal light will illumine, and

heavenly moralities become manifest.

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Then divine policy shall govern the world, for the divine policy is the oneness of humanity.

God is just and kind to all. He considers all as His servants. He excludes none, and His

judgments are correct and true. No matter how complete human policy and foresight may

appear, they are imperfect. If we do not seek the counsel of God or if we refuse to follow His

dictates, it is presumptive evidence that we are knowing and wise, whereas God is ignorant;

that we are sagacious and God is not. God forbid! We seek shelter in His mercy for this

suggestion! No matter how far the human intelligence may advance, it is still but a drop, while

divine omniscience is the ocean. Shall we say that a drop is imbued or endowed with qualities

of which the ocean is devoid? Shall we believe that the policy and plan of this atom of a human

soul are superior to the wisdom of the Omniscient? There is no greater ignorance than this.

Briefly, some are mere children; with the utmost love we must educate them to make them

wise. Others are sick and ailing; we must tenderly treat them until they recover. Some have

unworthy morals; we must train them toward the standard of true morality. Other than this we

are all the servants of one God and under the providence and protection of one Father.

These are the institutions of God and the foundations of His temple, the

Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.

The outer edifice is a symbol of the inner. May the people be admonished thereby.

I pray in your behalf that your hearts may be enlightened with the light of the love of God;

that your minds may develop daily; that your spirits may become aglow with the fire and

illumination of His glad tidings, until these divine foundations may become established

throughout the human world. The first of these institutions and foundations is the oneness of

humanity and love among mankind. The second is the Most Great Peace. Praise be to God!

This American democracy manifests capacity, showing forth readiness to become the standardbearer of the Most Great Peace. May its hosts be the hosts of the oneness of humanity. May

they serve the threshold of God and spread the message of the good pleasure of God.

O Thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to Thee. These hearts are radiant with Thy

love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated by the message of Thy glad tidings. O God! Let

this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material

degrees, and render this just government victorious. Confirm this revered nation to upraise the

standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the Most Great Peace, to become thereby

most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world. O God! This American

nation is worthy of Thy favors and is deserving of Thy mercy. Make it precious and near to

Thee through Thy bounty and bestowal.

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30 April 1912

Talk at Hull House

Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 67-69)

When we view the world of creation, we find that all living things may be classified under

two aspects of existence. First, they possess bodies composed of material substance common to all—whether vegetable, animal or human. This is their point of agreement or, as it is philosophically termed, their point of contact. Second, they vary and differ from each other in degree and function—that is to say, in their respective kingdoms. This is their point of distinction and differentiation. For instance, the vegetable and animal are alike in the fact that their bodies are composed of the same material elements but widely different in their kingdoms and powers. Man is like the animal in physical structure but otherwise immeasurably separated and superior.

In the human kingdom itself there are points of contact, properties common to all mankind; likewise, there are points of distinction which separate race from race, individual from individual. If the points of contact, which are the common properties of humanity, overcome the peculiar points of distinction, unity is assured. On the other hand, if the points of differentiation overcome the points of agreement, disunion and weakness result. One of the important questions which affect the unity and the solidarity of mankind is the fellowship and equality of the white and colored races. Between these two races certain points of agreement and points of distinction exist which warrant just and mutual consideration. The points of contact are many; for in the material or physical plane of being, both are constituted alike and exist under the same law of growth and bodily development. Furthermore, both live and move in the plane of the senses and are endowed with human intelligence. There are many other mutual qualifications. In this country, the United States of America, patriotism is common to both races; all have equal rights to citizenship, speak one language, receive the blessings of the same civilization, and follow the precepts of the same religion. In fact numerous points of partnership and agreement exist between the two races; whereas the one point of distinction is that of color. Shall this, the least of all distinctions, be allowed to separate you as races and

the world of humanity. He has caused various nations and divergent creeds to unite. He has declared that difference of race and color is like the variegated beauty of flowers in a garden. If you enter a garden, you will see yellow, white, blue, red flowers in profusion and beauty—each radiant within itself and although different from the others, lending its own charm to them. Racial difference in the human kingdom is similar. If all the flowers in a garden were of the same color, the effect would be monotonous and wearying to the eye. Therefore, Bahá'u'lláh hath said that the various races of humankind lend a composite harmony and beauty of color to the whole. Let all associate, therefore, in this great human garden even as flowers grow and blend together side by side without discord or disagreement between them.

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30 April 1912

Talk at Fourth Annual Conference of the National Association
for the Advancement of Colored People

Handel Hall, Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 69-70)

According to the words of the Old Testament God has said, "Let us make man in
our image,

after our likeness." This indicates that man is of the image and likeness of
God—that is to say,

the perfections of God, the divine virtues, are reflected or revealed in the
human reality. Just

as the light and effulgence of the sun when cast upon a polished mirror are
reflected fully,

gloriously, so, likewise, the qualities and attributes of Divinity are radiated
from the depths of

a pure human heart. This is an evidence that man is the most noble of God's
creatures.

Each kingdom of creation is endowed with its necessary complement of attributes
and

powers. The mineral possesses inherent virtues of its own kingdom in the scale
of existence.

The vegetable possesses the qualities of the mineral plus an augmentative
virtue, or power of

growth. The animal is endowed with the virtues of both the mineral and
vegetable plane plus

the power of intellect. The human kingdom is replete with the perfections of
all the kingdoms

below it with the addition of powers peculiar to man alone. Man is, therefore,
superior to all

the creatures below him, the loftiest and most glorious being of creation. Man
is the microcosm;

and the infinite universe, the macrocosm. The mysteries of the greater world,
or macrocosm,

are expressed or revealed in the lesser world, the microcosm. The tree, so to
speak, is the greater

world, and the seed in its relation to the tree is the lesser world. But the
whole of the great tree

is potentially latent and hidden in the little seed. When this seed is planted
and cultivated, the

tree is revealed. Likewise, the greater world, the macrocosm, is latent and
miniatured in the

lesser world, or microcosm, of man. This constitutes the universality or
perfection of virtues

potential in mankind. Therefore, it is said that man has been created in the
image and likeness

of God.

Let us now discover more specifically how he is the image and likeness of God and what

is the standard or criterion by which he can be measured and estimated. This standard can be

no other than the divine virtues which are revealed in him. Therefore, every man imbued with

divine qualities, who reflects heavenly moralities and perfections, who is the expression of

ideal and praiseworthy attributes, is, verily, in the image and likeness of God. If a man

possesses wealth, can we call him an image and likeness of God? Or is human honor and

notoriety the criterion of divine nearness? Can we apply the test of racial color and say that

man of a certain hue—white, black, brown, yellow, red—is the true image of his Creator? We

must conclude that color is not the standard and estimate of judgment and that it is of no

importance, for color is accidental in nature. The spirit and intelligence of man is essential, and

that is the manifestation of divine virtues, the merciful bestowals of God, the eternal life and

baptism through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, be it known that color or race is of no importance.

He who is the image and likeness of God, who is the manifestation of the bestowals of God, is

acceptable at the threshold of God—whether his color be white, black or brown; it matters not.

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Man is not man simply because of bodily attributes. The standard of divine measure and

judgment is his intelligence and spirit.

Therefore, let this be the only criterion and estimate, for this is the image and likeness of

God. A man's heart may be pure and white though his outer skin be black; or his heart be dark

and sinful though his racial color is white. The character and purity of the heart is of all

importance. The heart illumined by the light of God is nearest and dearest to God, and inasmuch

as God has endowed man with such favor that he is called the image of God, this is truly a

supreme perfection of attainment, a divine station which is not to be sacrificed by the mere

accident of color.

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1 May 1912

Talk at Dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár Grounds

Wilmette, Illinois

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 71-72)

The power which has gathered you here today notwithstanding the cold and windy weather

is, indeed, mighty and wonderful. It is the power of God, the divine favor of Bahá'u'lláh which

has drawn you together. We praise God that through His constraining love human souls are

assembled and associated in this way.

Thousands of Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs, dawning points of praise and mention of God for all

religionists will be built in the East and in the West, but this, being the first one erected in the

Occident, has great importance. In the future there will be many here and elsewhere—in Asia,

Europe, even in Africa, New Zealand and Australia—but this edifice in Chicago is of especial

significance. It has the same importance as the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in 'Ishqábád, Caucasus,

Russia, the first one built there. In Persia there are many; some are houses which have been

utilized for the purpose, others are homes entirely devoted to the divine Cause, and in some

places temporary structures have been erected. In all the cities of Persia there are Mashriqu'l-

Adhkárs, but the great dawning point was founded in 'Ishqábád. It possesses superlative

importance because it was the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár built. All the Bahá'í friends agreed and

contributed their utmost assistance and effort. The Afnán devoted his wealth, gave all he had

to it. From such a mighty and combined effort a beautiful edifice arose.

Notwithstanding their

contributions to that building, they have assisted the fund here in Chicago as

well. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in 'Ishqábád is almost completed. It is centrally located, nine avenues leading into it, nine gardens, nine fountains; all the arrangement and construction is according to the principle and proportion of the number nine. It is like a beautiful bouquet. Imagine a very lofty, imposing edifice surrounded completely by gardens of variegated flowers, with nine avenues leading through them, nine fountains and pools of water. Such is its matchless, beautiful design. Now they are building a hospital, a school for orphans, a home for cripples, a hospice and a large dispensary. God willing, when it is fully completed, it will be a paradise. I hope the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Chicago will be like this. Endeavor to have the grounds circular in shape. If possible, adjust and exchange the plots in order to make the dimensions and boundaries circular. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár cannot be triangular in shape. It must be in the form of a circle.

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2 May 1912

Talk at Hotel Plaza

Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 72-73)

In this Cause consultation is of vital importance, but spiritual conference and not the mere voicing of personal views is intended. In France I was present at a session of the senate, but the experience was not impressive. Parliamentary procedure should have for its object the attainment of the light of truth upon questions presented and not furnish a battleground for opposition and self-opinion. Antagonism and contradiction are unfortunate and always destructive to truth. In the parliamentary meeting mentioned, altercation and useless quibbling were frequent; the result, mostly confusion and turmoil; even in one instance a

physical
encounter took place between two members. It was not consultation but comedy.
The purpose is to emphasize the statement that consultation must have for its
object the
investigation of truth. He who expresses an opinion should not voice it as
correct and right but
set it forth as a contribution to the consensus of opinion, for the light of
reality becomes
apparent when two opinions coincide. A spark is produced when flint and steel
come together.
Man should weigh his opinions with the utmost serenity, calmness and composure.
Before
expressing his own views he should carefully consider the views already
advanced by others.
If he finds that a previously expressed opinion is more true and worthy, he
should accept it
immediately and not willfully hold to an opinion of his own. By this excellent
method he
endeavors to arrive at unity and truth. Opposition and division are deplorable.
It is better then
to have the opinion of a wise, sagacious man; otherwise, contradiction and
altercation, in which
varied and divergent views are presented, will make it necessary for a judicial
body to render
decision upon the question. Even a majority opinion or consensus may be
incorrect. A thousand
people may hold to one view and be mistaken, whereas one sagacious person may
be right.
Therefore, true consultation is spiritual conference in the attitude and
atmosphere of love.
Members must love each other in the spirit of fellowship in order that good
results may be
forthcoming. Love and fellowship are the foundation.
The most memorable instance of spiritual consultation was the meeting of the
disciples of
Jesus Christ upon the mount after His ascension. They said, "Jesus Christ has
been crucified,
and we have no longer association and intercourse with Him in His physical
body; therefore,
we must be loyal and faithful to Him, we must be grateful and appreciate Him,
for He has
raised us from the dead, He made us wise, He has given us eternal life. What
shall we do to be
faithful to Him?" And so they held council. One of them said, "We must
detach ourselves from
the chains and fetters of the world; otherwise, we cannot be faithful." The
others replied, "That

is so.” Another said, “Either we must be married and faithful to our wives and children or serve our Lord free from these ties. We cannot be occupied with the care and provision for families and at the same time herald the Kingdom in the wilderness. Therefore, let those who are unmarried remain so, and those who have married provide means of sustenance and comfort
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for their families and then go forth to spread the message of glad tidings.” There were no dissenting voices; all agreed, saying, “That is right.” A third disciple said, “To perform worthy deeds in the Kingdom we must be further self-sacrificing. From now on we should forego ease and bodily comfort, accept every difficulty, forget self and teach the Cause of God.” This found acceptance and approval by all the others. Finally a fourth disciple said, “There is still another aspect to our faith and unity. For Jesus’ sake we shall be beaten, imprisoned and exiled. They may kill us. Let us receive this lesson now. Let us realize and resolve that though we are beaten, banished, cursed, spat upon and led forth to be killed, we shall accept all this joyfully, loving those who hate and wound us.” All the disciples replied, “Surely we will—it is agreed; this is right.” Then they descended from the summit of the mountain, and each went forth in a different direction upon his divine mission. This was true consultation. This was spiritual consultation and not the mere voicing of personal views in parliamentary opposition and debate.

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2 May 1912

Talk to Federation of Women’s Clubs

Hotel La Salle, Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 74-77)

One of the functions of the sun is to quicken and reveal the hidden realities of the kingdoms of existence. Through the light and heat of the great central luminary, all that is potential in the earth is awakened and comes forth into the realm of the visible. The fruit hidden in the tree appears upon its branches in response to the power of the sun; man and all other organisms live, move and have their being under its developing rays; nature is resplendent with countless evolutionary forms through its pervading impulse—so that we can say a function of the sun is the revelation of the mysteries and creative purposes hidden within the phenomenal world.

The outer sun is a sign or symbol of the inner and ideal Sun of Truth, the Word of God.

Inasmuch as this is the century of light, it is evident that the Sun of Reality, the Word, has revealed itself to all humankind. One of the potentialities hidden in the realm of humanity was the capability or capacity of womanhood. Through the effulgent rays of divine illumination the capacity of woman has become so awakened and manifest in this age that equality of man and woman is an established fact. In past ages woman was wronged and oppressed. This was especially the case in Asia and Africa. In certain parts of Asia women were not considered as members of humankind. They were looked upon as inferior, unworthy creatures, subordinate and subject to man. A certain people known as the Nusayris held to the belief for a long period that woman was the incarnation of the evil spirit, or Satan, and that man alone was the manifestation of God, the Merciful. At last this century of light dawned, the realities shone forth, and the mysteries long hidden from human vision were revealed. Among these revealed realities was the great principle of the equality of man and woman, which is now finding recognition throughout the whole world—America, Europe and the Orient. History records the appearance in the world of women who have been signs of guidance, power and accomplishment. Some were notable poets, some philosophers and scientists, others

courageous upon the field of battle. Qurratu'l-'Ayn, a Bahá'í, was a poetess. She discomfited the learned men of Persia by her brilliancy and fervor. When she entered a meeting, even the learned were silent. She was so well versed in philosophy and science that those in her presence always considered and consulted her first. Her courage was unparalleled; she faced her enemies fearlessly until she was killed. She withstood a despotic king, the Sháh of Persia, who had the power to decree the death of any of his subjects. There was not a day during which he did not command the execution of some. This woman singly and alone withstood such a despot until her last breath, then gave her life for her faith. Consider the mysteries revealed during the last half century, all due to the effulgence of the Sun of Reality, which has been so gloriously manifested in this age and cycle. In this day man must investigate reality impartially and without prejudice in order to reach the true knowledge and conclusions. What, then, constitutes the inequality between man and woman? Both are
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human. In powers and function each is the complement of the other. At most it is this: that woman has been denied the opportunities which man has so long enjoyed, especially the privilege of education. But even this is not always a shortcoming. Shall we consider it an imperfection and weakness in her nature that she is not proficient in the school of military tactics, that she cannot go forth to the field of battle and kill, that she is not able to handle a deadly weapon? Nay, rather, is it not a compliment when we say that in hardness of heart and cruelty she is inferior to man? The woman who is asked to arm herself and kill her fellow creatures will say, "I cannot." Is this to be considered a fault and lack of qualification as man's equal? Yet be it known that if woman had been taught and trained in the military science of slaughter, she would have been the equivalent of man even in this accomplishment. But God forbid! May woman never attain this proficiency; may she never wield weapons of

war, for the
destruction of humanity is not a glorious achievement. The upbuilding of a
home, the bringing
of joy and comfort into human hearts are truly glories of mankind. Let not a
man glory in this,
that he can kill his fellow creatures; nay, rather, let him glory in this, that
he can love them.

When we consider the kingdoms of existence below man, we find no distinction or
estimate
of superiority and inferiority between male and female. Among the myriad
organisms of the
vegetable and animal kingdoms sex exists, but there is no differentiation
whatever as to relative
importance and value in the equation of life. If we investigate impartially, we
may even find
species in which the female is superior or preferable to the male. For
instance, there are trees
such as the fig, the male of which is fruitless while the female is fruitful.
The male of the date
palm is valueless while the female bears abundantly. Inasmuch as we find no
ground for
distinction or superiority according to the creative wisdom in the lower
kingdoms, is it logical
or becoming of man to make such distinction in regard to himself? The male of
the animal
kingdom does not glory in its being male and superior to the female. In fact,
equality exists and
is recognized. Why should man, a higher and more intelligent creature, deny and
deprive
himself of this equality the animals enjoy? His surest index and guide as to
the creative
intention concerning himself are the conditions and analogies of the kingdoms
below him
where equality of the sexes is fundamental.

The truth is that all mankind are the creatures and servants of one God, and in
His estimate
all are human. Man is a generic term applying to all humanity. The biblical
statement "Let us
make man in our image, after our likeness" does not mean that woman was not
created. The
image and likeness of God apply to her as well. In Persian and Arabic there are
two distinct
words translated into English as man: one meaning man and woman collectively,
the other
distinguishing man as male from woman the female. The first word and its
pronoun are generic,
collective; the other is restricted to the male. This is the same in Hebrew.

To accept and observe a distinction which God has not intended in creation is ignorance and superstition. The fact which is to be considered, however, is that woman, having formerly been deprived, must now be allowed equal opportunities with man for education and training.

There must be no difference in their education. Until the reality of equality between man and woman is fully established and attained, the highest social development of mankind is not possible. Even granted that woman is inferior to man in some degree of capacity or accomplishment, this or any other distinction would continue to be productive of discord and trouble. The only remedy is education, opportunity; for equality means equal qualification. In brief, the assumption of superiority by man will continue to be depressing to the ambition of woman, as if her attainment to equality was creationally impossible; woman's aspiration toward advancement will be checked by it, and she will gradually become hopeless. On the contrary, we must declare that her capacity is equal, even greater than man's. This will inspire

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her with hope and ambition, and her susceptibilities for advancement will continually increase.

She must not be told and taught that she is weaker and inferior in capacity and qualification. If

a pupil is told that his intelligence is less than his fellow pupils, it is a very great drawback and

handicap to his progress. He must be encouraged to advance by the statement, "You are most

capable, and if you endeavor, you will attain the highest degree."

It is my hope that the banner of equality may be raised throughout the five continents where

as yet it is not fully recognized and established. In this enlightened world of the West woman

has advanced an immeasurable degree beyond the women of the Orient. And let it be known

once more that until woman and man recognize and realize equality, social and political

progress here or anywhere will not be possible. For the world of humanity consists of two parts

or members: one is woman; the other is man. Until these two members are equal

in strength,
the oneness of humanity cannot be established, and the happiness and felicity
of mankind will
not be a reality. God willing, this is to be so.
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2 May 1912

Talk at Bahá'í Women's Reception

Hotel La Salle, Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 77-78)

When we look upon the kingdoms of creation below man, we find three forms or
planes of
existence which await education and development. For instance, the function of
a gardener is
to till the soil of the mineral kingdom and plant a tree which under his
training and cultivation
will attain perfection of growth. If it be wild and fruitless, it may be made
fruitful and prolific
by grafting. If small and unsightly, it will become lofty, beautiful and
verdant under the
gardener's training, whereas a tree bereft of his cultivation retrogresses
daily, its fruit grows
acid and bitter as the trees of the jungle, or it may become entirely barren
and bereft of its
fruitage. Likewise, we observe that animals which have undergone training in
their sphere of
limitation will progress and advance unmistakably, become more beautiful in
appearance and
increase in intelligence. For instance, how intelligent and knowing the Arabian
horse has
become through training, even how polite this horse has become through
education. As to the
human world: It is more in need of guidance and education than the lower
creatures. Reflect
upon the vast difference between the inhabitants of Africa and those of
America. Here the
people have been civilized and uplifted; there they are in the utmost and
abject state of
savagery. What is the cause of their savagery and the reason of your

civilization? It is evident
that this difference is due to education and the lack of education. Consider,
then, the
effectiveness of education in the human kingdom. It makes the ignorant wise,
the tyrant
merciful, the blind seeing, the deaf attentive, even the imbecile intelligent.
How vast this
difference. How wide the chasm which separates the educated man from the man
who lacks
teaching and training. This is the effect when the teacher is merely an
ordinary teacher.
But—praise be to God!—your Teacher and Instructor is Bahá'u'lláh. He
is the Educator of
the Orient and Occident. He is the Teacher of the very world of divinity and
spirituality, the
Sun of Truth, the Word of God. The lights of His education are radiating even
as the sun. See
what it has accomplished, how it is developing all humanity so that I, a
Persian, have come to
this meeting of revered souls upon the American continent and am standing here
expounding
to you in the greatest love. This is through the training of Bahá'u'lláh,
which can unite and has
united these hearts. In this way it has enlightened the world. Even so it has
breathed the spirit
of God into men. Even so it has resuscitated the hearts of men.
Therefore, praise be to God that you have been brought under the education of
this One
Who is the very Sun of Reality and Who is shining resplendently upon all
humankind,
endowing all with a life that is everlasting.
Praise be to God a thousand times!

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2 May 1912

Talk at Hotel Plaza

Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Marzieh Moss

(Promulgation, pp. 78-79)

This morning the city is enveloped in fog and mist. How beautiful is a city
brilliant with
sunshine. Just as these mists and vapors conceal the phenomenal sun, so human

imaginations
obscure the Sun of Truth. Consider the radiant glory of the great solar center
of our planetary
system: how wonderful the sight, how its splendor illumines vision until clouds
and mists veil
it from the eye. In the same way, the Sun of Truth becomes veiled and hidden by
the
superstitions and imaginations of human minds. When the sun rises, no matter
from what
dawning point on the horizon it appears—northeast, east, southeast—the haze
and mists
disperse, and we have clear vision of its glory mounting to the zenith.
Similarly, the nations
have been directed to the dawning points of the Sun of Reality, each to a
particular rising place
from which the light of religion has become manifest; but after a time the
dawning point has
become the object of worship instead of the Sun itself, which is ever one Sun
and stationary in
the heavens of the divine Will. Differences have arisen because of this,
causing clouds and
darkness to overshadow again the glorious luminary of Reality. When the mists
and darkness
of superstition and prejudice are dispersed, all will see the Sun aright and
alike. Then will all
nations become as one in its radiance.
Inasmuch as these clouds and human vapors of superstition hide the light of the
spiritual
Sun, we must put forth our utmost endeavor to dispel them. May we unite in this
and be
enlightened to accomplish it, for the Sun is one and its radiance and bounty
universal. All the
inhabitants of earth are recipients of the bounty of the one phenomenal sun,
and none are
preferred above others; so, likewise, all receive the heavenly bestowals of the
Word of God;
none are specialized as favorites; all are under its protection and universal
effulgence. Human
strife and religious disagreement complex and disfigure the simple purity and
beauty of the
divine Cause until clouds obscure the light of reality and disunion results.
Therefore, make use
of intelligence and reason so that you may dispel these dense clouds from the
horizon of human
hearts and all hold to the one reality of all the Prophets. It is most certain
that if human souls
exercise their respective reason and intelligence upon the divine questions,

the power of God
will dispel every difficulty, and the eternal realities will appear as one
light, one truth, one love,
one God and a peace that is universal.
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2 May 1912

Talk at Hotel Plaza

Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Henrietta C. Wagner

(Promulgation, pp. 79-83)

When we carefully investigate the kingdoms of existence and observe the
phenomena of
the universe about us, we discover the absolute order and perfection of
creation. The dull
minerals in their affinities, plants and vegetables with power of growth,
animals in their
instinct, man with conscious intellect and the heavenly orbs moving obediently
through
limitless space are all found subject to universal law, most complete, most
perfect. That is why
a wise philosopher has said, "There is no greater or more perfect system of
creation than that
which already exists." The materialists and atheists declare that this order
and symmetry is due
to nature and its forces; that composition and decomposition which constitute
life and existence
are exigencies of nature; that man himself is an exigency of nature; that
nature rules and
governs creation; and that all existing things are captives of nature. Let us
consider these
statements. Inasmuch as we find all phenomena subject to an exact order and
under control of
universal law, the question is whether this is due to nature or to divine and
omnipotent rule.
The materialists believe that it is an exigency of nature for the rain to fall
and that unless rain
fell the earth would not become verdant. They reason that if clouds cause a
downpour, if the
sun sends forth heat and light and the earth is endowed with capacity,

vegetation must inevitably follow; therefore, plant life is a property of these natural forces and is a sign of nature; just as combustion is the natural property of fire, therefore, fire burns, and we cannot conceive of fire without its burning. In reply to these statements we say that from the premises advanced by materialists, the conclusions are drawn that nature is the ruler and governor of existence and that all virtues and perfections are natural exigencies and outcomes. Furthermore, it follows that man is but a part or member of that whereof nature is the whole. Man possesses certain virtues of which nature is deprived. He exercises volition; nature is without will. For instance, an exigency of the sun is the giving of light. It is controlled—it cannot do otherwise than radiate light—but it is not volitional. An exigency of the phenomenon of electricity is that it is revealed in sparks and flashes under certain conditions, but it cannot voluntarily furnish illumination. An exigency or property of water is humidity; it cannot separate itself from this property by its own will. Likewise, all the properties of nature are inherent and obedient, not volitional; therefore, it is philosophically predicated that nature is without volition and innate perception. In this statement and principle we agree with the materialists. But the question which presents food for reflection is this: How is it that man, who is a part of the universal plan, is possessed of certain qualities whereof nature is devoid? Is it conceivable that a drop should be imbued with qualities of which the ocean is completely deprived? The drop is a part; the ocean is the whole. Could there be a phenomenon of combustion or illumination which the great luminary the sun itself did not manifest? Is it

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possible for a stone to possess inherent properties of which the aggregate mineral kingdom is lacking? For example, could the fingernail which is a part of human anatomy be endowed with cellular properties of which the brain is deprived?

Man is intelligent, instinctively and consciously intelligent; nature is not. Man is fortified with memory; nature does not possess it. Man is the discoverer of the mysteries of nature; nature is not conscious of those mysteries herself. It is evident, therefore, that man is dual in aspect: as an animal he is subject to nature, but in his spiritual or conscious being he transcends the world of material existence. His spiritual powers, being nobler and higher, possess virtues of which nature intrinsically has no evidence; therefore, they triumph over natural conditions. These ideal virtues or powers in man surpass or surround nature, comprehend natural laws and phenomena, penetrate the mysteries of the unknown and invisible and bring them forth into the realm of the known and visible. All the existing arts and sciences were once hidden secrets of nature. By his command and control of nature man took them out of the plane of the invisible and revealed them in the plane of visibility, whereas according to the exigencies of nature these secrets should have remained latent and concealed. According to the exigencies of nature electricity should be a hidden, mysterious power; but the penetrating intellect of man has discovered it, taken it out of the realm of mystery and made it an obedient human servant. In his physical body and its functions man is a captive of nature; for instance, he cannot continue his existence without sleep, an exigency of nature; he must partake of food and drink, which nature demands and requires. But in his spiritual being and intelligence man dominates and controls nature, the ruler of his physical being. Notwithstanding this, contrary opinions and materialistic views are set forth which would relegate man completely to physical subservience to nature's laws. This is equivalent to saying that the comparative degree exceeds the superlative, that the imperfect includes the perfect, that the pupil surpasses the teacher—all of which is illogical and impossible. When it is clearly manifest and evident that the intelligence of man, his constructive faculty, his power of penetration and discovery transcend nature, how can we say he is nature's thrall and captive? This would indicate that man is

deprived of the
bounties of God, that he is retrograding toward the station of the animal, that
his keen
superintelligence is without function and that he estimates himself as an
animal, without
distinction between his own and the animal's kingdom.
I was once conversing with a famous philosopher of the materialistic school in
Alexandria.
He was strongly opinionated upon the point that man and the other kingdoms of
existence are
under the control of nature and that, after all, man is only a social animal,
often very much of
an animal. When he was discomfited in argument, he said impetuously, "I see
no difference
between myself and the donkey, and I am not willing to admit distinctions which
I cannot
perceive." 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied, "No, I consider you quite different
and distinct; I call you a
man and the donkey but an animal. I perceive that you are highly intelligent,
whereas the
donkey is not. I know that you are well versed in philosophy, and I also know
that the donkey
is entirely deficient in it; therefore, I am not willing to accept your
statement."
Consider the lady beside me who is writing in this little book. It seems a very
trifling,
ordinary matter; but upon intelligent reflection you will conclude that what
has been written
presupposes and proves the existence of a writer. These words have not written
themselves,
and these letters have not come together of their own volition. It is evident
there must be a
writer.
And now consider this infinite universe. Is it possible that it could have been
created
without a Creator? Or that the Creator and cause of this infinite congeries of
worlds should be
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without intelligence? Is the idea tenable that the Creator has no comprehension
of what is
manifested in creation? Man, the creature, has volition and certain virtues. Is
it possible that
his Creator is deprived of these? A child could not accept this belief and
statement. It is
perfectly evident that man did not create himself and that he cannot do so. How

could man of
his own weakness create such a mighty being? Therefore, the Creator of man must
be more
perfect and powerful than man. If the creative cause of man be simply on the
same level with
man, then man himself should be able to create, whereas we know very well that
we cannot
create even our own likeness. Therefore, the Creator of man must be endowed
with superlative
intelligence and power in all points that creation involves and implies. We are
weak; He is
mighty, because, were He not mighty, He could not have created us. We are
ignorant; He is
wise. We are poor; He is rich. Otherwise, He would have been incapable of our
creation.

Among the proofs of the existence of a divine power is this: that things are
often known by
their opposites. Were it not for darkness, light could not be sensed. Were it
not for death, life
could not be known. If ignorance did not exist, knowledge would not be a
reality. It is necessary
that each should exist in order that the other should have reality. Night and
day must be in order
that each may be distinguished. Night itself is an indication and evidence of
day which follows,
and day itself indicates the coming night. Unless night were a reality, there
could not be day.

Were it not for death, there could be no life. Things are known by their
opposites.

Therefore, our weakness is an evidence that there is might; our ignorance
proves the reality
of knowledge; our need is an indication of supply and wealth. Were it not for
wealth, this need
would not exist; were it not for knowledge, ignorance would be unknown; were it
not for power,
there would be no impotence. In other words, demand and supply is the law, and
undoubtedly
all virtues have a center and source. That source is God, from Whom all these
bounties emanate.

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3 May 1912

Talk at Hotel Plaza

Chicago, Illinois
Notes by Marzieh Moss
(Promulgation, pp. 83-84)

I was in the Orient, and from the Orient to this part of the world is a long distance. Travel is difficult, especially difficult for me on account of my infirmities of body, increased by forty years in prison. My physical powers are weak; it is the power of will that sustains me. Realize from this how great has been my exertion and how strong my purpose in accomplishing this journey through the will of God. May it be the cause of great illumination in the Occident.

In this western world with its stimulating climate, its capacities for knowledge and lofty ideals, the message of peace should be easily spread. The people are not so influenced by imitations and prejudices, and through their comprehension of the real and unreal they should attain the truth. They should become leaders in the effort to establish the oneness of humankind.

What is higher than this responsibility? In the Kingdom of God no service is greater, and in the estimation of the Prophets, including Jesus Christ, there is no deed so estimable.

Yet even now warfare prevails. Envy and hatred have arisen between nations. But because

I find the American nation so capable of achievement and this government the fairest of western governments, its institutions superior to others, my wish and hope is that the banner of international reconciliation may first be raised on this continent and the standard of the Most

Great Peace be unfurled here. May the American people and their government unite in their

efforts in order that this light may dawn from this point and spread to all regions, for this is one

of the greatest bestowals of God. In order that America may avail herself of this opportunity, I

beg that you strive and pray with heart and soul, devoting all your energies to this end: that the

banner of international peace may be upraised here and that this democracy may be the cause

of the cessation of warfare in all other countries.

Observe what is taking place in Tripoli: men cutting each other into pieces, bombardment

from the sea, attacks from the land and the hail of dynamite from the very
 heaven itself. The
 contending armies are thirsting for each other's blood. How they can do this
 is inconceivable.
 They have fathers, mothers, children; they are human. What of their wives and
 families? Think
 of their anguish and suffering. How unjust, how terrible! Human beings should
 prevent and
 forbid this. These kings, rulers and chieftains should strive for the good of
 their subjects instead
 of their destruction. These shepherds should bring their sheep within the fold,
 comfort them
 and give them pasture instead of death and slaughter.
 I supplicate the divine Kingdom and ask that you may be instrumental in
 establishing the
 great peace in this country and that this government and nation may spread it
 to all the world.

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3 May 1912

Talk at Hotel Plaza

Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Marzieh Moss

(Promulgation, pp. 84-87)

According to the statement of philosophers the difference in degree of
 humankind from
 lowest to highest is due to education. The proofs they advance are these. The
 civilization of
 Europe and America is an evidence and outcome of education, whereas the
 semicivilized and
 barbarous peoples of Africa bear witness in their condition that they have been
 deprived of its
 advantages. Education makes the ignorant wise, the tyrant just, promotes
 happiness,
 strengthens the mind, develops the will and makes fruitless trees of humanity
 fruitful.
 Therefore, in the human world some have attained lofty degrees, while others
 grope in the
 abyss of despair. Nevertheless, the highest attainment is possible for every
 member of the
 human race even to the station of the Prophets. This is the statement and

reasoning of the
philosophers.

The Prophets of God are the first Educators. They bestow universal education upon man and cause him to rise from the lowest levels of savagery to the highest pinnacles of spiritual development. The philosophers, too, are educators along lines of intellectual training. At most, they have only been able to educate themselves and a limited number about them, to improve their own morals and, so to speak, civilize themselves; but they have been incapable of universal education. They have failed to cause an advancement for any given nation from savagery to civilization.

It is evident that although education improves the morals of mankind, confers the advantages of civilization and elevates man from lowest degrees to the station of sublimity, there is, nevertheless, a difference in the intrinsic or natal capacity of individuals. Ten children of the same age, with equal station of birth, taught in the same school, partaking of the same food, in all respects subject to the same environment, their interests equal and in common, will evidence separate and distinct degrees of capability and advancement; some will be exceedingly intelligent and progressive, some of mediocre ability, others limited and incapable.

One may become a learned professor, while another under the same course of education proves dull and stupid. From all standpoints the opportunities have been equal, but the results and outcomes vary from the highest to lowest degree of advancement. It is evident, therefore, that mankind differs in natal capacity and intrinsic intellectual endowment. Nevertheless, although capacities are not the same, every member of the human race is capable of education.

Jesus Christ was an Educator of humanity. His teachings were altruistic; His bestowal, universal. He taught mankind by the power of the Holy Spirit and not through human agency, for the human power is limited, whereas the divine power is illimitable and infinite. The influence and accomplishment of Christ will attest this. Galen, the Greek physician and

philosopher who lived in the second century A. D. , wrote a treatise upon the civilization of nations. He was not a Christian, but he bore testimony that religious beliefs exercise an

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extraordinary effect upon the problems of civilization. In substance he said, "There are certain people among us, followers of Jesus, the Nazarene, who was killed in Jerusalem. These people are truly imbued with moral principles which are the envy of philosophers. They believe in God and fear Him. They have hopes in His favors; therefore, they shun all unworthy deeds and actions and incline to praiseworthy ethics and morals. Day and night they strive that their deeds may be commendable and that they may contribute to the welfare of humanity; therefore, each one of them is virtually a philosopher, for these people have attained unto that which is the essence and purport of philosophy. These people have praiseworthy morals, even though they may be illiterate."

The purpose of this is to show that the holy Manifestations of God, the divine Prophets, are the first Teachers of the human race. They are universal Educators, and the fundamental principles they have laid down are the causes and factors of the advancement of nations. Forms and imitations which creep in afterward are not conducive to that progress. On the contrary, these are destroyers of human foundations established by the heavenly Educators. These are clouds which obscure the Sun of Reality. If you reflect upon the essential teachings of Jesus, you will realize that they are the light of the world. Nobody can question their truth. They are the very source of life and the cause of happiness to the human race. The forms and superstitions which appeared and obscured the light did not affect the reality of Christ. For example, Jesus Christ said, "Put up thy sword into the sheath." The meaning is that warfare is forbidden and abrogated; but consider the Christian wars which took place afterward. Christian hostility and inquisition spared not even the learned; he who proclaimed the

revolution of the
 earth was imprisoned; he who announced the new astronomical system was
 persecuted as a
 heretic; scholars and scientists became objects of fanatical hatred, and many
 were killed and
 tortured. How do these actions conform with the teachings of Jesus Christ, and
 what relation
 do they bear to His own example? For Christ declared, "Love your enemies, ...
 and pray for
 them which ... persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father which
 is in heaven:
 for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on
 the just and on
 the unjust." How can hatred, hostility and persecution be reconciled with
 Christ and His
 teachings?

Therefore, there is need of turning back to the original foundation. The
 fundamental
 principles of the Prophets are correct and true. The imitations and
 superstitions which have
 crept in are at wide variance with the original precepts and commands.
 Bahá'u'lláh has
 revoiced and reestablished the quintessence of the teachings of all the
 Prophets, setting aside
 the accessories and purifying religion from human interpretation. He has
 written a book entitled
 the Hidden Words. The preface announces that it contains the essences of the
 words of the
 Prophets of the past, clothed in the garment of brevity, for the teaching and
 spiritual guidance
 of the people of the world. Read it that you may understand the true
 foundations of religion
 and reflect upon the inspiration of the Messengers of God. It is light upon
 light.

We must not look for truth in the deeds and actions of nations; we must
 investigate truth at
 its divine source and summon all mankind to unity in reality itself.

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4 May 1912

Talk to Theosophical Society

Northwestern University Hall, Evanston, Illinois

Notes by Marzieh Moss

(Promulgation, pp. 87-91)

I am very happy in being present at this meeting. Praise be to God! I see before me the faces of those who are endowed with capacity to know and who desire to investigate truth. This is conducive to the greatest joy. According to divine philosophy there are two important and universal conditions in the world of material phenomena: one which concerns life, the other concerning death; one relative to existence, the other nonexistence; one manifest in composition, the other in decomposition. Some define existence as the expression of reality or being and nonexistence as nonbeing, imagining that death is annihilation. This is a mistaken idea, for total annihilation is an impossibility. At most, composition is ever subject to decomposition or disintegration—that is to say, existence implies the grouping of material elements in a form or body, and nonexistence is simply the decomposing of these groupings. This is the law of creation in its endless forms and infinite variety of expression. Certain elements have formed the composite creature man. This composite association of the elements in the form of a human body is, therefore, subject to disintegration, which we call death, but after disintegration the elements themselves persist unchanged. Therefore, total annihilation is an impossibility, and existence can never become nonexistence. This would be equivalent to saying that light can become darkness, which is manifestly untrue and impossible. As existence can never become nonexistence, there is no death for man; nay, rather, man is everlasting and ever-living. The rational proof of this is that the atoms of the material elements are transferable from one form of existence to another, from one degree and kingdom to another, lower or higher. For example, an atom of the soil or dust of earth may traverse the kingdoms from mineral to man by successive incorporations into the bodies of the organisms of those kingdoms. At one time it enters into the formation of the mineral or rock; it is then absorbed by the vegetable kingdom and becomes a constituent of the

body and fibre of a tree; again it is appropriated by the animal, and at a still later period is found in the body of man. Throughout these degrees of its traversing the kingdoms from one form of phenomenal being to another, it retains its atomic existence and is never annihilated nor relegated to nonexistence. Nonexistence, therefore, is an expression applied to change of form, but this transformation can never be rightly considered annihilation, for the elements of composition are ever present and existent as we have seen in the journey of the atom through successive kingdoms, unimpaired; hence, there is no death; life is everlasting. So to speak, when the atom entered into the composition of the tree, it died to the mineral kingdom, and when consumed by the animal, it died to the vegetable kingdom, and so on until its transference or transmutation into the kingdom of man; but throughout its traversing it was subject to transformation and not annihilation. Death, therefore, is applicable to a change or transference from one degree or

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condition to another. In the mineral realm there was a spirit of existence; in the world of plant life and organisms it reappeared as the vegetative spirit; thence it attained the animal spirit and finally aspired to the human spirit. These are degrees and changes but not obliteration, and this is a rational proof that man is everlasting, ever-living. Therefore, death is only a relative term implying change. For example, we will say that this light before me, having reappeared in another incandescent lamp, has died in the one and lives in the other. This is not death in reality. The perfections of the mineral are translated into the vegetable and from thence into the animal, the virtue always attaining a superlative degree in the upward change. In each kingdom we find the same virtues manifesting themselves more fully, proving that the reality has been transferred from a lower to a higher form and kingdom of being. Therefore, nonexistence is only relative and absolute nonexistence inconceivable. This rose in my hand

will become
disintegrated and its symmetry destroyed, but the elements of its composition
remain
changeless; nothing affects their elemental integrity. They cannot become
nonexistent; they are
simply transferred from one state to another.
Through his ignorance man fears death, but the death he shrinks from is
imaginary and
absolutely unreal; it is only human imagination.
The bestowal and grace of God have quickened the realm of existence with life
and being.
For existence there is neither change nor transformation; existence is ever
existence; it can
never be translated into nonexistence. It is gradation; a degree below a higher
degree is
considered as nonexistence. This dust beneath our feet, as compared with our
being, is
nonexistent. When the human body crumbles into dust, we can say it has become
nonexistent;
therefore, its dust in relation to living forms of human being is as
nonexistent, but in its own
sphere it is existent, it has its mineral being. Therefore, it is well proved
that absolute
nonexistence is impossible; it is only relative.
The purpose is this: that the everlasting bestowal of God vouchsafed to man is
never subject
to corruption. Inasmuch as He has endowed the phenomenal world with being, it
is impossible
for that world to become nonbeing, for it is the very genesis of God; it is in
the realm of
origination; it is a creational and not a subjective world, and the bounty
descending upon it is
continuous and permanent. Therefore, man, the highest creature of the
phenomenal world, is
endowed with that continuous bounty bestowed by divine generosity without
cessation. For
instance, the rays of the sun are continuous, the heat of the sun emanates from
it without
cessation; no discontinuance of it is conceivable. Even so, the bestowal of God
is descending
upon the world of humanity, never ceasing, continuous, forever. If we say that
the bestowal of
existence ceases or falters, it is equivalent to saying that the sun can exist
with cessation of its
effulgence. Is this possible? Therefore, the effulgences of existence are ever
present and
continuous.

The conception of annihilation is a factor in human degradation, a cause of human debasement and lowliness, a source of human fear and abjection. It has been conducive to the dispersion and weakening of human thought, whereas the realization of existence and continuity has upraised man to sublimity of ideals, established the foundations of human progress and stimulated the development of heavenly virtues; therefore, it behooves man to abandon thoughts of nonexistence and death, which are absolutely imaginary, and see himself ever-living, everlasting in the divine purpose of his creation. He must turn away from ideas which degrade the human soul so that day by day and hour by hour he may advance upward and higher to spiritual perception of the continuity of the human reality. If he dwells upon the

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thought of nonexistence, he will become utterly incompetent; with weakened willpower his ambition for progress will be lessened and the acquisition of human virtues will cease. Therefore, you must thank God that He has bestowed upon you the blessing of life and existence in the human kingdom. Strive diligently to acquire virtues befitting your degree and station. Be as lights of the world which cannot be hid and which have no setting in horizons of darkness. Ascend to the zenith of an existence which is never beclouded by the fears and forebodings of nonexistence. When man is not endowed with inner perception, he is not informed of these important mysteries. The retina of outer vision, though sensitive and delicate, may, nevertheless, be a hindrance to the inner eye which alone can perceive. The bestowals of God which are manifest in all phenomenal life are sometimes hidden by intervening veils of mental and mortal vision which render man spiritually blind and incapable, but when those scales are removed and the veils rent asunder, then the great signs of God will become visible, and he will witness the eternal light filling the world. The bestowals of God are all and always

manifest. The promises of heaven are ever present. The favors of God are all-surrounding, but should the conscious eye of the soul of man remain veiled and darkened, he will be led to deny these universal signs and remain deprived of these manifestations of divine bounty. Therefore, we must endeavor with heart and soul in order that the veil covering the eye of inner vision may be removed, that we may behold the manifestations of the signs of God, discern His mysterious graces and realize that material blessings as compared with spiritual bounties are as nothing. The spiritual blessings of God are greatest. When we were in the mineral kingdom, although we were endowed with certain gifts and powers, they were not to be compared with the blessings of the human kingdom. In the matrix of the mother we were the recipients of endowments and blessings of God, yet these were as nothing compared to the powers and graces bestowed upon us after birth into this human world. Likewise, if we are born from the matrix of this physical and phenomenal environment into the freedom and loftiness of the spiritual life and vision, we shall consider this mortal existence and its blessings as worthless by comparison. In the spiritual world the divine bestowals are infinite, for in that realm there is neither separation nor disintegration, which characterize the world of material existence. Spiritual existence is absolute immortality, completeness and unchangeable being. Therefore, we must thank God that He has created for us both material blessings and spiritual bestowals. He has given us material gifts and spiritual graces, outer sight to view the lights of the sun and inner vision by which we may perceive the glory of God. He has designed the outer ear to enjoy the melodies of sound and the inner hearing wherewith we may hear the voice of our Creator. We must strive with energies of heart, soul and mind to develop and manifest the perfections and virtues latent within the realities of the phenomenal world, for the human reality may be compared to a seed. If we sow the seed, a mighty tree appears from it. The virtues of the seed

are revealed in the tree; it puts forth branches, leaves, blossoms, and produces fruits. All these virtues were hidden and potential in the seed. Through the blessing and bounty of cultivation these virtues became apparent. Similarly, the merciful God, our Creator, has deposited within human realities certain latent and potential virtues. Through education and culture these virtues deposited by the loving God will become apparent in the human reality, even as the unfoldment of the tree from within the germinating seed. I will pray for you. O Thou kind Lord! These are Thy servants who have gathered in this meeting, have turned unto Thy Kingdom and are in need of Thy bestowal and blessing. O thou God! Manifest and make evident the signs of Thy oneness which have been deposited in all the realities of life.

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Reveal and unfold the virtues which Thou hast made latent and concealed in these human realities.

O God! We are as plants, and Thy bounty is as the rain; refresh and cause these plants to grow through Thy bestowal. We are Thy servants; free us from the fetters of material existence.

We are ignorant; make us wise. We are dead; make us alive. We are material; endow us with

spirit. We are deprived; make us the intimates of Thy mysteries. We are needy; enrich and bless

us from Thy boundless treasury. O God! Resuscitate us; give us sight; give us hearing;

familiarize us with the mysteries of life, so that the secrets of Thy kingdom may become

revealed to us in this world of existence and we may confess Thy oneness. Every bestowal

emanates from Thee; every benediction is Thine.

Thou art mighty. Thou art powerful. Thou art the Giver, and Thou art the Ever-Bounteous.

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5 May 1912
Talk at Children's Meeting
Hotel Plaza
Chicago, Illinois
Notes by Marzieh Moss

(Promulgation, pp. 91-93)

You are the children of whom Christ has said, “Of such is the kingdom of God”; and according to the words of Bahá’u’lláh you are the very lamps or candles of the world of humanity, for your hearts are exceedingly pure and your spirits most sensitive. You are near the source; you have not yet become contaminated. You are the lambs of the heavenly Shepherd. You are as polished mirrors reflecting pure light. My hope is that your parents may educate you spiritually and give you thorough moral training. May you develop so that each one of you shall become imbued with all the virtues of the human world. May you advance in all material and spiritual degrees. May you become learned in sciences, acquire the arts and crafts, prove to be useful members of human society and assist the progress of human civilization. May you be a cause of the manifestation of divine bestowals—each one of you a shining star radiating the light of the oneness of humanity toward the horizons of the East and West. May you be devoted to the love and unity of mankind, and through your efforts may the reality deposited in the human heart find its divine expression. I pray for you, asking the assistance and confirmation of God in your behalf. You are all my children, my spiritual children. Spiritual children are dearer than physical children, for it is possible for physical children to turn away from the Spirit of God, but you are spiritual children and, therefore, you are most beloved. I wish for you progress in every degree of development. May God assist you. May you be surrounded by the beneficent light of His countenance, and may you attain maturity under His nurture and protection. You are all blessed.

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(To the Friends)

I am going away, but you must arise to serve the Word of God. Your hearts must be pure and your intentions sincere in order that you may become recipients of the divine bestowals.

Consider that although the sun shines equally upon all things, yet in the clear mirror its reflection is most brilliant and not in the black stone. This great effulgence and heat have been produced by the crystal clearness of the glass. If there were no clearness and purity, these effects would not be witnessed. Should rain fall upon salty, stony earth, it will never have effect; but when it falls upon good pure soil, green and verdant growth follows, and fruits are produced.

This is the day when pure hearts have a portion of the everlasting bounties and sanctified souls are being illumined by the eternal manifestations. Praise be to God! You are believers in God, assured by the words of God and turning to the Kingdom of God. You have heard the divine call. Your hearts are moved by the breezes of the paradise of Abhá. You have good intentions; your purpose is the good pleasure of God; you desire to serve in the Kingdom of the Merciful One. Therefore, arise in the utmost power. Be in perfect unity. Never become angry with one another. Let your eyes be directed toward the kingdom of truth and not toward the world of creation. Love the creatures for the sake of God and not for themselves. You will never become angry or impatient if you love them for the sake of God. Humanity is not perfect.

There are imperfections in every human being, and you will always become unhappy if you look toward the people themselves. But if you look toward God, you will love them and be kind to them, for the world of God is the world of perfection and complete mercy. Therefore, do not look at the shortcomings of anybody; see with the sight of forgiveness. The imperfect eye beholds imperfections. The eye that covers faults looks toward the Creator of souls. He created them, trains and provides for them, endows them with capacity and life, sight and hearing; therefore, they are the signs of His grandeur. You must love and be kind to everybody, care for the poor, protect the weak, heal the sick, teach and educate the ignorant.

It is my hope that the unity and harmony of the friends in Chicago may be the cause of the

unity of the friends throughout America and that all people may become recipients of their love and kindness. May they be an example for mankind. Then the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abhá and the bestowals of the Sun of Reality will be all-encircling.

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5 May 1912

Talk at Plymouth Congregational Church

935 East Fiftieth Street

Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Marzieh Moss

(Promulgation, pp. 93-96)

I offer thanks to God for the privilege of being present in an assemblage which is

commemorating Him, whose members have no thought or intention save His good pleasure

and the unbiased investigation of reality. I praise God for this meeting of human souls free

from the bondage of imitations and prejudice, willing to examine reasonably and accept that

which is found to be true.

In our solar system the center of illumination is the sun itself. Through the will of God this

central luminary is the one source of the existence and development of all phenomenal things.

When we observe the organisms of the material kingdoms, we find that their growth and

training are dependent upon the heat and light of the sun. Without this quickening impulse there

would be no growth of tree or vegetation; neither would the existence of animal or human being

be possible; in fact, no forms of created life would be manifest upon the earth. But if we reflect

deeply, we will perceive that the great bestower and giver of life is God; the sun is the

intermediary of His will and plan. Without the bounty of the sun, therefore, the world would

be in darkness. All illumination of our planetary system proceeds or emanates from the solar

center.

Likewise, in the spiritual realm of intelligence and idealism there must be a

center of
illumination, and that center is the everlasting, ever-shining Sun, the Word of
God. Its lights
are the lights of reality which have shone upon humanity, illumining the realm
of thought and
morals, conferring the bounties of the divine world upon man. These lights are
the cause of the
education of souls and the source of the enlightenment of hearts, sending forth
in effulgent
radiance the message of the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. In brief, the
moral and ethical
world and the world of spiritual regeneration are dependent for their
progressive being upon
that heavenly Center of illumination. It gives forth the light of religion and
bestows the life of
the spirit, imbues humanity with archetypal virtues and confers eternal
splendors. This Sun of
Reality, this Center of effulgences, is the Prophet or Manifestation of God.
Just as the
phenomenal sun shines upon the material world producing life and growth,
likewise, the
spiritual or prophetic Sun confers illumination upon the human world of thought
and
intelligence, and unless it rose upon the horizon of human existence, the
kingdom of man would
become dark and extinguished.
The Sun of Reality is one Sun, but it has different dawning places, just as the
phenomenal
sun is one although it appears at various points of the horizon. During the
time of summer the
luminary of the physical world rises far to the north of the equinoctial, in
spring and fall it
dawns midway, and in winter it appears in the most southerly point of its
zodiacal journey.
These daysprings or dawning points differ widely, but the sun is ever the same
sun—whether
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it be the phenomenal or spiritual luminary. Souls who focus their vision upon
the Sun of Reality
will be the recipients of light no matter from what point it rises, but those
who are fettered by
adoration of the dawning point are deprived when it appears in a different
station upon the
spiritual horizon.
Furthermore, just as the solar cycle has its four seasons, the cycle of the Sun

of Reality has
its distinct and successive periods. Each brings its vernal season or
springtime. When the Sun
of Reality returns to quicken the world of mankind, a divine bounty descends
from the heaven
of generosity. The realm of thoughts and ideals is set in motion and blessed
with new life.
Minds are developed, hopes brighten, aspirations become spiritual, the virtues
of the human
world appear with freshened power of growth, and the image and likeness of God
become
visible in man. It is the springtime of the inner world. After the spring,
summer comes with its
fullness and spiritual fruitage; autumn follows with its withering winds which
chill the soul;
the Sun seems to be going away, until at last the mantle of winter overspreads,
and only faint
traces of the effulgence of that divine Sun remain. Just as the surface of the
material world
becomes dark and dreary, the soil dormant, the trees naked and bare and no
beauty or freshness
remains to cheer the darkness and desolation, so the winter of the spiritual
cycle witnesses the
death and disappearance of divine growth and extinction of the light and love
of God. But again
the cycle begins and a new springtime appears. In it the former springtime has
returned; the
world is resuscitated, illumined and attains spirituality; religion is renewed
and reorganized,
hearts are turned to God, the summons of God is heard, and life is again
bestowed upon man.
For a long time the religious world had been weakened and materialism had
advanced; the
spiritual forces of life were waning, moralities were becoming degraded,
composure and peace
had vanished from souls, and satanic qualities were dominating hearts; strife
and hatred
overshadowed humanity, bloodshed and violence prevailed. God was neglected; the
Sun of
Reality seemed to have gone completely; deprivation of the bounties of heaven
was a fact; and
so the season of winter fell upon mankind. But in the generosity of God a new
springtime
dawned, the lights of God shone forth, the effulgent Sun of Reality returned
and became
manifest, the realm of thoughts and kingdom of hearts became exhilarated, a new
spirit of life

breathed into the body of the world, and continuous advancement became
 apparent.
 I hope that the lights of the Sun of Reality will illumine the whole world so
 that no strife
 and warfare, no battles and bloodshed remain. May fanaticism and religious
 bigotry be
 unknown, all humanity enter the bond of brotherhood, souls consort in perfect
 agreement, the
 nations of earth at last hoist the banner of truth, and the religions of the
 world enter the divine
 temple of oneness, for the foundations of the heavenly religions are one
 reality. Reality is not
 divisible; it does not admit multiplicity. All the holy Manifestations of God
 have proclaimed
 and promulgated the same reality. They have summoned mankind to reality itself,
 and reality
 is one. The clouds and mists of imitations have obscured the Sun of Truth. We
 must forsake
 these imitations, dispel these clouds and mists and free the Sun from the
 darkness of
 superstition. Then will the Sun of Truth shine most gloriously; then all the
 inhabitants of the
 world will be united, the religions will be one, sects and denominations will
 reconcile, all
 nationalities will flow together in the recognition of one Fatherhood, and all
 degrees of
 humankind will gather in the shelter of the same tabernacle, under the same
 banner.
 Until the heavenly civilization is founded, no result will be forthcoming from
 material
 civilization, even as you observe. See what catastrophes overwhelm mankind.
 Consider the
 wars which disturb the world. Consider the enmity and hatred. The existence of
 these wars and
 conditions indicates and proves that the heavenly civilization has not yet been
 established. If
 the civilization of the Kingdom be spread to all the nations, this dust of
 disagreement will be

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dispelled, these clouds will pass away, and the Sun of Reality in its greatest
 effulgence and
 glory will shine upon mankind.
 O God! O Thou Who givest! This congregation is turning to Thee, casting their
 glances
 toward Thy Kingdom and favor, longing to behold the lights of Thy face. O God!

Bless this
 nation. Confirm this government. Reveal Thy glory unto this people and confer
 upon them life
 eternal. O God! Illumine the faces, render the hearts radiant, exhilarate the
 breasts, crown the
 heads with the diadem of Thy providence, cause them to soar in Thy pure
 atmosphere so they
 may reach the highest pinnacles of Thy splendor. Assist them in order that this
 world may ever
 find the light and effulgence of Thy presence. O God! Shelter this congregation
 and admonish
 this nation. Render them progressive in all degrees. May they become leaders in
 the world of
 humanity. May they be Thine examples among humankind. May they be
 manifestations of Thy
 grace. May they be filled with the inspiration of Thy Word. Thou art the
 Powerful. Thou art
 the Mighty. Thou art the Giver, and Thou art the Omniscient.

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5 May 1912
 Talk at All-Souls Church
 Lincoln Center, Chicago, Illinois
 Notes by Marzieh Moss
 (Promulgation, pp. 97-100)

The divine religions were founded for the purpose of unifying humanity and
 establishing
 universal peace. Any movement which brings about peace and agreement in human
 society is
 truly a divine movement; any reform which causes people to come together under
 the shelter
 of the same tabernacle is surely animated by heavenly motives. At all times and
 in all ages of
 the world, religion has been a factor in cementing together the hearts of men
 and in uniting
 various and divergent creeds. It is the peace element in religion that blends
 mankind and makes
 for unity. Warfare has ever been the cause of separation, disunion and discord.
 Consider how Jesus Christ united the divergent peoples, sects and denominations
 of the
 early days. It is evident that the fundamentals of religion are intended to

unify and bind together; their purpose is universal, everlasting peace. Prior to the time of Jesus Christ the Word of God had unified opposite types and conflicting elements of human society; and since His appearance the divine Teachers of the primal principles of the law of God have all intended this universal outcome. In Persia Bahá'u'lláh was able to unite people of varying thought, creed and denomination. The inhabitants of that country were Christians, Muslims, Jews, Zoroastrians and a great variety of subdivided forms and beliefs together with racial distinctions such as Semitic, Arabic, Persian, Turk, etc. ; but through the power and efficacy of religion Bahá'u'lláh united these differing peoples and caused them to consort together in perfect agreement. Such unity and accord became manifest among them that they were considered as one people and one kind.

The cause of this fellowship and unity lies in the fact that the divine law has two distinct aspects or functions: one the essential or fundamental, the other the material or accidental. The first aspect of the revealed religion of God is that which concerns the ethical development and spiritual progress of mankind, the awakening of potential human susceptibilities and the descent of divine bestowals. These ordinances are changeless, essential, eternal. The second function of the divine religion deals with material conditions, the laws of human intercourse and social regulation. These are subject to change and transformation in accordance with the time, place and conditions. The essential ordinances of religion were the same during the time of Abraham, the day of Moses and the cycle of Jesus, but the accidental or material laws were abrogated and superseded according to the exigency and requirement of each succeeding age.

For example, in the law of Moses there were ten distinct commandments in regard to murder, which were revealed according to the requirement and capacity of the people, but in the day of Jesus these were abrogated and superseded in conformity with the changed and advanced human conditions.

The central purpose of the divine religions is the establishment of peace and unity among mankind. Their reality is one; therefore, their accomplishment is one and universal—whether

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it be through the essential or material ordinances of God. There is but one light of the material sun, one ocean, one rain, one atmosphere. Similarly, in the spiritual world there is one divine reality forming the center and altruistic basis for peace and reconciliation among various and conflicting nations and peoples. Consider how the Roman Empire and Greek nation were at war in enmity and hatred after the Messianic day, how the hostilities of Egypt and Assyria, though subdued in intensity, still flamed in the warring element of these ancient and declining nations. But the teachings of Jesus Christ proved to be the cement by which they were united; warfare ceased, strife and hatred passed away, and these belligerent peoples associated in love and friendship. For strife and warfare are the very destroyers of human foundations, whereas peace and amity are the builders and safeguards of human welfare. As an instance, two nations which have remained at peace for centuries declare war against each other. What destruction and loss befalls both in one year of strife and conflict—the undoing of centuries. How urgent their necessity and demand for peace, with its comfort and progress, instead of war, which blasts and destroys the foundation of all human attainment. The body politic may be likened to the human organism. As long as the various members and parts of that organism are coordinated and cooperating in harmony, we have as a result the expression of life in its fullest degree. When these members lack coordination and harmony, we have the reverse, which in the human organism is disease, dissolution, death. Similarly, in the body politic of humanity dissension, discord and warfare are always destructive and inevitably fatal. All created beings are dependent upon peace and coordination, for every contingent and phenomenal being is a composition of distinct elements. As long

as there is
affinity and cohesion among these constituent elements, strength and life are
manifest; but
when dissension and repulsion arise among them, disintegration follows. This is
proof that
peace and amity, which God has willed for His children, are the saving factors
of human
society, whereas war and strife, which violate His ordinances, are the cause of
death and
destruction. Therefore, God has sent His Prophets to announce the message of
goodwill, peace
and life to the world of mankind.
Inasmuch as the essential reality of the religions is one and their seeming
variance and
plurality is adherence to forms and imitations which have arisen, it is evident
that these causes
of difference and divergence must be abandoned in order that the underlying
reality may unite
mankind in its enlightenment and upbuilding. All who hold fast to the one
reality will be in
agreement and unity. Then shall the religions summon people to the oneness of
the world of
humanity and to universal justice; then will they proclaim equality of rights
and exhort men to
virtue and to faith in the loving mercy of God. The underlying foundation of
the religions is
one; there is no intrinsic difference between them. Therefore, if the essential
and fundamental
ordinances of the religions be observed, peace and unity will dawn, and all the
differences of
sects and denominations will disappear.
And now let us consider the various peoples of the world. All the
nations—American,
British, French, German, Turkish, Persian, Arab—are children of the same
Adam, members of
the same human household. Why should dissension exist among them? The surface
of the earth
is one native land, and that native land was provided for all. God has not set
these boundaries
and race limitations. Why should imaginary barriers which God has not
originally destined be
made a cause of contention? God has created and provided for all. He is the
Preserver of all,
and all are submerged in the ocean of His mercy. Not a single soul is deprived.
Inasmuch as
we have such a loving God and Creator, why should we be at war with each other?
Now that

His light is shining universally, why should we cast ourselves into darkness?
As His table is
spread for all His children, why should we deprive each other of its
sustenance? As His
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effulgence is shining upon all, why should we seek to live among the shadows?
There is no
doubt that the only cause is ignorance and that the result is perdition.
Discord deprives
humanity of the eternal favors of God; therefore, we must forget all imaginary
causes of
difference and seek the very fundamentals of the divine religions in order that
we may associate
in perfect love and accord and consider humankind as one family, the surface of
the earth as
one nationality and all races as one humanity. Let us live under the protection
of God, attaining
eternal happiness in this world and everlasting life in the world to come.
O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast
decreed
that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all
Thy servants,
and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered
together at Thy Table
of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence.
O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all,
conferrest life upon
all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are
submerged in the
Ocean of Thy Mercy.
O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one,
so that they
may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all
live together
in perfect harmony.
O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind.
O God! Establish the Most Great Peace.
Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together.
O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love.
Brighten
our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of
Thy Word,
and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.
Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One
Who

overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

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6 May 1912

Talk at Euclid Hall

Cleveland, Ohio

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 101-103)

This is a very joyous evening, an evidence in itself of the possibility of uniting the East and

the West—an eastern man appearing before an assemblage of reverent western people. The

East and West, the Orient and Occident, shall be united. If we search history, we shall not find

the record of such an occasion where one has traveled from the far East to the far West to

address a meeting of this universal character. This is a miracle of the twentieth century which

proves that the seemingly impossible may become real and possible in the kingdom of man.

Praise be to God! The dark ages have disappeared, and the age of light has at last arrived. The

Sun of Reality has dawned with supreme effulgence, the realities of things have become

manifest and renewed, the mysteries of the unknown have been revealed, and great inventions

and discoveries mark this period as a most wonderful age.

Through the ingenuity and inventions of man it is possible to cross the wide oceans, fly

through the air and travel in submarine depths. At any moment the Orient and Occident can

communicate with each other. Trains speed across the continents. The human voice has been

arrested and reproduced, and now man can speak at long distances from any point. These are

some of the signs of this glorious century. The great progress mentioned has taken place in the

material world. Remarkable signs and evidences have become manifest. Hidden realities and

mysteries have been disclosed. This is the time for man to strive and put forth

his greatest
 efforts in spiritual directions. Material civilization has reached an advanced
 plane, but now
 there is need of spiritual civilization. Material civilization alone will not
 satisfy; it cannot meet
 the conditions and requirements of the present age; its benefits are limited to
 the world of
 matter. There is no limitation to the spirit of man, for spirit in itself is
 progressive, and if the
 divine civilization be established, the spirit of man will advance. Every
 developed
 susceptibility will increase the effectiveness of man. Discoveries of the real
 will become more
 and more possible, and the influence of divine guidance will be increasingly
 recognized. All
 this is conducive to the divine form of civilization. This is what is meant in
 the Bible by the
 descent of the New Jerusalem. The heavenly Jerusalem is none other than divine
 civilization,
 and it is now ready. It is to be and shall be organized, and the oneness of
 humankind will be a
 visible fact. Humanity will then be brought together as one. The various
 religions will be united,
 and different races will be known as one kind. The Orient and Occident will be
 conjoined, and
 the banner of international peace will be unfurled. The world shall at last
 find peace, and the
 equalities and rights of men shall be established. The capacity of humankind
 will be tested, and
 a degree shall be attained where equality is a reality.
 All the peoples of the world will enjoy like interests, and the poor shall
 possess a portion
 of the comforts of life. Just as the rich are surrounded by their luxuries in
 palaces, the poor will
 have at least their comfortable and pleasant places of abode; and just as the
 wealthy enjoy a
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variety of food, the needy shall have their necessities and no longer live in
 poverty. In short, a
 readjustment of the economic order will come about, the divine Sonship will
 attract, the Sun
 of Reality will shine forth, and all phenomenal being will attain a portion.
 Consider: What is this material civilization of the day giving forth? Has it
 not produced the
 instruments of warfare and destruction? In olden times the weapon of war was

the sword; today
it is the smokeless gun. Warships a century ago were sailing vessels; now we
have
dreadnoughts. Instruments and means of human destruction have enormously
multiplied in this
era of material civilization. But if material civilization shall become
organized in conjunction
with divine civilization, if the man of moral integrity and intellectual acumen
shall unite for
human betterment and uplift with the man of spiritual capacity, the happiness
and progress of
the human race will be assured. All the nations of the world will then be
closely related and
companionable, and the religions will merge into one, for the divine reality
within them all is
one reality. Abraham proclaimed this reality; Jesus promulgated it; all the
Prophets who have
appeared in the world have founded Their teachings upon it. Therefore, the
people of the world
have this one true, unchangeable basis for peace and agreement, and war, which
has raged for
thousands of years, will pass away.
For centuries and cycles humanity has been engaged in war and conflict. At one
time the
pretext for war has been religion, at another time patriotism, racial
prejudice, national politics,
territorial conquest or commercial expansion; in brief, humanity has never been
at peace during
the period of known history. What blood has been shed! How many fathers have
mourned the
loss of sons; how many sons have wept for fathers, and mothers for dear ones!
Human beings
have been the food and targets of the battlefield, and everywhere warfare and
strife have been
the theme and burden of history. Ferocity has characterized men even more than
animals. The
lion, tiger, bear and wolf are ferocious because of their needs. Unless they
are fierce, cruel and
unrelenting, they will die of starvation. The lion cannot graze; its teeth are
fitted only for food
of flesh. This is also true of other wild animals. Ferocity is natural to them
as their means of
subsistence; but human ferocity proceeds from selfishness, greed and
oppression. It springs
from no natural necessity. Man needlessly kills a thousand fellow creatures,
becomes a hero
and is glorified through centuries of posterity. A great city is destroyed in

one day by a
 commanding general. How ignorant, how inconsistent is humankind! If a man slays
 another
 man, we brand him as a murderer and criminal and sentence him to capital
 punishment, but if
 he kills one hundred thousand men, he is a military genius, a great celebrity,
 a Napoleon
 idolized by his nation. If a man steals one dollar, he is called a thief and
 put into prison; if he
 rapes and pillages an innocent country by military invasion, he is crowned a
 hero. How ignorant
 is humankind! Ferocity does not belong to the kingdom of man. It is the
 province of man to
 confer life, not death. It behooves him to be the cause of human welfare, but
 inasmuch as he
 glories in the savagery of animalism, it is an evidence that divine
 civilization has not been
 established in human society. Material civilization has advanced unmistakably,
 but because it
 is not associated with divine civilization, evil and wickedness abound. In
 ancient times if two
 nations were at war twelve months, not over twenty thousand men would be
 killed; now the
 instruments of death have become so multiplied and perfected that one hundred
 thousand can
 be destroyed in a day. In three months during the Russo-Japanese War one
 million perished.
 This was undreamed of in former cycles. The cause is the absence of divine
 civilization.
 This revered American nation presents evidences of greatness and worth. It is
 my hope that
 this just government will stand for peace so that warfare may be abolished
 throughout the world
 and the standards of national unity and reconciliation be upraised. This is the
 greatest
 attainment of the world of humanity. This American nation is equipped and
 empowered to

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accomplish that which will adorn the pages of history, to become the envy of
 the world and be
 blest in the East and the West for the triumph of its democracy. I pray that
 this may come to
 pass, and I ask the blessing of God in behalf of you all.

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6 May 1912

Talk at Sanatorium of Dr. C. M. Swingle

Cleveland, Ohio

Notes by Sigel T. Brooks

(Promulgation, p. 104)

This is a beautiful city; the climate is pleasant; the views are charming. All the cities of America seem to be large and beautiful, and the people appear prosperous. The American continent gives signs and evidences of very great advancement; its future is even more promising, for its influence and illumination are far-reaching, and it will lead all nations spiritually. The flag of freedom and banner of liberty have been unfurled here, but the prosperity and advancement of a city, the happiness and greatness of a country depend upon its hearing and obeying the call of God. The light of reality must shine therein and divine civilization be founded; then the radiance of the Kingdom will be diffused and heavenly influences surround. Material civilization is likened to the body, whereas divine civilization is the spirit in that body. A body not manifesting the spirit is dead; a fruitless tree is worthless. Jesus declares that there is spiritual capacity in some people, for all are not submerged in the sea of materialism. They seek the Divine Spirit; they turn to God; they long for the Kingdom. It is my hope that these revered people present may attain both material and spiritual progress. As they have advanced wonderfully in material degrees, so may they, likewise, advance in spiritual development until the body shall become refined and beautiful through the wealth of spiritual potentiality and efficiency. Praise be to God! The Sun of Reality has dawned, and its effulgences are shining from all horizons. The signs of God are resplendent, and the teachings of the heavenly Messengers are being spread. May the hearts be directed to the Kingdom of God and become illuminated by witnessing the lights of God in order that all created beings may obtain a

portion of the divine
bestowals. May the spirit of life be restored through the divine graces of the
Almighty, and
may the East and West be bound together. May oneness and harmony become
manifest in all
regions. May the people of the world become as one family and obtain the
everlasting bounty.
May the doors of the Kingdom be opened from all directions and the praise of
the name Abhá
be heard throughout the earth.

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7 May 1912

Talk at Hotel Schenley

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Notes by Suzanne Beatty

(Promulgation, pp. 105-110)

I have come from the Orient to visit your country. Surely this continent is
praiseworthy
from all points of view, and there are signs of prosperity everywhere. The
people show
refinement, and evidences of progressive civilization abound. I will give you a
brief exposition
of the fundamental principles of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings in order that
you may be informed of
the nature and significance of the Bahá'í movement.
About sixty years ago the greatest enmity and strife existed among the various
peoples and
religious denominations of Persia. Throughout the world generally war and
dissension
prevailed. At this time Bahá'u'lláh appeared in Persia and began devoting
Himself to the uplift
and education of the people. He united divergent sects and creeds, removed
religious, racial,
patriotic and political prejudices and established a strong bond of unity and
reconciliation
among varying degrees and classes of mankind. The enmity then existing among
the people
was so bitter and intense that even ordinary association was out of the
question. They would
not meet and consult with each other at all. Through the power of the teachings

of Bahá'u'lláh
the most wonderful results were witnessed. He removed the prejudices and hatred
from human
hearts and wrought such transformation in their attitudes toward each other
that today in Persia
there is perfect accord among hitherto bigoted religionists, varying sects and
divergent classes.
This was not an easy accomplishment, for Bahá'u'lláh underwent severe
trials, great
difficulties and violent persecution. He was imprisoned, tortures were
inflicted upon Him, and
finally He was banished from His native land. He bore every ordeal and
infliction cheerfully.
In His successive exiles from country to country up to the time of His
ascension from this
world, He was enabled to promulgate His teachings, even from prison. Wherever
His
oppressors sent Him, He hoisted the standard of the oneness of the world of
humanity and
promulgated the principles of the unity of mankind. Some of these principles
are as follows.
First, it is incumbent upon all mankind to investigate truth. If such
investigation be made, all
should agree and be united, for truth or reality is not multiple; it is not
divisible. The different
religions have one truth underlying them; therefore, their reality is one.
Each of the divine religions embodies two kinds of ordinances. The first is
those which
concern spiritual susceptibilities, the development of moral principles and the
quickenings of
the conscience of man. These are essential or fundamental, one and the same in
all religions,
changeless and eternal—reality not subject to transformation. Abraham
heralded this reality,
Moses promulgated it, and Jesus Christ established it in the world of mankind.
All the divine
Prophets and Messengers were the instruments and channels of this same eternal,
essential
truth.
The second kind of ordinances in the divine religions is those which relate to
the material
affairs of humankind. These are the material or accidental laws which are
subject to change in
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each day of manifestation, according to exigencies of the time, conditions and

differing capacities of humanity. For instance, in the day of Moses ten commandments in regard to murder were revealed by Him. These commandments were in accordance with the requirements of that day and time. Other laws embodying drastic punishments were enacted by Moses—an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. The penalty for theft was amputation of the hand. These laws and penalties were applicable to the degree of the Israelitish people of that period, who dwelt in the wilderness and desert under conditions where severity was necessary and justifiable. But in the time of Jesus Christ this kind of law was not expedient; therefore, Christ abrogated and superseded the commands of Moses. In brief, every one of the divine religions contains essential ordinances, which are not subject to change, and material ordinances, which are abrogated according to the exigencies of time. But the people of the world have forsaken the divine teachings and followed forms and imitations of the truth. Inasmuch as these human interpretations and superstitions differ, dissensions and bigotry have arisen, and strife and warfare have prevailed. By investigating the truth or foundation of reality underlying their own and other beliefs, all would be united and agreed, for this reality is one; it is not multiple and not divisible. The second principle or teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the proclamation of the oneness of the world of humanity—that all are servants of God and belong to one family; that God has created all and, therefore, His bestowals are universal; and that His providence, training, sustenance and loving-kindness surround all mankind. This is the divine policy, and it is impossible for man to lay the foundation of a better plan and policy than that which God has instituted. Therefore, we must recognize and assist the purpose of the glorious Lord. Inasmuch as God is kind and loving to all, why should we be unkind? As this human world is one household, why should its members be occupied with animosity and contention? Therefore, humanity must be looked upon with the eye of equal estimate and in the same attitude of love. The noblest of men is he who serves humankind, and

he is nearest the threshold of God who is the least of His servants. The glory and majesty of man are dependent upon his servitude to his fellow creatures and not upon the exercise of hostility and hatred.

The third principle or teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the oneness of religion and science. Any religious belief which is not conformable with scientific proof and investigation is superstition, for true science is reason and reality, and religion is essentially reality and pure reason; therefore, the two must correspond. Religious teaching which is at variance with science and reason is human invention and imagination unworthy of acceptance, for the antithesis and opposite of knowledge is superstition born of the ignorance of man. If we say religion is opposed to science, we lack knowledge of either true science or true religion, for both are founded upon the premises and conclusions of reason, and both must bear its test.

The fourth principle or teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the readjustment and equalization of the economic standards of mankind. This deals with the question of human livelihood. It is evident that under present systems and conditions of government the poor are subject to the greatest need and distress while others more fortunate live in luxury and plenty far beyond their actual necessities. This inequality of portion and privilege is one of the deep and vital problems of human society. That there is need of an equalization and apportionment by which all may possess the comforts and privileges of life is evident. The remedy must be legislative readjustment of conditions. The rich too must be merciful to the poor, contributing from willing

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hearts to their needs without being forced or compelled to do so. The composure of the world will be assured by the establishment of this principle in the religious life of mankind.

The fifth principle or teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the abandoning of religious, racial, patriotic and political prejudices, which destroy the foundations of human society. All

mankind are
creatures and servants of the one God. The surface of the earth is one home;
humanity is one
family and household. Distinctions and boundaries are artificial, human. Why
should there be
discord and strife among men? All must become united and coordinated in service
to the world
of humanity.

The sixth principle or teaching of Bahá'u'lláh concerns the equality of
man and woman.

He has declared that in the estimation of God there is no distinction of sex.

The one whose
heart is most pure, whose deeds and service in the Cause of God are greater and
nobler, is most
acceptable before the divine threshold—whether male or female. In the
vegetable and animal
kingdoms sex exists in perfect equality and without distinction or invidious
estimate. The

animal, although inferior to man in intelligence and reason, recognizes sex
equality. Why
should man, who is endowed with the sense of justice and sensibilities of
conscience, be willing
that one of the members of the human family should be rated and considered as
subordinate?

Such differentiation is neither intelligent nor conscientious; therefore, the
principle of religion
has been revealed by Bahá'u'lláh that woman must be given the privilege
of equal education
with man and full right to his prerogatives. That is to say, there must be no
difference in the
education of male and female in order that womankind may develop equal capacity
and

importance with man in the social and economic equation. Then the world will
attain unity and
harmony. In past ages humanity has been defective and inefficient because it
has been
incomplete. War and its ravages have blighted the world; the education of woman
will be a
mighty step toward its abolition and ending, for she will use her whole
influence against war.

Woman rears the child and educates the youth to maturity. She will refuse to
give her sons for
sacrifice upon the field of battle. In truth, she will be the greatest factor
in establishing universal
peace and international arbitration. Assuredly, woman will abolish warfare
among mankind.

Inasmuch as human society consists of two parts, the male and female, each the

complement
of the other, the happiness and stability of humanity cannot be assured unless
both are
perfected. Therefore, the standard and status of man and woman must become
equalized.
Among other teachings and principles Bahá'u'lláh counsels the education
of all members
of society. No individual should be denied or deprived of intellectual
training, although each
should receive according to capacity. None must be left in the grades of
ignorance, for
ignorance is a defect in the human world. All mankind must be given a knowledge
of science
and philosophy—that is, as much as may be deemed necessary. All cannot be
scientists and
philosophers, but each should be educated according to his needs and deserts.
Bahá'u'lláh teaches that the world of humanity is in need of the breath
of the Holy Spirit,
for in spiritual quickening and enlightenment true oneness is attained with God
and man. The
Most Great Peace cannot be assured through racial force and effort; it cannot
be established by
patriotic devotion and sacrifice; for nations differ widely and local
patriotism has limitations.
Furthermore, it is evident that political power and diplomatic ability are not
conducive to
universal agreement, for the interests of governments are varied and selfish;
nor will
international harmony and reconciliation be an outcome of human opinions
concentrated upon
it, for opinions are faulty and intrinsically diverse. Universal peace is an
impossibility through
human and material agencies; it must be through spiritual power. There is need
of a universal
impelling force which will establish the oneness of humanity and destroy the
foundations of

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war and strife. None other than the divine power can do this; therefore, it
will be accomplished
through the breath of the Holy Spirit.
No matter how far the material world advances, it cannot establish the
happiness of
mankind. Only when material and spiritual civilization are linked and
coordinated will
happiness be assured. Then material civilization will not contribute its

energies to the forces of evil in destroying the oneness of humanity, for in material civilization good and evil advance together and maintain the same pace. For example, consider the material progress of man in the last decade. Schools and colleges, hospitals, philanthropic institutions, scientific academies and temples of philosophy have been founded, but hand in hand with these evidences of development, the invention and production of means and weapons for human destruction have correspondingly increased. In early days the weapon of war was the sword; now it is the magazine rifle. Among the ancients, men fought with javelins and daggers; now they employ shells and bombs. Dreadnoughts are built, torpedoes invented, and every few days new ammunition is forthcoming.

All this is the outcome of material civilization; therefore, although material advancement furthers good purposes in life, at the same time it serves evil ends. The divine civilization is good because it cultivates morals. Consider what the Prophets of God have contributed to human morality. Jesus Christ summoned all to the Most Great Peace through the acquisition of pure morals. If the moral precepts and foundations of divine civilization become united with the material advancement of man, there is no doubt that the happiness of the human world will be attained and that from every direction the glad tidings of peace upon earth will be announced. Then humankind will achieve extraordinary progress, the sphere of human intelligence will be immeasurably enlarged, wonderful inventions will appear, and the spirit of God will reveal itself; all men will consort in joy and fragrance, and eternal life will be conferred upon the children of the Kingdom. Then will the power of the divine make itself effective and the breath of the Holy Spirit penetrate the essence of all things. Therefore, the material and the divine, or merciful, civilizations must progress together until the highest aspirations and desires of humanity shall become realized.

These are a few of the teachings and principles of Bahá'u'lláh, briefly presented so that you

may be informed of their significance and purpose and find them a stimulus to
your knowledge
and actions. I ask God to assist this prosperous and progressive nation and to
bestow His
blessings upon this just government and wonderful continent of the West.

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11 May 1912

Talk at 227 Riverside Drive, New York

Notes by John G. Grundy

(Promulgation, pp. 111-113)

It is only three weeks that we have been away from the New York friends, yet so
great has

been the longing to see you that it seems like three months. We have had no
rest by day or night

since we left you—either traveling, moving about or speaking—yet it was all
so pleasantly

done, and we have been most happy. Praise be to God! Everywhere and all the
time it has been

harakat, harakat, harakat (“motion, motion, motion”).

The friends in America are very good. All the people we have met here are kind
and

pleasant. They are polite and not antagonistic, although somewhat inquisitive.

A small minority

of them seem prejudiced, yet even these have their good points. The American
people have a

real love for advancement. They are not content to stand still. They are most
energetic and

progressive. When you see a tree growing and developing, be hopeful of its
outcome. It will

blossom and bear fruit eventually. If you see dry wood or old trees, there is
no hope whatever

of fruitage.

The questions asked us have been opportune and to the point. Our answers have
not been

utilized for controversy and argument. We met savants and learned men and
satisfied them

with our explanations. Important people expressed their satisfaction and
pleasure at our replies

to their inquiries. In brief, it would be difficult to find in the aggregate of
people we met anyone

who was dissatisfied. Some scholastic minds aimed only at fruitless discussion. In Chicago we met two clergymen—delivering an address at the church of one and having dinner with the other. Both manifested great love. Likewise, among all the people we met, not a single soul arose in opposition or went away disappointed. Yesterday in Washington we met a group of important people. One prominent in political circles came with a justice of the Supreme Court. There were many ladies of the diplomatic circle present. After we had spoken, the politician referred to raised the point that the foundation of all religions from time immemorial had been peace, love and accord—principles conducive to fellowship and unification—yet Jesus, he declared, had been “the cause of discord and strife and not a factor in the realization of unity.” “Therefore,” he said, “I cannot accept your statements and explanations that religion has been the source of human betterment.” After we explained further he said, “What you have stated may cause me to change my views and agree with you.” During this time the justice remained silent. Fearing he might have some feeling of dissatisfaction, we asked if anything presented had been objectionable to his opinion. He replied, “Not at all! Not at all! It’s all right! It’s all right!” This is the characteristic expression of the Occident—“All right! All right!” There were also present at this meeting several cabinet officers, United States senators, many from the foreign diplomatic service, army and navy officials and other dignitaries. The servant of God, our hostess, experienced much trouble in preparation and entertainment but
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was always active and energetic in service, inviting important and influential people to the gatherings. We spoke to all from their own standpoints with most satisfactory results; we were working day and night so there was very little time for individual and private interviews. In Washington, too, we called a meeting of the blacks and whites. The attendance was very

large, the blacks predominating. At our second gathering this was reversed, but at the third meeting we were unable to say which color predominated. These meetings were a great practical lesson upon the unity of colors and races in the Bahá'í teaching. We said in part: The black man must ever be grateful to the white man, for he has manifested great courage and self-sacrifice in behalf of the black race. Four years he fought their cause, enduring severe hardships, sacrificing life, family, treasure, all for his black brother until the great war ended in the proclamation of freedom. By this effort and accomplishment the black race throughout the world was influenced and benefited. Had this not been accomplished, the black man in Africa would still be bound by the chains of slavery. Therefore, his race should everywhere be grateful, for no greater evidence of humanism and courageous devotion could be shown than the white man has displayed. If the blacks of the United States forget this sacrifice, zeal and manhood on the part of the whites, no ingratitude could be greater or more censurable. If they could see the wretched conditions and surroundings of the black people of Africa today, the contrast would be apparent and the fact clearly evident that the black race in America enjoys incomparable advantages. The comfort and civilization under which they live here are due to the white man's effort and sacrifice. Had this sacrifice not been made, they would still be in the bonds and chains of slavery, scarcely lifted out of an aboriginal condition. Therefore, always show forth your gratitude to the white man. Eventually all differences will disappear, and you will completely win his friendship. God maketh no distinction between the white and the black. If the hearts are pure both are acceptable unto Him. God is no respecter of persons on account of either color or race. All colors are acceptable to Him, be they white, black, or yellow. Inasmuch as all were created in the image of God, we must bring ourselves to realize that all embody divine possibilities. If you go into a garden and find all the flowers alike in form, species and color, the effect is wearisome to the eye. The garden is more beautiful when the flowers are

many-colored and
different; the variety lends charm and adornment. In a flock of doves some are
white, some
black, red, blue; yet they make no distinction among themselves. All are doves
no matter what
the color.
This variety in forms and colorings which is manifest in all the kingdoms is
according to
creative wisdom and has a divine purpose. Nevertheless, whether the creatures
be all alike or
all different should not be the cause of strife and quarreling among them.
Especially why should
man find cause for discord in the color or race of his fellow creature? No
educated or illumined
mind will allow that this differentiation and discord should exist or that
there is any ground for
it. Therefore, the whites should be just and kind to the blacks, who in turn
should reflect an
equal measure of appreciation and gratitude. Then will the world become as one
great garden
of flowering humanity, variegated and multicolored, rivaling each other only in
the virtues and
graces which are spiritual.

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12 May 1912

Talk at Unity Church

Montclair, New Jersey

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 113-116)

I wish to speak upon the subject of divine unity, the oneness of God, before
this revered
assemblage.

It is a self-evident fact that phenomenal existence can never grasp nor
comprehend the

ancient and essential Reality. Utter weakness cannot understand absolute
strength. When we

view the world of creation, we discover differences in degree which make it
impossible for the

lower to comprehend the higher. For example, the mineral kingdom, no matter how

much it
may advance, can never comprehend the phenomena of the vegetable kingdom.
Whatever
development the vegetable may attain, it can have no message from nor come in
touch with the
kingdom of the animal. However perfect may be the growth of a tree, it cannot
realize the
sensation of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch; these are beyond its
limitation. Although it
is the possessor of existence in the world of creation, a tree, nevertheless,
has no knowledge of
the superior degree of the animal kingdom. Likewise, no matter how great the
advancement of
the animal, it can have no idea of the human plane, no knowledge of intellect
and spirit.
Difference in degree is an obstacle to this comprehension. A lower degree
cannot comprehend
a higher although all are in the same world of creation—whether mineral,
vegetable or animal.
Degree is the barrier and limitation. In the human plane of existence we can
say we have
knowledge of a vegetable, its qualities and product; but the vegetable has no
knowledge or
comprehension whatever of us. No matter how near perfection this rose may
advance in its
own sphere, it can never possess hearing and sight. Inasmuch as in the
creational world, which
is phenomenal, difference of degree is an obstacle or hindrance to
comprehension, how can the
human being, which is a created exigency, comprehend the ancient divine
Reality, which is
essential? This is impossible because the reality of Divinity is sanctified
beyond the
comprehension of the created being, man.
Furthermore, that which man can grasp is finite to man, and man to it is as
infinite. Is it
possible then for the reality of Divinity to be finite and the human creature
infinite? On the
contrary, the reverse is true; the human is finite while the essence of
Divinity is infinite.
Whatever comes within the sphere of human comprehension must be limited and
finite. As the
essence of Divinity transcends the comprehension of man, therefore God brings
forth certain
Manifestations of the divine Reality upon Whom He bestows heavenly effulgences
in order
that They may be intermediaries between humanity and Himself. These holy

Manifestations or

Prophets of God are as mirrors which have acquired illumination from the Sun of Truth, but

the Sun does not descend from its high zenith and does not effect entrance within the mirror.

In truth, this mirror has attained complete polish and purity until the utmost capacity of

reflection has been developed in it; therefore, the Sun of Reality with its fullest effulgence and

splendor is revealed therein. These mirrors are earthly, whereas the reality of Divinity is in its

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highest apogee. Although its lights are shining and its heat is manifest in them, although these

mirrors are telling their story of its effulgence, the Sun, nevertheless, remains in its own lofty

station; it does not descend; it does not effect entrance, because it is holy and sanctified.

The Sun of Divinity and of Reality has revealed itself in various mirrors.

Though these

mirrors are many, yet the Sun is one. The bestowals of God are one; the reality of the divine

religion is one. Consider how one and the same light has reflected itself in the different mirrors

or manifestations of it. There are certain souls who are lovers of the Sun; they perceive the

effulgence of the Sun from every mirror. They are not fettered or attached to the mirrors; they

are attached to the Sun itself and adore it, no matter from what point it may shine. But those

who adore the mirror and are attached to it become deprived of witnessing the light of the Sun

when it shines forth from another mirror. For instance, the Sun of Reality revealed itself from

the Mosaic mirror. The people who were sincere accepted and believed in it.

When the same

Sun shone from the Messianic mirror, the Jews who were not lovers of the Sun and who were

fettered by their adoration of the mirror of Moses did not perceive the lights and effulgences of

the Sun of Reality resplendent in Jesus; therefore, they were deprived of its bestowals. Yet the

Sun of Reality, the Word of God, shone from the Messianic mirror through the wonderful

channel of Jesus Christ more fully and more wonderfully. Its effulgences were

manifestly
radiant, but even to this day the Jews are holding to the Mosaic mirror.
Therefore, they are
bereft of witnessing the lights of eternity in Jesus.
In brief, the sun is one sun, the light is one light which shines upon all
phenomenal beings.
Every creature has a portion thereof, but the pure mirror can reveal the story
of its bounty more
fully and completely. Therefore, we must adore the light of the Sun, no matter
through what
mirror it may be revealed. We must not entertain prejudice, for prejudice is an
obstacle to
realization. Inasmuch as the effulgence is one effulgence, the human realities
must all become
recipients of the same light, recognizing in it the compelling force that
unites them in its
illumination.
As this is the radiant century, it is my hope that the Sun of Truth may
illumine all humanity.
May the eyes be opened and the ears become attentive; may souls become
resuscitated and
consort together in the utmost harmony as recipients of the same light.
Perchance, God will
remove this strife and warfare of thousands of years. May this bloodshed pass
away, this
tyranny and oppression cease, this warfare be ended. May the light of love
shine forth and
illumine hearts, and may human lives be cemented and connected until all of us
may find
agreement and tranquillity beneath the same tabernacle and with the standard of
the Most Great
Peace above us move steadily onward.
O Thou kind Lord! O Thou Who art generous and merciful! We are the servants of
Thy
threshold and are gathered beneath the sheltering shadow of Thy divine unity.
The sun of Thy
mercy is shining upon all, and the clouds of Thy bounty shower upon all. Thy
gifts encompass
all, Thy loving providence sustains all, Thy protection overshadows all, and
the glances of Thy
favor are cast upon all. O Lord! Grant Thine infinite bestowals, and let the
light of Thy guidance
shine. Illumine the eyes, gladden the hearts with abiding joy. Confer a new
spirit upon all
people and bestow upon them eternal life. Unlock the gates of true
understanding and let the
light of faith shine resplendent. Gather all people beneath the shadow of Thy

bounty and cause
them to unite in harmony, so that they may become as the rays of one sun, as
the waves of one
ocean, and as the fruit of one tree. May they drink from the same fountain. May
they be
refreshed by the same breeze. May they receive illumination from the same
source of light.

Thou art the Giver, the Merciful, the Omnipotent.

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??12 May 1912??

??Talk at Meeting of International Peace Forum??

??Grace Methodist Episcopal Church??

??West 104th Street, New York??

??Notes by Esther Foster??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 116-122??

??When we review history from the beginning down to the present day, we find that strife??

?—?and warfare have prevailed throughout the human world.

Wars—religious, racial or political??

??have arisen from human ignorance, misunderstanding and lack of education.

We will first??

??consider religious strife and conflict.??

??It is evident that the divine Prophets have appeared in the world to establish love and??

??agreement among mankind. They have been the Shepherds and not the wolves.

The Shepherd??

??comes forth to gather and lead his flock and not to disperse them by creating strife. Every divine??

??Shepherd has assembled a flock which had formerly been scattered. Among the Shepherds was??

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Moses. At a time when the tribes of Israel were wandering and dispersed, He assembled, united and educated them to higher degrees of capacity and progress until they passed out of the wilderness of discipline into the holy land of possession. He transformed their degradation into glory, changed their poverty into wealth and replaced their vices by virtues until they rose to such a zenith that the splendor of the sovereignty of Solomon was made possible, and the fame of their civilization extended to the East and the West. It is evident, therefore, that Moses was a divine Shepherd, for He gathered the tribes of Israel together and united them in the power

and strength of a great nationhood.

When the Messianic star of Jesus Christ dawned, He declared He had come to gather

together the lost tribes or scattered sheep of Moses. He not only shepherded the flock of Israel

but brought together people of Chaldea, Egypt, Syria, ancient Assyria and Phoenicia. These

people were in a state of utmost hostility, thirsting for the blood of each other with the ferocity

of animals; but Jesus Christ brought them together, cemented and united them in His Cause

and established such a bond of love among them that enmity and warfare were abandoned. It

is evident, therefore, that the divine teachings are intended to create a bond of unity in the

human world and establish the foundations of love and fellowship among mankind.

Divine

religion is not a cause for discord and disagreement. If religion becomes the source of

antagonism and strife, the absence of religion is to be preferred. Religion is meant to be the

quickening life of the body politic; if it be the cause of death to humanity, its nonexistence

would be a blessing and benefit to man. Therefore, in this day the divine teachings must be

sought, for they are the remedies for the present conditions of the world of humanity. The

purpose of a remedy is to heal and cure. If it be productive of worse symptoms, its absence or

discontinuance is preferable.

At a time when the Arabian tribes and nomadic peoples were widely separated, living in

the deserts under lawless conditions, strife and bloodshed continual among them, no tribe free

from the menace of attack and destruction by another—at such a critical time Muhammad

appeared. He gathered these wild tribes of the desert together, reconciled, united and caused

them to agree so that enmity and warfare ceased. The Arabian nation immediately advanced

until its dominion extended westward to Spain and Andalusia.

From these facts and premises we may conclude that the establishing of the divine religions

is for peace, not for war and the shedding of blood. Inasmuch as all are founded upon one

reality which is love and unity, the wars and dissensions which have characterized the history

of religion have been due to imitations and superstitions which arise afterward. Religion is reality, and reality is one. The fundamentals of the religion of God are, therefore, one in reality. There is neither difference nor change in the fundamentals. Variance is caused by blind imitations, prejudices and adherence to forms which appear later; and inasmuch as these differ, discord and strife result. If the religions of the world would forsake these causes of difficulty and seek the fundamentals, all would agree, and strife and dissension would pass away; for religion and reality are one and not multiple. Other wars are caused by purely imaginary racial differences; for humanity is one kind, one race and progeny, inhabiting the same globe. In the creative plan there is no racial distinction and separation such as Frenchman, Englishman, American, German, Italian or Spaniard; all belong to one household. These boundaries and distinctions are human and artificial, not natural and original. All mankind are the fruits of one tree, flowers of the same garden, waves of one sea. In the animal kingdom no such distinction and separation are observed. The sheep of the East and the sheep of the West would associate peacefully. The Oriental flock would not

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look surprised as if saying, "These are sheep of the Occident; they do not belong to our country." All would gather in harmony and enjoy the same pasture without evidence of local or racial distinction. The birds of different countries mingle in friendliness. We find these virtues in the animal kingdom. Shall man deprive himself of these virtues? Man is endowed with superior reasoning power and the faculty of perception; he is the manifestation of divine bestowals. Shall racial ideas prevail and obscure the creative purpose of unity in his kingdom? Shall he say, "I am a German," "I am a Frenchman" or an "Englishman" and declare war because of this imaginary and human distinction? God forbid! This earth is one household and the native land of all humanity; therefore, the human race should ignore

distinctions and
boundaries which are artificial and conducive to disagreement and hostility. We
have come
from the East. Praise be to God! We find this continent prosperous, the climate
salubrious and
delightful, the inhabitants genial and courteous, the government equitable and
just. Shall we
entertain any other thought and feeling than that of love for you? Shall we
say, "This is not our
native land; therefore, everything is objectionable"? This would be gross
ignorance to which
man must not subject himself. Man is endowed with powers to investigate
reality, and the
reality is that humanity is one in kind and equal in the creative plan.
Therefore, false distinctions
of race and native land, which are factors and causes of warfare, must be
abandoned.
Consider what is happening in Tripoli: how the poor are being killed and the
blood of the
helpless is being shed upon both sides; children, made fatherless; fathers,
lamenting the death
of their sons; mothers, bewailing the loss of dear ones. And what is the
benefit after all?
Nothing conceivable. Is it, therefore, justifiable? The domestic animals do not
manifest hatred
and cruelty toward each other; that is the attribute of the wild and ferocious
beasts. In a flock
of one thousand sheep you will witness no bloodshed. Numberless species of
birds are peaceful
in flocks. Wolves, lions, tigers are ferocious because it is their natural and
necessary means for
obtaining food. Man has no need of such ferocity; his food is provided in other
ways. Therefore,
it is evident that warfare, cruelty and bloodshed in the kingdom of man are
caused by human
greed, hatred and selfishness. The kings and rulers of nations enjoy luxury and
ease in their
palaces and send the common people to the battlefield—offer them as the food
and targets of
cannon. Each day they invent new instruments for the more complete destruction
of the
foundations of the human race. They are callous and merciless toward their
fellow creatures.
What shall atone for the sufferings and grief of mothers who have so tenderly
cared for their
sons? What sleepless nights they have spent, and what days of devotion and love
they have

given to bring their children to maturity! Yet the savagery of these warring
 rulers causes great
 numbers of their victims to be torn and mutilated in a day. What ignorance and
 degradation,
 yea even greater than the ferocious beasts themselves! For a wolf will carry
 away and devour
 one sheep at a time, whereas an ambitious tyrant may cause the death of one
 hundred thousand
 men in a battle and glory in his military prowess, saying, "I am commander in
 chief; I have
 won this mighty victory." Consider the ignorance and inconsistency of the
 human race. If a
 man kills another, no matter what the cause may be, he is pronounced a
 murderer, imprisoned
 or executed; but the brutal oppressor who has slain one hundred thousand is
 idolized as a hero,
 conqueror or military genius. A man steals a small sum of money; he is called a
 thief and sent
 to the penitentiary; but the military leader who invades and pillages a whole
 kingdom is
 acclaimed heroic and a mighty man of valor. How base and ignorant is man!
 In Persia previous to the middle of the nineteenth century among the various
 tribes and
 peoples, sects and denominations there existed the greatest animosity, strife
 and hatred. At that
 time, too, all the other nations of the East were in the same condition.
 Religionists were hostile
 and bigoted, sects were at enmity, races hated each other, tribes were
 constantly at war;
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everywhere antagonism and conflict prevailed. Men shunned and were suspicious
 of each
 other. The man who could kill a number of his fellow creatures was glorified
 for his heroism
 and strength. Among religionists it was esteemed a praiseworthy deed to take
 the life of one
 who held an opposite belief. At this time Bahá'u'lláh arose and declared
 His mission. He
 founded the oneness of the world of humanity, proclaimed that all are servants
 of the loving
 and merciful God Who has created, nourished and provided for all; therefore,
 why should men
 be unjust and unkind to each other, showing forth that which is contrary to
 God? As He loves
 us, why should we entertain animosity and hate? If God did not love all, He

would not have
created, trained and provided for all. Loving-kindness is the divine policy.
Shall we consider
human policy and attitude superior to the wisdom and policy of God? This would
be
inconceivable, impossible. Therefore, we must emulate and follow the divine
policy, dealing
with each other in the utmost love and tenderness.
Bahá'u'lláh declared the Most Great Peace and international arbitration.
He voiced these
principles in numerous Epistles which were circulated broadcast throughout the
East. He wrote
to all the kings and rulers, encouraging, advising and admonishing them in
regard to the
establishment of peace, making it evident by conclusive proofs that the
happiness and glory of
humanity can only be assured through disarmament and arbitration. This was
nearly fifty years
ago. Because He promulgated the message of universal peace and international
agreement, the
kings of the Orient arose against Him, for they did not find their personal and
national benefits
advanced by His admonition and teaching. They persecuted Him bitterly,
inflicted upon Him
every torment, imprisoned, bastinadoed, banished Him and eventually confined
Him in a
fortress. Then they arose against His followers. For the establishment of
international peace the
blood of twenty thousand Bahá'ís was spilled. Their homes were destroyed,
their children made
captives and their possessions pillaged, yet none of these people waxed cold or
wavered in
devotion. Even to this day the Bahá'ís are persecuted, and quite recently a
number were killed,
for wherever they are found they put forth the greatest efforts to establish
the peace of the
world. They not only promulgate principles; they are people of action.
In Persia today through the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh you will find people
of various beliefs
and denominations living together in the utmost peace and agreement. The former
enmities and
hatred have passed away, and they exercise the utmost love toward all mankind,
for they realize
and know that all are the creatures and servants of one God. This is directly
due to the divine
teachings. At most it is simply this: that the ignorant must be educated, the
ailing must be

healed, those who are as children in the scale of development must be helped to reach the age of maturity. We must not be unfriendly to anyone because of ignorance; neither must we reject the immature or turn away from the sick but administer the remedy for each human need until all are united in the providence of God. Therefore, it is evident that the essential foundations of the divine religions are unity and love. If religion be productive of discord among mankind, it is a destroyer and not divine, for religion implies unity and binding together and not separation. Mere knowledge of principles is not sufficient. We all know and admit that justice is good, but there is need of volition and action to carry out and manifest it. For example, we might think it good to build a church, but simply thinking of it as a good thing will not help its erection. The ways and means must be provided; we must will to build it and then proceed with the construction. All of us know that international peace is good, that it is conducive to human welfare and the glory of man, but volition and action are necessary before it can be established. Action is essential. Inasmuch as this century is a century of light, capacity for action is assured to mankind. Necessarily the divine principles will be spread among men until the time of action arrives. Surely this has been so, and truly the time and conditions are ripe for action now. All

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men know that, verily, war is a destroyer of human foundations, and in every country of the world this is admitted and apparent. I find the United States of America an exceedingly progressive nation, the government just, the people in a state of readiness and the principle of equality established to an extraordinary degree. Therefore, it is my hope that, inasmuch as the standard of international peace must be upraised, it may be upraised upon this continent, for this nation is more deserving and has greater capacity for such an initial step than any other. If other nations should attempt to do this, the motive would be misunderstood. For instance, if

Great Britain should declare for international peace, it would be said that it has been done to ensure the safety of her colonies. If France should hoist the standard, other nations would declare some hidden diplomatic policy underlies the action; Russia would be suspected of national designs if the first step were taken by that people, and so on with all the European and eastern governments. But the United States of America could not be accused of any such selfish interest. Your government has, strictly speaking, no colonies to protect. You are not endeavoring to extend your domain, nor have you need of territorial expansion. Therefore, if America takes the first step toward the establishing of world peace, it is certain to be ascribed to unselfishness and altruism. The world will say, "There is no other motive than altruism and service to humanity in this action by the United States." Therefore, it is my hope that you may stand forth as the first herald of peace and hoist this banner, for this banner will be hoisted. Raise it aloft, for you are the most qualified and deserving of nations. The other countries await this summons, expect this call to the standard of reconciliation, for the whole world is distressed because of the excessive burden and irreparable damage of war. Taxes are levied to meet its drain. Every year the burden increases, and the people have come to their end. Just now Europe is a battlefield of ammunition ready for a spark, and one spark will set aflame the whole world. Before these complications and cataclysmic events happen, take the step to prevent it. The foundations of all the divine religions are peace and agreement, but misunderstandings and ignorance have developed. If these are caused to disappear, you will see that all the religious agencies will work for peace and promulgate the oneness of humankind. For the foundation of all is reality, and reality is not multiple or divisible. Moses founded it, Jesus raised its tent, and its brilliant light has shone forth in all the religions. Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed this one reality and spread the message of the Most Great Peace. Even in prison He rested not until He lighted this lamp in the East. Praise be to God! All who have accepted

His teachings
are lovers of peace, peacemakers ready to sacrifice their lives and expend
their possessions for
it. Now let this standard be upraised in the West, and many will respond to the
call. America
has become renowned for her discoveries, inventions and artistic skill, famous
for equity of
government and stupendous undertakings; now may she also become noted and
celebrated as
the herald and messenger of universal peace. Let this be her mission and
undertaking, and may
its blessed impetus spread to all countries. I pray for all of you that you may
render this service
to the world of humanity.
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13 May 1912

Talk at Reception by New York Peace Society

Hotel Astor, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 123-126)

Although I felt indisposed this afternoon, yet because I attach great
importance to this
assembly and was longing to see your faces, I have come. The expression of
kindly feelings
and the spirit of hospitality manifested by the former speakers are most
grateful. I am thankful
for the susceptibilities of your hearts, for it is an evidence that your
greatest desire is the
establishment of international peace. You are lovers of the oneness of
humanity, seekers after
the good pleasure of the Lord, investigators of the foundations of the divine
religions.
Today there is no greater glory for man than that of service in the cause of
the Most Great
Peace. Peace is light, whereas war is darkness. Peace is life; war is death.
Peace is guidance;
war is error. Peace is the foundation of God; war is a satanic institution.
Peace is the
illumination of the world of humanity; war is the destroyer of human
foundations. When we

consider outcomes in the world of existence, we find that peace and fellowship are factors of upbuilding and betterment, whereas war and strife are the causes of destruction and disintegration. All created things are expressions of the affinity and cohesion of elementary substances, and nonexistence is the absence of their attraction and agreement. Various elements unite harmoniously in composition, but when these elements become discordant, repelling each other, decomposition and nonexistence result. Everything partakes of this nature and is subject to this principle, for the creative foundation in all its degrees and kingdoms is an expression or outcome of love. Consider the restlessness and agitation of the human world today because of war. Peace is health and construction; war is disease and dissolution. When the banner of truth is raised, peace becomes the cause of the welfare and advancement of the human world. In all cycles and ages war has been a factor of derangement and discomfort, whereas peace and brotherhood have brought security and consideration of human interests. This distinction is especially pronounced in the present world conditions, for warfare in former centuries had not attained the degree of savagery and destructiveness which now characterizes it. If two nations were at war in olden times, ten or twenty thousand would be sacrificed, but in this century the destruction of one hundred thousand lives in a day is quite possible. So perfected has the science of killing become and so efficient the means and instruments of its accomplishment that a whole nation can be obliterated in a short time. Therefore, comparison with the methods and results of ancient warfare is out of the question. According to an intrinsic law all phenomena of being attain to a summit and degree of consummation, after which a new order and condition is established. As the instruments and science of war have reached the degree of thoroughness and proficiency, it is hoped that the transformation of the human world is at hand and that in the coming centuries all the energies and inventions of man will be utilized in promoting the interests of peace and brotherhood.

Therefore, may this esteemed and worthy society for the establishment of international peace

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be confirmed in its sincere intentions and empowered by God. Then will it hasten the time when the banner of universal agreement will be raised and international welfare will be proclaimed and consummated so that the darkness which now encompasses the world shall pass away.

Sixty years ago Bahá'u'lláh was in Persia. Seventy years ago the Báb appeared there. These two Blessed Souls devoted Their lives to the foundation of international peace and love among mankind. They strove with heart and soul to establish the teachings by which divergent people might be brought together and no strife, rancor or hatred prevail. Bahá'u'lláh, addressing all humanity, said that Adam, the parent of mankind, may be likened to the tree of nativity upon which you are the leaves and blossoms. Inasmuch as your origin was one, you must now be united and agreed; you must consort with each other in joy and fragrance. He pronounced prejudice—whether religious, racial, patriotic, political—the destroyer of the body politic. He said that man must recognize the oneness of humanity, for all in origin belong to the same household, and all are servants of the same God. Therefore, mankind must continue in the state of fellowship and love, emulating the institutions of God and turning away from satanic promptings, for the divine bestowals bring forth unity and agreement, whereas satanic leadings induce hatred and war.

This remarkable Personage was able by these principles to establish a bond of unity among the differing sects and divergent people of Persia. Those who followed His teachings, no matter from what denomination or faction they came, were conjoined by the ties of love, until now they cooperate and live together in peace and agreement. They are real brothers and sisters. No distinctions of class are observed among them, and complete harmony prevails. Daily this bond

of affinity is strengthening, and their spiritual fellowship continually develops. In order to ensure the progress of mankind and to establish these principles Bahá'u'lláh suffered every ordeal and difficulty. The Báb became a martyr, and over twenty thousand men and women sacrificed their lives for their faith. Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned and subjected to severe persecutions. Finally, He was exiled from Persia to Mesopotamia; from Baghdád He was sent to Constantinople and Adrianople and from thence to the prison of 'Akká in Syria. Through all these ordeals He strove day and night to proclaim the oneness of humanity and promulgate the message of universal peace. From the prison of 'Akká He addressed the kings and rulers of the earth in lengthy letters, summoning them to international agreement and explicitly stating that the standard of the Most Great Peace would surely be upraised in the world. This has come to pass. The powers of earth cannot withstand the privileges and bestowals which God has ordained for this great and glorious century. It is a need and exigency of the time. Man can withstand anything except that which is divinely intended and indicated for the age and its requirements. Now—praise be to God!—in all countries of the world, lovers of peace are to be found, and these principles are being spread among mankind, especially in this country. Praise be to God! This thought is prevailing, and souls are continually arising as defenders of the oneness of humanity, endeavoring to assist and establish international peace. There is no doubt that this wonderful democracy will be able to realize it, and the banner of international agreement will be unfurled here to spread onward and outward among all the nations of the world. I give thanks to God that I find you imbued with such susceptibilities and lofty aspirations, and I hope that you will be the means of spreading this light to all men. Thus may the Sun of Reality shine upon the East and West. The enveloping clouds shall pass away, and the heat of the divine rays will dispel the mist. The reality of man shall develop and come forth as the image of God, his Creator. The thoughts of man shall take such upward flight that

former accomplishments shall appear as the play of children, for the ideas and beliefs of the

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past and the prejudices regarding race and religion have ever lowered and been destructive to

human evolution. I am most hopeful that in this century these lofty thoughts shall be conducive

to human welfare. Let this century be the sun of previous centuries, the effulgences of which

shall last forever, so that in times to come they shall glorify the twentieth century, saying the

twentieth century was the century of lights, the twentieth century was the century of life, the

twentieth century was the century of international peace, the twentieth century was the century

of divine bestowals, and the twentieth century has left traces which shall last forever.

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19 May 1912

Talk at Church of the Divine Paternity

Central Park West, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 126-129)

Religions are many, but the reality of religion is one. The days are many, but the sun is one.

The fountains are many, but the fountainhead is one. The branches are many, but the tree is

one.

The foundation of the divine religions is reality; were there no reality, there would be no

religions. Abraham heralded reality. Moses promulgated reality. Christ established reality.

Muhammad was the Messenger of reality. The Báb was the door of reality.

Bahá'u'lláh was

the splendor of reality. Reality is one; it does not admit multiplicity or division. Reality is as

the sun, which shines forth from different dawning points; it is as the light, which has illumined

many lanterns.

Therefore, if the religions investigate reality and seek the essential truth of their own foundations, they will agree and no difference will be found. But inasmuch as religions are submerged in dogmatic imitations, forsaking the original foundations, and as imitations differ widely, therefore, the religions are divergent and antagonistic. These imitations may be likened to clouds which obscure the sunrise; but reality is the sun. If the clouds disperse, the Sun of Reality shines upon all, and no difference of vision will exist. The religions will then agree, for fundamentally they are the same. The subject is one, but predicates are many. The divine religions are like the progression of the seasons of the year. When the earth becomes dead and desolate and because of frost and cold no trace of vanished spring remains, the springtime dawns again and clothes everything with a new garment of life. The meadows become fresh and green, the trees are adorned with verdure and fruits appear upon them. Then the winter comes again, and all the traces of spring disappear. This is the continuous cycle of the seasons—spring, winter, then the return of spring. But though the calendar changes and the years move forward, each springtime that comes is the return of the springtime that has gone; this spring is the renewal of the former spring. Springtime is springtime, no matter when or how often it comes. The divine Prophets are as the coming of spring, each renewing and quickening the teachings of the Prophet Who came before Him. Just as all seasons of spring are essentially one as to newness of life, vernal showers and beauty, so the essence of the mission and accomplishment of all the Prophets is one and the same. Now the people of religion have lost sight of the essential reality of the spiritual springtime. They have held tenaciously to ancestral forms and imitations, and because of this there is variance, strife and altercation among them. Therefore, we must now abandon these imitations and seek the foundation of the divine teachings; and inasmuch as the foundation is one reality, the divergent religionists must agree in it so that love and unity will be established among all people and denominations.

At a time when the Orient was rent by religious dissension Bahá'u'lláh appeared. He founded teachings which became the means of uniting the various and divergent peoples. He promulgated principles which removed the cause of their dissension, until today in Persia those who had been constantly at war are united. Christians, Muslims, Zoroastrians, Jews—people of every belief and denomination who have followed the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh—have attained complete fellowship and spiritual agreement. Former differences and dissensions have passed away entirely. Some of the principles of Bahá'u'lláh's teaching are as follows:

First, that the oneness of humanity shall be recognized and established. All men are the servants of God. He has created all; He is the Provider and Preserver; He is loving to all. Inasmuch as He is just and kind, why should we be unjust toward each other? As God has quickened us with life, why should we be the cause of death? As He has comforted us, why should we be the cause of anxiety and suffering? Can humanity conceive a plan and policy better and superior to that of God? It is certain that no matter how capable man may be in origination of plan and organization of purpose, his efforts will be inadequate when compared with the divine plan and purpose; for the policy of God is perfect. Therefore, we must follow the will and plan of God. As He is kind to all, we must be likewise; and it is certain that this will be most acceptable to God.

Second, that truth or reality must be investigated; for reality is one, and by investigating it all will find love and unity. Those who are ignorant must be educated, the ailing must be healed, the undeveloped must be brought to maturity. Shall we reject or oppose the ignorant, sick or immature because of their incapacity? Is it not better to be kind and gentle and to provide the means of remedy? Therefore, under no circumstances whatsoever should we assume any attitude except that of gentleness and humility.

Third, that religion is in harmony with science. The fundamental principles of the Prophets are scientific, but the forms and imitations which have appeared are opposed to science. If religion does not agree with science, it is superstition and ignorance; for God has endowed man with reason in order that he may perceive reality. The foundations of religion are reasonable. God has created us with intelligence to perceive them. If they are opposed to science and reason, how could they be believed and followed?

Fourth, that religion must be conducive to love and unity among mankind; for if it be the cause of enmity and strife, the absence of religion is preferable. When Moses appeared, the tribes of Israel were in a state of disunion as captives of the Pharaohs. Moses gathered them together, and the divine law established fellowship among them. They became as one people, united, consolidated, after which they were rescued from bondage. They passed into the promised land, advanced in all degrees, developed sciences and arts, progressed in material affairs, increased in divine or spiritual civilization until their nation rose to its zenith in the sovereignty of Solomon. It is evident, therefore, that religion is the cause of unity, fellowship and progress among mankind. The function of a shepherd is to gather the sheep together and not to scatter them. Then Christ appeared. He united varying and divergent creeds and warring people of His time. He brought together Greeks and Romans, reconciled Egyptians and Assyrians, Chaldeans and Phoenicians. Christ established unity and agreement among people of these hostile and warring nations. Therefore, it is again evident that the purpose of religion is peace and concord. Likewise, Muhammad appeared at a time when the peoples and tribes of Arabia were divergent and in a state of continual warfare. They killed each other, pillaged and took captive wives and children. Muhammad united these fierce tribes, established a foundation of fellowship among them so that they gave up warring against each other absolutely and

established communities. The result was that the Arabian tribes freed themselves from the Persian yoke and Roman control, established an independent sovereignty which rose to a high degree of civilization, advanced in sciences and arts, extended the Saracen dominion as far west as Spain and Andalusia and became famous throughout the world. Therefore, it is proved once more that the religion of God is intended to be the cause of advancement and solidarity and not of enmity and dissolution. If it becomes the cause of hatred and strife, its absence is preferable. Its purpose is unity, and its foundations are one. When Bahá'u'lláh appeared in Persia, violent strife and hatred separated the peoples and tribes of that country. They would not come together for any purpose except war; they would not partake of the same food, or drink of the same water; association and intercourse were impossible. Bahá'u'lláh founded the oneness of humanity among these people and bound their hearts together with such ties of love that they were completely united. He reestablished the prophetic foundations, reformed and renewed the principles laid down by the Messengers of God who had preceded Him. And now it is hoped that through His life and teachings the East and West shall become so united that no trace of enmity, strife and discord shall remain.

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19 May 1912

Talk at Brotherhood Church

Bergen and Fairview Avenues, Jersey City, New Jersey

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 129-132)

Because this is called the Church of Brotherhood, I wish to speak upon the brotherhood of mankind. There is perfect brotherhood underlying humanity, for all are servants of one God and belong to one family under the protection of divine providence. The bond of

fraternity
exists in humanity because all are intelligent beings created in the realm of
evolutionary
growth. There is brotherhood potential in humanity because all inhabit this
earthly globe under
the one canopy of heaven. There is brotherhood natal in mankind because all are
elements of
one human society subject to the necessity of agreement and cooperation. There
is brotherhood
intended in humanity because all are waves of one sea, leaves and fruit of one
tree. This is
physical fellowship which ensures material happiness in the human world. The
stronger it
becomes, the more will mankind advance and the circle of materiality be
enlarged.
The real brotherhood is spiritual, for physical brotherhood is subject to
separation. The wars
of the outer world of existence separate humankind, but in the eternal world of
spiritual
brotherhood separation is unknown. Material or physical association is based
upon earthly
interests, but divine fellowship owes its existence to the breaths of the Holy
Spirit. Spiritual
brotherhood may be likened to the light, while the souls of humankind are as
lanterns. The
incandescent lamps here are many, yet the light is one.
At a time in the Orient when even physical brotherhood was not in existence
Bahá'u'lláh
appeared. At first He set forth the principles of physical brotherhood and
afterward founded
the spiritual brotherhood. He breathed such a spirit into the countries of the
Orient that various
peoples and warring tribes were blended in unity. Their bestowals and
susceptibilities became
one, their purposes one purpose, their desires one desire to such a degree that
they sacrificed
themselves for each other, forfeiting name, possessions and comfort. Their
fellowship became
indissoluble. This is eternal, spiritual fellowship, heavenly and divine
brotherhood, which
defies dissolution. Material civilization advances through the physical
association of mankind.
The progress you observe in the outer world is founded mainly upon the
fraternity of material
interests. Were it not for this physical and mental association, civilization
would not have
progressed. Now—praise be to God!—the indissoluble spiritual association is

evident;
therefore, it is certain that divine civilization has been founded, and the world will progress and advance spiritually. In this radiant century divine knowledge, merciful attributes and spiritual virtues will attain the highest degree of advancement. The traces have become manifest in Persia. Souls have advanced to such a degree as to forfeit life and possessions for each other. Their spiritual perceptions have developed; their intelligence has quickened; their souls are awakened. The utmost love has been manifested. Therefore, it is my hope that spiritual fraternity shall unite the East and the West and bring about the complete abolition of warfare among mankind. May it bind together individuals and members of the human family and be

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the cause of advancing minds, illuminating hearts and allowing divine bestowals to encompass us from all directions. May spiritual susceptibilities set hearts aglow with the message of glad tidings. May spiritual brotherhood cause rebirth and regeneration, for its creative quickening emanates from the breaths of the Holy Spirit and is founded by the power of God. Surely that which is founded through the divine power of the Holy Spirit is permanent in its potency and lasting in its effect. Material brotherhood does not prevent nor remove warfare; it does not dispel differences among mankind. But spiritual alliance destroys the very foundation of war, effaces differences entirely, promulgates the oneness of humanity, revivifies mankind, causes hearts to turn to the Kingdom of God and baptizes souls with the Holy Spirit. Through this divine brotherhood the material world will become resplendent with the lights of Divinity, the mirror of materiality will acquire its lights from heaven, and justice will be established in the world so that no trace of darkness, hatred and enmity shall be visible. Humanity shall come within the bounds of security, the Prophethood of all the Messengers of God shall be established, Zion shall leap

and dance, Jerusalem shall rejoice, the Mosaic flame shall ignite, the Messianic light shall shine, the world will become another world, and humanity shall put on another power. This is the greatest divine bestowal; this is the effulgence of the Kingdom of God; this is the day of illumination; this is the merciful century. We must appreciate these things and strive in order that the utmost desire of the Prophets may now be realized and all the glad tidings be fulfilled. Trust in the favor of God. Look not at your own capacities, for the divine bestowal can transform a drop into an ocean; it can make a tiny seed a lofty tree. Verily, divine bestowals are like the sea, and we are the fishes of that sea. The fishes must not look at themselves; they must behold the ocean, which is vast and wonderful. Provision for the sustenance of all is in this ocean; therefore, the divine bounties encompass all, and love eternal shines upon all. The question has been asked: Will the spiritual progress of the world equal and keep pace with material progress in the future? In a living organism the full measure of its development is not known or realized at the time of its inception or birth. Development and progression imply gradual stages or degrees. For example, spiritual advancement may be likened to the light of the early dawn. Although this dawn light is dim and pale, a wise man who views the march of the sunrise at its very beginning can foretell the ascendancy of the sun in its full glory and effulgence. He knows for a certainty that it is the beginning of its manifestation and that later it will assume great power and potency. Again, for example, if he takes a seed and observes that it is sprouting, he will know assuredly that it will ultimately become a tree. Now is the beginning of the manifestation of the spiritual power, and inevitably the potency of its life forces will assume greater and greater proportions. Therefore, this twentieth century is the dawn, or beginning, of spiritual illumination, and it is evident that day by day it will advance. It will reach such a degree that spiritual effulgences will overcome the physical, so that divine susceptibilities will overpower material intelligence and the heavenly light

dispel and banish
 earthly darkness. Divine healing shall purify all ills, and the cloud of mercy
 will pour down its
 rain. The Sun of Reality will shine, and all the earth shall put on its
 beautiful green carpet.
 Among the results of the manifestation of spiritual forces will be that the
 human world will
 adapt itself to a new social form, the justice of God will become manifest
 throughout human
 affairs, and human equality will be universally established. The poor will
 receive a great
 bestowal, and the rich attain eternal happiness. For although at the present
 time the rich enjoy
 the greatest luxury and comfort, they are nevertheless deprived of eternal
 happiness; for eternal
 happiness is contingent upon giving, and the poor are everywhere in the state
 of abject need.
 Through the manifestation of God's great equity the poor of the world will be
 rewarded and
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assisted fully, and there will be a readjustment in the economic conditions of
 mankind so that
 in the future there will not be the abnormally rich nor the abject poor. The
 rich will enjoy the
 privilege of this new economic condition as well as the poor, for owing to
 certain provisions
 and restrictions they will not be able to accumulate so much as to be burdened
 by its
 management, while the poor will be relieved from the stress of want and misery.
 The rich will
 enjoy his palace, and the poor will have his comfortable cottage.
 The essence of the matter is that divine justice will become manifest in human
 conditions
 and affairs, and all mankind will find comfort and enjoyment in life. It is not
 meant that all will
 be equal, for inequality in degree and capacity is a property of nature.
 Necessarily there will be
 rich people and also those who will be in want of their livelihood, but in the
 aggregate
 community there will be equalization and readjustment of values and interests.
 In the future
 there will be no very rich nor extremely poor. There will be an equilibrium of
 interests, and a
 condition will be established which will make both rich and poor comfortable
 and content. This

will be an eternal and blessed outcome of the glorious twentieth century which will be realized universally. The significance of it is that the glad tidings of great joy revealed in the promises of the Holy Books will be fulfilled. Await ye this consummation.

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20 May 1912

Talk at Woman's Suffrage Meeting

Metropolitan Temple

Seventh Avenue and Fourteenth Street, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 133-137)

Today questions of the utmost importance are facing humanity, questions peculiar to this

radiant century. In former centuries there was not even mention of them.

Inasmuch as this is

the century of illumination, the century of humanity, the century of divine bestowals, these

questions are being presented for the expression of public opinion, and in all the countries of

the world, discussion is taking place looking to their solution.

One of these questions concerns the rights of woman and her equality with man.

In past

ages it was held that woman and man were not equal—that is to say, woman was considered

inferior to man, even from the standpoint of her anatomy and creation. She was considered

especially inferior in intelligence, and the idea prevailed universally that it was not allowable

for her to step into the arena of important affairs. In some countries man went so far as to

believe and teach that woman belonged to a sphere lower than human. But in this century,

which is the century of light and the revelation of mysteries, God is proving to the satisfaction

of humanity that all this is ignorance and error; nay, rather, it is well established that mankind

and womankind as parts of composite humanity are coequal and that no difference in estimate is allowable, for all are human. The conditions in past centuries were due to woman's lack of opportunity. She was denied the right and privilege of education and left in her undeveloped state. Naturally, she could not and did not advance. In reality, God has created all mankind, and in the estimation of God there is no distinction as to male and female. The one whose heart is pure is acceptable in His sight, be that one man or woman. God does not inquire, "Art thou woman or art thou man?" He judges human actions. If these are acceptable in the threshold of the Glorious One, man and woman will be equally recognized and rewarded. Furthermore, the education of woman is more necessary and important than that of man, for woman is the trainer of the child from its infancy. If she be defective and imperfect herself, the child will necessarily be deficient; therefore, imperfection of woman implies a condition of imperfection in all mankind, for it is the mother who rears, nurtures and guides the growth of the child. This is not the function of the father. If the educator be incompetent, the educated will be correspondingly lacking. This is evident and incontrovertible. Could the student be brilliant and accomplished if the teacher is illiterate and ignorant? The mothers are the first educators of mankind; if they be imperfect, alas for the condition and future of the race. Again, it is well established in history that where woman has not participated in human affairs the outcomes have never attained a state of completion and perfection. On the other

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hand, every influential undertaking of the human world wherein woman has been a participant has attained importance. This is historically true and beyond disproof even in religion. Jesus Christ had twelve disciples and among His followers a woman known as Mary Magdalene. Judas Iscariot had become a traitor and hypocrite, and after the crucifixion the remaining eleven disciples were wavering and undecided. It is certain from the evidence of the

Gospels that the one who comforted them and reestablished their faith was Mary Magdalene. The world of humanity consists of two parts: male and female. Each is the complement of the other. Therefore, if one is defective, the other will necessarily be incomplete, and perfection cannot be attained. There is a right hand and a left hand in the human body, functionally equal in service and administration. If either proves defective, the defect will naturally extend to the other by involving the completeness of the whole; for accomplishment is not normal unless both are perfect. If we say one hand is deficient, we prove the inability and incapacity of the other; for single-handed there is no full accomplishment. Just as physical accomplishment is complete with two hands, so man and woman, the two parts of the social body, must be perfect. It is not natural that either should remain undeveloped; and until both are perfected, the happiness of the human world will not be realized. The most momentous question of this day is international peace and arbitration, and universal peace is impossible without universal suffrage. Children are educated by the women. The mother bears the troubles and anxieties of rearing the child, undergoes the ordeal of its birth and training. Therefore, it is most difficult for mothers to send to the battlefield those upon whom they have lavished such love and care. Consider a son reared and trained twenty years by a devoted mother. What sleepless nights and restless, anxious days she has spent! Having brought him through dangers and difficulties to the age of maturity, how agonizing then to sacrifice him upon the battlefield! Therefore, the mothers will not sanction war nor be satisfied with it. So it will come to pass that when women participate fully and equally in the affairs of the world, when they enter confidently and capably the great arena of laws and politics, war will cease; for woman will be the obstacle and hindrance to it. This is true and without doubt. It has been objected by some that woman is not equally capable with man and that she is deficient by creation. This is pure imagination. The difference in capability

between man and woman is due entirely to opportunity and education. Heretofore woman has been denied the right and privilege of equal development. If equal opportunity be granted her, there is no doubt she would be the peer of man. History will evidence this. In past ages noted women have arisen in the affairs of nations and surpassed men in their accomplishments. Among them was Zenobia, Queen of the East, whose capital was Palmyra. Even today the site of that city bears witness to her greatness, ability and sovereignty; for there the traveler will find ruins of palaces and fortifications of the utmost strength and solidity built by this remarkable woman in the third century after Christ. She was the wife of the governor-general of Athens. After her husband's death she assumed control of the government in his stead and ruled her province most efficiently. Afterward she conquered Syria, subdued Egypt and founded a most wonderful kingdom with political sagacity and thoroughness. The Roman Empire sent a great army against her. When this army replete with martial splendor reached Syria, Zenobia herself appeared upon the field leading her forces. On the day of battle she arrayed herself in regal garments, placed a crown upon her head and rode forth, sword in hand, to meet the invading legions. By her courage and military strategy the Roman army was routed and so completely dispersed that they were not able to reorganize in retreat. The government of Rome held consultation, saying, "No matter what commander we send, we cannot overcome her; therefore,

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the Emperor Aurelian himself must go to lead the legions of Rome against Zenobia." Aurelian marched into Syria with two hundred thousand soldiers. The army of Zenobia was greatly inferior in size. The Romans besieged her in Palmyra two years without success. Finally, Aurelian was able to cut off the city's supply of provisions so that she and her people were compelled by starvation to surrender. She was not defeated in battle. Aurelian

carried her
captive to Rome. On the day of his entry into the city he arranged a triumphal
procession—
first elephants, then lions, tigers, birds, monkeys—and after the monkeys,
Zenobia. A crown
was upon her head, a chain of gold about her neck. With queenly dignity and
unconscious of
humiliation, looking to the right and left, she said, “Verily, I glory in
being a woman and in
having withstood the Roman Empire.” (At that time the dominion of Rome
covered half the
known earth.) “And this chain about my neck is a sign not of humiliation but
of glorification.
This is a symbol of my power, not of my defeat.”
Among other historical women was Catherine I, wife of Peter the Great. Russia
and Turkey
were at war. Muhammad Páshá, commander of the Turkish forces, had defeated
Peter and was
about to take St. Petersburg. The Russians were in a most critical position.
Catherine, the wife
of Peter, said, “I will arrange this matter.” She had an interview with
Muhammad Páshá,
negotiated a treaty of peace and induced him to turn back. She saved her
husband and her
nation. This was a great accomplishment. Afterward she was crowned Empress of
Russia and
ruled with wisdom until her death.
The discovery of America by Columbus was during the reign of Isabella of Spain,
to whose
intelligence and assistance this wonderful accomplishment was largely due. In
brief, many
remarkable women have appeared in the history of the world, but further mention
of them is
not necessary.
Today among the Bahá’ís of Persia there are many women who are the very
pride and envy
of the men. They are imbued with all the virtues and excellences of humanity.
They are
eloquent; they are poets and scholars and embody the quintessence of humility.
In political
ability and acumen they have been able to cope and compete with representative
men. They
have consecrated their lives and forfeited their possessions in martyrdom for
the sake of
humanity, and the traces of their glory will last forever. The pages of the
history of Persia are
illuminated by the lives and records of these women.

The purpose, in brief, is this: that if woman be fully educated and granted her rights, she will attain the capacity for wonderful accomplishments and prove herself the equal of man. She is the coadjutor of man, his complement and helpmeet. Both are human; both are endowed with potentialities of intelligence and embody the virtues of humanity. In all human powers and functions they are partners and coequals. At present in spheres of human activity woman does not manifest her natal prerogatives, owing to lack of education and opportunity. Without doubt education will establish her equality with men. Consider the animal kingdom, where no distinction is observed between male and female. They are equal in powers and privileges. Among birds of the air no distinction is evidenced. Their powers are equal; they dwell together in complete unity and mutual recognition of rights. Shall we not enjoy the same equality? Its absence is not befitting to mankind.

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22 May 1912

Talk at the Tremont Temple at the Unitarian Conference

Boston, Massachusetts

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 140-143)

Creation is the expression of motion. Motion is life. A moving object is a living object, whereas that which is motionless and inert is as dead. All created forms are progressive in their planes, or kingdoms of existence, under the stimulus of the power or spirit of life. The universal energy is dynamic. Nothing is stationary in the material world of outer phenomena or in the inner world of intellect and consciousness. Religion is the outer expression of the divine reality. Therefore, it must be living, vitalized, moving and progressive. If it be without motion and nonprogressive, it is without the divine life; it is dead. The divine institutes are continuously active and evolutionary; therefore, the revelation of them must be progressive and continuous. All things are subject to reformation. This is a century of life and renewal. Sciences and arts, industry and

invention have been reformed. Law and ethics have been reconstituted, reorganized. The world of thought has been regenerated. Sciences of former ages and philosophies of the past are useless today. Present exigencies demand new methods of solution; world problems are without precedent. Old ideas and modes of thought are fast becoming obsolete. Ancient laws and archaic ethical systems

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will not meet the requirements of modern conditions, for this is clearly the century of a new life, the century of the revelation of reality and, therefore, the greatest of all centuries. Consider how the scientific developments of fifty years have surpassed and eclipsed the knowledge and achievements of all the former ages combined. Would the announcements and theories of ancient astronomers explain our present knowledge of the suns and planetary systems? Would the mask of obscurity which beclouded medieval centuries meet the demand for clear-eyed vision and understanding which characterizes the world today? Will the despotism of former governments answer the call for freedom which has risen from the heart of humanity in this cycle of illumination? It is evident that no vital results are now forthcoming from the customs, institutions and standpoints of the past. In view of this, shall blind imitations of ancestral forms and theological interpretations continue to guide and control the religious life and spiritual development of humanity today? Shall man, gifted with the power of reason, unthinkingly follow and adhere to dogma, creeds and hereditary beliefs which will not bear the analysis of reason in this century of effulgent reality? Unquestionably this will not satisfy men of science, for when they find premise or conclusion contrary to present standards of proof and without real foundation, they reject that which has been formerly accepted as standard and correct and move forward from new foundations. The divine Prophets have revealed and founded religion. They have laid down certain laws

and heavenly principles for the guidance of mankind. They have taught and promulgated the knowledge of God, established praiseworthy ethical ideals and inculcated the highest standards of virtues in the human world. Gradually these heavenly teachings and foundations of reality have been beclouded by human interpretations and dogmatic imitations of ancestral beliefs.

The essential realities, which the Prophets labored so hard to establish in human hearts and minds while undergoing ordeals and suffering tortures of persecution, have now well nigh vanished. Some of these heavenly Messengers have been killed, some imprisoned, all of Them despised and rejected while proclaiming the reality of Divinity. Soon after Their departure from this world, the essential truth of Their teachings was lost sight of and dogmatic imitations adhered to.

Inasmuch as human interpretations and blind imitations differ widely, religious strife and disagreement have arisen among mankind, the light of true religion has been extinguished and the unity of the world of humanity destroyed. The Prophets of God voiced the spirit of unity and agreement. They have been the Founders of divine reality. Therefore, if the nations of the world forsake imitations and investigate the reality underlying the revealed Word of God, they will agree and become reconciled. For reality is one and not multiple.

The nations and religions are steeped in blind and bigoted imitations. A man is a Jew

because his father was a Jew. The Muslim follows implicitly the footsteps of his ancestors in

belief and observance. The Buddhist is true to his heredity as a Buddhist. That is to say, they

profess religious belief blindly and without investigation, making unity and agreement

impossible. It is evident, therefore, that this condition will not be remedied without a

reformation in the world of religion. In other words, the fundamental reality of the divine

religions must be renewed, reformed, revoiced to mankind.

From the seed of reality religion has grown into a tree which has put forth leaves and

branches, blossoms and fruit. After a time this tree has fallen into a condition of decay. The

leaves and blossoms have withered and perished; the tree has become stricken and fruitless. It is not reasonable that man should hold to the old tree, claiming that its life forces are undiminished, its fruit unequalled, its existence eternal. The seed of reality must be sown again

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in human hearts in order that a new tree may grow therefrom and new divine fruits refresh the world. By this means the nations and peoples now divergent in religion will be brought into unity, imitations will be forsaken, and a universal brotherhood in reality itself will be established. Warfare and strife will cease among mankind; all will be reconciled as servants of God. For all are sheltered beneath the tree of His providence and mercy. God is kind to all; He is the giver of bounty to all alike, even as Jesus Christ has declared that God “sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust”—that is to say, the mercy of God is universal. All humanity is under the protection of His love and favor, and unto all He has pointed the way of guidance and progress. Progress is of two kinds: material and spiritual. The former is attained through observation of the surrounding existence and constitutes the foundation of civilization. Spiritual progress is through the breaths of the Holy Spirit and is the awakening of the conscious soul of man to perceive the reality of Divinity. Material progress ensures the happiness of the human world. Spiritual progress ensures the happiness and eternal continuance of the soul. The Prophets of God have founded the laws of divine civilization. They have been the root and fundamental source of all knowledge. They have established the principles of human brotherhood, of fraternity, which is of various kinds—such as the fraternity of family, of race, of nation and of ethical motives. These forms of fraternity, these bonds of brotherhood, are merely temporal and transient in association. They do not ensure harmony and are usually productive of disagreement. They do not prevent warfare and strife; on the contrary, they are

selfish, restricted and fruitful causes of enmity and hatred among mankind. The spiritual brotherhood which is enkindled and established through the breaths of the Holy Spirit unites nations and removes the cause of warfare and strife. It transforms mankind into one great family and establishes the foundations of the oneness of humanity. It promulgates the spirit of international agreement and ensures universal peace. Therefore, we must investigate the foundation of this heavenly fraternity. We must forsake all imitations and promote the reality of the divine teachings. In accordance with these principles and actions and by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, both material and spiritual happiness shall become realized. Until all nations and peoples become united by the bonds of the Holy Spirit in this real fraternity, until national and international prejudices are effaced in the reality of this spiritual brotherhood, true progress, prosperity and lasting happiness will not be attained by man. This is the century of new and universal nationhood. Sciences have advanced; industries have progressed; politics have been reformed; liberty has been proclaimed; justice is awakening. This is the century of motion, divine stimulus and accomplishment, the century of human solidarity and altruistic service, the century of universal peace and the reality of the divine Kingdom.

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??23 May 1912??

??Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Francis W. Breed??

??367 Harvard Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts??

??From Stenographic Notes??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 138-139??

??Scientific knowledge is the highest attainment upon the human plane, for science is the??

??discoverer of realities. It is of two kinds: material and spiritual.

Material science is the??

??investigation of natural phenomena; divine science is the discovery and realization of spiritual??

??verities. The world of humanity must acquire both. A bird has two wings; it cannot fly with??

??one. Material and spiritual science are the two wings of human uplift and attainment. Both are??

??necessary—one the natural, the other supernatural; one material, the
other divine. By the divine??
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we mean the discovery of the mysteries of God, the comprehension of spiritual
realities, the
wisdom of God, inner significances of the heavenly religions and foundation of
the law.

This is 23 May, the anniversary of the message and Declaration of the Báb. It
is a blessed
day and the dawn of manifestation, for the appearance of the Báb was the early
light of the true
morn, whereas the manifestation of the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, was
the shining forth of
the sun. Therefore, it is a blessed day, the inception of the heavenly bounty,
the beginning of
the divine effulgence. On this day in 1844 the Báb was sent forth heralding
and proclaiming
the Kingdom of God, announcing the glad tidings of the coming of
Bahá'u'lláh and
withstanding the opposition of the whole Persian nation. Some of the Persians
followed Him.

For this they suffered the most grievous difficulties and severe ordeals. They
withstood the
tests with wonderful power and sublime heroism. Thousands were cast into
prison, punished,
persecuted and martyred. Their homes were pillaged and destroyed, their
possessions
confiscated. They sacrificed their lives most willingly and remained unshaken
in their faith to
the very end. Those wonderful souls are the lamps of God, the stars of sanctity
shining
gloriously from the eternal horizon of the will of God.

The Báb was subjected to bitter persecution in Shíráz, where He first
proclaimed His
mission and message. A period of famine afflicted that region, and the Báb
journeyed to
Isfahán. There the learned men rose against Him in great hostility. He was
arrested and sent to
Tabríz. From thence He was transferred to Mákú and finally imprisoned in the
strong castle of
Chihríq. Afterward He was martyred in Tabríz.

This is merely an outline of the history of the Báb. He withstood all
persecutions and bore
every suffering and ordeal with unflinching strength. The more His enemies
endeavored to

extinguish that flame, the brighter it became. Day by day His Cause spread and strengthened.

During the time when He was among the people He was constantly heralding the coming of

Bahá'u'lláh. In all His Books and Tablets He mentioned Bahá'u'lláh and announced the glad

tidings of His manifestation, prophesying that He would reveal Himself in the ninth year. He

said that in the ninth year “you will attain to all happiness”; in the ninth year “you will be

blessed with the meeting of the Promised One of Whom I have spoken.” He mentioned the

Blessed Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh, by the title “Him Whom God shall make manifest.” In brief,

that blessed Soul offered His very life in the pathway of Bahá'u'lláh, even as it is recorded in

historical writings and records. In His first Book, the Best of Stories, He says, “O Remnant of

God! I am wholly sacrificed to Thee; I am content with curses in Thy path; I crave nought but

to be slain in Thy love; and God, the Supreme, sufficeth as an eternal protection.”

Consider how the Báb endured difficulties and tribulations; how He gave His life in the

Cause of God; how He was attracted to the love of the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh; and how

He announced the glad tidings of His manifestation. We must follow His heavenly example;

we must be self-sacrificing and aglow with the fire of the love of God. We must partake of the

bounty and grace of the Lord, for the Báb has admonished us to arise in service to the Cause of

God, to be absolutely severed from all else save God during the day of the Blessed Perfection,

Bahá'u'lláh, to be completely attracted by the love of Bahá'u'lláh, to love all humanity for His

sake, to be lenient and merciful to all for Him and to upbuild the oneness of the world of

humanity. Therefore, this day, 23 May, is the anniversary of a blessed event. ??473??

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25 May 1912

Huntington Chambers

Boston, Massachusetts

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 143-146)

I am going away from your city, but I leave my heart with you. My spirit will
be here; I

will not forget you. I ask confirmation for you from the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh. I pray that you may advance continually in spiritual susceptibilities, that day by day you may grow more radiant and draw nearer to God until you become instrumental in illumining the world of humanity. May these confirmations of the Kingdom of God encompass you. This is my hope, my prayer.

In the estimation of historians this radiant century is equivalent to one hundred centuries of the past. If comparison be made with the sum total of all former human achievements, it will be found that the discoveries, scientific advancement and material civilization of this present century have equaled, yea far exceeded the progress and outcome of one hundred former centuries. The production of books and compilations of literature alone bears witness that the output of the human mind in this century has been greater and more enlightening than all the past centuries together. It is evident, therefore, that this century is of paramount importance.

Reflect upon the miracles of accomplishment which have already characterized it: the discoveries in every realm of human research. Inventions, scientific knowledge, ethical reforms and regulations established for the welfare of humanity, mysteries of nature explored, invisible forces brought into visibility and subjection—a veritable wonder-world of new phenomena and conditions heretofore unknown to man now open to his uses and further investigation. The East and West can communicate instantly. A human being can soar in the skies or speed in submarine depths. The power of steam has linked the continents. Trains cross the deserts and pierce the barriers of mountains; ships find unerring pathways upon the trackless oceans. Day by day discoveries are increasing. What a wonderful century this is! It is an age of universal reformation. Laws and statutes of civil and federal governments are in process of change and transformation. Sciences and arts are being molded anew. Thoughts are metamorphosed. The foundations of human society are changing and strengthening. Today sciences of the past are

useless. The Ptolemaic system of astronomy and numberless other systems and theories of scientific and philosophical explanation are discarded, known to be false and worthless. Ethical precedents and principles cannot be applied to the needs of the modern world. Thoughts and theories of past ages are fruitless now. Thrones and governments are crumbling and falling. All conditions and requisites of the past unfitted and inadequate for the present time are undergoing radical reform. It is evident, therefore, that counterfeit and spurious religious teaching, antiquated forms of belief and ancestral imitations which are at variance with the foundations of divine reality must also pass away and be reformed. They must be abandoned and new conditions be recognized. The morals of humanity must undergo change. New remedies and solutions for human problems must be adopted. Human intellects themselves must change and be subject to the universal reformation. Just as the thoughts and hypotheses of past ages are

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fruitless today, likewise dogmas and codes of human invention are obsolete and barren of product in religion. Nay, it is true that they are the cause of enmity and conducive to strife in the world of humanity; war and bloodshed proceed from them, and the oneness of mankind finds no recognition in their observance. Therefore, it is our duty in this radiant century to investigate the essentials of divine religion, seek the realities underlying the oneness of the world of humanity and discover the source of fellowship and agreement which will unite mankind in the heavenly bond of love. This unity is the radiance of eternity, the divine spirituality, the effulgence of God and the bounty of the Kingdom. We must investigate the divine source of these heavenly bestowals and adhere unto them steadfastly. For if we remain fettered and restricted by human inventions and dogmas, day by day the world of mankind will be degraded, day by day warfare and strife will increase and satanic forces converge toward

the destruction of the human race.

If love and agreement are manifest in a single family, that family will advance, become illumined and spiritual; but if enmity and hatred exist within it, destruction and dispersion are inevitable. This is, likewise, true of a city. If those who dwell within it manifest a spirit of accord and fellowship, it will progress steadily and human conditions become brighter, whereas through enmity and strife it will be degraded and its inhabitants scattered. In the same way, the people of a nation develop and advance toward civilization and enlightenment through love and accord and are disintegrated by war and strife. Finally, this is true of humanity itself in the aggregate. When love is realized and the ideal spiritual bonds unite the hearts of men, the whole human race will be uplifted, the world will continually grow more spiritual and radiant and the happiness and tranquillity of mankind be immeasurably increased. Warfare and strife will be uprooted, disagreement and dissension pass away and universal peace unite the nations and peoples of the world. All mankind will dwell together as one family, blend as the waves of one sea, shine as stars of one firmament and appear as fruits of the same tree. This is the happiness and felicity of humankind. This is the illumination of man, the eternal glory and everlasting life; this is the divine bestowal. I desire this station for you, and I pray God that the people of America may achieve this great end in order that the virtue of this democracy may be ensured and their names be glorified eternally. May the confirmations of God uphold them in all things and their memories become revered throughout the East and the West. May they become the servants of the Most High God, near and dear to Him in the oneness of the heavenly Kingdom.

Bahá'u'lláh endured ordeals and hardships sixty years. There was no persecution, vicissitude or suffering He did not experience at the hand of His enemies and oppressors. All the days of His life were passed in difficulty and tribulation—at one time in prison, another in exile, sometimes in chains. He willingly endured these difficulties for the unity of mankind,

praying that the world of humanity might realize the radiance of God, the
 oneness of
 humankind become a reality, strife and warfare cease and peace and tranquillity
 be realized by
 all. In prison He hoisted the banner of human solidarity, proclaiming universal
 peace, writing
 to the kings and rulers of nations, summoning them to international unity and
 counseling
 arbitration. His life was a vortex of persecution and difficulty; yet
 catastrophes, extreme ordeals
 and vicissitudes did not hinder the accomplishment of His work and mission.
 Nay, on the
 contrary, His power became greater and greater, His efficiency and influence
 spread and
 increased until His glorious light shone throughout the Orient, love and unity
 were established,
 and the differing religions found a center of contact and reconciliation.
 Therefore, we also must strive in this pathway of love and service, sacrificing
 life and
 possessions, passing our days in devotion, consecrating our efforts wholly to
 the Cause of God
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so that, God willing, the ensign of universal religion may be uplifted in the
 world of mankind
 and the oneness of the world of humanity be established.
 In your hearts I have beheld the reflection of a great and wonderful love. The
 Americans
 have shown me uniform kindness, and I entertain a deep spiritual love for them.
 I am pleased
 with the susceptibilities of your hearts. I will pray for you, asking divine
 assistance, and then
 say farewell.
 O my God! O my God! Verily, these servants are turning to Thee, supplicating
 Thy
 kingdom of mercy. Verily, they are attracted by Thy holiness and set aglow with
 the fire of
 Thy love, seeking confirmation from Thy wondrous kingdom, and hoping for
 attainment in
 Thy heavenly realm. Verily, they long for the descent of Thy bestowal, desiring
 illumination
 from the Sun of Reality. O Lord! Make them radiant lamps, merciful signs,
 fruitful trees and
 shining stars. May they come forth in Thy service and be connected with Thee by
 the bonds
 and ties of Thy love, longing for the lights of Thy favor. O Lord! Make them

signs of guidance,
standards of Thine immortal kingdom, waves of the sea of Thy mercy, mirrors of
the light of
Thy majesty.

Verily, Thou art the Generous. Verily, Thou art the Merciful. Verily, Thou art
the Precious,
the Beloved.

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26 May 1912
Talk at Mount Morris Baptist Church
Fifth Avenue and 126th Street, New York
Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 147-150)

As I entered the church this evening, I heard the hymn “Nearer my God, to Thee.” The greatest attainment in the world of humanity is nearness to God. Every lasting glory, honor, grace and beauty which comes to man comes through nearness to God. All the Prophets and apostles longed and prayed for nearness to the Creator. How many nights they passed in sleepless yearning for this station; how many days they devoted to supplication for this attainment, seeking ever to draw nigh unto Him! But nearness to God is not an easy accomplishment. During the time Jesus Christ was upon the earth mankind sought nearness to God, but in that day no one attained it save a very few—His disciples. Those blessed souls were confirmed with divine nearness through the love of God. Divine nearness is dependent upon attainment to the knowledge of God, upon severance from all else save God. It is contingent upon self-sacrifice and to be found only through forfeiting wealth and worldly possessions. It is made possible through the baptism of water and fire revealed in the Gospels. Water symbolizes the water of life, which is knowledge, and fire is the fire of the love of God; therefore, man must be baptized with the water of life, the Holy Spirit and the fire of the love of the Kingdom. Until he attains these three degrees, nearness to God is not possible. This is the process by which the Bahá’ís of Persia have attained it. They gave their lives for this station, sacrificed honor, comfort and possessions, hastened with the utmost joy to the place of martyrdom; their blood was spilled, their bodies were tortured and destroyed, their homes pillaged, their children carried into captivity. They endured all these conditions joyfully and willingly. Through such sacrifice nearness to God is made possible. And be it known that this nearness is not dependent upon time or place. Nearness to God is dependent upon purity of the heart and exhilaration of the spirit through the glad tidings of the Kingdom. Consider how a pure, well-polished mirror fully reflects the effulgence of the sun, no matter

how distant the
 sun may be. As soon as the mirror is cleaned and purified, the sun will
 manifest itself. The
 more pure and sanctified the heart of man becomes, the nearer it draws to God,
 and the light of
 the Sun of Reality is revealed within it. This light sets hearts aglow with the
 fire of the love of
 God, opens in them the doors of knowledge and unseals the divine mysteries so
 that spiritual
 discoveries are made possible. All the Prophets have drawn near to God through
 severance.
 We must emulate those Holy Souls and renounce our own wishes and desires. We
 must purify
 ourselves from the mire and soil of earthly contact until our hearts become as
 mirrors in
 clearness and the light of the most great guidance reveals itself in them.
 Bahá'u'lláh proclaims in the Hidden Words that God inspires His servants
 and is revealed
 through them. He says, "Thy heart is My home; sanctify it for My descent. Thy
 spirit is My
 place of revelation; cleanse it for My manifestation." Therefore, we learn
 that nearness to God
 is possible through devotion to Him, through entrance into the Kingdom and
 service to
 humanity; it is attained by unity with mankind and through loving-kindness to
 all; it is
 dependent upon investigation of truth, acquisition of praiseworthy virtues,
 service in the cause
 of universal peace and personal sanctification. In a word, nearness to God
 necessitates sacrifice
 of self, severance and the giving up of all to Him. Nearness is likeness.

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Behold how the sun shines upon all creation, but only surfaces that are pure
 and polished
 can reflect its glory and light. The darkened soul has no portion of the
 revelation of the glorious
 effulgence of reality; and the soil of self, unable to take advantage of that
 light, does not produce
 growth. The eyes of the blind cannot behold the rays of the sun; only pure eyes
 with sound and
 perfect sight can receive them. Green and living trees can absorb the bounty of
 the sun; dead
 roots and withered branches are destroyed by it. Therefore, man must seek
 capacity and develop
 readiness. As long as he lacks susceptibility to divine influences, he is

incapable of reflecting
the light and assimilating its benefits. Sterile soil will produce nothing,
even if the cloud of
mercy pours rain upon it a thousand years. We must make the soil of our hearts
receptive and
fertile by tilling in order that the rain of divine mercy may refresh them and
bring forth roses
and hyacinths of heavenly planting. We must have perceiving eyes in order to
see the light of
the sun. We must cleanse the nostril in order to scent the fragrances of the
divine rose garden.
We must render the ears attentive in order to hear the summons of the supreme
Kingdom. No
matter how beautiful the melody, the ear that is deaf cannot hear it, cannot
receive the call of
the Supreme Concourse. The nostril that is clogged with dust cannot inhale the
fragrant odors
of the blossoms. Therefore, we must ever strive for capacity and seek
readiness. As long as we
lack susceptibility, the beauties and bounties of God cannot penetrate. Christ
spoke a parable
in which He said His words were like the seeds of the sower; some fall upon
stony ground,
some upon sterile soil, some are choked by thorns and thistles, but some fall
upon the ready,
receptive and fertile ground of human hearts. When seeds are cast upon sterile
soil, no growth
follows. Those cast upon stony ground will grow a short time, but lacking deep
roots will wither
away. Thorns and thistles destroy others completely, but the seed cast in good
ground brings
forth harvest and fruitage.
In the same way, the words I speak to you here tonight may produce no effect
whatever.
Some hearts may be affected, then soon forget; others owing to superstitious
ideas and
imaginings may even fail to hear and understand; but the blessed souls who
are attentive to
my exhortation and admonition, listening with the ear of acceptance, allowing
my words to
penetrate effectively, will advance day by day toward full fruition, yea even
to the Supreme
Concourse. Consider how the parable makes attainment dependent upon capacity.
Unless
capacity is developed, the summons of the Kingdom cannot reach the ear, the
light of the Sun
of Truth will not be observed, and the fragrances of the rose garden of inner

significance will
 be lost. Let us endeavor to attain capacity, susceptibility and worthiness that
 we may hear the
 call of the glad tidings of the Kingdom, become revived by the breaths of
 the Holy Spirit,
 hoist the standard of the oneness of humanity, establish human brotherhood, and
 under the
 protection of divine grace attain the everlasting and eternal life.
 O Thou forgiving God! These servants are turning to Thy kingdom and seeking Thy
 grace
 and bounty. O God! Make their hearts good and pure in order that they may
 become worthy of
 Thy love. Purify and sanctify the spirits that the light of the Sun of Reality
 may shine upon
 them. Purify and sanctify the eyes that they may perceive Thy light. Purify and
 sanctify the
 ears in order that they may hear the call of Thy kingdom.
 O Lord! Verily, we are weak, but Thou art mighty. Verily, we are poor, but Thou
 art rich.
 We are the seekers, and Thou art the One sought. O Lord! Have compassion upon
 us and
 forgive us; bestow upon us such capacity and receptiveness that we may be
 worthy of Thy
 favors and become attracted to Thy kingdom, that we may drink deep of the water
 of life, may
 be enkindled by the fire of Thy love, and be resuscitated through the breaths
 of the Holy Spirit
 in this radiant century.
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O God, my God! Cast upon this gathering the glances of Thy loving-kindness.
 Keep safe
 each and all in Thy custody and under Thy protection. Send down upon these
 souls Thy
 heavenly blessings. Immerse them in the ocean of Thy mercy and quicken them
 through the
 breaths of the Holy Spirit.
 O Lord! Bestow Thy gracious aid and confirmation upon this just government.
 This country
 lieth beneath the sheltering shadow of Thy protection and this people is in Thy
 service. O Lord!
 Confer upon them Thy heavenly bounty and render the outpourings of Thy grace
 and favor
 copious and abundant. Suffer this esteemed nation to be held in honor and
 enable it to be
 admitted into Thy kingdom.

Thou art the Powerful, the Omnipotent, the Merciful, and Thou art the Generous,
the
Beneficent, the Lord of grace abounding.

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28 May 1912

Talk at Reception at Metropolitan Temple

Seventh Avenue and Fourteenth Street, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 150-153)

The Fatherhood of God, His loving-kindness and beneficence are apparent to all.

In His

mercy He provides fully and amply for His creatures, and if any soul sins, He
does not suspend

His bounty. All created things are visible manifestations of His Fatherhood,
mercy and

heavenly bestowals. Human brotherhood is, likewise, as clear and evident as the
sun, for all are

servants of one God, belong to one humankind, inhabit the same globe, are
sheltered beneath

the overshadowing dome of heaven and submerged in the sea of divine mercy.

Human

brotherhood and dependence exist because mutual helpfulness and cooperation are
the two

necessary principles underlying human welfare. This is the physical
relationship of mankind.

There is another brotherhood—the spiritual—which is higher, holier and
superior to all others.

It is heavenly; it emanates from the breaths of the Holy Spirit and the
effulgence of merciful

attributes; it is founded upon spiritual susceptibilities. This brotherhood is
established by the

Manifestations of the Holy One.

The divine Manifestations since the day of Adam have striven to unite humanity
so that all

may be accounted as one soul. The function and purpose of a shepherd is to
gather and not

disperse his flock. The Prophets of God have been divine Shepherds of humanity.

They have

established a bond of love and unity among mankind, made scattered peoples one
nation and

wandering tribes a mighty kingdom. They have laid the foundation of the oneness of God and summoned all to universal peace. All these holy, divine Manifestations are one. They have served one God, promulgated the same truth, founded the same institutions and reflected the same light. Their appearances have been successive and correlated; each One has announced and extolled the One Who was to follow, and all laid the foundation of reality. They summoned and invited the people to love and made the human world a mirror of the Word of God. Therefore, the divine religions They established have one foundation; Their teachings, proofs and evidences are one; in name and form They differ, but in reality They agree and are the same. These holy Manifestations have been as the coming of springtime in the world. Although the springtime of this year is designated by another name according to the changing calendar, yet as regards its life and quickening it is the same as the springtime of last year. For each spring is the time of a new creation, the effects, bestowals, perfections and life-giving forces of which are the same as those of the former vernal seasons, although the names are many and various. This is 1912, last year was 1911 and so on, but in fundamental reality no difference is apparent. The sun is one, but the dawning points of the sun are numerous and changing. The ocean is one body of water, but different parts of it have particular designations—Atlantic, Pacific, Mediterranean, Antarctic, etc. If we consider the names, there is differentiation; but the water, the ocean itself, is one reality.

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Likewise, the divine religions of the holy Manifestations of God are in reality one, though in name and nomenclature they differ. Man must be a lover of the light, no matter from what dayspring it may appear. He must be a lover of the rose, no matter in what soil it may be growing. He must be a seeker of the truth, no matter from what source it come. Attachment to the lantern is not loving the light. Attachment to the earth is not befitting,

but enjoyment of the
rose which develops from the soil is worthy. Devotion to the tree is
profitless, but partaking of
the fruit is beneficial. Luscious fruits, no matter upon what tree they grow or
where they may
be found, must be enjoyed. The word of truth, no matter which tongue utters it,
must be
sanctioned. Absolute verities, no matter in what book they be recorded, must be
accepted. If
we harbor prejudice, it will be the cause of deprivation and ignorance. The
strife between
religions, nations and races arises from misunderstanding. If we investigate
the religions to
discover the principles underlying their foundations, we will find they agree;
for the
fundamental reality of them is one and not multiple. By this means the
religionists of the world
will reach their point of unity and reconciliation. They will ascertain the
truth that the purpose
of religion is the acquisition of praiseworthy virtues, the betterment of
morals, the spiritual
development of mankind, the real life and divine bestowals. All the Prophets
have been the
promoters of these principles; none of Them has been the promoter of
corruption, vice or evil.
They have summoned mankind to all good. They have united people in the love of
God, invited
them to the religions of the unity of mankind and exhorted them to amity and
agreement. For
example, we mention Abraham and Moses. By this mention we do not mean the
limitation
implied in the mere names but intend the virtues which these names embody. When
we say
Abraham, we mean thereby a manifestation of divine guidance, a center of human
virtues, a
source of heavenly bestowals to mankind, a dawning point of divine inspiration
and
perfections. These perfections and graces are not limited to names and
boundaries. When we
find these virtues, qualities and attributes in any personality, we recognize
the same reality
shining from within and bow in acknowledgment of the Abrahamic perfections.
Similarly, we
acknowledge and adore the beauty of Moses. Some souls were lovers of the name
Abraham,
loving the lantern instead of the light, and when they saw this same light
shining from another

lantern, they were so attached to the former lantern that they did not recognize its later appearance and illumination. Therefore, those who were attached and held tenaciously to the name Abraham were deprived when the Abrahamic virtues reappeared in Moses. Similarly, the Jews were believers in Moses, awaiting the coming of the Messiah. The virtues and perfections of Moses became apparent in Jesus Christ most effulgently, but the Jews held to the name Moses, not adoring the virtues and perfections manifest in Him. Had they been adoring these virtues and seeking these perfections, they would assuredly have believed in Jesus Christ when the same virtues and perfections shone in Him. If we are lovers of the light, we adore it in whatever lamp it may become manifest, but if we love the lamp itself and the light is transferred to another lamp, we will neither accept nor sanction it. Therefore, we must follow and adore the virtues revealed in the Messengers of God—whether in Abraham, Moses, Jesus or other Prophets—but we must not adhere to and adore the lamp. We must recognize the sun, no matter from what dawning point it may shine forth, be it Mosaic, Abrahamic or any personal point of orientation whatever, for we are lovers of sunlight and not of orientation. We are lovers of illumination and not of lamps and candles. We are seekers for water, no matter from what rock it may gush forth. We are in need of fruit in whatsoever orchard it may be ripened. We long for rain; it matters not which cloud pours it down. We must not be fettered. If we renounce these fetters, we shall agree, for all are seekers of reality. The counterfeit or imitation of true religion has adulterated human belief, and the foundations have been lost sight of. The variance of these imitations has produced enmity and strife, war and bloodshed. Now the glorious and brilliant twentieth century has dawned, and the divine bounty is radiating universally. The Sun

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of Truth is shining forth in intense enkindlement. This is, verily, the century when these

imitations must be forsaken, superstitions abandoned and God alone worshiped.
 We must look
 at the reality of the Prophets and Their teachings in order that we may agree.
 Praise be to God! The springtime of God is at hand. This century is, verily,
 the spring
 season. The world of mind and kingdom of soul have become fresh and verdant by
 its
 bestowals. It has resuscitated the whole realm of existence. On one hand, the
 lights of reality
 are shining; on the other, the clouds of divine mercy are pouring down the
 fullness of heavenly
 bounty. Wonderful material progress is evident, and great spiritual discoveries
 are being made.
 Truly, this can be called the miracle of centuries, for it is replete with
 manifestations of the
 miraculous. The time has come when all mankind shall be united, when all races
 shall be loyal
 to one fatherland, all religions become one religion, and racial and religious
 bias pass away. It
 is a day in which the oneness of humankind shall uplift its standard and
 international peace,
 like the true morning, flood the world with its light. Therefore, we offer
 supplications to God,
 asking Him to dispel these gloomy clouds and uproot these imitations in order
 that the East and
 West may become radiant with love and unity, that the nations of the world
 shall embrace each
 other and the ideal spiritual brotherhood illumine the world like the glorious
 sun of the high
 heavens. This is our hope, our wish and desire. We pray that through the bounty
 and grace of
 God we may attain thereto. I am very happy to be present at this meeting which
 has innate
 radiance, intelligence, perception and longing to investigate reality. Such
 meetings are the glory
 of the world of mankind. I ask the blessing of God in your behalf.

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29 May 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney
 780 West End Avenue, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt
(Promulgation, pp. 154-156)

The divine Manifestations have been iconoclastic in Their teachings, uprooting error, destroying false religious beliefs and summoning mankind anew to the fundamental oneness of God. All of Them have, likewise, proclaimed the oneness of the world of humanity. The essential teaching of Moses was the law of Sinai, the Ten Commandments. Christ renewed and again revealed the commands of the one God and precepts of human action. In Muhammad, although the circle was wider, the intention of His teaching was likewise to uplift and unify humanity in the knowledge of the one God. In the Báb the circle was again very much enlarged, but the essential teaching was the same. The Books of Bahá'u'lláh number more than one hundred. Each one is an evident proof sufficient for mankind; each one from foundation to apex proclaims the essential unity of God and humanity, the love of God, the abolition of war and the divine standard of peace. Each one also inculcates divine morality, the manifestation of lordly graces—in every word a book of meanings. For the Word of God is collective wisdom, absolute knowledge and eternal truth. Consider the statement recorded in the first chapter of the book of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” This statement is brief but replete with the greatest meanings. Its applications are illimitable and beyond the power of books or words to contain and express. Heretofore the doctors of theology have not expounded it but have restricted it to Jesus as “the Word made flesh,” the separation of Jesus from God, the Father, and His descent upon the earth. In this way the individualized separation of the godhead came to be taught. The essential oneness of Father, Son and Spirit has many meanings and constitutes the foundation of Christianity. Today we will merely give a synopsis of explanation. Why was Jesus the Word? In the universe of creation all phenomenal beings are as letters. Letters in

themselves are
meaningless and express nothing of thought or ideal—as, for instance, a, b,
etc. Likewise, all
phenomenal beings are without independent meaning. But a word is composed of
letters and
has independent sense and meaning. Therefore, as Christ conveyed the perfect
meaning of
divine reality and embodied independent significance, He was the Word. He was
as the station
of reality compared to the station of metaphor. There is no intrinsic meaning
in the leaves of a
book, but the thought they convey leads you to reflect upon reality. The
reality of Jesus was
the perfect meaning, the Christhood in Him which in the Holy Books is
symbolized as the
Word.

“The Word was with God.” The Christhood means not the body of Jesus but the
perfection
of divine virtues manifest in Him. Therefore, it is written, “He is God.”
This does not imply

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separation from God, even as it is not possible to separate the rays of the sun
from the sun. The
reality of Christ was the embodiment of divine virtues and attributes of God.
For in Divinity
there is no duality. All adjectives, nouns and pronouns in that court of
sanctity are one; there is
neither multiplicity nor division. The intention of this explanation is to show
that the Words of
God have innumerable significances and mysteries of meanings—each one a
thousand and
more.

The Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh are many. The precepts and teachings they
contain are universal,
covering every subject. He has revealed scientific explanations ranging
throughout all the
realms of human inquiry and investigation—astronomy, biology, medical
science, etc. In the
Kitáb-i-Íqán He has given expositions of the meanings of the Gospel and
other heavenly Books.
He wrote lengthy Tablets upon civilization, sociology and government. Every
subject is
considered. His Tablets are matchless in beauty and profundity. Even His
enemies
acknowledge the greatness of Bahá'u'lláh, saying He was the miracle of

humanity. This was
 their confession although they did not believe in Him. He was eulogized by
 Christians, Jews,
 Zoroastrians and Muslims who denied His claim. They frequently said, "He is
 matchless,
 unique." A Christian poet in the Orient wrote, "Do not believe him a
 manifestation of God, yet
 his miracles are as great as the sun." Mírzá Abu'l-Fadl has mentioned
 many poems of this kind,
 and there are numerous others. The testimony of His enemies witnessed that He
 was the
 "miracle of mankind," that He "walked in a special pathway of
 knowledge" and was "peerless
 in personality." His teachings are universal and the standard for human
 action. They are not
 merely theoretical and intended to remain in books. They are the principles of
 action. Results
 follow action. Mere theory is fruitless. Of what use is a book upon medicine if
 it is never taken
 from the library shelf? When practical activity has been manifested, the
 teachings of God have
 borne fruit.

The great and fundamental teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are the oneness of God
 and unity of
 mankind. This is the bond of union among Bahá'ís all over the world. They
 become united
 among themselves, then unite others. It is impossible to unite unless united.
 Christ said, "Ye
 are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost his savor, wherewith shall
 it be salted?" This
 proves there were dissensions and lack of unity among His followers. Hence His
 admonition
 to unity of action.

Now must we, likewise, bind ourselves together in the utmost unity, be kind and
 loving to
 each other, sacrificing all our possessions, our honor, yea, even our lives for
 each other. Then
 will it be proved that we have acted according to the teachings of God, that we
 have been real
 believers in the oneness of God and unity of mankind.

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??30 May 1912??

??Talk at Theosophical Lodge??

??Broadway and Seventy-ninth Street, New York??

??Notes by Howard MacNutt??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 156-160??

??I am greatly pleased with these expressions of kindly feeling and evidences of spiritual??

??susceptibility. Tonight I am very happy in the realization that our aims and purposes are the??

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same, our desires and longings are one. This is a reflection and evidence of the oneness of the world of humanity and the intention toward accomplishment of the Most Great Peace.

Therefore, we are united in will and purpose. In the world of existence there are no greater

questions than these. Oneness of the world of humanity ensures the glorification of man.

International peace is the assurance of the welfare of all humankind. There are no greater

motives and purposes in the human soul. As we are agreed upon them, the certainty of unity

and concord between Bahá'ís and Theosophists is most hopeful. Their purposes are one, their

desires one, and spiritual susceptibilities are common to both. Their attention

is devoted to the
divine Kingdom; they partake alike of its bounty.
Today the human world is in need of a great power by which these glorious
principles and
purposes may be executed. The cause of peace is a very great cause; it is the
Cause of God, and
all the forces of the world are opposed to it. Governments, for instance,
consider militarism as
the step to human progress, that division among men and nations is the cause of
patriotism and
honor, that if one nation attack and conquer another, gaining wealth, territory
and glory thereby,
this warfare and conquest, this bloodshed and cruelty are the cause of that
victorious nation's
advancement and prosperity. This is an utter mistake. Compare the nations of
the world to the
members of a family. A family is a nation in miniature. Simply enlarge the
circle of the
household, and you have the nation. Enlarge the circle of nations, and you have
all humanity.
The conditions surrounding the family surround the nation. The happenings in
the family are
the happenings in the life of the nation. Would it add to the progress and
advancement of a
family if dissensions should arise among its members, all fighting, pillaging
each other, jealous
and revengeful of injury, seeking selfish advantage? Nay, this would be the
cause of the
effacement of progress and advancement. So it is in the great family of
nations, for nations are
but an aggregate of families. Therefore, as strife and dissension destroy a
family and prevent
its progress, so nations are destroyed and advancement hindered.
All the heavenly Books, divine Prophets, sages and philosophers agree that
warfare is
destructive to human development, and peace constructive. They agree that war
and strife strike
at the foundations of humanity. Therefore, a power is needed to prevent war and
to proclaim
and establish the oneness of humanity.
But knowledge of the need of this power is not sufficient. Realizing that
wealth is desirable
is not becoming wealthy. The admission that scientific attainment is
praiseworthy does not
confer scientific knowledge. Acknowledgment of the excellence of honor does not
make a man
honorable. Knowledge of human conditions and the needed remedy for them is not

the cause
of their betterment. To admit that health is good does not constitute health. A
skilled physician
is needed to remedy existing human conditions. As a physician is required to
have complete
knowledge of pathology, diagnosis, therapeutics and treatment, so this World
Physician must
be wise, skillful and capable before health will result. His mere knowledge is
not health; it must
be applied and the remedy carried out.
The attainment of any object is conditioned upon knowledge, volition and
action. Unless
these three conditions are forthcoming, there is no execution or
accomplishment. In the erection
of a house it is first necessary to know the ground, and design the house
suitable for it; second,
to obtain the means or funds necessary for the construction; third, actually to
build it. Therefore,
a power is needed to carry out and execute what is known and admitted to be the
remedy for
human conditions—namely, the unification of mankind. Furthermore, it is
evident that this
cannot be realized through material process and means. The accomplishment of
this unification
cannot be through racial power, for races are different and diverse in
tendencies. It cannot be
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through patriotic power, for nationalities are unlike. Nor can it be effected
through political
power since the policies of governments and nations are various. That is to
say, any effort
toward unification through these material means would benefit one and injure
another because
of unequal and individual interests. Some may believe this great remedy can be
found in
dogmatic insistence upon imitations and interpretations. This would likewise be
without
foundation and result. Therefore, it is evident that no means but an ideal
means, a spiritual
power, divine bestowals and the breaths of the Holy Spirit will heal this world
sickness of war,
dissension and discord. Nothing else is possible; nothing can be conceived of.
But through
spiritual means and the divine power it is possible and practicable.
Consider history. What has brought unity to nations, morality to peoples and

benefits to
mankind? If we reflect upon it, we will find that establishing the divine
religions has been the
greatest means toward accomplishing the oneness of humanity. The foundation of
divine reality
in religion has done this, not imitations of ancestral religious forms.
Imitations are opposed to
each other and have ever been the cause of strife, enmity, jealousy and war.
The divine religions
are collective centers in which diverse standpoints may meet, agree and unify.
They accomplish
oneness of native lands, races and policies. For instance, Christ united
various nations, brought
peace to warring peoples and established the oneness of humankind. The
conquering Greeks
and Romans, the prejudiced Egyptians and Assyrians were all in a condition of
strife, enmity
and war, but Christ gathered these varied peoples together and removed the
foundations of
discord—not through racial, patriotic or political power, but through divine
power, the power
of the Holy Spirit. This was not otherwise possible. All other efforts of men
and nations remain
as mere mention in history, without accomplishment.
As this great result is contingent upon divine power and bestowals, where shall
the world
obtain that power? God is eternal and ancient—not a new God. His sovereignty
is of old, not
recent—not merely existent these five or six thousand years. This infinite
universe is from
everlasting. The sovereignty, power, names and attributes of God are eternal,
ancient. His
names presuppose creation and predicate His existence and will. We say God is
Creator. This
name Creator appears when we connote creation. We say God is the Provider. This
name
presupposes and proves the existence of the provided. God is Love. This name
proves the
existence of the beloved. In the same way God is Mercy, God is Justice, God is
Life, etc.
Therefore, as God is Creator, eternal and ancient, there were always creatures
and subjects
existing and provided for. There is no doubt that divine sovereignty is
eternal. Sovereignty
necessitates subjects, ministers, trustees and others subordinate to
sovereignty. Could there be
a king without country, subjects and armies? If we conceive of a time when

there were no
 creatures, no servants, no subjects of divine lordship, we dethrone God and
 predicate a time
 when God was not. It would be as if He had been recently appointed and man had
 given these
 names to Him. The divine sovereignty is ancient, eternal. God from everlasting
 was Love,
 Justice, Power, Creator, Provider, the Omniscient, the Bountiful.
 As the divine entity is eternal, the divine attributes are coexistent,
 coeternal. The divine
 bestowals are, therefore, without beginning, without end. God is infinite; the
 works of God are
 infinite; the bestowals of God are infinite. As His divinity is eternal, His
 lordship and
 perfections are without end. As the bounty of the Holy Spirit is eternal, we
 can never say that
 His bestowals terminate, else He terminates. If we think of the sun and then
 try to conceive of
 the cessation of the solar flame and heat, we have predicated the nonexistence
 of the sun. For
 separation of the sun from its rays and heat is inconceivable. Therefore, if we
 limit the
 bestowals of God, we limit the attributes of God and limit God.
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Let us then trust in the bounty and bestowal of God. Let us be exhilarated with
 the divine
 breath, illumined and exalted by the heavenly glad tidings. God has ever dealt
 with man in
 mercy and kindness. He Who conferred the divine spirit in former times is
 abundantly able and
 capable at all times and periods to grant the same bestowals. Therefore, let us
 be hopeful. The
 God Who gave to the world formerly will do so now and in the future. God Who
 breathed the
 breath of the Holy Spirit upon His servants will breathe it upon them now and
 hereafter. There
 is no cessation to His bounty. The Divine Spirit is penetrating from eternity
 to eternity, for it is
 the bounty of God, and the bounty of God is eternal. Can you conceive of
 limitation of the
 divine power in atomic verities or cessation of the divine bounty in existing
 organisms? Could
 you conceive the power now manifest in this glass in cohesion of its atoms
 becoming
 nonexistent? The energy by which the water of the sea is constituted failing to

exert itself and
the sea disappearing? A shower of rain today and no more showers afterward? The
effulgence
of the sun terminated and no more light or heat?
When we observe that in the kingdom of minerals the divine bounties are
continuous, how
much more shall we expect and realize in the divine spiritual Kingdom! How much
greater the
radiation of the lights of God and the bounty of everlasting life upon the soul
of man! As the
body of the universe is continuous, indestructible, the bounties and bestowals
of the divine
spirit are everlasting.

I praise God that I am privileged to be present in this revered assembly which
is quickened
with spiritual susceptibilities and heavenly attraction—its members
investigating reality, their
utmost hope the establishment of international peace and their greatest purpose
service to the
world of humanity.

When we observe the world of created phenomena, we discover that each atom of
the atoms
of substance is moving through the various degrees and kingdoms of organic
life. For instance,
consider the ethereal element which is penetrating and traveling through all
the contingent
realities. When there is vibration or movement in the ethereal element, the eye
is affected by
that vibration and beholds what is known as light.

In the same manner the bestowals of God are moving and circulating throughout
all created
things. This illimitable divine bounty has no beginning and will have no
ending. It is moving,
circulating and becomes effective wherever capacity is developed to receive it.

In every station
there is a specialized capacity. Therefore, we must be hopeful that through the
bounty and favor
of God this spirit of life infusing all created beings shall quicken humanity,
and from its
bestowals the human world shall become a divine world, this earthly kingdom
become the
mirror of the realm of Divinity, the virtues and perfections of the world of
humanity become
unveiled and the image and likeness of God be reflected from this temple.

I am most grateful to the president of this society and express my most
respectful greetings
to him. It is my hope that all of you may be assisted in attaining the good

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31 May 1912
Talk at Town Hall
Fanwood, New Jersey
From Persian Notes
(Promulgation, pp. 161-163)

The material world is subject to change and transformation. The Cause of the Kingdom is eternal; therefore, it is the most important. But, alas, day by day the power of the Kingdom in human hearts is weakened, and material forces gain the ascendancy. The divine signs are becoming less and less, and human evidences grow stronger. They have reached such a degree that materialists are advancing and aggressive while divine forces are waning and vanishing. Irreligion has conquered religion. The cause of the chaotic condition lies in the differences among the religions and finds its origin in the animosity and hatred existing between sects and denominations. The materialists have availed themselves of this dissension amongst the religions and are constantly attacking them, intending to uproot the tree of divine planting. Owing to strife and contention among themselves, the religions are being weakened and vanquished. If a commander is at variance with his army in the execution of military tactics, there is no doubt he will be defeated by the enemy. Today the religions are at variance; enmity, strife and recrimination prevail among them; they refuse to associate; nay, rather, if necessary

they shed each other's blood. Read history and record to see what dreadful events have happened in the name of religion. For instance, the Hebrew prophets were sent to announce Christ, but unfortunately the Talmud and its superstitions veiled Him so completely that they crucified their promised Messiah. Had they renounced the talmudic traditions and investigated the reality of the religion of Moses, they would have become believers in Christ. Blind adherence to forms and imitations of ancestral beliefs deprived them of their messianic bounty. They were not refreshed by the downpouring rain of mercy, nor were they illumined by the rays of the Sun of Truth. Imitation destroys the foundation of religion, extinguishes the spirituality of the human world, transforms heavenly illumination into darkness and deprives man of the knowledge of God. It is the cause of the victory of materialism and infidelity over religion; it is the denial of Divinity and the law of revelation; it refuses Prophethood and rejects the Kingdom of God. When materialists subject imitations to the intellectual analysis of reason, they find them to be mere superstitions; therefore, they deny religion. For instance, the Jews have ideas as to the purity and impurity of religion, but when you subject these ideas to scientific scrutiny, they are found to be without foundation. Is it impossible for us to receive the infinite bounties of God? Is it impossible to attain the virtues of the spiritual world because we are not living in the time of Moses, the period of the prophets or the era of Christ? Those were spiritual cycles. Can we not develop spiritually because we are far from them and are living in a materialistic age? The God of Moses and Jesus is able to bestow the same favors, nay, greater favors upon His people in this day. For example, in past ages He bestowed reason, intelligence and understanding upon His servants. Can we

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say He is not able to confer His bounties in this century? Would it be just if He sent Moses for

the guidance of past nations and entirely neglected those living now? Could it be possible that this present period has been deprived of divine bounties while past ages of tyranny and barbarism received an inexhaustible portion of them? The same merciful God Who bestowed His favors in the past has opened the doors of His Kingdom to us. The rays of His sun are shining; the breath of the Holy Spirit is quickening. That omniscient God still assists and confirms us, illumines our hearts, gladdens our souls and perfumes our nostrils with the fragrances of holiness. Divine wisdom and providence have encircled all and spread the heavenly table before us. We must take a bountiful share of this generous favor.

The work of the shepherd is to bring together the scattered sheep. If he disperses the united flock, he is not the shepherd. As the Prophets fulfilled Their mission in this respect, They are the true Shepherds. When Moses appeared, the Israelitish people were disorganized. Enmity and discord increased their disunion. With divine power He assembled and united this scattered flock, placed within their hearts the pearl of love, freed them from captivity and led them out of Egypt into the Holy Land. They made wonderful progress in sciences and arts. Bonds of social and national strength cemented them. Their progress in human virtues was so rapid and wonderful that they rose to the zenith of the Solomonic sovereignty. Could it be said that Moses was not a real Shepherd and that He did not gather these scattered people together?

Christ was a real Shepherd. At the time of His manifestation, the Greeks, Romans, Assyrians and Egyptians were like so many scattered flocks. Christ breathed upon them the spirit of unity and harmonized them.

Therefore, it is evident that the Prophets of God have come to unite the children of men

and not to disperse them, to establish the law of love and not enmity.

Consequently, we must

lay aside all prejudice—whether it be religious, racial, political or patriotic; we must become

the cause of the unification of the human race. Strive for universal peace, seek the means of

love, and destroy the basis of disagreement so that this material world may become divine, the world of matter become the realm of the Kingdom and humanity attain to the world of perfection.

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2 June 1912

Talk at Church of the Ascension

Fifth Avenue and Tenth Street, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 163-171)

In the terminology of the Holy Books the church has been called the house of the covenant

for the reason that the church is a place where people of different thoughts and divergent

tendencies—where all races and nations—may come together in a covenant of permanent

fellowship. In the temple of the Lord, in the house of God, man must be submissive to God. He

must enter into a covenant with his Lord in order that he shall obey the divine commands and

become unified with his fellowman. He must not consider divergence of races nor difference

of nationalities; he must not view variation in denomination and creed, nor should he take into

account the differing degrees of thoughts; nay, rather, he should look upon all as mankind and

realize that all must become united and agreed. He must recognize all as one family, one race,

one native land; he must see all as the servants of one God, dwelling beneath the shelter of His

mercy. The purport of this is that the church is a collective center. Temples are symbols of the

reality and divinity of God—the collective center of mankind. Consider how within a temple

every race and people is seen and represented—all in the presence of the Lord, covenanting

together in a covenant of love and fellowship, all offering the same melody,
prayer and
supplication to God. Therefore, it is evident that the church is a collective
center for mankind.
For this reason there have been churches and temples in all the divine
religions; but the real
Collective Centers are the Manifestations of God, of Whom the church or temple
is a symbol
and expression. That is to say, the Manifestation of God is the real divine
temple and Collective
Center of which the outer church is but a symbol.
Recall the statement of Jesus Christ in the Gospel. Addressing Peter, He said,
“Thou art
Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.” It is evident, therefore,
that the church of
God is the law of God and that the actual edifice is but one symbol thereof.
For the law of God
is a collective center which unites various peoples, native lands, tongues and
opinions. All find
shelter in its protection and become attracted by it. For example, Moses and
the Mosaic law
were the unifying center for the scattered sheep of Israel. He united these
wandering flocks,
brought them under control of divine law, educated and unified them, caused
them to agree and
uplifted them to a superlative degree of development. At a time when they were
debased, they
became glorified; ignorant, they were made knowing; in the bonds of captivity,
they were given
freedom; in short, they were unified. Day by day they advanced until they
attained the highest
degree of progress witnessed in that age. We prove, therefore, that the
Manifestation of God
and the law of God accomplish unity.
It is self-evident that humanity is at variance. Human tastes differ; thoughts,
native lands,
races and tongues are many. The need of a collective center by which these
differences may be
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counterbalanced and the people of the world be unified is obvious. Consider how
nothing but
a spiritual power can bring about this unification, for material conditions and
mental aspects
are so widely different that agreement and unity are not possible through outer
means. It is

possible, however, for all to become unified through one spirit, just as all may receive light from one sun. Therefore, assisted by the collective and divine center which is the law of God and the reality of His Manifestation, we can overcome these conditions until they pass away entirely and the races advance.

Consider the time of Christ. Peoples, races and governments were many; religions, sects and denominations were various; but when Christ appeared, the Messianic reality proved to be the collective center which unified them beneath the same tabernacle of agreement. Reflect upon this. Could Jesus Christ have united these divergent factors or brought about such results through political power? Was this unity and agreement possible through material forces? It is evident that it was not; nay, rather, these various peoples were brought together through a divine power, through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. They were blended and quickened by the infusion of a new life. The spirituality of Christ overcame their difficulties so that their disagreements passed away completely. In this way these divergent peoples were unified and became welded in a bond of love which alone can unite hearts. Therefore, it is shown that the divine Manifestations, the holy Mouthpieces of God, are the Collective Centers of God. These heavenly Messengers are the real Shepherds of humanity, for whenever They appear in the world They unite the scattered sheep. The Collective Center has always appeared in the Orient. Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, Muhammad were Collective Centers of Their day and time, and all arose in the East. Today Bahá'u'lláh is the Collective Center of unity for all mankind, and the splendor of His light has likewise dawned from the East. He founded the oneness of humanity in Persia. He established harmony and agreement among the various peoples of religious beliefs, denominations, sects and cults by freeing them from the fetters of past imitations and superstitions, leading them to the very foundation of the divine religions. From this foundation shines forth the radiance of spirituality, which is unity, the love of God, the

knowledge of God, praiseworthy morals and the virtues of the human world.
 Bahá'u'lláh
 renewed these principles, just as the coming of spring refreshes the earth and
 confers new life
 upon all phenomenal beings. For the freshness of the former springtimes had
 waned, the
 vivification had ceased, the life-giving breezes were no longer wafting their
 fragrances, winter
 and the season of darkness had come. Bahá'u'lláh came to renew the life
 of the world with this
 new and divine springtime, which has pitched its tent in the countries of the
 Orient in the utmost
 power and glory. It has refreshed the world of the Orient, and there is no
 doubt that if the world
 of the Occident should abandon dogmas of the past, turn away from empty
 imitations and
 superstitions, investigate the reality of the divine religions, holding fast to
 the example of Jesus
 Christ, acting in accordance with the teachings of God and becoming unified
 with the Orient,
 an eternal happiness and felicity would be attained.
 In the western world material civilization has attained the highest point of
 development,
 but divine civilization was founded in the land of the East. The East must
 acquire material
 civilization from the West, and the West must receive spiritual civilization
 from the East. This
 will establish a mutual bond. When these two come together, the world of
 humanity will present
 a glorious aspect, and extraordinary progress will be achieved. This is clear
 and evident; no
 proof is needed. The degree of material civilization in the Occident cannot be
 denied; nor can
 anyone fail to confirm the spiritual civilization of the Orient, for all the
 divine foundations of
 human uplift have appeared in the East. This, likewise, is clear and evident.
 Therefore, you
 must assist the East in order that it may attain material progress. The East
 must, likewise,

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promulgate the principles of spiritual civilization in the western world. By
 this commingling

and union the human race will attain the highest degree of prosperity and
 development.

Material civilization alone is not sufficient and will not prove productive.

The physical happiness of material conditions was allotted to the animal. Consider how the animal has attained the fullest degree of physical felicity. A bird perches upon the loftiest branch and builds there its nest with consummate beauty and skill. All the grains and seeds of the meadows are its wealth and food; all the fresh water of mountain springs and rivers of the plain are for its enjoyment. Truly, this is the acme of material happiness, to which even a human creature cannot attain. This is the honor of the animal kingdom. But the honor of the human kingdom is the attainment of spiritual happiness in the human world, the acquisition of the knowledge and love of God. The honor allotted to man is the acquisition of the supreme virtues of the human world. This is his real happiness and felicity. But if material happiness and spiritual felicity be conjoined, it will be “delight upon delight,” as the Arabs say. We pray that God will unite the East and the West in order that these two civilizations may be exchanged and mutually enjoyed. I am sure it will come to pass, for this is the radiant century. This is an age for the outpouring of divine mercy upon the exigency of this new century—the unity of the East and the West. It will surely be accomplished.

Question: What is the status of woman in the Orient?

Answer: The status of woman in former times was exceedingly deplorable, for it was the belief of the Orient that it was best for woman to be ignorant. It was considered preferable that she should not know reading or writing in order that she might not be informed of events in the world. Woman was considered to be created for rearing children and attending to the duties of the household. If she pursued educational courses, it was deemed contrary to chastity; hence women were made prisoners of the household. The houses did not even have windows opening upon the outside world. Bahá'u'lláh destroyed these ideas and proclaimed the equality of man and woman. He made woman respected by commanding that all women be educated, that there be no difference in the education of the two sexes and that man and woman share the same

rights. In the estimation of God there is no distinction of sex. One whose thought is pure, whose education is superior, whose scientific attainments are greater, whose deeds of philanthropy excel, be that one man or woman, white or colored, is entitled to full rights and recognition; there is no differentiation whatsoever. Therefore, the status of women in the East has undergone change. At present they attend schools and colleges, pursue the ordinary curriculum and day by day are becoming indispensable to men and equal to them. This is the present condition of womankind in Persia.

Question: What relation do you sustain to the founder of your belief? Are you his successor in the same manner as the Pope of Rome?

Answer: I am the servant of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder; and in this I glory. No honor do I consider greater than this, and it is my hope that I may be confirmed in servitude to Bahá'u'lláh.

This is my station.

Question: Is it not a fact that universal peace cannot be accomplished until there is political democracy in all the countries of the world?

Answer: It is very evident that in the future there shall be no centralization in the countries of the world, be they constitutional in government, republican or democratic in form. The United States may be held up as the example of future government—that is to say, each province will be independent in itself, but there will be federal union protecting the interests of
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the various independent states. It may not be a republican or a democratic form. To cast aside centralization which promotes despotism is the exigency of the time. This will be productive of international peace. Another fact of equal importance in bringing about international peace is woman's suffrage. That is to say, when perfect equality shall be established between men and women, peace may be realized for the simple reason that womankind in general will never favor warfare. Women will not be willing to allow those whom they have so tenderly cared for

to go to the battlefield. When they shall have a vote, they will oppose any cause of warfare.

Another factor which will bring about universal peace is the linking together of the Orient and the Occident.

Question: What is your belief about reincarnation?

Answer: The subject of reincarnation has two aspects. One is that which the Hindustani

people believe, and even that is subdivided into two: reincarnation and metempsychosis.

According to one belief the soul goes and then returns in certain reincarnations; therefore, they

say that a sick person is sick because of actions in a previous incarnation and that this is

retribution. The other school of Hinduism believes that man sometimes appears as an animal—

a donkey, for instance—and that this is retribution for past acts. I am referring to the beliefs in

that country, the beliefs of the schools. There is a reincarnation of the prophetic mission. Jesus

Christ, speaking of John the Baptist, declared he was Elias. When John the Baptist was

questioned, “Art thou Elias?” he said, “I am not.” These two statements are apparently

contradictory, but in reality they do not contradict. The light is one light.

The light which

illuminated this lamp last night is illuminating it tonight. This does not mean that the identical

rays of light have reappeared but the virtues of illumination. The light which revealed itself

through the glass reveals itself again so that we can say the light of this evening is the light of

last evening relighted. This is as regards its virtues and not as regards its former identity. This

is our view of reincarnation. We believe in that which Jesus Christ and all the Prophets have

believed. For example, the Báb states, “I am the return of all the Prophets.” This is significant

of the oneness of the prophetic virtues, the oneness of power, the oneness of bestowal, the

oneness of radiation, the oneness of expression, the oneness of revelation.

Question: What is the attitude of your belief toward the family?

Answer: According to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh the family, being a human unit, must

be educated according to the rules of sanctity. All the virtues must be taught the family. The

integrity of the family bond must be constantly considered, and the rights of

the individual members must not be transgressed. The rights of the son, the father, the mother—none of them must be transgressed, none of them must be arbitrary. Just as the son has certain obligations to his father, the father, likewise, has certain obligations to his son. The mother, the sister and other members of the household have their certain prerogatives. All these rights and prerogatives must be conserved, yet the unity of the family must be sustained. The injury of one shall be considered the injury of all; the comfort of each, the comfort of all; the honor of one, the honor of all.

Question: What is the relation of the Bahá'í teaching to the ancient Zoroastrian religion?

Answer: The religions of God have the same foundation, but the dogmas appearing later have differed. Each of the divine religions has two aspects. The first is essential. It concerns morality and development of the virtues of the human world. This aspect is common to all. It is fundamental; it is one; there is no difference, no variation in it. As regards the inculcation of morality and the development of human virtues, there is no difference whatsoever between the

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teachings of Zoroaster, Jesus and Bahá'u'lláh. In this they agree; they are one. The second aspect of the divine religions is nonessential. It concerns human needs and undergoes change in every cycle according to the exigency of the time. For example, in the time of Moses divorce was conformable to the needs and conditions; Moses, therefore, established it. But in the time of Christ, divorces were numerous and the cause of corruption; as they were not suitable for the time, he made divorce unlawful and likewise changed other laws. These are needs and conditions which have to do with the conduct of society; therefore, they undergo change according to the exigency of the time. Moses dwelt in the desert. As there were no penitentiaries, no means of restitution in the desert and wilderness, the laws of God were an

eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Could this be carried out now? If a man destroys another man's eye, are you willing to destroy the eye of the offender? If a man's teeth are broken or his ear cut off, will you demand a corresponding mutilation of his assailant? This would not be conformable to conditions of humanity at the present time. If a man steals, shall his hand be cut off? This punishment was just and right in the law of Moses, but it was applicable to the desert, where there were no prisons and reformatory institutions of later and higher forms of government. Today you have government and organization, a police system, a judge and trial by jury. The punishment and penalty is now different. Therefore, the nonessentials which deal with details of community are changed according to the exigency of the time and conditions.

But the essential foundation of the teachings of Moses, Zoroaster, Jesus and Bahá'u'lláh is identical, is one; there is no difference whatsoever.

Question: Is peace a greater word than love?

Answer: No! Love is greater than peace, for peace is founded upon love. Love is the objective point of peace, and peace is an outcome of love. Until love is attained, peace cannot be; but there is a so-called peace without love. The love which is from God is the fundamental.

This love is the object of all human attainment, the radiance of heaven, the light of man.

Question: Will you state the tenets of your faith?

Answer: First, investigate reality. Man must leave imitation and seek reality.

The contemporaneous religious beliefs differ because of their allegiance to dogma. It is necessary, therefore, to abandon imitations and seek their fundamental reality.

Second, the oneness of humanity. All human creatures are the servants of God.

All are submerged in the sea of His mercy. The Creator of all is one God; the Provider, the Giver, the

Protector of all is one God. He is kind to all; why should we be unkind? All live beneath the

shadow of His love; why should we hate each other? There are certain people who are ignorant;

they must be educated. Some are like children; they must be trained and educated until they

reach maturity. Others are sickly, intellectually ill, spiritually ill; they

must be treated and
 healed. But all are the servants of God.
 Third, religion must be conducive to love of all, the cause of fellowship,
 unity and light. If
 it be the cause of enmity, bloodshed and hatred, its nonbeing is better than
 its being, its
 nonexistence better than its existence. Religion and science conform and agree.
 If a question
 of religion violates reason and does not agree with science, it is imagination
 and not worthy of
 credence.
 Fourth, equality between men and women. In all degrees they are equal. The
 readjustment
 of the economic laws for the livelihood of man must be effected in order that
 all humanity may
 live in the greatest happiness according to their respective degrees.
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Fifth, spiritual brotherhood. All mankind must attain to spiritual
 fraternity—that is to say,
 fraternity in the Holy Spirit—for patriotic, racial and political fraternity
 are of no avail. Their
 results are meager; but divine fraternity, spiritual fraternity, is the cause
 of unity and amity
 among mankind. As heretofore material civilization has been extended, the
 divine civilization
 must now be promulgated. Until the two agree, real happiness among mankind will
 be
 unknown. By mere intellectual development and power of reason, man cannot
 attain to his
 fullest degree—that is to say, by means of intellect alone he cannot
 accomplish the progress
 effected by religion. For the philosophers of the past strove in vain to
 revivify the world of
 mankind through the intellectual faculty. The most of which they were capable
 was educating
 themselves and a limited number of disciples; they themselves have confessed
 failure.
 Therefore, the world of humanity must be confirmed by the breath of the Holy
 Spirit in order
 to receive universal education. Through the infusion of divine power all
 nations and peoples
 become quickened, and universal happiness is possible.
 These are some of the principles of the Bahá'ís.
 Question: Will women or men aid this new religion most? Which will be more
 capable?

Answer: In Persia the men have aided it more, but in the West perchance the women. In the West women evidently have precedence in religion, but in the East men surpass the women.

Question: What will be the food of the united people?

Answer: As humanity progresses, meat will be used less and less, for the teeth of man are not carnivorous. For example, the lion is endowed with carnivorous teeth, which are intended for meat, and if meat be not found, the lion starves. The lion cannot graze; its teeth are of different shape. The digestive system of the lion is such that it cannot receive nourishment save through meat. The eagle has a crooked beak, the lower part shorter than the upper. It cannot pick up grain; it cannot graze; therefore, it is compelled to partake of meat. The domestic animals have herbivorous teeth formed to cut grass, which is their fodder. The human teeth, the molars, are formed to grind grain. The front teeth, the incisors, are for fruits, etc. It is, therefore, quite apparent according to the implements for eating that man's food is intended to be grain and not meat. When mankind is more fully developed, the eating of meat will gradually cease.

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8 June 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by John G. Grundy

(Promulgation, p. 171)

The body politic today is greatly in need of a physician. It is similar to a human body afflicted with severe ailments. A doctor diagnoses the case and prescribes treatment. He does not prescribe, however, until he has made the diagnosis. The disease which afflicts the body politic is lack of love and absence of altruism. In the hearts of men no real love is found, and the condition is such that, unless their susceptibilities are quickened by some power so that unity, love and accord may develop within them, there can be no healing, no agreement among mankind. Love and unity are the needs of the body politic today. Without these there can be no progress or prosperity attained. Therefore, the friends of God must adhere to the power which will create this love and unity in the hearts of the sons of men. Science cannot cure the illness of the body politic. Science cannot create amity and fellowship in human hearts. Neither can patriotism nor racial allegiance effect a remedy. It must be accomplished

Therefore, hold to these heavenly agencies which God has provided so that through the love of God this soul-bond may be established, this heart-attachment realized and the light of the reality of unity be reflected from you throughout the universe. If we do not hold fast to these divine agencies and means, no result will be possible. Let us pray to God that He will exhilarate our spirits so we may behold the descent of His bounties, illumine our eyes to witness His great guidance and attune our ears to enjoy the celestial melodies of the heavenly Word.

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9 June 1912

Talk at Unitarian Church

Fifteenth Street and Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 172-176)

I have come from distant countries of the Orient where the lights of heaven
have ever shone
forth, from regions where the Manifestations of God have appeared and the
radiance and power
of God have been revealed to mankind. The purpose and intention of my visit is
that, perchance,
a bond of unity and agreement may be established between the East and West,
that divine love
may encompass all nations, divine radiance enlighten both continents and the
bounties of the
Holy Spirit revivify the body of the world. Therefore, I supplicate the
threshold of God that the
Orient and Occident may become as one, that the various peoples and religions
be unified and
souls be blended as the waves of one sea. May they become as trees, flowers and
roses which
adorn and beautify the same garden.
The realm of Divinity is an indivisible oneness, wholly sanctified above human

comprehension; for intellectual knowledge of creation is finite, whereas comprehension of Divinity is infinite. How can the finite comprehend the infinite? We are utter poverty, whereas the reality of Divinity is absolute wealth. How can utter poverty understand absolute wealth? We are utter weakness, whereas the reality of Divinity is absolute power. Utter weakness can never attain nor apprehend absolute power. The phenomenal beings, which are captives of limitations, are ever subject to transformation and change in condition. How can such phenomenal beings ever grasp the heavenly, eternal, unchanging reality? Assuredly this is an absolute impossibility, for when we study the creational world, we see that the difference of degree is a barrier to such knowing. An inferior degree can never comprehend a higher degree or kingdom. The mineral, no matter how far it may advance, can never attain knowledge of the vegetable. No matter how the plant or vegetable may progress, it cannot perceive the reality of the animal kingdom—in other words, it cannot grasp a world of life that is endowed with the power of the senses. The animal may develop a wonderful degree of intelligence, but it can never attain the powers of ideation and conscious reflection which belong to man. It is evident, therefore, that difference in degree is ever an obstacle to comprehension of the higher by the lower, the superior by the inferior. This flower, so beautiful, fresh, fragrant and delicately scented, although it may have attained perfection in its own kingdom, nevertheless cannot comprehend the human reality, cannot possess sight and hearing; therefore, it exists unaware of the world of man, although man and itself are both accidental or conditional beings. The difference is difference of degree. The limitation of an inferior degree is the barrier to comprehension. This being so, how can the human reality, which is limited, comprehend the eternal, unmanifest Creator? How can man comprehend the omniscient, omnipresent Lord?

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Undoubtedly, he cannot, for whatever comes within the grasp of human mind is man's limited conception, whereas the divine Kingdom is unlimited, infinite. But although the reality of Divinity is sanctified beyond the comprehension of its creatures, it has bestowed its bounties upon all kingdoms of the phenomenal world, and evidences of spiritual manifestation are witnessed throughout the realms of contingent existence. The lights of God illumine the world of man, even as the effulgences of the sun shine gloriously upon the material creation. The Sun of Reality is one; its bestowal is one; its heat is one; its rays are one; it shines upon all the phenomenal world, but the capacity for comprehending it differs according to the kingdoms, each kingdom receiving the light and bounty of the eternal Sun according to its capacity. The black stone receives the light of the material sun; the trees and animals likewise are recipients of it. All exist and are developed by that one bounty. The perfect soul of man—that is to say, the perfect individual—is like a mirror wherein the Sun of Reality is reflected. The perfections, the image and light of that Sun have been revealed in the mirror; its heat and illumination are manifest therein, for that pure soul is a perfect expression of the Sun. These mirrors are the Messengers of God Who tell the story of Divinity, just as the material mirror reflects the light and disc of the outer sun in the skies. In this way the image and effulgence of the Sun of Reality appear in the mirrors of the Manifestations of God. This is what Jesus Christ meant when He declared, “the father is in the son,” the purpose being that the reality of that eternal Sun had become reflected in its glory in Christ Himself. It does not signify that the Sun of Reality had descended from its place in heaven or that its essential being had effected an entrance into the mirror, for there is neither entrance nor exit for the reality of Divinity; there is no ingress or egress; it is sanctified above all things and ever occupies its own holy station. Changes and transformations are not applicable to that eternal reality. Transformation from condition to condition is the attribute of contingent realities.

At a time when warfare and strife prevailed among nations, when enmity and hatred separated sects and denominations and human differences were very great, Bahá'u'lláh appeared upon the horizon of the East, proclaiming the oneness of God and the unity of the world of humanity. He promulgated the teaching that all mankind are the servants of one God; that all have come into being through the bestowal of the one Creator; that God is kind to all, nurtures, rears and protects all, provides for all and extends His love and mercy to all races and people. Inasmuch as God is loving, why should we be unjust and unkind? As God manifests loyalty and mercy, why should we show forth enmity and hatred? Surely the divine policy is more perfect than human plan and theory; for no matter how wise and sagacious man may become, he can never attain a policy that is superior to the policy of God. Therefore, we must emulate the attitude of God, love all people, be just and kind to every human creature. We must consider all as the leaves, branches and fruit of one tree, children of one household; for all are the progeny of Adam. We are waves of one sea, grass of the same meadow, stars in the same heaven; and we find shelter in the universal divine Protector. If one be sick, he must be treated; the ignorant must be educated; the sleeping must be awakened; the dead must be quickened with life. These were principles of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. In proclaiming the oneness of mankind He taught that men and women are equal in the sight of God and that there is no distinction to be made between them. The only difference between them now is due to lack of education and training. If woman is given equal opportunity of education, distinction and estimate of inferiority will disappear. The world of humanity has two wings, as it were: One is the female; the other is the male. If one wing be defective, the strong perfect wing will not be capable of flight. The world of humanity has two hands. If one be imperfect, the capable hand is restricted and unable to perform its duties. God is the Creator

of mankind. He has endowed both sexes with perfections and intelligence, given them physical members and organs of sense, without differentiation or distinction as to superiority; therefore, why should woman be considered inferior? This is not according to the plan and justice of God.

He has created them equal; in His estimate there is no question of sex. The one whose heart is purest, whose deeds are most perfect, is acceptable to God, male or female.

Often in history women have been the pride of humanity—for example, Mary, the mother of Jesus. She was the glory of mankind. Mary Magdalene, Ásíyih, daughter of Pharaoh, Sarah, wife of Abraham, and innumerable others have glorified the human race by their excellences. In this day there are women among the Bahá'ís who far outshine men. They are wise, talented, well-informed, progressive, most intelligent and the light of men. They surpass men in courage. When they speak in meetings, the men listen with great respect. Furthermore, the education of women is of greater importance than the education of men, for they are the mothers of the race, and mothers rear the children. The first teachers of children are the mothers. Therefore, they must be capably trained in order to educate both sons and daughters. There are many provisions in the words of Bahá'u'lláh in regard to this.

He promulgated the adoption of the same course of education for man and woman. Daughters and sons must follow the same curriculum of study, thereby promoting unity of the sexes. When all mankind shall receive the same opportunity of education and the equality of men and women be realized, the foundations of war will be utterly destroyed.

Without equality this will be impossible because all differences and distinction are conducive to discord and strife. Equality between men and women is conducive to the abolition of warfare for the reason that women will never be willing to sanction it. Mothers will not give their sons as sacrifices upon the battlefield after twenty years of anxiety and loving devotion in rearing them from infancy, no matter what cause they are called upon to defend. There is no doubt that when women obtain equality of rights, war will entirely cease among mankind.

Bahá'u'lláh promulgated the fundamental oneness of religion. He taught that reality is one and not multiple, that it underlies all divine precepts and that the foundations of the religions are, therefore, the same. Certain forms and imitations have gradually arisen. As these vary, they cause differences among religionists. If we set aside these imitations and seek the fundamental reality underlying our beliefs, we reach a basis of agreement because it is one and not multiple. Among other principles of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings was the harmony of science and religion. Religion must stand the analysis of reason. It must agree with scientific fact and proof so that science will sanction religion and religion fortify science. Both are indissolubly welded and joined in reality. If statements and teachings of religion are found to be unreasonable and contrary to science, they are outcomes of superstition and imagination. Innumerable doctrines and beliefs of this character have arisen in the past ages. Consider the superstitions and mythology of the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians; all were contrary to religion and science. It is now evident that the beliefs of these nations were superstitions, but in those times they held to them most tenaciously. For example, one of the many Egyptian idols was to those people an authenticated miracle, whereas in reality it was a piece of stone. As science could not sanction the miraculous origin and nature of a piece of rock, the belief in it must have been superstition. It is now evident that it was superstition. Therefore, we must cast aside such beliefs and investigate reality. That which is found to be real and conformable to reason must be accepted, and whatever science and reason cannot support must be rejected as imitation and not reality. Then differences of belief will disappear. All will become as one family, one people, and the same susceptibility to the divine bounty and education will be witnessed among mankind.

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O Thou forgiving Lord! Thou art the shelter of all these Thy servants. Thou knowest the

secrets and art aware of all things. We are all helpless, and Thou art the
Mighty, the
Omnipotent. We are all sinners, and Thou art the Forgiver of sins, the
Merciful, the
Compassionate. O Lord! Look not at our shortcomings. Deal with us according to
Thy grace
and bounty. Our shortcomings are many, but the ocean of Thy forgiveness is
boundless. Our
weakness is grievous, but the evidences of Thine aid and assistance are clear.
Therefore,
confirm and strengthen us. Enable us to do that which is worthy of Thy holy
Threshold.
Illumine our hearts, grant us discerning eyes and attentive ears. Resuscitate
the dead and heal
the sick. Bestow wealth upon the poor and give peace and security to the
fearful. Accept us in
Thy kingdom and illumine us with the light of guidance. Thou art the Powerful
and the
Omnipotent. Thou art the Generous. Thou art the Clement. Thou art the Kind.

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9 June 1912
Talk at Baptist Temple
Broad and Berks Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Notes by Edna McKinney
(Promulgation, pp. 176-182)

I am greatly pleased to be present this evening. Truly this is a spiritual gathering. I perceive the fragrances of the heavenly Kingdom among you—devotion to God, sincere intention and spiritual love. Glad tidings! From the time of the creation of Adam to this day there have been two pathways in the world of humanity: one the natural or materialistic, the other the religious or

spiritual. The pathway of nature is the pathway of the animal realm. The animal acts in accordance with the requirements of nature, follows its own instincts and desires. Whatever its impulses and proclivities may be, it has the liberty to gratify them; yet it is a captive of nature. It cannot deviate in the least degree from the road nature has established. It is utterly lacking spiritual susceptibilities, ignorant of divine religion and without knowledge of the Kingdom of God.

The animal possesses no power of ideation or conscious intelligence; it is a captive of the senses and deprived of that which lies beyond them. It is subject to what the eye sees, the ear hears, the nostrils sense, the taste detects and touch reveals. These sensations are acceptable and

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sufficient for the animal. But that which is beyond the range of the senses, that realm of phenomena through which the conscious pathway to the Kingdom of God leads, the world of spiritual susceptibilities and divine religion—of these the animal is completely unaware, for in its highest station it is a captive of nature.

One of the strangest things witnessed is that the materialists of today are proud of their natural instincts and bondage. They state that nothing is entitled to belief and acceptance except that which is sensible or tangible. By their own statements they are captives of nature, unconscious of the spiritual world, uninformed of the divine Kingdom and unaware of heavenly bestowals. If this be a virtue, the animal has attained it to a superlative degree, for the animal is absolutely ignorant of the realm of spirit and out of touch with the inner world of conscious realization. The animal would agree with the materialist in denying the existence of that which transcends the senses. If we admit that being limited to the plane of the senses is a virtue, the animal is indeed more virtuous than man, for it is entirely bereft of that which lies beyond, absolutely oblivious of the Kingdom of God and its traces, whereas God has deposited within

the human creature an illimitable power by which he can rule the world of nature.

Consider how all other phenomenal existence and beings are captives of nature.

The sun,

that colossal center of our solar system, the giant stars and planets, the

towering mountains, the

earth itself and its kingdoms of life lower than the human—all are captives

of nature except

man. No other created thing can deviate in the slightest degree from obedience to natural law.

The sun in its glory and greatness millions of miles away is held prisoner in its orbit of universal

revolution, captive of universal natural control. Man is the ruler of nature.

According to natural

law and limitation he should remain upon the earth, but behold how he violates this command

and soars above the mountains in airplanes. He sails in ships upon the surface of the ocean and

dives into its depths in submarines. Man makes nature his servant; he harnesses the mighty

energy of electricity, for instance, and imprisons it in a small lamp for his uses and convenience.

He speaks from the East to the West through a wire. He is able to store and preserve his voice

in a phonograph. Though he is a dweller upon earth, he penetrates the mysteries of starry worlds

inconceivably distant. He discovers latent realities within the bosom of the earth, uncovers

treasures, penetrates secrets and mysteries of the phenomenal world and brings to light that

which according to nature's jealous laws should remain hidden, unknown and unfathomable.

Through an ideal inner power man brings these realities forth from the invisible plane to the

visible. This is contrary to nature's law.

It is evident, therefore, that man is ruler over nature's sphere and province. Nature is inert;

man is progressive. Nature has no consciousness; man is endowed with it. Nature is without

volition and acts perforce, whereas man possesses a mighty will. Nature is incapable of

discovering mysteries or realities, whereas man is especially fitted to do so.

Nature is not in

touch with the realm of God; man is attuned to its evidences. Nature is uninformed of God;

man is conscious of Him. Man acquires divine virtues; nature is denied them.

Man can

voluntarily discontinue vices; nature has no power to modify the influence of its instincts.

Altogether it is evident that man is more noble and superior, that in him there is an ideal power

surpassing nature. He has consciousness, volition, memory, intelligent power, divine attributes

and virtues of which nature is completely deprived and bereft; therefore, man is higher and

nobler by reason of the ideal and heavenly force latent and manifest in him.

How strange then it seems that man, notwithstanding his endowment with this ideal power,

will descend to a level beneath him and declare himself no greater than that which is manifestly

inferior to his real station. God has created such a conscious spirit within him that he is the

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most wonderful of all contingent beings. In ignoring these virtues he descends to the material

plane, considers matter the ruler of existence and denies that which lies beyond. Is this virtue?

In its fullest sense this is animalistic, for the animal realizes nothing more.

In fact, from this

standpoint the animal is the greater philosopher because it is completely ignorant of the

Kingdom of God, possesses no spiritual susceptibilities and is uninformed of the heavenly

world. In brief, this is a view of the pathway of nature.

The second pathway is that of religion, the road of the divine Kingdom. It involves the

acquisition of praiseworthy attributes, heavenly illumination and righteous actions in the world

of humanity. This pathway is conducive to the progress and uplift of the world.

It is the source

of human enlightenment, training and ethical improvement—the magnet which attracts the love

of God because of the knowledge of God it bestows. This is the road of the holy Manifestations

of God; for They are, in reality, the foundation of the divine religion of oneness. There is no

change or transformation in this pathway. It is the cause of human betterment, the acquisition

of heavenly virtues and the illumination of mankind.

Alas that humanity is completely submerged in imitations and unrealities, notwithstanding

that the truth of divine religion has ever remained the same. Superstitions

have obscured the
fundamental reality, the world is darkened, and the light of religion is not
apparent. This
darkness is conducive to differences and dissensions; rites and dogmas are many
and various;
therefore, discord has arisen among the religious systems, whereas religion is
for the unification
of mankind. True religion is the source of love and agreement amongst men, the
cause of the
development of praiseworthy qualities, but the people are holding to the
counterfeit and
imitation, negligent of the reality which unifies, so they are bereft and
deprived of the radiance
of religion. They follow superstitions inherited from their fathers and
ancestors. To such an
extent has this prevailed that they have taken away the heavenly light of
divine truth and sit in
the darkness of imitations and imaginations. That which was meant to be
conducive to life has
become the cause of death; that which should have been an evidence of knowledge
is now a
proof of ignorance; that which was a factor in the sublimity of human nature
has proved to be
its degradation. Therefore, the realm of the religionist has gradually narrowed
and darkened,
and the sphere of the materialist has widened and advanced; for the religionist
has held to
imitation and counterfeit, neglecting and discarding holiness and the sacred
reality of religion.
When the sun sets, it is the time for bats to fly. They come forth because they
are creatures of
the night. When the lights of religion become darkened, the materialists
appear. They are the
bats of night. The decline of religion is their time of activity; they seek the
shadows when the
world is darkened and clouds have spread over it.
Bahá'u'lláh has risen from the eastern horizon. Like the glory of the sun
He has come into
the world. He has reflected the reality of divine religion, dispelled the
darkness of imitations,
laid the foundation of new teachings and resuscitated the world.
The first teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the investigation of reality. Man
must seek reality
himself, forsaking imitations and adherence to mere hereditary forms. As the
nations of the
world are following imitations in lieu of truth and as imitations are many and
various,

differences of belief have been productive of strife and warfare. So long as these imitations remain, the oneness of the world of humanity is impossible. Therefore, we must investigate reality in order that by its light the clouds and darkness may be dispelled. Reality is one reality; it does not admit multiplicity or division. If the nations of the world investigate reality, they will agree and become united. Many people and sects in Persia have sought reality through the

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guidance and teaching of Bahá'u'lláh. They have become united and now live in a state of agreement and love; among them there is no longer the least trace of enmity and strife.

The Jews were expecting the appearance of the Messiah, looking forward to it with devotion of heart and soul, but because they were submerged in imitations, they did not believe in Jesus Christ when He appeared. Finally they rose against Him even to the extreme of persecution and shedding His blood. Had they investigated reality, they would have accepted their promised Messiah. These blind imitations and hereditary prejudices have invariably become the cause of bitterness and hatred and have filled the world with darkness and violence of war. Therefore, we must seek the fundamental truth in order to extricate ourselves from such conditions and then with illumined faces find the pathway to the Kingdom of God.

The second teaching of Bahá'u'lláh concerns the unity of mankind. All are the servants of God and members of one human family. God has created all, and all are His children. He rears, nourishes, provides for and is kind to all. Why should we be unjust and unkind? This is the policy of God, the lights of which have shone throughout the world. His sun bestows its effulgence unsparingly upon all; His clouds send down rain without distinction or favor; His breezes refresh the whole earth. It is evident that humankind without exception is sheltered beneath His mercy and protection. Some are imperfect; they must be perfected. The ignorant

must be taught, the sick healed, the sleepers awakened. The child must not be oppressed or censured because it is undeveloped; it must be patiently trained. The sick must not be neglected because they are ailing; nay, rather, we must have compassion upon them and bring them healing. Briefly, the old conditions of animosity, bigotry and hatred between the religious systems must be dispelled and the new conditions of love, agreement and spiritual brotherhood be established among them.

The third teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is that religion must be the source of fellowship, the cause of unity and the nearness of God to man. If it rouses hatred and strife, it is evident that absence of religion is preferable and an irreligious man better than one who professes it. According to the divine Will and intention religion should be the cause of love and agreement, a bond to unify all mankind, for it is a message of peace and goodwill to man from God. The fourth teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the agreement of religion and science. God has endowed man with intelligence and reason whereby he is required to determine the verity of questions and propositions. If religious beliefs and opinions are found contrary to the standards of science, they are mere superstitions and imaginations; for the antithesis of knowledge is ignorance, and the child of ignorance is superstition. Unquestionably there must be agreement between true religion and science. If a question be found contrary to reason, faith and belief in it are impossible, and there is no outcome but wavering and vacillation. Bahá'u'lláh also taught that prejudices—whether religious, racial, patriotic or political—are destructive to the foundations of human development. Prejudices of any kind are the destroyers of human happiness and welfare. Until they are dispelled, the advancement of the world of humanity is not possible; yet racial, religious and national biases are observed everywhere. For thousands of years the world of humanity has been agitated and disturbed by prejudices. As long as it prevails, warfare, animosity and hatred will continue. Therefore, if we seek to establish peace, we must cast aside this obstacle; for otherwise, agreement and

composure are not to be attained.

Sixth, Bahá'u'lláh set forth principles of guidance and teaching for economic readjustment.

Regulations were revealed by Him which ensure the welfare of the commonwealth.

As the rich

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man enjoys his life surrounded by ease and luxuries, so the poor man must, likewise, have a

home and be provided with sustenance and comforts commensurate with his needs.

This

readjustment of the social economy is of the greatest importance inasmuch as it ensures the

stability of the world of humanity; and until it is effected, happiness and prosperity are impossible.

Seventh, Bahá'u'lláh taught that an equal standard of human rights must be recognized and

adopted. In the estimation of God all men are equal; there is no distinction or preferment for

any soul in the dominion of His justice and equity.

Eighth, education is essential, and all standards of training and teaching throughout the

world of mankind should be brought into conformity and agreement; a universal curriculum

should be established, and the basis of ethics be the same.

Ninth, a universal language shall be adopted and be taught by all the schools and institutions

of the world. A committee appointed by national bodies of learning shall select a suitable

language to be used as a medium of international communication. All must acquire it. This is

one of the great factors in the unification of man.

Tenth, Bahá'u'lláh emphasized and established the equality of man and woman. Sex is not

particularized to humanity; it exists throughout the animate kingdoms but without distinction

or preference. In the vegetable kingdom there is complete equality between male and female

of species. Likewise, in the animal plane equality exists; all are under the protection of God. Is

it becoming to man that he, the noblest of creatures, should observe and insist upon such

distinction? Woman's lack of progress and proficiency has been due to her need of equal

education and opportunity. Had she been allowed this equality, there is no

doubt she would be
the counterpart of man in ability and capacity. The happiness of mankind will
be realized when
women and men coordinate and advance equally, for each is the complement and
helpmeet of
the other.

The world of humanity cannot advance through mere physical powers and
intellectual
attainments; nay, rather, the Holy Spirit is essential. The divine Father must
assist the human
world to attain maturity. The body of man is in need of physical and mental
energy, but his
spirit requires the life and fortification of the Holy Spirit. Without its
protection and quickening
the human world would be extinguished. Jesus Christ declared, "Let the dead
bury their dead."
He also said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is
born of the Spirit is
spirit." It is evident, therefore, according to Christ that the human spirit
which is not fortified
by the presence of the Holy Spirit is dead and in need of resurrection by that
divine power;
otherwise, though materially advanced to high degrees, man cannot attain full
and complete
progress.

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11 June 1912

Talk at Open Committee Meeting

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney

780 West End Avenue, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, p. 183)

It is my hope that the meetings of the Bahá'í Assembly in New York shall
become like
meetings of the Supreme Concourse. When you assemble, you must reflect the
lights of the
heavenly Kingdom. Let your hearts be as mirrors in which the radiance of the
Sun of Reality
is visible. Each bosom must be a telegraph station—one terminus of the wire
attached to the

soul, the other fixed in the Supreme Concourse—so that inspiration may descend from the Kingdom of Abhá and questions of reality be discussed. Then opinions will coincide with truth; day by day there will be progression, and the meetings will become more radiant and spiritual. This attainment is conditioned upon unity and agreement. The more perfect the love and agreement, the more the divine confirmations and assistance of the Blessed Perfection will descend. May this prove to be a divine meeting, and may boundless bestowals come down upon you. Strive with all your hearts and with the very power of life that unity and love may continually increase. In discussions look toward the reality without being self-opinionated. Let no one assert and insist upon his own mere opinion; nay, rather, let each investigate reality with the greatest love and fellowship. Consult upon every matter, and when one presents the point of view of reality itself, that shall be acceptable to all. Then will spiritual unity increase among you, individual illumination will be greater, happiness will be more abundant, and you will draw nearer and nearer to the Kingdom of God.

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11 June 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 183-186)

We have just returned from a visit to Philadelphia, spending two nights there and speaking in two large churches. The weather proved unpleasant and affected my health. The purpose in these movements here and there is a single purpose—it is to spread the light of truth in this dark world. On account of my age it is difficult to journey. Sometimes the difficulties are arduous, but out of love for the friends of God and with desire to sacrifice

myself in the pathway
of God, I bear them in gladness. The purpose is the result which is
accomplished—love and
unity among mankind. For the world is dark with discord and selfishness, hearts
are negligent,
souls are bereft of God and His heavenly bestowals. Man is submerged in the
affairs of this
world. His aims, objects and attainments are mortal, whereas God desires for
him immortal
accomplishments. In his heart there is no thought of God. He has sacrificed his
portion and
birthright of divine spirituality. Desire and passion, like two unmanageable
horses, have
wrested the reins of control from him and are galloping madly in the
wilderness. This is the
cause of the degradation of the world of humanity. This is the cause of its
retrogression into
the appetites and passions of the animal kingdom. Instead of divine advancement
we find
sensual captivity and debasement of heavenly virtues of the soul. By devotion
to the carnal,
mortal world human susceptibilities sink to the level of animalism.
What are the animals' propensities? To eat, drink, wander about and sleep.
The thoughts,
the minds of the animals are confined to these. They are captives in the bonds
of these desires.
Man becomes a prisoner and slave to them when his ultimate desire is no higher
than his
welfare in this world of the senses. Consider how difficult for man is the
attainment of pleasures
and happiness in this mortal world. How easy it is for the animal. Look upon
the fields and
flowers, prairies, streams, forests and mountains. The grazing animals, the
birds of the air, the
fishes neither toil nor undergo hardships; they sow not, nor are they concerned
about the
reaping; they have no anxiety about business or politics—no trouble or worry
whatsoever. All
the fields and grasses, all the meadows of fruits and grains, all the mountain
slopes and streams
of salubrious water belong to them. They do not labor for their livelihood and
happiness
because everything is provided and made possible for them. If the life of man
be confined to
this physical, material outlook, the animal's life is a hundred times better,
easier and more
productive of comfort and contentment. The animal is nobler, more serene and

confident

because each hour is free from anxiety and worry; but man, restless and dissatisfied, runs from morn till eve, sailing the seas, diving beneath them in submarines, flying aloft in airplanes, delving into the lowest strata of the earth to obtain his livelihood—all with the greatest difficulty, anxiety and unrest. Therefore, in this respect the animal is nobler, more serene, poised and confident. Consider the birds in the forest and jungle: how they build their nests high in the swaying treetops, build them with the utmost skill and beauty—swinging, rocking in the morning breezes, drinking the pure, sweet water, enjoying the most enchanting views as they fly here and there high overhead, singing joyously—all without labor, free from worry,

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care and forebodings. If man's life be confined to the elemental, physical world of enjoyment, one lark is nobler, more admirable than all humanity because its livelihood is prepared, its condition complete, its accomplishment perfect and natural. But the life of man is not so restricted; it is divine, eternal, not mortal and sensual. For him a spiritual existence and livelihood is prepared and ordained in the divine creative plan. His life is intended to be a life of spiritual enjoyment to which the animal can never attain. This enjoyment depends upon the acquisition of heavenly virtues. The sublimity of man is his attainment of the knowledge of God. The bliss of man is the acquiring of heavenly bestowals, which descend upon him in the outflow of the bounty of God. The happiness of man is in the fragrance of the love of God. This is the highest pinnacle of attainment in the human world. How preferable to the animal and its hopeless kingdom! Therefore, consider how base a nature it reveals in man that, notwithstanding the favors showered upon him by God, he should lower himself into the animal sphere, be wholly occupied with material needs, attached to this mortal realm, imagining that the greatest happiness is to attain wealth in this world. How purposeless! How debased is

such a nature!
 God has created man in order that he may be a dove of the Kingdom, a heavenly
 candle, a
 recipient of eternal life. God has created man in order that he may be
 resuscitated through the
 breaths of the Holy Spirit and become the light of the world. How debased the
 soul which can
 find enjoyment in this darkness, occupied with itself, the captive of self and
 passion, wallowing
 in the mire of the material world! How degraded is such a nature! What an
 ignorance this is!
 What a blindness! How glorious the station of man who has partaken of the
 heavenly food and
 built the temple of his everlasting residence in the world of heaven!
 The Manifestations of God have come into the world to free man from these bonds
 and
 chains of the world of nature. Although They walked upon the earth, They lived
 in heaven.
 They were not concerned about material sustenance and prosperity of this world.
 Their bodies
 were subjected to inconceivable distress, but Their spirits ever soared in the
 highest realms of
 ecstasy. The purpose of Their coming, Their teaching and suffering was the
 freedom of man
 from himself. Shall we, therefore, follow in Their footsteps, escape from this
 cage of the body
 or continue subject to its tyranny? Shall we pursue the phantom of a mortal
 happiness which
 does not exist or turn toward the tree of life and the joys of its eternal
 fruits?
 I have come to this country in the advanced years of my life, undergoing
 difficulties of
 health and climate because of excessive love for the friends of God. It is my
 wish that they may
 be assisted to become servants of the heavenly Kingdom, captives in the service
 of the will of
 God. This captivity is freedom; this sacrifice is glorification; this labor is
 reward; this need is
 bestowal. For service in love for mankind is unity with God. He who serves has
 already entered
 the Kingdom and is seated at the right hand of his Lord.

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11 June 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Emma C. Melick

(Promulgation, pp. 186-187)

Man must be lofty in endeavor. He must seek to become heavenly and spiritual, to find the pathway to the threshold of God and become acceptable in the sight of God. This is eternal glory—to be near to God. This is eternal sovereignty—to be imbued with the virtues of the human world. This is boundless blessing—to be entirely sanctified and holy above every stain and dross.

Consider the human world. See how nations have come and gone. They have been of all

minds and purposes. Some were mere captives of self and desire, engulfed in the passions of

the lower nature. They attained to wealth, to the comforts of life, to fame.

And what was the

final outcome? Utter evanescence and oblivion. Reflect upon this. Look upon it with the eye

of admonition. No trace of them remains, no fruit, no result, no benefit; they have gone

utterly—complete effacement.

Souls have appeared in the world who were pure and undefiled, who have directed their

attention toward God, seeking the reward of God, attaining nearness to the threshold of God,

acceptable in the good pleasure of God. They have been the lights of guidance and stars of the

Supreme Concourse. Consider these souls, shining like stars in the horizon of sanctity

forevermore.

It must not be implied that one should give up avocation and attainment to livelihood. On

the contrary, in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh monasticism and asceticism are not sanctioned. In

this great Cause the light of guidance is shining and radiant.

Bahá'u'lláh has even said that

occupation and labor are devotion. All humanity must obtain a livelihood by sweat of the brow

and bodily exertion, at the same time seeking to lift the burden of others, striving to be the

source of comfort to souls and facilitating the means of living. This in itself is devotion to God.

Bahá'u'lláh has thereby encouraged action and stimulated service. But the

energies of the heart
must not be attached to these things; the soul must not be completely occupied
with them.
Though the mind is busy, the heart must be attracted toward the Kingdom of God
in order that
the virtues of humanity may be attained from every direction and source.
We have forsaken the path of God; we have given up attention to the divine
Kingdom; we
have not severed the heart from worldly attractions; we have become defiled
with qualities
which are not praiseworthy in the sight of God; we are so completely steeped in
material issues
and tendencies that we are not partakers of the virtues of humanity.
Little reflection, little admonition is necessary for us to realize the purpose
of our creation.
What a heavenly potentiality God has deposited within us! What a power God has
given our
spirits! He has endowed us with a power to penetrate the realities of things;
but we must be
self-abnegating, we must have pure spirits, pure intentions, and strive with
heart and soul while
in the human world to attain everlasting glory.

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I have come for the purpose of admonition and voicing the teachings of
Bahá'u'lláh. It is
my hope that His will and guidance may influence your spirits, souls and
hearts, causing them
to become pure, holy, sanctified and illumined and making you lamps of heavenly
illumination
to the world. This is my desire; this is my hope through the assistance of God.
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12 June 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Mary J. MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 187-189)

You are all exceedingly welcome. Do you realize how much you should thank God
for His
blessings? If you should thank Him a thousand times with each breath, it would
not be sufficient
because God has created and trained you. He has protected you from every

affliction and
prepared every gift and bestowal. Consider what a kind Father He is. He bestows
His gift before
you ask. We were not in the world of existence, but as soon as we were born, we
found
everything prepared for our needs and comfort without question on our part. He
has given us a
kind father and compassionate mother, provided for us two springs of salubrious
milk, pure
atmosphere, refreshing water, gentle breezes and the sun shining above our
heads. In brief, He
has supplied all the necessities of life although we did not ask for any of
these great gifts. With
pure mercy and bounty He has prepared this great table. It is a mercy which
precedes asking.
There is another kind of mercy, which is realized after questioning and
supplication. He has
bestowed both upon us—without asking and with supplication. He has created us
in this radiant
century, a century longed for and expected by all the sanctified souls in past
periods. It is a
blessed century; it is a blessed day. The philosophers of history have agreed
that this century
is equal to one hundred past centuries. This is true from every standpoint.
This is the century
of science, inventions, discoveries and universal laws. This is the century of
the revelation of
the mysteries of God. This is the century of the effulgence of the rays of the
Sun of Truth.
Therefore, you must render thanks and glorification to God that you were born
in this age.
Furthermore, you have listened to the call of Bahá'u'lláh. Your nostrils
are perfumed with the
breezes of the paradise of Abhá. You have caught glimpses of the light from
the horizon of the
Orient. You were asleep; you are awakened. Your ears are attentive; your hearts
are informed.
You have acquired the love of God. You have attained to the knowledge of God.
This is the
most great bestowal of God. This is the breath of the Holy Spirit, and this
consists of faith and
assurance. This eternal life is the second birth; this is the baptism of the
Holy Spirit. God has
destined this station for you all. He has prepared this for you. You must
appreciate the value of
this bounty and engage your time in mentioning and thanking the True One. You
must live in

the utmost happiness. If any trouble or vicissitude comes into your lives, if your heart is depressed on account of health, livelihood or vocation, let not these things affect you. They should not cause unhappiness, for Bahá'u'lláh has brought you divine happiness. He has prepared heavenly food for you; He has destined eternal bounty for you; He has bestowed everlasting glory upon you. Therefore, these glad tidings should cause you to soar in the atmosphere of joy forever and ever. Render continual thanks unto God so that the confirmations of God may encircle you all.

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15 June 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 189-190)

I have made you wait awhile, but as I was tired, I slept. While I was sleeping, I was conversing with you as though speaking at the top of my voice. Then through the effect of my own voice I awoke. As I awoke, one word was upon my lips—the word *imtíyáz* (“distinction”). So I will speak to you upon that subject this morning. When we look upon the world of existence, we realize that all material things have a common bond; and yet, on the other hand, there are certain points of distinction between them. For instance, all earthly objects have common bodily ties. The minerals, vegetables and animals have elemental bodies in common with each other. Likewise, they have place in the order of creation. This is the common tie or point of contact between them. All of them pass through the process of composition and decomposition; this is a natural law to which all are subject. This law is ruling throughout creation and constitutes a bond of connection among created things. But at the same time there are certain distinguishing features between

these objects. For instance, between the mineral and vegetable, the vegetable and animal, the animal and human, points of distinction exist which are unmistakable and significant. Likewise, there are distinctions between kinds and species of each kingdom. When we consider the mineral kingdom in detail, we observe not only points of similarity between objects but points of distinction as well. Some are immovable bodies, some hard and solid; some have the power of expansion and contraction; some are liquid, some gaseous; some have weight; others, like fire and electricity, have not. So there are many points of distinction among these kinds of elements.

In the vegetable kingdom also we observe distinction between the various sorts and species of organisms. Each has its own form, color and fragrance. In the animal kingdom the same law rules as many distinctions in form, color and function are noticeable. It is the same in the human kingdom. From the standpoint of color there are white, black, yellow and red people. From the standpoint of physiognomy there is a wide difference and distinction among races. The Asian, African and American have different physiognomies; the men of the North and men of the South are very different in type and features. From an economic standpoint in the law of living there is a great deal of difference. Some are poor, others wealthy; some are wise, others ignorant; some are patient and serene, some impatient and excitable; some are prone to justice, others practice injustice and oppression; some are meek, others arrogant. In brief, there are many points of distinction among humankind.

I desire distinction for you. The Bahá'ís must be distinguished from others of humanity. But this distinction must not depend upon wealth—that they should become more affluent than other people. I do not desire for you financial distinction. It is not an ordinary distinction I desire; not scientific, commercial, industrial distinction. For you I desire spiritual distinction—that is, you must become eminent and distinguished in morals. In the love of God you must become distinguished from all else. You must become distinguished for loving

humanity, for
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unity and accord, for love and justice. In brief, you must become distinguished
in all the virtues
of the human world—for faithfulness and sincerity, for justice and fidelity,
for firmness and
steadfastness, for philanthropic deeds and service to the human world, for love
toward every
human being, for unity and accord with all people, for removing prejudices and
promoting
international peace. Finally, you must become distinguished for heavenly
illumination and for
acquiring the bestowals of God. I desire this distinction for you. This must be
the point of
distinction among you.

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16 June 1912

Talk at Fourth Unitarian Church

Beverly Road, Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 190-194)

This is a Unitarian church, and in the Arabic tongue this day may well be
called Yawm-al'

Ittihád ("the Unitarian Day"). Therefore, I consider it appropriate to
speak to you upon the
subject of unity.

What is real unity? When we observe the human world, we find various collective
expressions of unity therein. For instance, man is distinguished from the
animal by his degree,

or kingdom. This comprehensive distinction includes all the posterity of Adam
and constitutes

one great household or human family, which may be considered the fundamental or
physical

unity of mankind. Furthermore, a distinction exists between various groups of
humankind

according to lineage, each group forming a racial unity separate from the
others. There is also

the unity of tongue among those who use the same language as a means of
communication;

national unity where various peoples live under one form of government such as

French,
 German, British, etc. ; and political unity, which conserves the civil rights
 of parties or factions
 of the same government. All these unities are imaginary and without real
 foundation, for no
 real result proceeds from them. The purpose of true unity is real and divine
 outcomes. From
 these limited unities mentioned only limited outcomes proceed, whereas
 unlimited unity
 produces unlimited result. For instance, from the limited unity of race or
 nationality the results
 at most are limited. It is like a family living alone and solitary; there are
 no unlimited or
 universal outcomes from it.
 The unity which is productive of unlimited results is first a unity of mankind
 which
 recognizes that all are sheltered beneath the overshadowing glory of the
 All-Glorious, that all
 are servants of one God; for all breathe the same atmosphere, live upon the
 same earth, move
 beneath the same heavens, receive effulgence from the same sun and are under
 the protection
 of one God. This is the most great unity, and its results are lasting if
 humanity adheres to it; but
 mankind has hitherto violated it, adhering to sectarian or other limited
 unities such as racial,
 patriotic or unity of self-interests; therefore, no great results have been
 forthcoming.
 Nevertheless, it is certain that the radiance and favors of God are
 encompassing, minds have
 developed, perceptions have become acute, sciences and arts are widespread, and
 capacity
 exists for the proclamation and promulgation of the real and ultimate unity of
 mankind, which
 will bring forth marvelous results. It will reconcile all religions, make
 warring nations loving,
 cause hostile kings to become friendly and bring peace and happiness to the
 human world. It
 will cement together the Orient and Occident, remove forever the foundations of
 war and
 upraise the ensign of the Most Great Peace. These limited unities are,
 therefore, signs of that
 great unity which will make all the human family one by being productive of the
 attractions of
 conscience in mankind.
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Another unity is the spiritual unity which emanates from the breaths of the Holy Spirit. This is greater than the unity of mankind. Human unity or solidarity may be likened to the body, whereas unity from the breaths of the Holy Spirit is the spirit animating the body. This is a perfect unity. It creates such a condition in mankind that each one will make sacrifices for the other, and the utmost desire will be to forfeit life and all that pertains to it in behalf of another's good. This is the unity which existed among the disciples of Jesus Christ and bound together the Prophets and holy Souls of the past. It is the unity which through the influence of the divine spirit is permeating the Bahá'ís so that each offers his life for the other and strives with all sincerity to attain his good pleasure. This is the unity which caused twenty thousand people in Persia to give their lives in love and devotion to it. It made the Báb the target of a thousand arrows and caused Bahá'u'lláh to suffer exile and imprisonment forty years. This unity is the very spirit of the body of the world. It is impossible for the body of the world to become quickened with life without its vivification. Jesus Christ—may my life be a sacrifice to Him!—promulgated this unity among mankind. Every soul who believed in Jesus Christ became revived and resuscitated through this spirit, attained to the zenith of eternal glory, realized the everlasting life, experienced the second birth and rose to the acme of good fortune.

In the Word of God there is still another unity—the oneness of the Manifestations of God, Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, Muhammad, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. This is a unity divine, heavenly, radiant, merciful—the one reality appearing in its successive Manifestations. For instance, the sun is one and the same, but its points of dawning are various. During the summer season it rises from the northern point of the ecliptic; in winter it appears from the southern point of rising. Each month between, it appears from a certain zodiacal position. Although these dawning points are different, the sun is the same sun which has appeared from them all. The significance is the reality of Prophethood which is symbolized by the sun, and

the holy

Manifestations are the dawning places or zodiacal points.

There is also the divine unity or entity, which is sanctified above all concept of humanity.

It cannot be comprehended nor conceived because it is infinite reality and cannot become finite.

Human minds are incapable of surrounding that reality because all thoughts and conceptions

of it are finite, intellectual creations and not the reality of Divine Being which alone knows

itself. For example, if we form a conception of Divinity as a living, almighty, self-subsisting,

eternal Being, this is only a concept apprehended by a human intellectual reality. It would not

be the outward, visible reality, which is beyond the power of human mind to conceive or

encompass. We ourselves have an external, visible entity; but even our concept of it is the

product of our own brain and limited comprehension. The reality of Divinity is sanctified above

this degree of knowing and realization. It has ever been hidden and secluded in its own holiness

and sanctity above our comprehending. Although it transcends our realization, its lights,

bestowals, traces and virtues have become manifest in the realities of the Prophets, even as the

sun becomes resplendent in various mirrors. These holy realities are as reflectors, and the

reality of Divinity is as the sun, which, although it is reflected from the mirrors, and its virtues

and perfections become resplendent therein, does not stoop from its own station of majesty and

glory and seek abode in the mirrors; it remains in its heaven of sanctity. At most it is this: that

its lights become manifest and evident in its mirrors or manifestations.

Therefore, its bounty

proceeding from them is one bounty, but the recipients of that bounty are many.

This is the

unity of God; this is oneness—unity of Divinity, holy above ascent or descent, embodiment,

comprehension or idealization—divine unity. The Prophets are its mirrors; its lights are

revealed through Them; its virtues become resplendent in Them, but the Sun of Reality never

descends from its own highest point and station. This is unity, oneness, sanctity; this is glorification whereby we praise and adore God. O my God! O my God! Verily, these are servants at the threshold of Thy mercy, and maidservants at the door of Thy oneness. Verily, they have gathered in this temple to turn to Thy face of glory, holding to the hem of Thy garment and to Thy singleness, seeking Thy good pleasure and ascent into Thy Kingdom. They receive effulgence from the Sun of Reality in this glorious century, and they long for Thy goodwill in all great affairs. O Lord! Illumine their sight with a vision of Thy signs and riches, and quicken their ears with hearkening to Thy Word. Render their hearts replete with Thy love, and gladden their spirits with Thy meeting. Deign to bestow upon them spiritual good in Thine earth and heaven, and make them signs of unity among Thy servants in order that the real unity may appear and all may become one in Thy Cause and Kingdom. Verily, Thou art the Generous. Verily, Thou art the Mighty, the Spiritual. Thou art the Merciful, the Clement.

(To the children in the Sunday School)

I am glad to see these bright, radiant children. God willing, all of them may realize the hopes and aspirations of their parents. Praise be to God! I see before me these beautiful children of the Kingdom. Their hearts are pure, their faces are shining. They shall soon become the sons and daughters of the Kingdom. Thanks be to God! They are seeking to acquire virtues and will be the cause of the attainment of the excellences of humanity. This is the cause of oneness in the Kingdom of God. Praise be to God! They have kind and revered teachers who train and educate them well and who long for confirmation in order that, God willing, like tender plants in the garden of God they may be refreshed by the downpour of the clouds of mercy, grow and become verdant. In the utmost perfection and delicacy may they at last bring forth fruit. I supplicate God that these children may be reared under His protection and that they may be nourished by His favor and grace until all, like beautiful flowers in the

garden of human
 hopes and aspirations, shall blossom and become redolent of fragrance.
 O God! Educate these children. These children are the plants of Thine orchard,
 the flowers
 of Thy meadow, the roses of Thy garden. Let Thy rain fall upon them; let the
 Sun of Reality
 shine upon them with Thy love. Let Thy breeze refresh them in order that they
 may be trained,
 grow and develop, and appear in the utmost beauty. Thou art the Giver. Thou art
 the
 Compassionate.
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16 June 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard MacNutt
 935 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, New York
 Notes by Esther Foster
 (Promulgation, pp. 194-197)

This is a splendid gathering, a meeting of the maidservants of the Merciful and
 the beloved
 of God. Whenever such gatherings have taken place in this world, the results
 have been very
 great. They have exerted an influence upon the world of hearts and minds.
 Wherever a lamp is
 lighted in the night, naturally people are attracted and gather around it. When
 you see such an
 assemblage as this, you may know that a light is illumining the darkness. There
 are lamps the
 light of which is limited. There are lamps the light of which is unlimited.
 There are lamps which
 illumine small places and lamps which illumine the horizons. The lamp of the
 guidance of God,
 wherever lighted, has shed its radiance throughout the East and the West.
 Praise be to God! It
 has been lighted in this country; day by day its radiance is becoming more
 resplendent and its
 effulgence more widespread. This is not known now, but later on its traces will
 become evident.
 Consider the days of Christ: how the light of guidance brightened twelve
 hearts. How limited

it seemed, but how expansive it became afterward and illumined the world! You are not a large body of people, but because the lamp of guidance has been lighted in your hearts, the effects will be wonderful in the years to come. It is evident and manifest that the world will be illumined by this light; therefore, you must thank God that—praise be to God!—through His grace and favor the lamp of the most great guidance has been ignited in your hearts, and He has summoned you to His Kingdom. He has caused the call of the Supreme Concourse to reach your ears. The doors of heaven have been opened unto you. The Sun of Reality is shining upon you, the cloud of mercy is pouring down, and the breezes of providence are wafting through your souls. Although the bestowal is great and the grace is glorious, yet capacity and readiness are requisite. Without capacity and readiness the divine bounty will not become manifest and evident. No matter how much the cloud may rain, the sun may shine and the breezes blow, the soil that is sterile will give no growth. The ground that is pure and free from thorns and thistles receives and produces through the rain of the cloud of mercy. No matter how much the sun shines, it will have no effect upon the black rock, but in a pure and polished mirror its lights become resplendent. Therefore, we must develop capacity in order that the signs of the mercy of the Lord may be revealed in us. We must endeavor to free the soil of the hearts from useless weeds and sanctify it from the thorns of worthless thoughts in order that the cloud of mercy may bestow its power upon us. The doors of God are open, but we must be ready and fitted to enter. The ocean of divine providence is surging, but we must be able to swim. The bestowals of the Almighty are descending from the heaven of grace, but capacity to receive them is essential. The fountain of divine generosity is gushing forth, but we must have thirst for the living waters. Unless there be thirst, the salutary water will not assuage. Unless the soul hungers, the delicious foods of the heavenly table will not give sustenance. Unless the eyes of perception be opened, the lights of the sun will not be witnessed. Until the

nostrils are purified,
the fragrance of the divine rose garden will not be inhaled. Unless the heart
be filled with
longing, the favors of the Lord will not be evident. Unless a perfect melody be
sung, the ears

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of the hearers will not be attracted. Therefore, we must endeavor night and day
to purify the
hearts from every dross, sanctify the souls from every restriction and become
free from the
discords of the human world. Then the divine bestowals will become evident in
their fullness
and glory. If we do not strive and sanctify ourselves from the defects and evil
qualities of
human nature, we will not partake of the bestowals of God. It is as if the sun
is shining in its
full glory, but no reflection is forthcoming from hearts that are black as
stone. If an ocean of
salubrious water is surging and we be not thirsty, what benefit do we receive?
If the candle be
lighted and we have no eyes, what enjoyment do we obtain from it? If melodious
anthems
should rise to the heavens and we are bereft of hearing, what enjoyment can we
find?
Therefore, we must endeavor always, cry, supplicate and invoke the Kingdom of
God to
grant us full capacity in order that the bestowals of God may become revealed
and manifest in
us. And as we attain to these heavenly bounties, we shall offer thanks unto the
threshold of
oneness. Then shall we rejoice in the Lord that in this wonderful century and
glorious age,
under the shelter of the Kingdom of God we have enjoyed these bestowals and
will arise in
praise and thanksgiving. Therefore, I first exhort myself and then I entreat
you to appreciate
this great bestowal, recognize this most great guidance, accept these bounties
of the Lord. You
must endeavor day and night to become worthy of a generous portion of these
gifts and realize
full capacity of attainment. Praise be to God! Your hearts are illumined, your
faces are turned
toward the Kingdom of God. It is my hope that all of these degrees may be
reached and these
friends attain a station which shall be an example and stimulus for all friends

in the world. May
the love of God spread from here onward and outward; may the knowledge of God
be sent
broadcast from this place; may spiritual forces become effective here; may the
lights of the
Kingdom shine; may intelligent souls be found here so that with all power they
may be
occupied in the service of God, furthering the oneness of the human world and
the cause of the
Most Great Peace. May these souls be lighted candles and fruitful trees; may
they be pearls of
the shells of providence; may they be stars of heaven. This is my supplication
to God. This is
my request from the Beauty of Abhá: that He may submerge all of you in the
ocean of His
grace.

(Afterward, speaking of numbers)

Such suppositions regarding lucky or unlucky numbers are purely imaginary. The
superstition concerning thirteen had its origin in the fact that Jesus Christ
was surrounded by
twelve disciples and that Judas Iscariot was the thirteenth member of their
gathering. This is
the source of the superstition, but it is purely imaginary. Although Judas was
outwardly a
disciple, in reality he was not. Twelve is the original number of significance
and completion.

Jacob had twelve sons from whom descended twelve tribes. The disciples of Jesus
were twelve;
the Imáms of Muhammad were twelve. The zodiacal signs are twelve; the months
of the year
are twelve, etc.

The mysteries of the Holy Books have become explained in the manifestation of
Bahá'u'lláh. Before He appeared, these mysteries were not understood.

Bahá'u'lláh opened
and unsealed these mysteries. It was my wish to come here today to have this
meeting.

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16 June 1912

Talk at Central Congregational Church
Hancock Street, Brooklyn, New York
Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 197-203)

This is a goodly temple and congregation, for—praise be to God!—this is a house of worship wherein conscientious opinion has free sway. Every religion and every religious aspiration may be freely voiced and expressed here. Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and development is stifled, whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted, the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail—that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs—development and growth are inevitable. Therefore, this is a blessed church because its pulpit is open to every religion, the ideals of which may be set forth with openness and freedom. For this reason I am most grateful to the reverend doctor; I find him indeed a servant of the oneness of humanity. The holy Manifestations Who have been the Sources or Founders of the various religious systems were united and agreed in purpose and teaching. Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are one in spirit and reality. Moreover, each Prophet fulfilled the promise of the One Who came before Him and, likewise, Each announced the One Who would follow. Consider how Abraham foretold the coming of Moses, and Moses embodied the Abrahamic statement. Moses prophesied the Messianic cycle, and Christ fulfilled the law of Moses. It is evident, therefore, that the Holy Manifestations Who founded the religious systems are united and agreed; there is no differentiation possible in Their mission and teachings; all are reflectors of reality, and all are promulgators of the religion of God. The divine religion is reality, and reality is not multiple; it is one. Therefore,

the foundations of the
religious systems are one because all proceed from the indivisible reality; but
the followers of
these systems have disagreed; discord, strife and warfare have arisen among
them, for they
have forsaken the foundation and held to that which is but imitation and
semblance. Inasmuch
as imitations differ, enmity and dissension have resulted. For example, Jesus
Christ—may my
spirit be a sacrifice unto Him!—laid the foundation of eternal reality, but
after His departure
many sects and divisions appeared in Christianity. What was the cause of this?
There is no
doubt that they originated in dogmatic imitations, for the foundations of
Christ were reality
itself, in which no divergence exists. When imitations appeared, sects and
denominations were
formed.

If Christians of all denominations and divisions should investigate reality,
the foundations
of Christ will unite them. No enmity or hatred will remain, for they will all
be under the one
guidance of reality itself. Likewise, in the wider field if all the existing
religious systems will

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turn away from ancestral imitations and investigate reality, seeking the real
meanings of the
Holy Books, they will unite and agree upon the same foundation, reality itself.
As long as they
follow counterfeit doctrines or imitations instead of reality, animosity and
discord will exist
and increase. Let me illustrate this. Moses and the prophets of Israel
announced the advent of
the Messiah but expressed it in the language of symbols. When Christ appeared,
the Jews
rejected Him, although they were expecting His manifestation and in their
temples and
synagogues were crying and lamenting, saying, “O God, hasten the coming of
the Messiah!”
Why did they deny Him when He announced Himself? Because they had followed
ancestral
forms and interpretations and were blind to the reality of Christ. They had not
perceived the
inner significances of the Holy Bible. They voiced their objections, saying,
“We are expecting

Christ, but His coming is conditioned upon certain fulfillments and prophetic announcements.

Among the signs of His appearance is one that He shall come from an unknown place, whereas now this claimant of Messiahship has come from Nazareth. We know his home, and we are acquainted with his mother.

“Second, one of the signs or Messianic conditions is that His scepter would be an iron rod, and this Christ has not even a wooden staff.

“Third, He was to be seated upon the throne of David, whereas this Messianic king is in the utmost state of poverty and has not even a mat.

“Fourth, He was to conquer the East and the West. This person has not even conquered a village. How can he be the Messiah?

“Fifth, He was to promulgate the laws of the Bible. This one has not only failed to promulgate the laws of the Bible, but he has broken the law of the sabbath.

“Sixth, the Messiah was to gather together all the Jews who were scattered in Palestine and restore them to honor and prestige, but this one has degraded the Jews instead of uplifting them.

“Seventh, during His sovereignty even the animals were to enjoy blessings and comfort, for according to the prophetic texts, He should establish peace to such a universal extent that the eagle and quail would live together, the lion and deer would feed in the same meadow, the wolf and lamb would lie down in the same pasture. In the human kingdom warfare was to cease entirely; spears would be turned into pruning hooks and swords into plowshares. Now we see in the day of this would-be Messiah such injustice prevails that even he himself is sacrificed.

How could he be the promised Christ?”

And so they spoke infamous words regarding Him.

Now inasmuch as the Jews were submerged in the sea of ancestral imitations, they could not comprehend the meaning of these prophecies. All the words of the prophets were fulfilled, but because the Jews held tenaciously to hereditary interpretations, they did not understand the inner meanings of the Holy Bible; therefore, they denied Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The purpose of the prophetic words was not the outward or literal meaning, but the inner symbolical

significance. For example, it was announced that the Messiah was to come from an unknown place. This did not refer to the birthplace of the physical body of Jesus. It has reference to the reality of the Christ—that is to say, the Christ reality was to appear from the invisible realm—for the divine reality of Christ is holy and sanctified above place. His sword was to be a sword of iron. This signified His tongue which should separate the true from the false and by which great sword of attack He would conquer the kingdoms of
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hearts. He did not conquer by the physical power of an iron rod; He conquered the East and the West by the sword of His utterance. He was seated upon the throne of David, but His sovereignty was neither a Napoleonic sovereignty nor the vanishing dominion of a Pharaoh. The Christ Kingdom was everlasting, eternal in the heaven of the divine Will. By His promulgating the laws of the Bible the reality of the law of Moses was meant. The Sinaitic law is the foundation of the reality of Christianity. Christ promulgated it and gave it higher, spiritual expression. He conquered and subdued the East and West. His conquest was effected through the breaths of the Holy Spirit, which eliminated all boundaries and shone from all horizons. In His day, according to prophecy, the wolf and the lamb were to drink from the same fountain. This was realized in Christ. The fountain referred to was the Gospel, from which the water of life gushes forth. The wolf and lamb are opposed and divergent races symbolized by these animals. Their meeting and association were impossible, but having become believers in Jesus Christ those who were formerly as wolves and lambs became united through the words of the Gospel. The purport is that all the meanings of the prophecies were fulfilled, but because the Jews were captives of ancestral imitations and did not perceive the reality of the meanings of these words, they denied Christ; nay, they even went so far as to crucify Him.

Consider how harmful
is imitation. These were interpretations handed down from fathers and
ancestors, and because
the Jews held fast to them, they were deprived.
It is evident, then, that we must forsake all such imitations and beliefs so
that we may not
commit this error. We must investigate reality, lay aside selfish notions and
banish hearsay
from our minds. The Jews consider Christ the enemy of Moses, whereas, on the
contrary, Christ
promoted the Word of Moses. He spread the name of Moses throughout the Orient
and
Occident. He promulgated the teachings of Moses. Had it not been for Christ,
you would not
have heard the name of Moses; and unless the manifestation of Messiahship had
appeared in
Christ, we would not have received the Old Testament.
The truth is that Christ fulfilled the Mosaic law and in every way upheld
Moses; but the
Jews, blinded by imitations and prejudices, considered Him the enemy of Moses.
Among the great religious systems of the world is Islám. About three hundred
million
people acknowledge it. For more than a thousand years there has been enmity and
strife
between Muslims and Christians, owing to misunderstanding and spiritual
blindness. If
prejudices and imitations were abandoned, there would be no enmity whatever
between them,
and these hundreds of millions of antagonistic religionists would adorn the
world of humanity
by their unity.
I wish now to call your attention to a most important point. All Islám
considers the Qur'án
the Word of God. In this sacred Book there are explicit texts which are not
traditional, stating
that Christ was the Word of God, that He was the Spirit of God, that Jesus
Christ came into this
world through the quickening breaths of the Holy Spirit and that Mary, His
mother, was holy
and sanctified. In the Qur'án a whole chapter is devoted to the story of
Jesus. It records that in
the time of His youth He worshiped God in the temple at Jerusalem, that manna
descended
from heaven for His sustenance and that He uttered words immediately after His
birth. In brief,

in the Qur'án there is eulogy and commendation of Christ such as you do not find in the Gospel.

The Gospel does not record that the child Jesus spoke at birth or that God caused sustenance to descend from heaven for Him, but in the Qur'án it is repeatedly stated that God sent down manna day by day as food for Him. Furthermore, it is significant and convincing that when

Muhammad proclaimed His work and mission, His first objection to His own followers was,

“Why have you not believed on Jesus Christ? Why have you not accepted the Gospel? Why

have you not believed in Moses? Why have you not followed the precepts of the Old

Testament? Why have you not understood the prophets of Israel? Why have you not believed

in the disciples of Christ? The first duty incumbent upon ye, O Arabians, is to accept and

believe in these. You must consider Moses as a Prophet. You must accept Jesus Christ as the

Word of God. You must know the Old and the New Testaments as the Word of God. You must

believe in Jesus Christ as the product of the Holy Spirit.” His people answered, “O Muhammad!

We will become believers although our fathers and ancestors were not believers, and we are

proud of them. Tell us what is going to become of them?” Muhammad replied, “I declare unto

you that they occupy the lowest stratum of hell because they did not believe in Moses and

Christ and because they did not accept the Bible; and although they are my own ancestors, yet

they are in despair in hell.” This is an explicit text of the Qur'án; it is not a story or tradition

but from the Qur'án itself, which is in the hands of the people. Therefore, it is evident that

ignorance and misunderstanding have caused so much warfare and strife between Christians

and Muslims. If both should investigate the underlying truth of their religious beliefs, the

outcome would be unity and agreement; strife and bitterness would pass away forever and the

world of humanity find peace and composure. Consider that there are two hundred and fifty

million Christians and three hundred million Muslims. How much blood has flowed in their

wars; how many nations have been destroyed; how many children have been made

fatherless;
how many fathers and mothers have mourned the loss of children and dear ones!
All this has
been due to prejudice, misunderstanding and imitations of ancestral beliefs
without
investigation of reality. If the Holy Books were rightly understood, none of
this discord and
distress would have existed, but love and fellowship would have prevailed
instead. This is true
with all the other religions as well. The conditions I have named will apply
equally to all. The
essential purpose of the religion of God is to establish unity among mankind.
The divine
Manifestations were Founders of the means of fellowship and love. They did not
come to create
discord, strife and hatred in the world. The religion of God is the cause of
love, but if it is made
to be the source of enmity and bloodshed, surely its absence is preferable to
its existence; for
then it becomes satanic, detrimental and an obstacle to the human world.
In the Orient the various peoples and nations were in a state of antagonism and
strife,
manifesting the utmost enmity and hatred toward each other. Darkness
encompassed the world
of mankind. At such a time as this Bahá'u'lláh appeared. He removed all
the imitations and
prejudices which had caused separation and misunderstanding and laid the
foundation of the
one religion of God. When this was accomplished, Muslims, Christians, Jews,
Zoroastrians,
Buddhists all were united in actual fellowship and love. The souls who followed
Bahá'u'lláh
from every nation have become as one family living in agreement and accord,
willing to
sacrifice life for each other. The Muslim will give his life for the Christian,
the Christian for
the Jew and all of them for the Zoroastrian. They live together in love,
fellowship and unity.
They have attained to the condition of rebirth in the Spirit of God. They have
become revived
and regenerated through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Praise be to God! This
light has come
forth from the East, and eventually there shall be no discord or enmity in the
Orient. Through
the power of Bahá'u'lláh all will be united. He upraised this standard of
the oneness of
humanity in prison. When subjected to banishment by two kings, while a refugee

from enemies

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of all nations and during the days of His long imprisonment He wrote to the kings and rulers of the world in words of wonderful eloquence, arraigning them severely and summoning them to the divine standard of unity and justice. He exhorted them to peace and international agreement, making it incumbent upon them to establish a board of international arbitration—that from all nations and governments of the world there should be delegates selected for a congress of nations which should constitute a universal arbitral court of justice to settle international disputes. He wrote to Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, the Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, Napoleon III of France and others, inviting them to world unity and peace. Through a heavenly power He was enabled to promulgate these ideals in the Orient. Kings could not withstand Him. They endeavored to extinguish His light but served only to increase its intensity and illumination. While in prison He stood against the Sháh of Persia and Sultán of Turkey and promulgated His teachings until He firmly established the banner of truth and the oneness of humankind. I was a prisoner with Him for forty years until the Young Turks of the Committee of Union and Progress overthrew the despotism of ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd, dethroned him and proclaimed liberty. This committee set me free from tyranny and oppression; otherwise, I should have been in prison until the days of my life were ended. The purport is this: that Bahá’u’lláh in prison was able to proclaim and establish the foundations of peace although two despotic kings were His enemies and oppressors. The King of Persia, Násiri’d-Dín Sháh, had killed twenty thousand Bahá’ís, martyrs who in absolute severance and complete willingness offered their lives joyfully for their faith. These two powerful and tyrannical kings could not withstand a prisoner; this Prisoner upheld the standard of humanity and brought the people of the Orient into agreement and unity. Today in the East, only those

who have not
followed Bahá'u'lláh are in opposition and enmity. The people of the
nations who have
accepted Him as the standard of divine guidance enjoy a condition of actual
fellowship and
love. If you should attend a meeting in the East, you could not distinguish
between Christian
and Muslim; you would not know which was Jew, Zoroastrian or Buddhist, so
completely have
they become fraternized and their religious differences been leveled. They
associate in the
utmost love and spiritual fragrance as if they belonged to one family, as if
they were one people.

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18 June 1912
Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York
Notes by Emma C. Melick
(Promulgation, pp. 205-206)

No matter how much the world of humanity advances in material civilization, it

is nevertheless in need of the spiritual development mentioned in the Gospel. The virtues of the material world are limited, whereas divine virtues are unlimited. Inasmuch as material virtues are limited, man's need of the perfections of the divine world is unlimited. Throughout human history we find that although the very apex of human virtues has been reached at various times, yet they were limited, whereas divine attainments have ever been unbounded and infinite. The limited is ever in need of the unlimited. The material must be correlated with the spiritual. The material may be likened to the body, but divine virtues are the breathings of the Holy Spirit itself. The body without spirit is not capable of real accomplishment. Although it may be in the utmost condition of beauty and excellence, it is, nevertheless, in need of the spirit. The chimney of the lamp, no matter how polished and perfect it be, is in need of the light. Without the light, the lamp or candle is not illuminating. Without the spirit, the body is not productive. The teacher of material principles is limited. The philosophers who claimed to be the educators of mankind were at most only able to train themselves. If they educated others, it was within a restricted circle; they failed to bestow general education and development. This has been conferred upon humanity by the power of the Holy Spirit. For example, Christ educated and developed mankind universally. He rescued nations and peoples from the bondage of superstition and idolatry. He summoned them all to the knowledge of the oneness of God. They were dark, they became illumined; they were material, they became spiritual; earthly they were, they became heavenly. He enlightened the world of morality. This general, universal development is not possible through the power of philosophy. It is only attainable through the pervading influence of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, no matter how far the world of humanity advances, it fails to attain the highest degree unless quickened by the education and divine bestowals of the Holy Spirit. This ensures human progress and

prosperity.

Therefore, I exhort you to be devoted to your spiritual development. Just as you have striven along material lines and have attained to high degrees of worldly advancement, may you

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likewise become strengthened and proficient in the knowledge of God. May divine susceptibilities be increased and awakened; may your devotion to the heavenly Kingdom

become intense. May you be the recipients of the impulses of the Holy Spirit, be assisted in the

world of morality and attain ideal power so that the sublimity of the world of mankind may

become apparent in you. Thus may you attain the highest happiness, the eternal life, the

everlasting glory, the second birth, and become manifestations of the bestowals of God.

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17 June 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Emma C. Melick

(Promulgation, pp. 204-205)

We should all visit the sick. When they are in sorrow and suffering, it is a
real help and
benefit to have a friend come. Happiness is a great healer to those who are
ill. In the East it is
the custom to call upon the patient often and meet him individually. The people
in the East
show the utmost kindness and compassion to the sick and suffering. This has
greater effect than
the remedy itself. You must always have this thought of love and affection when
you visit the
ailing and afflicted.
The world of humanity may be likened to the individual man himself; it has its
illness and
ailments. A patient must be diagnosed by a skillful physician. The Prophets of

God are the real
Physicians. In whatever age or time They appear They prescribe for human
conditions. They
know the sicknesses; They discover the hidden sources of disease and indicate
the necessary
remedy. Whosoever is healed by that remedy finds eternal health. For instance,
in the day of
Jesus Christ the world of humanity was afflicted with various ailments. Jesus
Christ was the
real Physician. He appeared, recognized the symptoms and prescribed the real
remedy. What
was that remedy? It was His revealed teaching especially applicable to that
age. Later on many
new ailments and disorders appeared in the body politic. The world became sick;
other severe
maladies appeared, especially in the peninsula of Arabia. God manifested
Muhammad there.
He came and prescribed for the conditions so that the Arabs became healthy,
strong and virile
in that time.
In this present age the world of humanity is afflicted with severe sicknesses
and grave
disorders which threaten death. Therefore, Bahá'u'lláh has appeared. He
is the real Physician,
bringing divine remedy and healing to the world of man. He has brought
teachings for all
ailments—the Hidden Words, Ishráqát, Tarázát, Tajallíyát, Words of
Paradise, Glad Tidings,
etc. These Holy Words and teachings are the remedy for the body politic, the
divine
prescription and real cure for the disorders which afflict the world.
Therefore, we must accept
and partake of this healing remedy in order that complete recovery may be
assured. Every soul
who lives according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is free from the
ailments and indispositions
which prevail throughout the world of humanity; otherwise, selfish disorders,
intellectual
maladies, spiritual sicknesses, imperfections and vices will surround him, and
he will not
receive the life-giving bounties of God.
Bahá'u'lláh is the real Physician. He has diagnosed human conditions and
indicated the
necessary treatment. The essential principles of His healing remedies are the
knowledge and
love of God, severance from all else save God, turning our faces in sincerity
toward the

Kingdom of God, implicit faith, firmness and fidelity, loving-kindness toward all creatures and the acquisition of the divine virtues indicated for the human world. These are the fundamental principles of progress, civilization, international peace and the unity of mankind. These are the

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essentials of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings, the secret of everlasting health, the remedy and healing for man.

It is my hope that you may assist in healing the sick body of the world through these teachings so that eternal radiance may illumine all the nations of mankind.

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20 June 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 206-209)

I am about to leave the city for a few days rest at Montclair. When I return, it is my wish to give a large feast of unity. A place for it has not yet been found. It must be outdoors under the trees, in some location away from city noise—like a Persian garden. The food will be Persian food. When the place is arranged, all will be informed, and we will have a general meeting in which hearts will be bound together, spirits blended and a new foundation for unity established. All the friends will come. They will be my guests. They will be as the parts and members of one body. The spirit of life manifest in that body will be one spirit. The foundation of that temple of unity will be one foundation. Each will be a stone in that foundation, solid and interdependent. Each will be as a leaf, blossom or fruit upon one tree. For the sake of fellowship and unity I desire this feast and spiritual gathering. Whatsoever is conducive to unity is merciful and from the divine bounty itself. Every

universal affair is divine. Everything which conduces to separation and

estrangement is satanic
because it emanates from the purposes of self. Consider how clearly it is shown
in creation that
the cause of existence is unity and cohesion and the cause of nonexistence is
separation and
dissension. By a divine power of creation the elements assemble together in
affinity, and the
result is a composite being. Certain of these elements have united, and man has
come into
existence. Certain other combinations produce plants and animals. Therefore,
this affinity of
the inanimate elements is the cause of life and being. Through their
commingling, therefore,
human affinity, love and fellowship are made possible. If the elements were not
assembled
together in affinity to produce the body of man, the higher intelligent forces
could not be
manifest in the body. But when these elements separate, when their affinity and
cohesion are
overcome, death and dissolution of the body they have built inevitably follow.
Therefore,
affinity and unity among even these material elements mean life in the body of
man, and their
discord and disagreement mean death. Throughout all creation, in all the
kingdoms, this law is
written: that love and affinity are the cause of life, and discord and
separation are the cause of
death.
Consider the bodies of all the natural organisms. Certain elements have
gathered and
combine in chemical affinity. The tree, the man, the fish are due to this
attraction and cohesion
which have brought the elements together. A composition or composite being has
resulted. The
outcome of certain atomic grouping, for instance, is a mirror, table or clock
because a cohesive
power has magnetized and bound these atoms together. When that attracting power
is
withdrawn, dissolution and disintegration follow; no mirror, table or clock
remain—no trace,
no existence. Therefore, commingling of the atoms brings forth a reality, while
dispersion or
dissemination of them is equivalent to nonexistence.
Study the law of affinity among the domestic animals. They manifest fellowship,
they live
in flocks and herds; the love of association is evident among them. Among birds
we see

evidences of instinctive fellowship and love. But the ferocious animals and birds of prey are just the reverse of the domestic. Sheep, cows and horses graze together in concord and agreement, but ferocious animals are never seen associating in love and fellowship. Each lives solitary and alone or with a single mate. When they see each other, they manifest the utmost ferocity. Dogs pounce upon dogs; wolves, tigers, lions rage, snarl and fight to the death. Their ferocity is instinctive. There is a creative reason for it. Birds of prey, like eagles and hawks, live solitary and build their nests apart, but doves fly in flocks and nest in the same branches. When an eagle meets another eagle, there is a furious battle. The meeting of two doves is a peace meeting. Therefore, it is evident that these blessed characteristics as well as the reverse are found among the creatures of a lower kingdom. The great mass of humanity does not exercise real love and fellowship. The elect of humanity are those who live together in love and unity. They are preferable before God because the divine attributes are already manifest in them. The supreme love and unity is witnessed in the divine Manifestations. Among Them unity is indissoluble, changeless, eternal and everlasting. Each One is expressive and representative of all. If we deny One of the Manifestations of God, we deny all. To inflict persecution upon One is to persecute the Others. In all degrees of existence each One praises and sanctifies the Others. Each of Them holds to the solidarity of mankind and promotes the unity of human hearts. Next to the divine Manifestations come the believers whose characteristics are agreement, fellowship and love. The Bahá'í friends in Persia attained such a brotherhood and love that it really became a hindrance in the conduct of material affairs. Each one into whatever house of the friends he went considered himself the owner of the house, so to speak. There was no duality but complete mutuality of interests and love. The visiting friend would have no hesitation

in opening the
 provision box and taking out enough food for his needs. They wore each
 other's clothes as their
 own when necessary. If in need of a hat or cloak, they would take and use it.
 The owner of the
 clothing would be thankful and grateful that the garment had gone. When he
 returned home,
 he would perhaps be told, "So and so was here and took away your coat." He
 would reply,
 "Praise be to God! I am so grateful to him. Praise be to God! I am so
 thankful I have been given
 this opportunity of showing my love for him." To such an extreme degree this
 love and
 fellowship expressed itself that Bahá'u'lláh commanded that no one should
 take possession of
 another's belongings unless presented with them. The intention is to show to
 what an extent
 unity and love prevailed among the Bahá'í friends in the East.
 I hope that this same degree and intensity of love may become manifest and
 apparent here;
 that the spirit of God shall so penetrate your hearts that each one of the
 beloved of God shall
 be considered as all; that each one may become a cause of unity and center of
 accord and all
 mankind be bound together in real fellowship and love.

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23 June 1912

Talk at Montclair, New Jersey

Notes by Frank E. Osborne

(Promulgation, pp. 207-213)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: You are always smiling.

Mr. Osborne: Surely our faces should reflect happiness in this presence.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes! This is the day of Bahá'u'lláh, the age of the

Blessed Perfection, the

cycle of the Greatest Name. If you do not smile now, for what time will you
 await and what

greater happiness could you expect? This is the springtime of manifestation.

The vernal shower

has descended from the cloud of divine mercy; the life-giving breeze of the
 Holy Spirit is

wafting the perfume of blossoms. From field and meadow rises a fragrant breath of thanksgiving like pure incense ascending to the throne of God. The world has become a new world; souls are quickened, spirits renewed, refreshed. Truly it is a time for happiness.

(To people coming in)
Welcome! Welcome! You are very welcome!
(The church bells begin to ring)
I was not feeling very well this morning, or I would have gone to church. Everywhere we hear the call of the spiritual world; in everything we behold the works of God. The church bells are pealing in memory of Jesus Christ although more than nineteen hundred years have passed since He lived upon the earth. This is through the power of the spirit. No material power could do this. Yet people in their blindness deny Christ, seeking to perpetuate their names in worldly deeds. Everyone wishes to be remembered. Through earthly and material accomplishments one will hardly be remembered nine years, while the memory and glory of Christ continue after nineteen hundred have passed. For His name is eternal and His glory everlasting. Therefore, man should hear with attentive ear the call of the spiritual world, seeking first the Kingdom of God and its perfections. This is eternal life; this is everlasting remembrance. How great the difference between the glory of Christ and the glory of an earthly conqueror!

It is related by historians that Napoleon Bonaparte I embarked secretly by night from Egypt. His destination was France. During his campaign in Palestine revolution had broken out and grave difficulties had arisen in the home government. Christian worship had been forbidden by the revolutionists. The priests of Christianity had fled in terror. France had become atheistic; anarchy prevailed. The ship sailed out into a night brilliant with the light of the moon. Napoleon was pacing up and down the deck. His officers were sitting together, talking. One of them spoke of the similarity between Bonaparte and Christ. Napoleon stopped and said grimly, "Do you think I am going back to France to establish religion?" Jesus Christ established the religion of God through love. His sovereignty is everlasting.

Napoleon overthrew governments in war and bloodshed. His dominion passed away;
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himself was dethroned. Bonaparte destroyed human life; Christ was a Savior.
Bonaparte
controlled the physical bodies of men; Christ was a conqueror of human hearts.
None of the
Prophets of God were famous men, but They were unique in spiritual power. Love
is the eternal
sovereignty. Love is the divine power. By it all the kings of earth are
overthrown and
conquered. What evidence of this could be greater than the accomplishment of
Bahá'u'lláh?
He appeared in the East and was exiled. He was sent to the prison of 'Akká
in Palestine. Two
powerful despotic kings arose against Him. During His exile and imprisonment He
wrote
Tablets of authority to the kings and rulers of the world, announcing His
spiritual sovereignty,
establishing the religion of God, upraising the heavenly banners of the Cause
of God. One of
these Tablets was sent to Napoleon III, Emperor of France. He received it with
contempt and
cast it behind his back. Bahá'u'lláh addressed a second Tablet to him,
containing these words,
“Hadst thou been sincere in thy words, thou wouldst have not cast behind thy
back the Book
of God, when it was sent unto thee. ... We have proved thee through it, and
found thee other
than that which thou didst profess. Arise, and make amends for that which
escaped thee.
Erelong the world and all that thou possessest will perish, and the kingdom
will remain unto
God. ... For what thou hast done, thy kingdom shall be thrown into confusion,
and thine empire
shall pass from thine hands, as a punishment for that which thou hast wrought.
Then wilt thou
know how thou hast plainly erred. ... Thy pomp ... shall soon pass away, unless
thou holdest
fast by this firm Cord. We see abasement hastening after thee. ...” All this
happened just as
announced by Bahá'u'lláh. Napoleon III was dethroned and exiled. His
empire passed away
and became nonexistent while the dominion and sovereignty of Bahá'u'lláh,
the Prisoner, has

become eternal through the confirmation of God. This is as evident as the light of the sun at midday except to those who are spiritually blind. If we are afflicted with a cold, we cannot inhale the delicate fragrances emanating from the rose garden of the divine Kingdom.

In brief, the nations of the world are becoming united under the sovereignty of the divine Kingdom. The East and the West are embracing here in love and affection today. This is not a commercial or political unity, but unity through the love of God. We have crossed the sea to spread that love in America, to announce the call of the Kingdom, to establish the spiritual foundations of international peace. Although men may arise against the Kingdom, the dominion and sovereignty of God will be set up. It is an eternal Kingdom, a divine sovereignty.

In His day Christ was called Satan, Beelzebub, but hear the bells now ringing for Him! He was the Word of God and not Satan. They mocked Him, led Him through the city upon a donkey, crowned Him with thorns, spat upon His blessed face and crucified Him, but He is now with God and in God because He was the Word and not Satan. Fifty years ago no one would touch the Christian Bible in Persia. Bahá'u'lláh came and asked, "Why?" They said, "It is not the Word of God." He said, "You must read it with understanding of its meanings, not as those who merely recite its words." Now Bahá'ís all over the East read the Bible and understand its spiritual teaching. Bahá'u'lláh spread the Cause of Christ and opened the book of the Christians and Jews. He removed the barriers of names. He proved that all the divine Prophets taught the same reality and that to deny One is to deny the Others, for all are in perfect oneness with God.

In London some of the Christians said we were deniers of Christ. We say Christ is the Word of God. We are gathered here this morning for His mention. The bells have called us together in love and unity. This house is the temple of God. All are welcome! Very welcome!

Question: How shall we determine the truth or error of certain biblical interpretation, as, for instance, the higher criticism and other present-day Christian teachings?

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‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Your question is an abstruse and important one. Complete answer to it

would require a long time. I will reply to it briefly. The only true Explainer of the Book of God

is the Holy Spirit, for no two minds are alike, no two can comprehend alike, no two can speak

alike. That is to say, from the mere human standpoint of interpretation there could be neither

truth nor agreement.

Question: Do you approve of the new thought in which the control of mind over matter is

the central principle?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Philosophy develops the mind. Christ and the Word of God are revealed

through the Spirit. Plato says, “The mental conclusions are so and so.”

Christ says, “Be led of the Spirit.”

Question: Should children be allowed to read the higher criticism?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: They should first be taught the reality of religion as a foundation. For

instance, in the Catholic Church the child is taught that through some act of the priest the bread

and wine of the sacrament become the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. The mind cannot accept

this. The child must be taught that this transformation is symbolical of the truth that Christ is

the food from heaven, the eating of which produces eternal life. The Jews had memorized the

Bible but failed to grasp its meanings. If they had understood the spiritual significances of the

scriptures, they would have been the first believers in Christ. You are among the first believers

in this country. You are the children of the Kingdom. Bahá’u’lláh has taught you the reality of

religion. There are many of the Bahá’í friends in Persia whom we do not know, but we know

you here in America. Turn your faces to the Sun of Reality. That Sun has always risen in the

East. Find the answer to your questions in your heart. Be as little children.

Until the soil is

prepared, it cannot receive the benefit of planting.

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29 June 1912

Talk at Unity Feast, Outdoors
West Englewood, New Jersey
Notes by Esther Foster
(Promulgation, pp. 213-215)

This is a delightful gathering; you have come here with sincere intentions, and the purpose of all present is the attainment of the virtues of God. The motive is attraction to the divine Kingdom. Since the desire of all is unity and agreement, it is certain that this meeting will be productive of great results. It will be the cause of attracting a new bounty, for we are turning to the Kingdom of Abhá, seeking the infinite bestowals of the Lord. This is a new Day, and this hour is a new Hour in which we have come together. Surely the Sun of Reality with its full effulgence will illumine us, and the darkness of disagreements will disappear. The utmost love and unity will result; the favors of God will encompass us; the pathway of the Kingdom will be made easy. Like candles these souls will become ignited and made radiant through the lights of supreme guidance. Such gatherings as this have no equal or likeness in the world of mankind, where people are drawn together by physical motives or in furtherance of material interests, for this meeting is a prototype of that inner and complete spiritual association in the eternal world of being. True Bahá'í meetings are the mirrors of the Kingdom wherein images of the Supreme Concourse are reflected. In them the lights of the most great guidance are visible. They voice the summons of the heavenly Kingdom and echo the call of the angelic hosts to every listening ear. The efficacy of such meetings as these is permanent throughout the ages. This assembly has a name and significance which will last forever. Hundreds of thousands of meetings shall be held to commemorate this occasion, and the very words I speak to you today

shall be
 repeated in them for ages to come. Therefore, be ye rejoiced, for ye are
 sheltered beneath the
 providence of God. Be happy and joyous because the bestowals of God are
 intended for you
 and the life of the Holy Spirit is breathing upon you.
 Rejoice, for the heavenly table is prepared for you.
 Rejoice, for the angels of heaven are your assistants and helpers.
 Rejoice, for the glance of the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, is directed
 upon you.
 Rejoice, for Bahá'u'lláh is your Protector.
 Rejoice, for the everlasting glory is destined for you.
 Rejoice, for the eternal life is awaiting you.
 How many blessed souls have longed for this radiant century, their utmost hopes
 and
 desires centered upon the happiness and joy of one such day as this. Many the
 nights they

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passed sleepless and lamenting until the very morn in longing anticipation of
 this age, yearning
 to realize even an hour of this time. God has favored you in this century and
 has specialized
 you for the realization of its blessings. Therefore, you must praise and thank
 God with heart
 and soul in appreciation of this great opportunity and the attainment of this
 infinite bestowal—
 that such doors have been opened before your faces, that such abundance is
 pouring down from
 the cloud of mercy and that these refreshing breezes from the paradise of Abhá
 are resuscitating
 you. You must become of one heart, one spirit and one susceptibility. May you
 become as the
 waves of one sea, stars of the same heaven, fruits adorning the same tree,
 roses of one garden
 in order that through you the oneness of humanity may establish its temple in
 the world of
 mankind, for you are the ones who are called to uplift the cause of unity among
 the nations of
 the earth.
 First, you must become united and agreed among yourselves. You must be
 exceedingly
 kind and loving toward each other, willing to forfeit life in the pathway of
 another's happiness.
 You must be ready to sacrifice your possessions in another's behalf. The rich
 among you must

show compassion toward the poor, and the well-to-do must look after those in distress. In Persia the friends offer their lives for each other, striving to assist and advance the interests and welfare of all the rest. They live in a perfect state of unity and agreement. Like the Persian friends you must be perfectly agreed and united to the extent and limit of sacrificing life. Your utmost desire must be to confer happiness upon each other. Each one must be the servant of the others, thoughtful of their comfort and welfare. In the path of God one must forget himself entirely. He must not consider his own pleasure but seek the pleasure of others. He must not desire glory nor gifts of bounty for himself but seek these gifts and blessings for his brothers and sisters. It is my hope that you may become like this, that you may attain to the supreme bestowal and be imbued with such spiritual qualities as to forget yourselves entirely and with heart and soul offer yourselves as sacrifices for the Blessed Perfection. You should have neither will nor desire of your own but seek everything for the beloved of God and live together in complete love and fellowship. May the favors of Bahá'u'lláh surround you from all directions. This is the greatest bestowal and supreme bounty. These are the infinite favors of God.

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1 July 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 216-217)

What could be better before God than thinking of the poor? For the poor are beloved by our heavenly Father. When Christ came upon the earth, those who believed in Him and followed Him were the poor and lowly, showing that the poor were near to God. When a rich man believes and follows the Manifestation of God, it is a proof that his wealth is not an

obstacle and does not prevent him from attaining the pathway of salvation. After he has been tested and tried, it will be seen whether his possessions are a hindrance in his religious life. But the poor are especially beloved of God. Their lives are full of difficulties, their trials continual, their hopes are in God alone. Therefore, you must assist the poor as much as possible, even by sacrifice of yourself. No deed of man is greater before God than helping the poor. Spiritual conditions are not dependent upon the possession of worldly treasures or the absence of them. When one is physically destitute, spiritual thoughts are more likely. Poverty is a stimulus toward God. Each one of you must have great consideration for the poor and render them assistance. Organize in an effort to help them and prevent increase of poverty. The greatest means for prevention is that whereby the laws of the community will be so framed and enacted that it will not be possible for a few to be millionaires and many destitute. One of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings is the adjustment of means of livelihood in human society. Under this adjustment there can be no extremes in human conditions as regards wealth and sustenance. For the community needs financier, farmer, merchant and laborer just as an army must be composed of commander, officers and privates. All cannot be commanders; all cannot be officers or privates. Each in his station in the social fabric must be competent—each in his function according to ability but with justness of opportunity for all. Lycurgus, King of Sparta, who lived long before the day of Christ, conceived the idea of absolute equality in government. He proclaimed laws by which all the people of Sparta were classified into certain divisions. Each division had its separate rights and function. First, farmers and tillers of the soil. Second, artisans and merchants. Third, leaders or grandees. Under the laws of Lycurgus, the latter were not required to engage in any labor or vocation, but it was incumbent upon them to defend the country in case of war and invasion. Then he divided Sparta into nine thousand equal parts or provinces, appointing nine thousand leaders

or grantees to protect them. In this way the farmers of each province were assured of protection, but each farmer was compelled to pay a tax to support the grantee of that province. The farmers and merchants were not obliged to defend the country. In lieu of labor the grantees received the taxes. Lycurgus, in order to establish this forever as a law, brought nine thousand grantees together, told them he was going upon a long journey and wished this form of government to remain effective until his return. They swore an oath to protect and preserve his law. He then left his kingdom, went into voluntary exile and never came back. No man ever made such a sacrifice to ensure equality among his fellowmen. A few years passed, and the

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whole system of government he had founded collapsed, although established upon such a just and wise basis.

Difference of capacity in human individuals is fundamental. It is impossible for all to be alike, all to be equal, all to be wise. Bahá'u'lláh has revealed principles and laws which will accomplish the adjustment of varying human capacities. He has said that whatsoever is possible of accomplishment in human government will be effected through these principles. When the laws He has instituted are carried out, there will be no millionaires possible in the community and likewise no extremely poor. This will be effected and regulated by adjusting the different degrees of human capacity. The fundamental basis of the community is agriculture, tillage of the soil. All must be producers. Each person in the community whose need is equal to his individual producing capacity shall be exempt from taxation. But if his income is greater than his needs, he must pay a tax until an adjustment is effected. That is to say, a man's capacity for production and his needs will be equalized and reconciled through taxation. If his production exceeds, he will pay a tax; if his necessities exceed his production, he shall receive an amount sufficient to equalize or adjust. Therefore, taxation will be proportionate to

capacity and
production, and there will be no poor in the community.
Bahá'u'lláh, likewise, commanded the rich to give freely to the poor. In
the Kitáb-i-Aqdas
it is further written by Him that those who have a certain amount of income
must give one-fifth
of it to God, the Creator of heaven and earth.
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1 July 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York
From Stenographic Notes
(Promulgation, p. 218)

I desire to make manifest among the friends in America a new light that they
may become
a new people, that a new foundation may be established and complete harmony be
realized; for
the foundation of Bahá'u'lláh is love. When you go to Green Acre, you
must have infinite love
for each other, each preferring the other before himself. The people must be so
attracted to you
that they will exclaim, "What happiness exists among you!" and will see in
your faces the lights
of the Kingdom; then in wonderment they will turn to you and seek the cause of
your happiness.
You must give the message through action and deed, not alone by word. Word must
be
conjoined with deed. You must love your friend better than yourself; yes, be
willing to sacrifice
yourself. The Cause of Bahá'u'lláh has not yet appeared in this country.
I desire that you be
ready to sacrifice everything for each other, even life itself; then I will
know that the Cause of
Bahá'u'lláh has been established. I will pray for you that you may become
the cause of
upraising the lights of God. May everyone point to you and ask, "Why are
these people so
happy?" I want you to be happy in Green Acre, to laugh, smile and rejoice in
order that others
may be made happy by you. I will pray for you.
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5 July 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 218-220)

Question: You have stated that we are living in a universal cycle, the first
Manifestation of
which was Adam and the universal Manifestation of which is Bahá'u'lláh.
Does this imply that
other universal cycles preceded this one and that all traces of them have been
effaced—cycles
in which the ultimate purpose was the divine spiritualization of man just as it
is the creative
intention in this one?
The divine sovereignty is an ancient sovereignty, not an accidental
sovereignty.
If we imagine this world of existence has a beginning, we can say the divine
sovereignty is
accidental—that is, there was a time when it did not exist. A king without a
kingdom is
impossible. He cannot be without a country, without subjects, without an army,
without
dominion, or he would be without kingship. All these exigencies or requirements
of sovereignty

must exist for a king. When they do exist, we can apply the word sovereignty to him. Otherwise, his sovereignty is imperfect, incomplete. If none of these conditions exists, sovereignty does not exist.

If we acknowledge that there is a beginning for this world of creation, we acknowledge that the sovereignty of God is accidental—that is, we admit a time when the reality of Divinity has been without dominion (lit. “defeated”). The names and attributes of Divinity are requirements of this world. The names the Powerful, the Living, the Provider, the Creator require and necessitate the existence of creatures. If there were no creatures, Creator would be meaningless.

If there were none to provide for, we could not think of the Provider. If there were no life, the Living would be beyond the power of conception. Therefore, all the names and attributes of God require the existence of objects or creatures upon which they have been bestowed and in which they have become manifest. If there was a time when no creation existed, when there was none to provide for, it would imply a time when there was no existent One, no Trainer, and the attributes and qualities of God would have been meaningless and without significance.

Therefore, the requirements of the attributes of God do not admit of cessation or interruption, for the names of God are actually and forever existing and not potential.

Because they convey life, they are called Life-giving; because they provide, they are called Bountiful, the Provider; because they create, they are called Creator; because they educate and govern, the name Lord

God is applied. That is to say, the divine names emanate from the eternal attributes of Divinity.

Therefore, it is proved that the divine names presuppose the existence of objects or beings.

How then is a time conceivable when this sovereignty has not been existent?

This divine sovereignty is not to be measured by six thousand years. This interminable, illimitable universe is not the result of that measured period. This stupendous laboratory and workshop has not been limited in its production to six thousand revolutions of the earth about the sun. With the

slightest reflection man can be assured that this calculation and announcement is childish,

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especially in view of the fact that it is scientifically proved the terrestrial globe has been the

habitation of man long prior to such a limited estimate.

As to the record in the Bible concerning Adam's entering paradise, His eating from the tree

and His expulsion through the temptation of Satan: These are all symbols beneath which there

are wonderful and divine meanings not to be calculated in years, dates and measurement of

time. Likewise, the statement that God created the heaven and the earth in six days is symbolic.

We will not explain this further today. The texts of the Holy Books are all symbolical, needing

authoritative interpretation.

When man casts even a cursory glance of reflection upon the question of the universe, he

discovers it is very ancient. A Persian philosopher was looking up into the heavens, lost in

wonder. He said, "I have written a book containing seventy proofs of the accidental appearance

of the universe, but I still find it very ancient."

Bahá'u'lláh says, "The universe hath neither beginning nor ending."

He has set aside the

elaborate theories and exhaustive opinions of scientists and material philosophers by the simple

statement, "There is no beginning, no ending." The theologians and religionists advance

plausible proofs that the creation of the universe dates back six thousand years; the scientists

bring forth indisputable facts and say, "No! These evidences indicate ten, twenty, fifty thousand

years ago," etc. There are endless discussions pro and con. Bahá'u'lláh sets aside these

discussions by one word and statement. He says, "The divine sovereignty hath no beginning

and no ending." By this announcement and its demonstration He has established a standard of

agreement among those who reflect upon this question of divine sovereignty; He has brought

reconciliation and peace in this war of opinion and discussion.

Briefly, there were many universal cycles preceding this one in which we are living. They

were consummated, completed and their traces obliterated. The divine and creative purpose in them was the evolution of spiritual man, just as it is in this cycle. The circle of existence is the same circle; it returns. The tree of life has ever borne the same heavenly fruit.

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Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York
Notes by Emma C. Melick and Howard MacNutt
(Promulgation, pp. 220-225)

Among the various nations and peoples of the world no enmity or hatred should

remain. All hearts were to be connected one with another. These things are recorded in the Torah, or Old Testament, in the Gospel, the Qur'án, the Zend-Avesta, and the books of Buddha. In brief, all the Holy Books contain these glad tidings. They announce that after the world is surrounded by darkness, radiance shall appear. For just as the night, when it becomes excessively dark, precedes the dawn of a new day, so likewise when the darkness of religious apathy and heedlessness overtakes the world, when human souls become negligent of God, when materialistic ideas overshadow spirituality, when nations become submerged in the world of matter and forget God—at such a time as this shall the divine Sun shine forth and the radiant morn appear.

Consider to what a remarkable extent the spirituality of people has been overcome by materialism so that spiritual susceptibility seems to have vanished, divine civilization become decadent, and guidance and knowledge of God no longer remain. All are submerged in the sea of materialism. Although some attend churches and temples of worship and devotion, it is in accordance with the traditions and imitations of their fathers and not for the investigation of reality. For it is evident they have not found reality and are not engaged in its adoration. They are holding to certain imitations which have descended to them from their fathers and ancestors. They have become accustomed to passing a certain length of time in temple worship and conforming to imitations and ceremonies. The proof of this is that the son of every Jewish father becomes a Jew and not a Christian; the son of every Muslim becomes a follower of Islám; the son of every Christian proves to be a Christian; the son of every Zoroastrian is a Zoroastrian, etc. Therefore, religious faith and belief is merely a remnant of blind imitations which have descended through fathers and ancestors. Because this man's father was a Jew, he considers himself a Jew. Not that he has investigated reality and proved satisfactorily to himself that Judaism is right—nay, rather, he is aware that his forefathers have

followed this course;
therefore, he has held to it himself.

The purpose of this is to explain that the darkness of imitations encompasses the world.

Every nation is holding to its traditional religious forms. The light of reality is obscured. Were these various nations to investigate reality, there is no doubt they would attain to it. As reality is one, all nations would then become as one nation. So long as they adhere to various imitations and are deprived of reality, strife and warfare will continue and rancor and sedition prevail. If they investigate reality, neither enmity nor rancor will remain, and they will attain to the utmost concord among themselves.

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During the years when the darkness of heedlessness was most intense in the Orient and the

people were so submerged in imitations that nations were thirsting for the blood of each other,

considering each other as contaminated and refusing to associate—at such a time as this

Bahá'u'lláh appeared. He arose in the Orient, uprooting the very foundations of imitations, and

brought the dawn of the light of reality. Through Him various nations became united because

all desired reality. Inasmuch as they investigated reality in religion, they found that all men are

the servants of God, the posterity of Adam, children of one household and that the foundations

of all the Prophets are one. For inasmuch as the teachings of the Prophets are reality, Their

foundations are one. The enmity and strife of nations, therefore, are due to religious imitations

and not to the reality which underlies the teachings of the Prophets. Through Bahá'u'lláh the

nations and peoples grew to understand and comprehend this. Therefore, hearts became united,

and lives were cemented together. After centuries of hatred and bitterness the Christian, Jew,

Zoroastrian, Muslim and Buddhist met in fellowship, all of them in the utmost love and unity.

They became welded and cemented because they had perceived reality.

The divine Prophets are conjoined in the perfect state of love. Each One has given the glad

tidings of His successor's coming and each successor has sanctioned the One Who preceded Him. They were in the utmost unity, but Their followers are in strife. For instance, Moses gave the message of the glad tidings of Christ, and Christ confirmed the Prophethood of Moses.

Therefore, between Moses and Jesus there is no variation or conflict. They are in perfect unity, but between the Jew and the Christian there is conflict. Now, therefore, if the Christian and Jewish peoples investigate the reality underlying their Prophets' teachings, they will become kind in their attitude toward each other and associate in the utmost love, for reality is one and not dual or multiple. If this investigation of reality becomes universal, the divergent nations will ratify all the divine Prophets and confirm all the Holy Books. No strife or rancor will then remain, and the world will become united. Then will we associate in the reality of love. We will become as fathers and sons, as brothers and sisters living together in complete unity, love and happiness; for this century is the century of light. It is not like former centuries. Former centuries were epochs of oppression. Now human intellects have developed, and human intelligence has increased. Each soul is investigating reality. This is not a time when we shall wage war and be hostile toward each other. We are living at a time when we should enjoy real friendship.

Fifty years ago Bahá'u'lláh sent Epistles to all the kings and nations of the world, at a time when there was no mention of international peace. One of these Epistles was sent by Him to the president of the American democracy. In these communications He summoned all to international peace and the oneness of the human world. He summoned mankind to the fundamentals of the teachings of all the Prophets. Some of the European kings were arrogant. Among them was Napoleon III. Bahá'u'lláh wrote a second Epistle to him, which was published thirty years ago. The context is this: "O Napoleon! Thou hast become haughty indeed. Thou hast become proud. Thou hast forgotten God. Thou dost imagine that this majesty

is permanent for thee, that this dominion is abiding for thee. A letter have we sent unto thee for acceptance with thy greatest love; but, instead, thou hast shown arrogance. Therefore, God shall uproot the edifice of thy sovereignty; thy country shall flee away from thee. Thou shalt find humiliation hastening after thee because thou didst not arise for that which was enjoined upon thee, whereas that which was a duty incumbent upon thee was the cause of life to the world. The punishment of God shall soon be dealt out to thee.” This Epistle was revealed in the year 1869, and after one year the foundations of the Napoleonic sovereignty were completely uprooted.
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Among these Epistles was a very lengthy one to the Sháh of Persia. It was printed and spread broadcast throughout all the countries. This Epistle was revealed in the year 1870. In it Bahá'u'lláh admonished the Sháh of Persia to be kind to all his subjects, summoning him to dispense justice, counseling him to make no distinction between the religions, charging him to deal equally with Jew, Christian, Muslim and Zoroastrian and to remove the oppression prevailing in his country. At that time the Jews were greatly oppressed in Persia. Bahá'u'lláh especially recommended justice for them, saying that all people are the servants of God, and in the eye of the government they should be equally estimated. “If justice is not dealt out, if these oppressions are not removed and if thou dost not obey God, the foundations of thy government will be razed, and thou shalt become evanescent, become as nothing. Thou shouldst gather all the learned men, and then summon Me. There I shall be present. I will then advance proofs and evidences as to My validity. I will manifest My proof and anything that you may ask. I am ready. But if no attention is paid to this book, thou, like unto the kings who became nonexistent, shalt likewise become nonexistent.” The Sháh did not answer this Epistle of the Blessed Perfection. Then God destroyed the foundations of his sovereignty.

Among those to whom Bahá'u'lláh wrote was the Sultán of Turkey. In it He arraigned him, saying, "Verily, thou didst incarcerate and make Me a prisoner. Dost thou imagine that imprisonment is a loss to Me, that imprisonment is a humiliation for Me? This imprisonment is a glory for Me because it is in the pathway of God. I have not committed a crime. It is for the sake of God that I have received this ordeal. Therefore, I am very happy; I am exceedingly joyous. But thou must wait; God will send thee a punishment; thou shalt receive retribution. Ere long thou shalt observe how ordeals shall descend upon thee like rain, and thou shalt become nonexistent." And even so it was. Likewise, He sent messages to the other kings and crowned heads of the earth, summoning all of them to love, equity, international peace and the oneness of humanity in order that mankind might become unified and agreed; that strife, warfare and sedition should pass away; that bitterness and enmity might cease and all arise to serve the one God. In brief, two kings arose against Bahá'u'lláh: the Sháh of Persia and the Sultán of Turkey. They imprisoned Him in the fortress of 'Akká in order to extinguish His light and exterminate His Cause. But Bahá'u'lláh while in prison wrote severe letters of arraignment to them. He declared that imprisonment was no obstacle to Him. He said, "This imprisonment will prove to be the means of the promotion of My Cause. This imprisonment shall be the incentive for the spreading of My teachings. No harm shall come to Me because I have sacrificed My life, I have sacrificed My blood, I have sacrificed My possessions, I have sacrificed all and for Me this imprisonment is no loss." And just as He declared, so it came to pass. In prison He hoisted His banner, and His Cause spread throughout the world. It has reached America. Now the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh is extending to all nations of the earth. You go to Asia, and wherever you travel you will find Bahá'ís. You go to Africa, Europe; there you will find the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. In America it is just beginning to grow and spread. These two kings could not do anything to withstand Bahá'u'lláh, but God through Him was

capable of destroying both of them. I, too, was in prison. God removed the chains from my neck and placed them around the neck of ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd. It was done suddenly—not a long time, in a moment as it were. The same hour that the Young Turks declared liberty, the Committee of Union and Progress set me free. They lifted the chains from my neck and threw them around the neck of ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd. That which he did to me was inflicted upon him. Now

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the position is precisely reversed. His days are spent in prison just as I passed the days in prison at ‘Akká, with this difference: that I was happy in imprisonment. I was in the utmost elation because I was not a criminal. They had imprisoned me in the path of God. Every time I thought of this, that I was a prisoner in the pathway of God, the utmost elation overcame me. ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd is now suffering punishment for his deeds. Because of the sins he committed, he is now in prison. This is retribution for his acts. Every hour he is mortified anew and his ignominy revived. He is in the utmost sorrow and disappointment while I am in perfect happiness. I was happy that—praise be to God!—I was a prisoner in the Cause of God, that my life was not wasted, that it was spent in the divine service. Nobody who saw me imagined that I was in prison. They beheld me in the utmost joy, complete thankfulness and health, paying no attention to the prison.

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6 July 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Emma C. Melick

)(Promulgation, pp. 225-228)

In the world of existence man has traversed successive degrees until he has attained the

human kingdom. In each degree of his progression he has developed capacity for advancement

to the next station and condition. While in the kingdom of the mineral he was attaining the

capacity for promotion into the degree of the vegetable. In the kingdom of the vegetable he

underwent preparation for the world of the animal, and from thence he has come onward to the

human degree, or kingdom. Throughout this journey of progression he has ever and always

been potentially man.

In the beginning of his human life man was embryonic in the world of the matrix. There he

received capacity and endowment for the reality of human existence. The forces and powers

necessary for this world were bestowed upon him in that limited condition. In this world he

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needed eyes; he received them potentially in the other. He needed ears; he obtained them there

in readiness and preparation for his new existence. The powers requisite in this world were

conferred upon him in the world of the matrix so that when he entered this realm of real

existence he not only possessed all necessary functions and powers but found provision for his

material sustenance awaiting him.

Therefore, in this world he must prepare himself for the life beyond. That which he needs

in the world of the Kingdom must be obtained here. Just as he prepared himself in the world of

the matrix by acquiring forces necessary in this sphere of existence, so, likewise, the

indispensable forces of the divine existence must be potentially attained in

this world.

What is he in need of in the Kingdom which transcends the life and limitation of this mortal

sphere? That world beyond is a world of sanctity and radiance; therefore, it is necessary that in

this world he should acquire these divine attributes. In that world there is need of spirituality,

faith, assurance, the knowledge and love of God. These he must attain in this world so that after

his ascension from the earthly to the heavenly Kingdom he shall find all that is needful in that

eternal life ready for him.

That divine world is manifestly a world of lights; therefore, man has need of illumination

here. That is a world of love; the love of God is essential. It is a world of perfections; virtues,

or perfections, must be acquired. That world is vivified by the breaths of the Holy Spirit; in this

world we must seek them. That is the Kingdom of everlasting life; it must be attained during

this vanishing existence.

By what means can man acquire these things? How shall he obtain these merciful gifts and

powers? First, through the knowledge of God. Second, through the love of God.

Third, through

faith. Fourth, through philanthropic deeds. Fifth, through self-sacrifice.

Sixth, through

severance from this world. Seventh, through sanctity and holiness. Unless he acquires these

forces and attains to these requirements, he will surely be deprived of the life that is eternal.

But if he possesses the knowledge of God, becomes ignited through the fire of the love of God,

witnesses the great and mighty signs of the Kingdom, becomes the cause of love among

mankind and lives in the utmost state of sanctity and holiness, he shall surely attain to second

birth, be baptized by the Holy Spirit and enjoy everlasting existence.

Is it not astonishing that although man has been created for the knowledge and love of God,

for the virtues of the human world, for spirituality, heavenly illumination and eternal life,

nevertheless, he continues ignorant and negligent of all this? Consider how he seeks knowledge

of everything except knowledge of God. For instance, his utmost desire is to penetrate the

mysteries of the lowest strata of the earth. Day by day he strives to know what

can be found
 ten meters below the surface, what he can discover within the stone, what he
 can learn by
 archaeological research in the dust. He puts forth arduous labors to fathom
 terrestrial mysteries
 but is not at all concerned about knowing the mysteries of the Kingdom,
 traversing the
 illimitable fields of the eternal world, becoming informed of the divine
 realities, discovering
 the secrets of God, attaining the knowledge of God, witnessing the splendors of
 the Sun of
 Truth and realizing the glories of everlasting life. He is unmindful and
 thoughtless of these.
 How much he is attracted to the mysteries of matter, and how completely unaware
 he is of the
 mysteries of Divinity! Nay, he is utterly negligent and oblivious of the
 secrets of Divinity. How
 great his ignorance! How conducive to his degradation! It is as if a kind and
 loving father had
 provided a library of wonderful books for his son in order that he might be
 informed of the
 mysteries of creation, at the same time surrounding him with every means of
 comfort and
 enjoyment, but the son amuses himself with pebbles and playthings, neglectful
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father's gifts and provision. How ignorant and heedless is man! The Father
 has willed for him
 eternal glory, and he is content with blindness and deprivation. The Father has
 built for him a
 royal palace, but he is playing with the dust; prepared for him garments of
 silk, but he prefers
 to remain unclothed; provided for him delicious foods and fruits, while he
 seeks sustenance in
 the grasses of the field.
 Praise be to God! You have heard the call of the Kingdom. Your eyes are opened;
 you have
 turned to God. Your purpose is the good pleasure of God, the understanding of
 the mysteries
 of the heart and investigation of the realities. Day and night you must strive
 that you may attain
 to the significances of the heavenly Kingdom, perceive the signs of Divinity,
 acquire certainty
 of knowledge and realize that this world has a Creator, a Vivifier, a Provider,
 an Architect—

knowing this through proofs and evidences and not through susceptibilities,
 nay, rather,
 through decisive arguments and real vision—that is to say, visualizing it as
 clearly as the outer
 eye beholds the sun. In this way may you behold the presence of God and attain
 to the
 knowledge of the holy, divine Manifestations.
 You must come into the knowledge of the divine Manifestations and Their
 teachings
 through proofs and evidences. You must unseal the mysteries of the supreme
 Kingdom and
 become capable of discovering the inner realities of things. Then shall you be
 the
 manifestations of the mercy of God and true believers, firm and steadfast in
 the Cause of God.
 Praise be to God! The door of divine knowledge has been opened by
 Bahá'u'lláh, for He
 has laid the foundation whereby man may become acquainted with the verities of
 heaven and
 earth and has bestowed the utmost confirmation in this day. He is our Teacher
 and Adviser; He
 is our Seer and the One clement toward us. He has prepared His gifts and
 vouchsafed His
 bounties, revealed every admonition and behest, prepared for us the means of
 eternal glory,
 breathed upon us the life-quickenings of the Holy Spirit, opened before
 our faces the
 doors of the paradise of Abhá and caused the lights of the Sun of Truth to
 shine upon us. The
 clouds of mercy have poured down their precious rain. The sea of favor is
 swelling and surging
 toward us.
 The spiritual springtime has come. Infinite bounties and graces have appeared.
 What
 bestowal is greater than this? We must appreciate the divine generosity and act
 in accordance
 with the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh so that all good may be stored up for
 us and in both worlds
 we shall become precious and acceptable to God, attain to everlasting
 blessings, taste the
 delicacy of the love of God, find the sweetness of the knowledge of God,
 perceive the heavenly
 bestowal and witness the power of the Holy Spirit.
 This is my advice, and this is my admonition.
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14 July 1912

Talk at All Souls Unitarian Church

Fourth Avenue and Twentieth Street, New York

Notes by John G. Grundy and Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 228-235)

Today I wish to speak to you upon the subject of the oneness of humanity, for
in this great

century the most important accomplishment is the unity of mankind. Although in
former

centuries and times this subject received some measure of mention and
consideration, it has

now become the paramount issue and question in the religious and political
conditions of the

world. History shows that throughout the past there has been continual warfare and strife among the various nations, peoples and sects; but now—praise be to God!—in this century of illumination, hearts are inclined toward agreement and fellowship, and minds are thoughtful upon the question of the unification of mankind. There is an emanation of the universal consciousness today which clearly indicates the dawn of a great unity. In the investigation of a subject the right method of approach is to carefully examine its premises. Therefore, we must go back to the foundation upon which human solidarity rests—namely, that all are the progeny of Adam, the creatures and servants of one God; that God is the Protector and Provider; that all are submerged in the sea of divine mercy and grace and God is loving toward all. Humanity shares in common the intellectual and spiritual faculties of a created endowment. All are equally subject to the various exigencies of human life and are similarly occupied in acquiring the means of earthly subsistence. From the viewpoint of creation human beings stand upon the same footing in every respect, subject to the same requirements and seeking the enjoyment and comfort of earthly conditions. Therefore, the things humanity shares in common are numerous and manifest. This equal participation in the physical, intellectual and spiritual problems of human existence is a valid basis for the unification of mankind. Consider how discord and dissension have prevailed in this great human family for thousands of years. Its members have ever been engaged in war and bloodshed. Up to the present time in history the world of humanity has neither attained nor enjoyed any measure of peace, owing to incessant conditions of hostility and strife. History is a continuous and consecutive record of warfare brought about by religious, sectarian, racial, patriotic and political causes. The world of humanity has found no rest. Mankind has always been in conflict, engaged in destroying the foundations, pillaging the properties and possessing the lands and territory of each other, especially in the earlier periods of savagery and barbarism where whole

races and peoples were carried away captive by their conquerors. Who shall
measure or
estimate the tremendous destruction of human life resulting from this hostility
and strife? What
human powers and forces have been employed in the prosecution of war and
applied to
inhuman purposes of battle and bloodshed? In this most radiant century it has
become necessary
to divert these energies and utilize them in other directions, to seek the new
path of fellowship
and unity, to unlearn the science of war and devote supreme human forces to the
blessed arts

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of peace. After long trial and experience we are convinced of the harmful and
satanic outcomes
of dissension; now we must seek after means by which the benefits of agreement
and concord
may be enjoyed. When such means are found, we must give them a trial.
Consider the harmful effect of discord and dissension in a family; then reflect
upon the
favors and blessings which descend upon that family when unity exists among its
various
members. What incalculable benefits and blessings would descend upon the great
human
family if unity and brotherhood were established! In this century when the
beneficent results
of unity and the ill effects of discord are so clearly apparent, the means for
the attainment and
accomplishment of human fellowship have appeared in the world.
Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed
and provided the way by which hostility and dissension may be removed from the
human
world. He has left no ground or possibility for strife and disagreement.
First, He has proclaimed the oneness of mankind and specialized religious
teachings for
existing human conditions. The first form of dissension arises from religious
differences.
Bahá'u'lláh has given full teachings to the world which are conducive to
fellowship and unity
in religion. Throughout past centuries each system of religious belief has
boasted of its own
superiority and excellence, abasing and scorning the validity of all others.
Each has proclaimed
its own belief as the light and all others as darkness. Religionists have
considered the world of

humanity as two trees: one divine and merciful, the other satanic; they themselves the branches, leaves and fruit of the divine tree and all others who differ from them in belief the product of the tree which is satanic. Therefore, sedition and warfare, bloodshed and strife have been continuous among them. The greatest cause of human alienation has been religion because each party has considered the belief of the other as anathema and deprived of the mercy of God.

The teachings specialized in Bahá'u'lláh are addressed to humanity. He says, "Ye are all the leaves of one tree." He does not say, "Ye are the leaves of two trees: one divine, the other satanic." He has declared that each individual member of the human family is a leaf or branch upon the Adamic tree; that all are sheltered beneath the protecting mercy and providence of God; that all are the children of God, fruit upon the one tree of His love. God is equally compassionate and kind to all the leaves, branches and fruit of this tree. Therefore, there is no satanic tree whatever—Satan being a product of human minds and of instinctive human tendencies toward error. God alone is Creator, and all are creatures of His might. Therefore, we must love mankind as His creatures, realizing that all are growing upon the tree of His mercy, servants of His omnipotent will and manifestations of His good pleasure. Even though we find a defective branch or leaf upon this tree of humanity or an imperfect blossom, it, nevertheless, belongs to this tree and not to another. Therefore, it is our duty to protect and cultivate this tree until it reaches perfection. If we examine its fruit and find it imperfect, we must strive to make it perfect. There are souls in the human world who are ignorant; we must make them knowing. Some growing upon the tree are weak and ailing; we must assist them toward health and recovery. If they are as infants in development, we must minister to them until they attain maturity. We should never detest and shun them as objectionable and unworthy. We must treat them with honor, respect and kindness; for God has created them and not Satan. They are not manifestations of the wrath of God but evidences of

His divine favor. God, the Creator, has endowed them with physical, mental and spiritual qualities that they may seek to know and do His will; therefore, they are not objects of His wrath and condemnation. In brief, all humanity must be looked upon with love, kindness and respect; for what we behold in them are none other than the signs and traces of God Himself. All are evidences of God; therefore, how shall we be justified in debasing and belittling them, ?????? ?????? ???? ???????????

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uttering anathema and preventing them from drawing near unto His mercy? This is ignorance and injustice, displeasing to God; for in His sight all are His servants. Another cause of dissension and disagreement is the fact that religion has been pronounced at variance with science. Between scientists and the followers of religion there has always been controversy and strife for the reason that the latter have proclaimed religion superior in authority to science and considered scientific announcement opposed to the teachings of religion. Bahá'u'lláh declared that religion is in complete harmony with science and reason. If religious belief and doctrine is at variance with reason, it proceeds from the limited mind of man and not from God; therefore, it is unworthy of belief and not deserving of attention; the heart finds no rest in it, and real faith is impossible. How can man believe that which he knows to be opposed to reason? Is this possible? Can the heart accept that which reason denies? Reason is the first faculty of man, and the religion of God is in harmony with it. Bahá'u'lláh has removed this form of dissension and discord from among mankind and reconciled science with religion by revealing the pure teachings of the divine reality. This accomplishment is specialized to Him in this Day. Still another cause of disagreement and dissension has been the formation of religious sects and denominations. Bahá'u'lláh said that God has sent religion for the purpose of establishing fellowship among humankind and not to create strife and discord, for all religion is founded

upon the love of humanity. Abraham promulgated this principle, Moses summoned all to its recognition, Christ established it, and Muhammad directed mankind to its standard. This is the reality of religion. If we abandon hearsay and investigate the reality and inner significance of the heavenly teachings, we will find the same divine foundation of love for humanity. The purport is that religion is intended to be the cause of unity, love and fellowship and not discord, enmity and estrangement. Man has forsaken the foundation of divine religion and adhered to blind imitations. Each nation has clung to its own imitations, and because these are at variance, warfare, bloodshed and destruction of the foundation of humanity have resulted. True religion is based upon love and agreement. Bahá'u'lláh has said, "If religion and faith are the causes of enmity and sedition, it is far better to be nonreligious, and the absence of religion would be preferable; for we desire religion to be the cause of amity and fellowship. If enmity and hatred exist, irreligion is preferable." Therefore, the removal of this dissension has been specialized in Bahá'u'lláh, for religion is the divine remedy for human antagonism and discord. But when we make the remedy the cause of the disease, it would be better to do without the remedy. Other sources of human dissension are political, racial and patriotic prejudices. These have been removed by Bahá'u'lláh. He has said, and has guarded His statement by rational proofs from the Holy Books, that the world of humanity is one race, the surface of the earth one place of residence and that these imaginary racial barriers and political boundaries are without right or foundation. Man is degraded in becoming the captive of his own illusions and suppositions. The earth is one earth, and the same atmosphere surrounds it. No difference or preference has been made by God for its human inhabitants; but man has laid the foundation of prejudice, hatred and discord with his fellowman by considering nationalities separate in importance and races different in rights and privileges. Diversity of languages has been a fruitful cause of discord. The function of language is to

convey the thought and purpose of one to another. Therefore, it matters not what language man speaks or employs. Sixty years ago Bahá'u'lláh advocated one language as the greatest means of unity and the basis of international conference. He wrote to the kings and rulers of the various nations, recommending that one language should be sanctioned and adopted by all

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governments. According to this each nation should acquire the universal language in addition to its native tongue. The world would then be in close communication, consultation would become general, and dissensions due to diversity of speech would be removed. Another teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is in relation to universal peace: that all mankind must be awakened to and become conscious of the harm of war, that they should be brought to realize the benefits of peace and know that peace is from God while warfare is satanic. Man must emulate the merciful God and turn away from satanic promptings in order that universal inclination shall be toward peace, love and unity and the discord of war vanish.

Lack of equality between man and woman is, likewise, a cause of human dissension. Bahá'u'lláh has named this as an important factor of discord and separation, for so long as humankind remains unequally divided in right and importance between male and female, no unity can be established. In a perfect human body it is not possible for one organ to be complete and another defective. In the great body of human society it is impossible to establish unity and coordination if one part is considered perfect and the other imperfect. When the perfect functions of both parts are in operation, harmony will prevail. God has created man and woman equal as to faculties. He has made no distinction between them. Woman has not reached the level of man in human accomplishment because of the lack of opportunity and education. If educational opportunities were made equal and similar, the two parts, man and woman, would equalize in attainment. God has intended no difference between them that should be productive

of discord. He has endowed all with human faculties, and all are manifestations of His mercy.

If we say man and woman differ in creational endowment, it is contrary to divine justice and intention. Both are human. If God has created one perfect and the other defective, He is unjust.

But God is just; all are perfect in His intention and creative endowment. To assume imperfection in the creature is to presuppose imperfection in the almighty Creator. The soul that excels in attainment of His attributes and graces is most acceptable before God.

We are considering the divine plan for the reconciliation of the religious systems of the world. Bahá'u'lláh has said that if one intelligent member be selected from each of the varying religious systems, and these representatives come together seeking to investigate the reality of religion, they would establish an interreligious body before which all disputes and differences of belief could be presented for consideration and settlement. Such questions could then be weighed and viewed from the standpoint of reality and all imitations be discarded. By this method and procedure all sects, denominations and systems would become one. Do not question the practicability of this, and be not astonished. It has been accomplished and effected in Persia. In that country the various religionists have conjoined in investigating reality and have united in complete fellowship and love. No traces of discord or differences remain among them; now affection and unity are manifest instead. They live together in harmony and accord like a single family. Antagonism and strife have passed away; love and agreement have taken the place of hatred and animosity. Furthermore, those souls who have followed Bahá'u'lláh and attained this condition of fellowship and affiliation are Muslims, Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Nestorians, Sunnites, Shiites and others. No discord exists among them. This is a proof of the possibility of unification among the religionists of the world through practical means. Imitations and prejudices which have held men apart have been discarded, and the reality of religion envelops them in a perfect unity. When reality

envelops the soul of man, love is possible. The divine purpose in religion is pure love and agreement. The Prophets of God manifested complete love for all. Each One announced the glad tidings of His successor, and each subsequent One confirmed the teachings and prophecies

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of the Prophet Who preceded Him. There was no disagreement or variance in the reality of

Their teaching and mission. Discord has arisen among Their followers, who have lost sight of

reality and hold fast to imitations. If imitations be done away with and the radiant shining

reality dawn in the souls of men, love and unity must prevail. In this way humanity will be

rescued from the strife and wars which have prevailed for thousands of years; dissensions will

pass away and the illumination of unity dawn. Consider how all the Prophets of God were

persecuted and what hardships They experienced. Jesus Christ endured affliction and accepted

martyrdom upon the cross in order to summon mankind to unity and love. What sacrifice could

be greater? He brought the religion of love and fellowship into the world.

Shall we make use

of it to create discord, violence and hatred among mankind?

Moses was persecuted and driven out into the desert, Abraham was banished, Muhammad

took refuge in caves, the Báb was killed and Bahá'u'lláh was exiled and imprisoned forty years.

Yet all of Them desired fellowship and love among men. They endured hardships, suffered

persecution and death for our sakes that we might be taught to love one another and be united

and affiliated instead of discordant and at variance. Enough of these long centuries which have

brought such vicissitudes and hardships into the world through strife and hatred. Now in this

radiant century let us try to do the will of God that we may be rescued from these things of

darkness and come forth into the boundless illumination of heaven, shunning division and

welcoming the divine oneness of humanity. Perchance, God willing, this terrestrial world may

become as a celestial mirror upon which we may behold the imprint of the traces

of Divinity,
 and the fundamental qualities of a new creation may be reflected from the
 reality of love shining
 in human hearts. From the light and semblance of God in us may it be, indeed,
 proved and
 witnessed that God has created man after His own image and likeness.
 O my God! O my God! Verily, I invoke Thee and supplicate before Thy threshold,
 asking
 Thee that all Thy mercies may descend upon these souls. Specialize them for Thy
 favor and
 Thy truth.
 O Lord! Unite and bind together the hearts, join in accord all the souls, and
 exhilarate the
 spirits through the signs of Thy sanctity and oneness. O Lord! Make these faces
 radiant through
 the light of Thy oneness. Strengthen the loins of Thy servants in the service
 of Thy kingdom.
 O Lord, Thou possessor of infinite mercy! O Lord of forgiveness and pardon!
 Forgive our
 sins, pardon our shortcomings, and cause us to turn to the kingdom of Thy
 clemency, invoking
 the kingdom of might and power, humble at Thy shrine and submissive before the
 glory of
 Thine evidences.
 O Lord God! Make us as waves of the sea, as flowers of the garden, united,
 agreed through
 the bounties of Thy love. O Lord! Dilate the breasts through the signs of Thy
 oneness, and
 make all mankind as stars shining from the same height of glory, as perfect
 fruits growing upon
 Thy tree of life.
 Verily, Thou art the Almighty, the Self-Subsistent, the Giver, the Forgiving,
 the Pardoner,
 the Omniscient, the One Creator.

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15 July 1912

Talk at Home of Dr. and Mrs. Florian Krug

830 Park Avenue, New York

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 236-237)

I am greatly pleased to see you. Your hearts are illumined by the lights of

Bahá. This meeting is in reality a divine, celestial assembly under the favor of God, for we have no other purpose than praising and meeting God. The prayer you have just offered is a prayer of thankfulness.

Thankfulness is of various kinds. There is a verbal thanksgiving which is confined to a mere utterance of gratitude. This is of no importance because perchance the tongue may give thanks while the heart is unaware of it. Many who offer thanks to God are of this type, their spirits and hearts unconscious of thanksgiving. This is mere usage, just as when we meet, receive a gift and say thank you, speaking the words without significance. One may say thank you a thousand times while the heart remains thankless, ungrateful. Therefore, mere verbal thanksgiving is without effect. But real thankfulness is a cordial giving of thanks from the heart.

When man in response to the favors of God manifests susceptibilities of conscience, the heart is happy, the spirit is exhilarated. These spiritual susceptibilities are ideal thanksgiving.

There is a cordial thanksgiving, too, which expresses itself in the deeds and actions of man when his heart is filled with gratitude. For example, God has conferred upon man the gift of guidance, and in thankfulness for this great gift certain deeds must emanate from him. To express his gratitude for the favors of God man must show forth praiseworthy actions. In response to these bestowals he must render good deeds, be self-sacrificing, loving the servants of God, forfeiting even life for them, showing kindness to all the creatures. He must be severed from the world, attracted to the Kingdom of Abhá, the face radiant, the tongue eloquent, the ear attentive, striving day and night to attain the good pleasure of God. Whatsoever he wishes to do must be in harmony with the good pleasure of God. He must observe and see what is the will of God and act accordingly. There can be no doubt that such commendable deeds are thankfulness for the favors of God.

Consider how grateful anyone becomes when healed from sickness, when treated kindly

by another or when a service is rendered by another, even though it may be of the least consequence. If we forget such favors, it is an evidence of ingratitude. Then it will be said a loving-kindness has been done, but we are thankless, not appreciating this love and favor. Physically and spiritually we are submerged in the sea of God's favor. He has provided our foods, drink and other requirements; His favors encompass us from all directions. The sustenances provided for man are blessings. Sight, hearing and all his faculties are wonderful gifts. These blessings are innumerable; no matter how many are mentioned, they are still endless. Spiritual blessings are likewise endless—spirit, consciousness, thought, memory, perception, ideation and other endowments. By these He has guided us, and we enter His Kingdom. He has opened the doors of all good before our faces. He has vouchsafed eternal

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glory. He has summoned us to the Kingdom of heaven. He has enriched us by the bestowals of God. Every day he has proclaimed new glad tidings. Every hour fresh bounties descend. Consider how all the people are asleep, and ye are awake. They are dead, and ye are alive through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. They are blind while ye are endowed with perceptive sight. They are deprived of the love of God, but in your hearts it exists and is glowing. Consider these bestowals and favors. Therefore, in thanksgiving for them ye must act in accordance with the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Ye must read the Tablets—the Hidden Words, Ishráqát, Glad Tidings—all the holy utterances, and act according to them. This is real thanksgiving, to live in accord with these utterances. This is true thankfulness and the divine bestowal. This is thanksgiving and glorification of God. I hope you all may attain thereto, be mindful of these favors of God and be attentive. It is my hope that I may go away from New York with a happy heart, and my heart is happy when

the friends of God love each other, when they manifest the mercy of God to all people. If I see this, I shall go away happy.

Salutations!

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23 July 1912

Talk at Hotel Victoria

Boston, Massachusetts

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 238-239)

The Bahá'ís must not engage in political movements which lead to sedition.

They must

interest themselves in movements which conduce to law and order. In Persia at the present time

the Bahá'ís have no part in the revolutionary upheavals which have terminated in lawlessness

and rebellion. Nevertheless, a Bahá'í may hold a political office and be interested in politics of

the right type. Ministers, state officials and governor-generals in Persia are Bahá'ís, and there

are many other Bahá'ís holding governmental positions; but nowhere throughout the world

should the followers of Bahá'u'lláh be engaged in seditious movements.

For example, if there

should be an uprising here in America having for its purpose the establishment of a despotic

government, the Bahá'ís should not be connected with it.

The Bahá'í Cause covers all economic and social questions under the heading and ruling

of its laws. The essence of the Bahá'í spirit is that, in order to establish a better social order and

economic condition, there must be allegiance to the laws and principles of government. Under

the laws which are to govern the world, the socialists may justly demand human rights but

without resort to force and violence. The governments will enact these laws, establishing just

legislation and economics in order that all humanity may enjoy a full measure of welfare and

privilege; but this will always be according to legal protection and procedure.

Without legislative administration, rights and demands fail, and the welfare of the commonwealth cannot be realized. Today the method of demand is the strike and resort to force, which is manifestly wrong and destructive of human foundations. Rightful privilege and demand must be set forth in laws and regulations. While thousands are considering these questions, we have more essential purposes. The fundamentals of the whole economic condition are divine in nature and are associated with the world of the heart and spirit. This is fully explained in the Bahá'í teaching, and without knowledge of its principles no improvement in the economic state can be realized. The Bahá'ís will bring about this improvement and betterment but not through sedition and appeal to physical force—not through warfare, but welfare. Hearts must be so cemented together, love must become so dominant that the rich shall most willingly extend assistance to the poor and take steps to establish these economic adjustments permanently. If it is accomplished in this way, it will be most praiseworthy because then it will be for the sake of God and in the pathway of His service. For example, it will be as if the rich inhabitants of a city should say, "It is neither just nor lawful that we should possess great wealth while there is abject poverty in this community," and then willingly give their wealth to the poor, retaining only as much as will enable them to live comfortably. Strive, therefore, to create love in the hearts in order that they may become glowing and radiant. When that love is shining, it will permeate other hearts even as this electric light

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illuminates its surroundings. When the love of God is established, everything else will be realized. This is the true foundation of all economics. Reflect upon it. Endeavor to become the cause of the attraction of souls rather than to enforce minds. Manifest true economics to the people. Show what love is, what kindness is, what true severance is and

generosity. This is the
important thing for you to do. Act in accordance with the teachings of
Bahá'u'lláh. All His
Books will be translated. Now is the time for you to live in accordance with
His words. Let
your deeds be the real translation of their meaning. Economic questions will
not attract hearts.
The love of God alone will attract them. Economic questions are most
interesting; but the power
which moves, controls and attracts the hearts of men is the love of God.

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24 July 1912
Talk to Theosophical Society
The Kensington
Exeter and Boylston Streets, Boston, Massachusetts
Notes by Edna McKinney
(Promulgation, pp. 239-243)

In the world of existence there is nothing so important as spirit, nothing so essential as the spirit of man. The spirit of man is the most noble of phenomena. The spirit of man is the meeting between man and God. The spirit of man is the animus of human life and the

collective center
of all human virtues. The spirit of man is the cause of the illumination of
this world. The world
may be likened to the body; man is the spirit of the body, because the light of
the world is the
human spirit. Man is the life of the world, and the life of man is the spirit.
The happiness of the
world depends upon man, and the happiness of man is dependent upon the spirit.
The world
may be likened to the lamp chimney, whereas man is the light. Man himself may
be likened to
the lamp; his spirit is the light within the lamp. Therefore, we will speak of
this spirit.
The philosophers of the world are divided into two classes: materialists, who
deny the spirit
and its immortality, and the divine philosophers, the wise men of God, the true
illuminati who
believe in the spirit and its continuance hereafter. The ancient philosophers
taught that man
consists simply of the material elements which compose his cellular structure
and that when
this composition is disintegrated the life of man becomes extinct. They
reasoned that man is
body only, and from this elemental composition the organs and their functions,
the senses,
powers and attributes which characterize man have proceeded, and that these
disappear
completely with the physical body. This is practically the statement of all the
materialists.
The divine philosophers proclaim that the spirit of man is ever-living and
eternal, and
because of the objections of the materialists, these wise men of God have
advanced rational
proofs to support the validity of their statement. Inasmuch as the
materialistic philosophers
deny the Books of God, scriptural demonstration is not evidence to them, and
materialistic
proofs are necessary. Answering them, the men of divine knowledge have said
that all existing
phenomena may be resolved into grades or kingdoms, classified progressively as
mineral,
vegetable, animal and human, each of which possesses its degree of function and
intelligence.
When we consider the mineral, we find that it exists and is possessed of the
power of affinity
or combination. The vegetable possesses the qualities of the mineral plus the
augmentative

virtue or power of growth. It is, therefore, evident that the vegetable kingdom is superior to the mineral. The animal kingdom in turn possesses the qualities of the mineral and vegetable plus the five senses of perception whereof the kingdoms below it are lacking. Likewise, the power of memory inherent in the animal does not exist in the lower kingdoms. Just as the animal is more noble than the vegetable and mineral, so man is superior to the animal. The animal is bereft of ideality—that is to say, it is a captive of the world of nature and not in touch with that which lies within and beyond nature; it is without spiritual susceptibilities, deprived of the attractions of consciousness, unconscious of the world of God

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and incapable of deviating from the law of nature. It is different with man. Man is possessed of the emanations of consciousness; he has perception, ideality and is capable of discovering the mysteries of the universe. All the industries, inventions and facilities surrounding our daily life were at one time hidden secrets of nature, but the reality of man penetrated them and made them subject to his purposes. According to nature's laws they should have remained latent and hidden; but man, having transcended those laws, discovered these mysteries and brought them out of the plane of the invisible into the realm of the known and visible. How wonderful is the spirit of man! One of the mysteries of natural phenomena is electricity. Man has discovered this illimitable power and made it captive to his uses. How many of nature's secrets have been penetrated and revealed! Columbus, while in Spain, discovered America. Man has accurately determined that the sun is stationary while the earth revolves about it. The animal cannot do this. Man perceives the mirage to be an illusion. This is beyond the power of the animal. The animal can only know through sense impressions and cannot grasp intellectual realities. The animal cannot conceive of the power of thought. This is an abstract intellectual matter and not limited to the senses. The animal is incapable of knowing that the earth is

round. In brief,
abstract intellectual phenomena are human powers. All creation below the
kingdom of man is
the captive of nature; it cannot deviate in the slightest degree from
nature's laws. But man
wrests the sword of dominion from nature's hand and uses it upon nature's
head. For example,
it is a natural exigency that man should be a dweller upon the earth, but the
power of the human
spirit transcends this limitation, and he soars aloft in airplanes. This is
contrary to the law and
requirement of nature. He sails at high speed upon the ocean and dives beneath
its surface in
submarines. He imprisons the human voice in a phonograph and communicates in
the twinkling
of an eye from East to West. These are things we know to be contrary to the
limitations of
natural law. Man transcends nature, while the mineral, vegetable and animal are
helplessly
subject to it. This can be done only through the power of the spirit, because
the spirit is the
reality.

In the physical powers and senses, however, man and the animal are partners. In
fact, the
animal is often superior to man in sense perception. For instance, the vision
of some animals is
exceedingly keen and the hearing of others most acute. Consider the instinct of
a dog: how
much greater than that of man. But, although the animal shares with man all the
physical virtues
and senses, a spiritual power has been bestowed upon man of which the animal is
devoid. This
is a proof that there is something in man above and beyond the endowment of the
animal—a
faculty and virtue peculiar to the human kingdom which is lacking in the lower
kingdoms of
existence. This is the spirit of man. All these wonderful human accomplishments
are due to the
efficacy and penetrating power of the spirit of man. If man were bereft of this
spirit, none of
these accomplishments would have been possible. This is as evident as the sun
at midday.

All the organisms of material creation are limited to an image or form. That is
to say, each
created material being is possessed of a form; it cannot possess two forms at
the same time.

For example, a body may be spherical, triangular or square; but it is

impossible for it to be two
of these shapes simultaneously. It may be triangular, but if it is to become
square, it must first
rid itself of the triangular shape. It is absolutely impossible for it to be
both at the same time.
Therefore, it is evident in the reality of material organisms that different
forms cannot be
simultaneously possessed. In the spiritual reality of man, however, all
geometrical figures can
be simultaneously conceived, while in physical realities one image must be
forsaken in order
that another may be possible. This is the law of change and transformation, and
change and
transformation are precursors of mortality. Were it not for this change in
form, phenomena
would be immortal; but because the phenomenal existence is subject to
transformation, it is
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mortal. The reality of man, however, is possessed of all virtues; it is not
necessary for him to
give up one image for another as mere physical bodies do. Therefore, in that
reality there is no
change or transformation; it is immortal and everlasting. The body of man may
be in America
while his spirit is laboring and working in the Far East, discovering,
organizing and planning.
While occupied in governing, making laws and erecting a building in Russia, his
body is still
here in America. What is this power which, notwithstanding that it is embodied
in America, is
operating at the same time in the Orient, organizing, destroying, upbuilding?
It is the spirit of
man. This is irrefutable.
When you wish to reflect upon or consider a matter, you consult something
within you.
You say, shall I do it, or shall I not do it? Is it better to make this journey
or abandon it? Whom
do you consult? Who is within you deciding this question? Surely there is a
distinct power, an
intelligent ego. Were it not distinct from your ego, you would not be
consulting it. It is greater
than the faculty of thought. It is your spirit which teaches you, which advises
and decides upon
matters. Who is it that interrogates? Who is it that answers? There is no doubt
that it is the spirit

and that there is no change or transformation in it, for it is not a composition of elements, and anything that is not composed of elements is eternal. Change and transformation are peculiarities of composition. There is no change and transformation in the spirit. In proof of this, the body may become weakened in its members. It may be dismembered, or one of its members may be incapacitated. The whole body may be paralyzed; and yet the mind, the spirit, remains ever the same. The mind decides; the thought is perfect; and yet the hand is withered, the feet have become useless, the spinal column is paralyzed, and there is no muscular movement at all, but the spirit is in the same status. Dismember a healthy man; the spirit is not dismembered. Amputate his feet; his spirit is there. He may become lame; the spirit is not affected. The spirit is ever the same; no change or transformation can you perceive, and because there is no change or transformation, it is everlasting and permanent. Consider man while in the state of sleep; it is evident that all his parts and members are at a standstill, are functionless. His eye does not see, his ear does not hear, his feet and hands are motionless; but, nevertheless, he does see in the world of dreams, he does hear, he speaks, he walks, he may even fly in an airplane. Therefore, it becomes evident that though the body be dead, yet the spirit is alive and permanent. Nay, the perceptions may be keener when man's body is asleep, the flight may be higher, the hearing may be more acute; all the functions are there, and yet the body is at a standstill. Hence it is proof that there is a spirit in the man, and in this spirit there is no distinction as to whether the body be asleep or absolutely dead and dependent. The spirit is not incapacitated by these conditions; it is not bereft of its existence; it is not bereft of its perfections. The proofs are many, innumerable. These are all rational proofs. Nobody can refute them. As we have shown that there is a spirit and that this spirit is permanent and everlasting, we must strive to learn of it. May you become informed of its power, hasten to render it divine, to have it become sanctified and holy and make it the very light of the world illuminating the East and the West.

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25 July 1912

Talk at Hotel Victoria

Boston, Massachusetts

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, p. 244)

I am very happy to greet you here today. This is the second time the breeze of God has

wafted over Boston. I am expecting results from this visit and hope that my coming may not

be fruitless. The results I expect are these: that the individual soul shall be released from self

and desire and freed from the bondage of satanic suggestions. May the mirrors of hearts be

cleansed from dust in order that the Sun of Truth may be reflected therein.

Man possesses two kinds of susceptibilities: the natural emotions, which are like dust upon

the mirror, and spiritual susceptibilities, which are merciful and heavenly characteristics.

There is a power which purifies the mirror from dust and transforms its reflection into

intense brilliancy and radiance so that spiritual susceptibilities may chasten the hearts and

heavenly bestowals sanctify them. What is the dust which obscures the mirror?

It is attachment

to the world, avarice, envy, love of luxury and comfort, haughtiness and self-desire; this is the

dust which prevents reflection of the rays of the Sun of Reality in the mirror.

The natural

emotions are blameworthy and are like rust which deprives the heart of the bounties of God.

But sincerity, justice, humility, severance, and love for the believers of God will purify the

mirror and make it radiant with reflected rays from the Sun of Truth.

It is my hope that you may consider this matter, that you may search out your own

imperfections and not think of the imperfections of anybody else. Strive with all your power to

be free from imperfections. Heedless souls are always seeking faults in others.

What can the
hypocrite know of others' faults when he is blind to his own? This is the
meaning of the words
in the Seven Valleys. It is a guide for human conduct. As long as a man does
not find his own
faults, he can never become perfect. Nothing is more fruitful for man than the
knowledge of
his own shortcomings. The Blessed Perfection says, "I wonder at the man who
does not find
his own imperfections."

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5 August 1912

Talk at Dublin Inn

Dublin, New Hampshire

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 245-247)

The people of Christianity have clung to literal interpretation of the statement in the Gospel that Christ came from heaven. The Jews, likewise, at the time of His manifestation held to outward and visible expectation of the fulfillment of the prophecies. They said, "The Messiah shall appear from heaven. This man came from Nazareth; we know his house; we know his parents and people. It is only hearsay that he descended from heaven; this cannot be proved." The text of the Gospel states that He came from heaven although physically born of the

mother. The meaning is that the divine reality of Christ was from heaven, but the body was born of Mary. Therefore, He came according to the prophecies of the Holy Book and, likewise, according to natural law—His reality from heaven, His body earthly. As He came before, so must He come this time in the same way. But some arise with objections, saying, “We must have literal proof of this through the senses.”

The reality of Christ was always in heaven and will always be. This is the intention of the

text of the Gospel. For while Jesus Christ walked upon the earth, He said, “The Son of Man is

in heaven.” Therefore, holding to literal interpretation and visible fulfillment of the text of the

Holy Books is simply imitation of ancestral forms and beliefs; for when we perceive the reality

of Christ, these texts and statements become clear and perfectly reconcilable with each other.

Unless we perceive reality, we cannot understand the meanings of the Holy Books, for these

meanings are symbolical and spiritual—such as, for instance, the raising of Lazarus, which has

spiritual interpretation. We must first establish the fact that the power of God is infinite,

unlimited, and that it is within that power to accomplish anything.

Second, we must understand the interpretation of Christ’s words concerning the dead. A

certain disciple came to Christ and asked permission to go and bury his father. He answered,

“Let the dead bury their dead.” Therefore, Christ designated as dead some who were still

living—that is, let the living dead, the spiritually dead, bury your father. They were dead

because they were not believers in Christ. Although physically alive, they were dead spiritually.

This is the meaning of Christ’s words, “That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is

born of Spirit is spirit.” He meant that those who were simply born of the human body were

dead spiritually, while those quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit were living and

eternally alive. These are the interpretations of Christ Himself. Reflect upon them, and the

meanings of the Holy Books will become clear as the sun at midday.

The Holy Books have their special terminologies which must be known and understood.

Physicians have their own peculiar terms; architects, philosophers have their characteristic expressions; poets have their phrases; and scientists, their nomenclature. In the scripture we read that Zion is dancing. It is evident that this has other than literal interpretation. The meaning

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is that the people of Zion shall rejoice. The Jews said Christ was not the Messiah but Antichrist, because one of the signs of the Messiah's coming was the dancing of Mount Zion, which had not yet come to pass. In reality, when Christ appeared, not only Mount Zion but all Palestine danced and rejoiced. Again in scriptures it is said, "The trees of the field shall clap their hands."

This is symbolical. There are terms and expressions of usage in every language which cannot

be taken literally. For instance, in oriental countries it is customary to say,

"When my friend

entered the house, the doors and walls began to sing and dance." In Persia

they say, "Get at the

head," meaning engage in the matter according to its own terms and usages.

All these have

other and inner meanings.

You have asked concerning approval of Christian Science treatment and healing.

Spirit has

influence; prayer has spiritual effect. Therefore, we pray, "O God! Heal this sick one!"

Perchance God will answer. Does it matter who prays? God will answer the prayer of every

servant if that prayer is urgent. His mercy is vast, illimitable. He answers the prayers of all His

servants. He answers the prayer of this plant. The plant prays potentially,

"O God! Send me

rain!" God answers the prayer, and the plant grows. God will answer anyone.

He answers

prayers potentially. Before we were born into this world did we not pray, "O God! Give me a

mother; give me two fountains of bright milk; purify the air for my breathing; grant me rest

and comfort; prepare food for my sustenance and living"? Did we not pray potentially for these

needed blessings before we were created? When we came into this world, did we not find our

prayers answered? Did we not find mother, father, food, light, home and every

other necessity
 and blessing, although we did not actually ask for them? Therefore, it is
 natural that God will
 give to us when we ask Him. His mercy is all-encircling.
 But we ask for things which the divine wisdom does not desire for us, and there
 is no answer
 to our prayer. His wisdom does not sanction what we wish. We pray, "O God!
 Make me
 wealthy!" If this prayer were universally answered, human affairs would be at
 a standstill.
 There would be none left to work in the streets, none to till the soil, none to
 build, none to run
 the trains. Therefore, it is evident that it would not be well for us if all
 prayers were answered.
 The affairs of the world would be interfered with, energies crippled and
 progress hindered. But
 whatever we ask for which is in accord with divine wisdom, God will answer.
 Assuredly!
 For instance, a very feeble patient may ask the doctor to give him food which
 would be
 positively dangerous to his life and condition. He may beg for roast meat. The
 doctor is kind
 and wise. He knows it would be dangerous to his patient so he refuses to allow
 it. The doctor
 is merciful; the patient, ignorant. Through the doctor's kindness the patient
 recovers; his life is
 saved. Yet the patient may cry out that the doctor is unkind, not good, because
 he refuses to
 answer his pleading.
 God is merciful. In His mercy He answers the prayers of all His servants when
 according
 to His supreme wisdom it is necessary.

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6 August 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

Dublin, New Hampshire

Notes by Howard MacNutt

(Promulgation, pp. 247-252)

Today we are enjoying temperate weather. As there are many strangers present,
 we will

answer questions.

Question: Are not all Christians Bahá'ís? Is there any difference?

Answer: When Christians act according to the teachings of Christ, they are called Bahá'ís.

For the foundations of Christianity and the religion of Bahá'u'lláh are one. The foundations of

all the divine Prophets and Holy Books are one. The difference among them is one of

terminology only. Each springtime is identical with the former springtime. The distinction

between them is only one of the calendar—1911, 1912 and so on. The difference between a

Christian and a Bahá'í, therefore, is this: There was a former springtime, and there is a

springtime now. No other difference exists because the foundations are the same. Whoever acts

completely in accordance with the teachings of Christ is a Bahá'í. The purpose is the essential

meaning of Christian, not the mere word. The purpose is the sun itself and not the dawning

points. For though the sun is one sun, its dawning points are many. We must not adore the

dawning points but worship the sun. We must adore the reality of religion and not blindly cling

to the appellation Christianity. The Sun of Reality must be worshiped and followed. We must

seek the fragrance of the rose from whatever bush it is blooming—whether oriental or western.

Be seekers of light, no matter from which lantern it shines forth. Be not lovers of the lantern.

At one time the light has shone from a lantern in the East, now in the West. If it comes from

North, South, from whatever direction it proceeds, follow the light. Let me illustrate further. A

certain person bestowed a coin upon five beggars. They resolved to spend it for food. The

Englishman said, "Buy grapes." The Turk wanted uzum, the Arab 'anab, the Greek stafi' li, the

Persian angúr. Not understanding each other's language, they quarreled and fought. A stranger

came along. He was familiar with all five languages. He said, "Give me the coin; I will buy

what you wish." When he brought them grapes, they were all satisfied. They wanted the same

thing but differed in the term only. Briefly, when reality dawns in the midst of the religions, all

will be unified and reconciled.

Question: Does 'Abdu'l-Bahá find Christianity is not lived up to and carried out in America?

Answer: My meaning is that it should be completely carried out and lived up to. Man needs eyes, ears, arms, a head, feet and various other members. When he possesses all and all work together, there is symmetry and perfection in him. So Christ said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," meaning that perfection is the requirement of Christianity. Be the image and likeness of God. This is not easy. It necessitates the focalization of all heavenly virtues. It requires that we become recipients of all the perfections

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of God. Then we become His image and likeness. For in the Bible it is stated, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." The attainment of this is most difficult.

When Christ appeared with those marvelous breaths of the Holy Spirit, the children of Israel

said, "We are quite independent of him; we can do without him and follow Moses; we have a

book and in it are found the teachings of God; what need, therefore, have we of this man?"

Christ said to them, "The book sufficeth you not." It is possible for a man to hold to a book of

medicine and say, "I have no need of a doctor; I will act according to the book; in it every

disease is named, all symptoms are explained, the diagnosis of each ailment is completely

written out, and a prescription for each malady is furnished; therefore, why do I need a doctor?"

This is sheer ignorance. A physician is needed to prescribe. Through his skill the principles of

the book are correctly and effectively applied until the patient is restored to health. Christ was

a heavenly Physician. He brought spiritual health and healing into the world. Bahá'u'lláh is,

likewise, a divine Physician. He has revealed prescriptions for removing disease from the body

politic and has remedied human conditions by spiritual power.

Therefore, mere knowledge is not sufficient for complete human attainment. The teachings

of the Holy Books need a heavenly power and divine potency to carry them out. A house is not built by mere acquaintance with the plans. Money must be forthcoming; volition is necessary to construct it; a carpenter must be employed in its erection. It is not enough to say, "The plan and purpose of this house are very good; I will live in it." There are no walls of protection, there is no roof of shelter in this mere statement; the house must be actually built before we can live in it.

Briefly, the teachings of the Holy Books need a divine potency to complete their accomplishment in human hearts. In Persia Bahá'u'lláh reared and taught souls, established a bond of affiliation among various peoples and united divergent religious beliefs to such an extent that twenty thousand devoted ones sacrificed themselves for the Cause of God in the glorious unity of martyrdom. No differences whatever remained among these blessed souls—Christians, Jews, Muslims, Zoroastrians, all blended, unified and agreed through the potency of His heavenly power, not by mere words, not by merely saying, "Unity is good, and love is praiseworthy."

Bahá'u'lláh not only proclaimed this unity and love; He established it. As a heavenly Physician He not only gave prescriptions for these ailments of discord and hatred but accomplished the actual healing. We may read in a medical book that a certain form of illness requires such and such a remedy. While this may be absolutely true, the remedy is useless unless there be volition and executive force to apply it. Every man in the king's army can give a command; but when the king speaks, it is carried out. This one, that one, may say, "Go conquer a country"; but when the king says, "Go!", the army advances. Therefore, it is evident that the confirmation of the Holy Spirit and impelling influence of a heavenly power are needed to accomplish the divine purpose in human hearts and conditions. Jesus Christ, single, solitary and alone, accomplished what all the kings of the earth could not have carried out. If all the kingdoms and nations of the world had combined to effect it, they would have

failed.

It is, therefore, evident and proved that an effort must be put forward to complete the purpose and plan of the teachings of God in order that in this great Day of days the world may be reformed, souls resuscitated, a new spirit of life found, hearts become illumined, mankind rescued from the bondage of nature, saved from the baseness of materialism and attain spirituality and radiance in attraction toward the divine Kingdom. This is necessary; this is needful. Mere reading of the Holy Books and texts will not suffice.
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Many years ago in Baghdád I saw a certain officer sitting upon the ground. Before him a large paper was placed into which he was sticking needles tipped with small red and white flags. First he would stick them into the paper, then thoughtfully pull them out and change their position. I watched him with curious interest for a long time, then asked, "What are you doing?" He replied, "I have in mind something which is historically related of Napoleon I during his war against Austria. One day, it is said, his secretary found him sitting upon the ground as I am now doing, sticking needles into a paper before him. His secretary inquired what it meant. Napoleon answered, 'I am on the battlefield figuring out my next victory. You see, Italy and Austria are defeated, and France is triumphant.' In the great campaign which followed, everything came out just as he said. His army carried his plans to a complete success. Now, I am doing the same as Napoleon, figuring out a great campaign of military conquest." I said, "Where is your army? Napoleon had an army already equipped when he figured out his victory. You have no army. Your forces exist only on paper. You have no power to conquer countries. First get ready your army, then sit upon the ground with your needles." We need an army to attain victory in the spiritual world; mere plans are not sufficient; ideas and principles are helpless without a divine power to put them into effect. Aside from all this, there is need of the stimulus of the joy of glad tidings

in human hearts.

Certain spiritual attraction is requisite in order that hearts may willingly take the step forward in the divine Cause. We must become attracted to God. The breaths of the Holy Spirit must take effect. Unless this is so, it is impossible for the teachings of God to accomplish in us. An ideal power is necessary. The people of America have remarkably quick perception, intelligence and understanding. Their thoughts are free and not fettered by the yoke of governmental tyranny. They should investigate reality and not be occupied with ancestral forms and imitations. Consider what Christ accomplished. He caused souls to attain a station where with complete willingness and joy they laid down their lives. What a power! Thousands of human souls, in the utmost joy because of their spiritual susceptibilities, were so attracted to God that they were dispossessed of volition, deprived of will in His path. If they had been told simply that sacrifice in the path of God was good and praiseworthy, this would never have happened. They would not have acted. Christ attracted them, wrested the reins of control from them, and they went forth in ecstasy to sacrifice themselves.

Qurratu'l-'Ayn was a Persian woman without fame and importance—unknown, like all other Persian women. When she saw Bahá'u'lláh, she changed completely, visibly, and looked within another world. The reins of volition were taken out of her hands by heavenly attraction. She was so overcome that physical susceptibilities ceased. Her husband, her sons and her family arose in the greatest hostility against Bahá'u'lláh. She became so attracted to the divine threshold that she forsook everything and went forth to the plain of Badasht, no fear in her heart, dauntless, intrepid, openly proclaiming the message of light which had come to her. The Persian government stood against her. They made every effort to quiet her, they imprisoned her in the governor's house, but she continued to speak. Then she was taken and killed. To her very last breath she spoke with fervid eloquence and so became famous for her complete attraction in the path of God. If she had not seen Bahá'u'lláh, no such

effect would have been
produced. She had read and heard the teachings of scriptures all her life, but
the action and
enkindlement were missing. All women in Persia are enveloped in veils in
public. So
completely covered are they that even the hand is not visible. This rigid
veiling is unspeakable.
Qurratu'l-'Ayn tore off her veils and went forth fearlessly. She was like a
lioness. Her action
caused a great turmoil throughout the land of Persia. So excessive and
compulsory is the
requirement for veiling in the East that the people in the West have no idea of
the excitement

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and indignation produced by the appearance of an unveiled woman.
Qurratu'l-'Ayn lost all
thought of herself and was unconscious of fear in her attraction to God.
Question: Do the Bahá'í women go without veils in the East?
Answer: It is not possible for them to do so universally yet, but the
conditions are not nearly
so restrictive as they were. The Bahá'í men and women meet together. This
is the beginning of
woman's emancipation from the thralldom of centuries. Qurratu'l-'Ayn was
really the liberator
of all Persian women.

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16 August 1912

Talk at Green Acre

Eliot, Maine

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 253-261)

Every subject presented to a thoughtful audience must be supported by rational proofs and logical arguments. Proofs are of four kinds: first, through sense perception; second, through

the reasoning faculty; third, from traditional or scriptural authority; fourth, through the medium of inspiration. That is to say, there are four criteria or standards of judgment by which the human mind reaches its conclusions. We will first consider the criterion of the senses. This is a standard still held to by the materialistic philosophers of the world. They believe that whatever is perceptible to the senses is a verity, a certainty and without doubt existent. For example, they say, "Here is a lamp which you see, and because it is perceptible to the sense of sight, you cannot doubt its existence. There is a tree; your sense of vision assures you of its reality, which is beyond question. This is a man; you see that he is a man; therefore, he exists." In a word, everything confirmed by the senses is assumed to be as undoubted and unquestioned as the product of five multiplied by five; it cannot be twenty-six nor less than twenty-five. Consequently, the materialistic philosophers consider the criterion of the senses to be first and foremost. But in the estimation of the divine philosophers this proof and assurance is not reliable; nay, rather, they deem the standard of the senses to be false because it is imperfect. Sight, for instance, is one of the most important of the senses, yet it is subject to many aberrations and inaccuracies. The eye sees the mirage as a body of water; it regards images in the mirror as realities when they are but reflections. A man sailing upon the river imagines that objects upon the shore are moving, whereas he is in motion, and they are stationary. To the eye the earth appears fixed, while the sun and stars revolve about it. As a matter of fact, the heavenly orbs are stationary, and the earth is turning upon its axis. The colossal suns, planets and constellations which shine in the heavens appear small, nay, infinitesimal to human vision, whereas in reality they are vastly greater than the earth in dimension and volume. A whirling spark appears to the sight as a circle of fire. There are numberless instances of this kind which show the error and inaccuracy of the senses. Therefore, the divine philosophers have considered

this standard of judgment to be defective and unreliable.

The second criterion is that of the intellect. The ancient philosophers in particular considered the intellect to be the most important agency of judgment. Among the wise men of Greece, Rome, Persia and Egypt the criterion of true proof was reason. They held that every matter submitted to the reasoning faculty could be proved true or false and must be accepted or rejected accordingly. But in the estimation of the people of insight this criterion is likewise defective and unreliable, for these same philosophers who held to reason or intellect as the standard of human judgment have differed widely among themselves upon every subject of investigation. The statements of the Greek philosophers are contradictory to the conclusions of

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the Persian sages. Even among the Greek philosophers themselves there is continual variance and lack of agreement upon any given subject. Great difference of thought also prevailed between the wise men of Greece and Rome. Therefore, if the criterion of reason or intellect constituted a correct and infallible standard of judgment, those who tested and applied it should have arrived at the same conclusions. As they differ and are contradictory in conclusions, it is an evidence that the method and standard of test must have been faulty and insufficient.

The third criterion or standard of proof is traditional or scriptural—namely, that every statement or conclusion should be supported by traditions recorded in certain religious books.

When we come to consider even the Holy Books—the Books of God—we are led to ask, “Who understands these books? By what authority of explanation may these Books be understood?”

It must be the authority of human reason, and if reason or intellect finds itself incapable of explaining certain questions, or if the possessors of intellect contradict each other in the interpretation of traditions, how can such a criterion be relied upon for accurate conclusions?

The fourth standard is that of inspiration. In past centuries many philosophers

have claimed illumination or revelation, prefacing their statements by the announcement that “this subject has been revealed through me” or “thus do I speak by inspiration.” Of this class were the philosophers of the Illuminati. Inspirations are the promptings or susceptibilities of the human heart. The promptings of the heart are sometimes satanic. How are we to differentiate them? How are we to tell whether a given statement is an inspiration and prompting of the heart through the merciful assistance or through the satanic agency? Consequently, it has become evident that the four criteria or standards of judgment by which the human mind reaches its conclusions are faulty and inaccurate. All of them are liable to mistake and error in conclusions. But a statement presented to the mind accompanied by proofs which the senses can perceive to be correct, which the faculty of reason can accept, which is in accord with traditional authority and sanctioned by the promptings of the heart, can be adjudged and relied upon as perfectly correct, for it has been proved and tested by all the standards of judgment and found to be complete. When we apply but one test, there are possibilities of mistake. This is self-evident and manifest. We will now consider the subject of love which has been suggested, submitting it to the four standards of judgment and thereby reaching our conclusions. We declare that love is the cause of the existence of all phenomena and that the absence of love is the cause of disintegration or nonexistence. Love is the conscious bestowal of God, the bond of affiliation in all phenomena. We will first consider the proof of this through sense perception. As we look upon the universe, we observe that all composite beings or existing phenomena are made up primarily of single elements bound together by a power of attraction. Through this power of attraction cohesion has become manifest between atoms of these composing elements. The resultant being is a phenomenon of the lower contingent type. The power of cohesion expressed in the mineral kingdom is in reality love or affinity manifested in a low degree according to the exigencies of the mineral world. We take a step

higher into the
vegetable kingdom where we find an increased power of attraction has become
manifest among
the composing elements which form phenomena. Through this degree of attraction
a cellular
admixture is produced among these elements which make up the body of a plant.
Therefore, in
the degree of the vegetable kingdom there is love. We enter the animal kingdom
and find the
attractive power binding together single elements as in the mineral, plus the
cellular admixture
as in the vegetable, plus the phenomena of feelings or susceptibilities. We
observe that the
animals are susceptible to certain affiliation and fellowship and that they
exercise natural
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selection. This elemental attraction, this admixture and selective affinity is
love manifest in the
degree of the animal kingdom.
Finally, we come to the kingdom of man. As this is the superior kingdom, the
light of love
is more resplendent. In man we find the power of attraction among the elements
which compose
his material body, plus the attraction which produces cellular admixture or
augmentative
power, plus the attraction which characterizes the sensibilities of the animal
kingdom, but still
beyond and above all these lower powers we discover in the being of man the
attraction of
heart, the susceptibilities and affinities which bind men together, enabling
them to live and
associate in friendship and solidarity. It is, therefore, evident that in the
world of humanity the
greatest king and sovereign is love. If love were extinguished, the power of
attraction dispelled,
the affinity of human hearts destroyed, the phenomena of human life would
disappear.
This is a proof perceptible to the senses, acceptable to reason, in accord with
traditions and
teachings of the Holy Books and verified by the promptings of human hearts
themselves. It is
a proof upon which we can absolutely rely and declare to be complete. But these
are only
degrees of love which exist in the natural or physical world. Their
manifestation is ever

according to the requirement of natural conditions and standards.
Real love is the love which exists between God and His servants, the love which binds together holy souls. This is the love of the spiritual world, not the love of physical bodies and organisms. For example, consider and observe how the bestowals of God successively descend upon mankind, how the divine effulgences ever shine upon the human world. There can be no doubt that these bestowals, these bounties, these effulgences emanate from love. Unless love be the divine motive, it would be impossible for the heart of man to attain or receive them. Unless love exists, the divine blessing could not descend upon any object or thing. Unless there be love, the recipient of divine effulgence could not radiate and reflect that effulgence upon other objects. If we are of those who perceive, we realize that the bounties of God manifest themselves continuously, even as the rays of the sun unceasingly emanate from the solar center. The phenomenal world through the resplendent effulgence of the sun is radiant and bright. In the same way the realm of hearts and spirits is illumined and resuscitated through the shining rays of the Sun of Reality and the bounties of the love of God. Thereby the world of existence, the kingdom of hearts and spirits, is ever quickened into life. Were it not for the love of God, hearts would be inanimate, spirits would wither, and the reality of man would be bereft of the everlasting bestowals. Consider to what extent the love of God makes itself manifest. Among the signs of His love which appear in the world are the dawning points of His Manifestations. What an infinite degree of love is reflected by the divine Manifestations toward mankind! For the sake of guiding the people They have willingly forfeited Their lives to resuscitate human hearts. They have accepted the cross. To enable human souls to attain the supreme degree of advancement, They have suffered during Their limited years extreme ordeals and difficulties. If Jesus Christ had not possessed love for the world of humanity, surely He would not have welcomed the cross. He was crucified for the love of mankind. Consider the infinite degree

of that love.

Without love for humanity John the Baptist would not have offered his life. It has been likewise

with all the Prophets and Holy Souls. If the Báb had not manifested love for mankind, surely

He would not have offered His breast for a thousand bullets. If

Bahá'u'lláh had not been aflame

with love for humanity, He would not have willingly accepted forty years' imprisonment.

Observe how rarely human souls sacrifice their pleasure or comfort for others, how

improbable that a man would offer his eye or suffer himself to be dismembered for the benefit

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of another. Yet all the divine Manifestations suffered, offered Their lives and blood, sacrificed

Their existence, comfort and all They possessed for the sake of mankind.

Therefore, consider

how much They love. Were it not for Their love for humanity, spiritual love would be mere

nomenclature. Were it not for Their illumination, human souls would not be radiant. How

effective is Their love! This is a sign of the love of God, a ray of the Sun of Reality.

Therefore, we must give praise unto God, for it is the light of His bounty which has shone

upon us through His love which is everlasting. His divine Manifestations have offered Their

lives through love for us. Consider, then, what the love of God means. Were it not for the love

of God, all the spirits would be inanimate. The meaning of this is not physical death; nay,

rather, it is that condition concerning which Christ declared, "Let the dead bury their dead," for

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Were it

not for the love of God, the hearts would not be illumined. Were it not for the love of God, the

pathway of the Kingdom would not be opened. Were it not for the love of God, the Holy Books

would not have been revealed. Were it not for the love of God, the divine Prophets would not

have been sent to the world. The foundation of all these bestowals is the love of God. Therefore,

in the human world there is no greater power than the love of God. It is the

love of God which
has brought us together here tonight. It is the love of God which is
affiliating the East and the
West. It is the love of God which has resuscitated the world. Now we must offer
thanks to God
that such a great bestowal and effulgence has been revealed to us.
We come to another aspect of our subject: Are the workings and effects of love
confined
to this world, or do they extend on and on to another existence? Will its
influence affect our
existence here only, or will it extend to the everlasting life? When we look
upon the human
kingdom, we readily observe that it is superior to all others. In the
differentiation of life in the
world of existence, there are four degrees or kingdoms: the mineral, vegetable,
animal and
human. The mineral kingdom is possessed of a certain virtue which we term
cohesion. The
vegetable kingdom possesses cohesive properties plus the power of growth, or
augmentative
power. The animal kingdom is possessed of the virtues of the mineral and
vegetable plus the
powers of the senses. But the animal, although gifted with sensibilities, is
utterly bereft of
consciousness, absolutely out of touch with the world of consciousness and
spirit. The animal
possesses no powers by which it can make discoveries which lie beyond the realm
of the senses.
It has no power of intellectual origination. For example, an animal located in
Europe is not
capable of discovering the continent of America. It understands only phenomena
which come
within the range of its senses and instinct. It cannot abstractly reason out
anything. The animal
cannot conceive of the earth being spherical or revolving upon its axis. It
cannot apprehend
that the little stars in the heavens are tremendous worlds vastly greater than
the earth. The
animal cannot abstractly conceive of intellect. Of these powers it is bereft.
Therefore, these
powers are peculiar to man, and it is made evident that in the human kingdom
there is a reality
of which the animal is lacking. What is that reality? It is the spirit of man.
By it man is
distinguished above all the other phenomenal kingdoms. Although he possesses
all the virtues
of the lower kingdoms, he is further endowed with the spiritual faculty, the

heavenly gift of
consciousness.

All material phenomena are subject to nature. All material organisms are
captives of nature.

None of them can deviate in the slightest from the laws of nature. This earth,
these great

mountains, the animals with their wonderful powers and instincts cannot go
beyond natural

limitations. All things are captives of nature except man. Man is the sovereign
of nature; he

breaks nature's laws. Though an animal fitted by nature to live upon the
surface of the earth,

he flies in the air like a bird, sails upon the ocean and dives deep beneath
its waves in

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submarines. Man is gifted with a power whereby he penetrates and discovers the
laws of nature,

brings them forth from the world of invisibility into the plane of visibility.

Electricity was once

a latent force of nature. According to nature's laws it should remain a
hidden secret, but the

spirit of man discovered it, brought it forth from its secret depository and
made its phenomena

visible. It is evident and manifest that man is capable of breaking nature's
laws. How does he

accomplish it? Through a spirit with which God has endowed him at creation.

This is a proof

that the spirit of man differentiates and distinguishes him above all the lower
kingdoms. It is

this spirit to which the verse in the Old Testament refers when it states,

"And God said, Let us

make man in our image, after our likeness." The spirit of man alone
penetrates the realities of

God and partakes of the divine bounties.

This great power must evidently be differentiated from the physical body or
temple in

which it is manifested. Observe and understand how this human body changes;
nevertheless,

the spirit of man remains ever in the same condition. For instance, the body
sometimes grows

weak, it becomes strong or stout, sometimes it grows smaller or may be
dismembered, but there

is no effect upon the spirit. The eye may become blind, the foot may be
amputated, but no

imperfection afflicts the spirit. This is proof that the spirit of man is

distinct from his body.

Defects in the body or its members do not imply defects in the spirit. This leads to the accurate conclusion that if the whole body should be subjected to a radical change, the spirit will survive that change; that even if the body of man is destroyed and becomes nonexistent, the spirit of man remains unaffected. For the spirit of man is everlasting. Sometimes the body sleeps, the eyes do not see, the ears do not hear, the members cease to act, every function is as inactive as death; nevertheless, the spirit sees, hears and soars on high. For it is possessed of these faculties which operate without the instrumentality of the body. In the world of thought it sees without eyes, hears without ears and travels without the motion of foot. Without physical force it exercises every function. This makes it evident that during sleep the spirit is alive though the body is as dead. In the world of dreams the body becomes absolutely passive, but the spirit still functions actively, possessed of all susceptibilities. This leads to the conclusion that the life of the spirit is neither conditional nor dependent upon the life of the body. At most it can be said that the body is a mere garment utilized by the spirit. If that garment be destroyed, the wearer is not affected but is, in fact, protected. Furthermore, all phenomena are subject to changes from one condition to another, and the revolution caused by this transformation produces a form of nonexistence. For instance, when a man is transformed from the human kingdom to the mineral, we say that he is dead, for he has relinquished the physical form of man and assumed the condition of the mineral substances. This transformation or transmutation is called death. Therefore, it follows that no phenomenal organism can be possessed of two forms at the same time. If an object or phenomenon presents a triangular shape, it cannot simultaneously possess the shape of a square. If it is spherical, it cannot at the same time be pentagonal or hexagonal. In order to assume any given figure or form it must relinquish its previous shape or dimension. Thus the triangular must be abandoned to assume the square; the square must change to become a pentagon. These

transformations or changes from one condition to another are equivalent to death. But the reality of man, the human spirit, is simultaneously possessed of all forms and figures without being bereft of any of them. It does not require transformation from one concept to another. Were it to be bereft of one or all figures, we would then say it has been transferred to another, and this would be equivalent to death. But as the human spirit possesses all the figures simultaneously, it has no transformation or death.

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Again, according to natural philosophy it is an assured fact that single or simple elements are indestructible. As nature is indestructible, every simple element of nature is lasting and permanent. Death and annihilation affect only compounds and compositions. That is to say, compositions are destructible. When decomposition takes place, death occurs. For example, certain single elements have combined to make this flower. When this combination is disintegrated, this composition decomposed, the flower dies as an organism of the vegetable kingdom. But the single elements of which this flower is composed do not suffer death, for all single elements are permanent, everlasting and not subject to destruction. They are indestructible because they are single and not compound. Thus they cannot disintegrate nor become separated in their component atoms but are single, simple and, therefore, everlasting. If an elementary substance is possessed of immortality, how can the human spirit or reality, which is wholly above combination and composition, be destroyed? Nay, rather, that spirit, which is all in all, is a unit and not a compound. Its destruction, therefore, is not possible. The spirit of man transcends the qualities and attributes of any natural element. It is greater in attributes than gold, silver or iron, which are single elements and indestructible. As they are free from destruction and qualified with permanence, how much more so is the human spirit

free and immortal. How will that ever be destroyed? This is a subject of great importance.

There are innumerable proofs in support of it. I hope we may continue it at another time.

Before we leave, I desire to offer a prayer in behalf of Miss Farmer; for, verily, she has been the founder of this organization, the source of this loving fellowship and assemblage.

O Thou kind God! Encircle these servants with the glances of Thy providence. Set aglow

the hearts of this assemblage with the fire of Thy love. Illumine these faces with the light of

heaven. Enlighten these hearts with the light of the most great guidance.

O God! The clouds of superstitions have covered the horizons of the hearts. O Lord! Dispel

these clouds so that the lights of the Sun of Reality may shine. O Lord!

Illumine our eyes so

that we may behold Thy light. O Lord! Attune our ears so that we may hear the call of the

Supreme Concourse. O Lord! Render our tongues eloquent so that we may become engaged in

Thy commemoration. O Lord! Sanctify and purify the hearts so that the effulgence of Thy love may shine therein.

O Thou kind Lord! Bestow quick recovery through Thy power and bounty upon the founder

of this Association. O Lord! This woman has served Thee, has turned her face toward Thy

Kingdom and has established these conferences in order that reality might be investigated and the light of reality shine.

O Lord! Be Thou ever her support. O Lord! Be Thou ever her comforter. O Lord! Bestow

upon her quick healing. Verily, Thou art the Clement. Verily, Thou art the Merciful. Verily,

Thou art the Generous.

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17 August 1912

Talk at Green Acre

Eliot, Maine

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 261-263)

The physical beauty of this place is very wonderful. We hope that a spiritual charm may surround and halo it; then its beauty will be perfect. There is a spiritual atmosphere manifest here particularly at sunset. In cities like New York the people are submerged in the sea of materialism. Their sensibilities are attuned to material forces, their perceptions purely physical. The animal energies predominate in their activities; all their thoughts are directed to material things; day and night they are devoted to the attractions of this world, without aspiration beyond the life that is vanishing and mortal. In schools and temples of learning knowledge of the sciences acquired is based upon material observations only; there is no realization of Divinity in their methods and conclusions—all have reference to the world of matter. They are not interested in attaining knowledge of the mysteries of God or understanding the secrets of the heavenly Kingdom; what they acquire is based altogether upon visible and tangible evidences. Beyond these evidences they are without susceptibilities; they have no idea of the world of inner significances and are utterly out of touch with God, considering this an indication of reasonable attitude and philosophical judgement whereof they are self-sufficient and proud. As a matter of fact, this supposed excellence is possessed in its superlative degree by the animals. The animals are without knowledge of God; so to speak, they are deniers of Divinity and understand nothing of the Kingdom and its heavenly mysteries. As deniers of the Kingdom, they are utterly ignorant of spiritual things and uninformed of the supernatural world. Therefore, if it be a perfection and virtue to be without knowledge of God and His Kingdom, the animals have attained the highest degree of excellence and proficiency. Then the donkey is the greatest scientist and the cow an accomplished naturalist, for they have obtained what they know without schooling and years of laborious study in colleges, trusting implicitly to the

evidence of the senses and relying solely upon intuitive virtues. The cow, for instance, is a lover of the visible and a believer in the tangible, contented and happy when pasture is plenty, perfectly serene, a blissful exponent of the transcendental school of philosophy. Such is the status of the material philosophers, who glory in sharing the condition of the cow, imagining themselves in a lofty station. Reflect upon their ignorance and blindness. Nay, rather, the virtue of man is this: that he can investigate the ideals of the Kingdom and attain knowledge which is denied the animal in its limitation. The station of man is this: that he has the power to attain those ideals and thereby differentiate and consciously distinguish himself an infinite degree above the kingdoms of existence below him. The station of man is great, very great. God has created man after His own image and likeness. He has endowed him with a mighty power which is capable of discovering the

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mysteries of phenomena. Through its use man is able to arrive at ideal conclusions instead of being restricted to the mere plane of sense impressions. As he possesses sense endowment in common with the animals, it is evident that he is distinguished above them by his conscious power of penetrating abstract realities. He acquires divine wisdom; he searches out the mysteries of creation; he witnesses the radiance of omnipotence; he attains the second birth—that is to say, he is born out of the material world just as he is born of the mother; he attains to everlasting life; he draws nearer to God; his heart is replete with the love of God. This is the foundation of the world of humanity; this is the image and likeness of God; this is the reality of man; otherwise, he is an animal. Verily, God has created the animal in the image and likeness of man, for though man outwardly is human, yet in nature he possesses animal tendencies. You must endeavor to understand the mysteries of God, attain the ideal knowledge and arrive at the station of vision, acquiring directly from the Sun of Reality and receiving a

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Talk at Green Acre

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 263-264)

Atlantic, yet love assisted us, and we came here. At certain times the spirit must assist the body.

our bodily strength. For example, the body of man may be able to withstand the ordeal of

routine. During our imprisonment in ‘Akká means of comfort were lacking, troubles and

were able to endure these trials for forty years. The climate was very bad, necessities and

the reason? The spirit was strengthening and resuscitating the body constantly.

through this long, difficult period in the utmost love and heavenly servitude.

assist the body under certain conditions which surround us, because the body of itself cannot

endure the extreme strain of such hardships.

The human body is in reality very weak; there is no physical body more delicately

constituted. One mosquito will distress it; the smallest quantity of poison will destroy it; if

respiration ceases for a moment, it will die. What instrument could be weaker and more

delicate? A blade of grass severed from the root may live an hour, whereas a human body

deprived of its forces may die in one minute. But in the proportion that the human body is weak, the spirit of man is strong. It can control natural phenomena; it is a supernatural power which transcends all contingent beings. It has immortal life, which nothing can destroy or pervert. If all the kingdoms of life arise against the immortal spirit of man and seek its destruction, this immortal spirit, singly and alone, can withstand their attacks in fearless firmness and resolution because it is indestructible and empowered with supreme natural virtues. For this reason we say that the spirit of man can penetrate and discover the realities of all things, can solve the secrets and mysteries of all created objects. While living upon the earth, it discovers the stars and their satellites; it travels underground, finds the metals in their hidden depths and unlocks the secrets of geological ages. It can cross the abysses of interstellar space and discover the motion of inconceivably distant suns. How wonderful it is! It can attain to the Kingdom of God. It can penetrate the mysteries of the divine Kingdom and attain to everlasting life. It receives illumination from the light of God and reflects it to the whole universe. How wonderful it is! How powerful the spirit of man, while his body is so weak! If the susceptibilities of the spirit control him, there is no created being more heroic, more undaunted than man; but if physical forces dominate, you cannot find a more cowardly or fearful object because the body is so weak and incapable. Therefore, it is divinely intended that the spiritual susceptibilities of man should gain precedence and overrule his physical forces. In this way he

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becomes fitted to dominate the human world by his nobility and stand forth fearless and free, endowed with the attributes of eternal life.

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17 August 1912

Talk at Green Acre

Eliot, Maine

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 264-270)

Are you all well and happy? This is a delightful spot; the scenery is beautiful, and an atmosphere of spirituality haloes everything. In the future, God willing, Green Acre shall become a great center, the cause of the unity of the world of humanity, the cause of uniting hearts and binding together the East and the West. This is my hope. Tonight I wish to speak upon the oneness of the world of humanity. This is one of the important subjects of the present period. If the oneness of the human world were established, all the differences which separate mankind would be eradicated. Strife and warfare would cease, and the world of humanity would find repose. Universal peace would be promoted, and the East and West would be conjoined in a strong bond. All men would be sheltered beneath one tabernacle. Native lands would become one; races and religions would be unified. The people of the world would live together in harmony, and their well-being would be assured. From the beginning of human history down to the present time the various religions of the world have anathematized and accused each other of falsity. Each religion has considered the others bereft of the face of God, deprived of His mercy and in the direct line of divine wrath. Therefore, they have shunned each other most rigidly, exercising mutual animosity and rancor. Consider the record of religious warfare, the battles between nations, the bloodshed and destruction in the name of religion. One of the greatest religious wars, the Crusades, extended over a period of two hundred years. In this succession of great campaigns the western crusaders were constantly invading the Orient, bent upon recovering the Holy City from the hands of the Islamic people. Army after army raised in Europe poured its fanatical legions into the East. The kings of European nations personally led these Crusades, killing and shedding

the blood of the
 Orientals. During this period of two hundred years the East and West were in a
 state of violence
 and commotion. Sometimes the crusaders were successful, killing, pillaging and
 taking captive
 the Muslim people; sometimes the Muslims were victorious, inflicting bloodshed,
 death and
 ruin in turn upon the invaders. So they continued for two centuries,
 alternately fighting with
 fury and relaxing from weakness, until the European religionists withdrew from
 the East,
 leaving ashes of desolation behind them and finding their own nations in a
 condition of
 turbulence and upheaval. Hundreds of thousands of human beings were killed and
 untold
 wealth wasted in this fruitless religious warfare. How many fathers mourned the
 loss of their
 sons! How many mothers and wives lamented the absence of their dear ones! Yet
 this was only
 one of the "holy" wars. Consider and reflect.
 Religious wars have been many. Nine hundred thousand martyrs to the Protestant
 cause
 was the record of conflict and difference between that sect of Christians and
 the Catholics.
 Consult history and confirm this. How many languished in prisons! How merciless
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treatment of captives! All in the name of religion! Consider and estimate the
 outcome of other
 wars between the people and sects of religious belief.
 From the beginning of human history down to this time the world of humanity has
 not
 enjoyed a day of absolute rest and relaxation from conflict and strife. Most of
 the wars have
 been caused by religious prejudice, fanaticism and sectarian hatred.
 Religionists have
 anathematized religionists, each considering the other as deprived of the mercy
 of God, abiding
 in gross darkness and the children of Satan. For example, the Christians and
 Muslims
 considered the Jews satanic and the enemies of God. Therefore, they cursed and
 persecuted
 them. Great numbers of Jews were killed, their houses burned and pillaged,
 their children
 carried into captivity. The Jews in turn regarded the Christians as infidels

and the Muslims as
enemies and destroyers of the law of Moses. Therefore, they call down vengeance
upon them
and curse them even to this day.
Consider what injuries, ordeals and calamities have been inflicted upon mankind
since the
beginning of history. Every city, country, nation and people has been subjected
to the
destruction and havoc of war. Each one of the divine religions considers itself
as belonging to
a goodly and blessed tree, the tree of the Merciful, and all other religious
systems as belonging
to a tree of evil, the tree of Satan. For this reason they heap execration and
abuse upon each
other. This is clearly apparent in books of historical record and prevailed
until the time of the
appearance of Bahá'u'lláh.
When the light of Bahá'u'lláh dawned from the East, He proclaimed the
promise of the
oneness of humanity. He addressed all mankind, saying, "Ye are all the fruits
of one tree. There
are not two trees: one a tree of divine mercy, the other the tree of Satan."
Again He said, "Ye
are all the fruits of one tree, the leaves of one branch." This was His
announcement; this was
His promise of the oneness of the world of humanity. Anathema and execration
were utterly
abrogated. He said, "It is not becoming in man to curse another; it is not
befitting that man
should attribute darkness to another; it is not meet that one human being
should consider
another human being as bad; nay, rather, all mankind are the servants of one
God; God is the
Father of all; there is not a single exception to that law. There are no people
of Satan; all belong
to the Merciful. There is no darkness; all is light. All are the servants of
God, and man must
love humanity from his heart. He must, verily, behold humanity as submerged in
the divine
mercy."
Bahá'u'lláh has made no exception to this rule. He said that among
mankind there may be
those who are ignorant; they must be trained. Some are sick; they must be
treated. Some are
immature; they must be helped to attain maturity. In other respects humanity is
submerged in
the ocean of divine mercy. God is the Father of all. He educates, provides for

and loves all; for
they are His servants and His creation. Surely the Creator loves His creatures.
It would be
impossible to find an artist who does not love his own production. Have you
ever seen a man
who did not love his own actions? Even though they be bad actions, he loves
them. How
ignorant, therefore, the thought that God, Who created man, educated and
nurtured him,
surrounded him with all blessings, made the sun and all phenomenal existence
for his benefit,
bestowed upon him tenderness and kindness and then did not love him. This is
palpable
ignorance, for no matter to what religion a man belongs, even though he be an
atheist or
materialist, nevertheless, God nurtures him, bestows His kindness and sheds
upon him His
light. How then can we believe God is wrathful and unloving? How can we even
imagine this,
when as a matter of fact we are witnesses of the tenderness and mercy of God
upon every hand?
All about us we behold manifestations of the love of God. If, therefore, God be
loving, what
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should we do? We have nothing else to do but to emulate Him. Just as God loves
all and is kind
to all, so must we really love and be kind to everybody. We must consider none
bad, none
worthy of detestation, no one as an enemy. We must love all; nay, we must
consider everyone
as related to us, for all are the servants of one God. All are under the
instructions of one
Educator. We must strive day and night that love and amity may increase, that
this bond of
unity may be strengthened, that joy and happiness may more and more prevail,
that in unity
and solidarity all mankind may gather beneath the shadow of God, that people
may turn to God
for their sustenance, finding in Him the life that is everlasting. Thus may
they be confirmed in
the Kingdom of God and live forever through His grace and bounty.
Bahá'u'lláh has clearly said in His Tablets that if you have an enemy,
consider him not as
an enemy. Do not simply be long-suffering; nay, rather, love him. Your
treatment of him should

be that which is becoming to lovers. Do not even say that he is your enemy. Do not see any enemies. Though he be your murderer, see no enemy. Look upon him with the eye of friendship. Be mindful that you do not consider him as an enemy and simply tolerate him, for that is but stratagem and hypocrisy. To consider a man your enemy and love him is hypocrisy. This is not becoming of any soul. You must behold him as a friend. You must treat him well.

This is right.

We return to the subject. When we observe the phenomena of the universe, we realize that the axis around which life revolves is love, while the axis around which death and destruction revolve is animosity and hatred. Let us view the mineral kingdom. Here we see that if attraction did not exist between the atoms, the composite substance of matter would not be possible. Every existent phenomenon is composed of elements and cellular particles. This is scientifically true and correct. If attraction did not exist between the elements and among the cellular particles, the composition of that phenomenon would never have been possible. For instance, the stone is an existent phenomenon, a composition of elements. A bond of attraction has brought them together, and through this cohesion of ingredients this petrous object has been formed. This stone is the lowest degree of phenomena, but nevertheless within it a power of attraction is manifest without which the stone could not exist. This power of attraction in the mineral world is love, the only expression of love the stone can manifest. Look now upon the next highest stage of life, the vegetable kingdom. Here we see that the plant is the result of cohesion among various elements, just as the mineral is in its kingdom; but, furthermore, the plant has the power of absorption from the earth. This is a higher degree of attraction which differentiates the plant from the mineral. In the kingdom of the vegetable this is an expression of love, the highest capacity of expression the vegetable possesses. By this power of attraction, or augmentation, the plant grows day by day. Therefore, in this kingdom, also, love is the cause of life. If repulsion existed among the elements

instead of attraction, the result would be disintegration, destruction and nonexistence. Because cohesion exists among the elements and cellular attraction is manifest, the plant appears. When this attraction is dispelled and the ingredients separate, the plant ceases to exist. Then we come to the animal world, which is still higher in degree than the vegetable kingdom. In it the power of love makes itself still more manifest. The light of love is more resplendent in the animal kingdom because the power of attraction whereby elements cohere and cellular atoms commingle now reveals itself in certain emotions and sensibilities which produce instinctive fellowship and association. The animals are imbued with kindness and affinity which manifests itself among those of the same species.

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Finally, we reach the kingdom of man. Here we find that all the degrees of the mineral, vegetable and animal expressions of love are present plus unmistakable attractions of consciousness. That is to say, man is the possessor of a degree of attraction which is conscious and spiritual. Here is an immeasurable advance. In the human kingdom spiritual susceptibilities come into view, love exercises its superlative degree, and this is the cause of human life. The proof is clear that in all degrees and kingdoms unity and agreement, love and fellowship are the cause of life, whereas dissension, animosity and separation are ever conducive to death. Therefore, we must strive with life and soul in order that day by day unity and agreement may be increased among mankind and that love and affinity may become more resplendently glorious and manifest. In the animal kingdom you will observe that domestic species live together in the utmost fellowship. See how sociable and friendly sheep gather together in a flock. Look at the doves and other domestic birds. There is no partisanship among them, no separation due to notions of patriotism. They live together in the utmost love and unity, flying, feeding, associating. Ferocious animals—beasts of prey such as

the wolf, bear,
tiger and hyena—are never amicable and do not associate together. They attack one another.
Whenever they meet, they fight. Three wolves are never seen associating happily. If you see them together, it is with some ferocious intent. They are like selfish, brutal men who are inimical, cursing and killing each other. Better that man should resemble the domestic animals than the ferocious beasts of prey, for in the estimation of God love is acceptable, whereas hatred and animosity are rejected. Why should we act contrary to the good pleasure of God? Why should we be as ferocious animals, constantly shedding blood, pillaging and destroying?
Because we belong to one race or family of humankind, why should we consider all others bad and inferior, deserving of death, pillage and invasion—people of darkness, worthy of hatred and detestation by God? Why does man show forth such attitude and actions toward his fellowman? We see that God is kind to all. Just as He loves us, He loves all others; just as He provides for us, He provides for the rest. He nurtures and trains all with equal solicitude.
God is great! God is kind! He does not behold human shortcomings; He does not regard human weaknesses. Man is a creature of His mercy, and to His mercy He summons all. Why then should we despise or detest His creatures because this one is a Jew, another a Buddhist or Zoroastrian and so on? This is ignorance, for the oneness of humanity as servants of God is an assured and certain fact.
Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed the promise of the oneness of humanity. Therefore, we must exercise the utmost love toward each other. We must be loving to all the people of the world.
We must not consider any people the people of Satan, but know and recognize all as the servants of the one God. At most it is this: Some do not know; they must be guided and trained. They must be taught to love their fellow creatures and be encouraged in the acquisition of virtues. Some are ignorant; they must be informed. Some are as children, undeveloped; they must be helped to reach maturity. Some are ailing, their moral condition is

unhealthy; they
must be treated until their morals are purified. But the sick man is not to be
hated because he
is sick, the child must not be shunned because he is a child, the ignorant one
is not to be despised
because he lacks knowledge. They must all be treated, educated, trained and
assisted in love.
Everything must be done in order that humanity may live under the shadow of God
in the
utmost security, enjoying happiness in its highest degree.
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17 August 1912
Talk at Green Acre
Eliot, Maine
Notes by Edna McKinney
(Promulgation, pp. 270-275)

The worlds of God are in perfect harmony and correspondence one with another.
Each
world in this limitless universe is, as it were, a mirror reflecting the
history and nature of all
the rest. The physical universe is, likewise, in perfect correspondence with
the spiritual or
divine realm. The world of matter is an outer expression or facsimile of the
inner kingdom of
spirit. The world of minds corresponds with the world of hearts.
If we look reflectively upon the material world, we realize that all outer
phenomena are
dependent upon the sun. Without the sun the phenomenal world would be in a
state of utter
darkness and devoid of life. All earthly creation—whether mineral, vegetable,
animal or
human—is dependent upon the heat, light and splendor of the great central
solar body for
training and development. Were it not for the solar heat and sunlight, no
minerals would have
been formed, no vegetable, animal and human organisms would or could have
become existent.
It is clearly evident, therefore, that the sun is the source of life to all
earthly and outer
phenomena.

In the inner world, the world of the Kingdom, the Sun of Reality is the Trainer and Educator of minds, souls and spirits. Were it not for the effulgent rays of the Sun of Reality, they would be deprived of growth and development; nay, rather, they would be nonexistent. For just as the physical sun is the trainer of all outer and phenomenal forms of being through the radiation of its light and heat, so the radiation of the light and heat of the Sun of Reality gives growth, education and evolution to minds, souls and spirits toward the station of perfection. Christ was the Sun of Reality which shone from the heavenly horizon of Christianity, training, protecting, confirming minds, souls and spirits until they came into harmony with the divine Kingdom and attained capacity for descent of the infinite bounties of God. Were it not for the appearance of His splendor, they would have remained in the darkness of imperfection and remoteness from God. But because that Sun of Reality shone forth and flooded its light into the world of minds, souls and spirits, they became radiant. He conferred a new and eternal life upon them. When the phenomenal sun appears from the vernal point of dawning in the zodiac, a wondrous and vibrant commotion is set up in the body of the earthly world. The withered trees are quickened with animation, the black soil becomes verdant with new growth, fresh and fragrant flowers bloom, the world of dust is refreshed, renewed life forces surge through the veins of every animate being, and a new springtime carpets the meadows, plains, mountains and valleys with wondrous forms of life. That which was dead and desolate is revived and resuscitated; that which was withered, faded and stricken is transformed by the spirit of a new creation. In the same way the Sun of Reality, when it illumines the horizon of the inner world,

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animates, vivifies and quickens with a divine and wonderful power. The trees of human minds clothe themselves in new and verdant robes, putting on leaves and blossoms and

bearing
spiritual fruits of the heavenly glad tidings. Then fragrant flowers of inner significances appear
from the soil of human souls, and the whole being of man awakens to a new and divine activity.
This is the growth and development of the inner world through the effulgent light of divine
guidance and the heat of the fire of the love of God.
The physical sun has its rising and its setting. The earthly world has its day and its night.
After each sunset there is a sunrise and the coming of a new dawn. The Sun of Reality, likewise,
has its rising and setting. There is a day and a night in the world of spirituality. After each
departure there is a return and the dawning light of a new day.
Furthermore, the reality of Divinity is characterized by certain names and attributes.
Among these names are Creator, Resuscitator, Provider, the All-Present, Almighty, Omniscient
and Giver. These names and attributes of Divinity are eternal and not accidental. This is a very
subtle point which demands close attention. Their existence is proved and necessitated by the
appearance of phenomena. For example, Creator presupposes creation, Resuscitator implies
resuscitation, Provider necessitates provision; otherwise, these would be empty and impossible
names. Merciful evidences an object upon which mercy is bestowed. If mercy were not
manifest, this attribute of God would not be realized. The name Lord proves the existence of
subjects over whom sovereignty is exercised. The name Omniscient demands the objects of
all-knowing. Unless these objects existed, omniscience would be meaningless and without
function. The name the Wise necessitates objects for the exercise of wisdom; and unless
wisdom comprehended them, this name would be inconceivable. Therefore, the divine names
and attributes presuppose the existence of phenomena implied by those names and attributes.
And vice versa—the sovereignty of God is proved and established through their verity and
being.
Reflect then carefully that the sovereignty of God is not accidental but everlasting and
eternal, and that it necessitates the existence of phenomenal being. Kingship

necessitates a kingdom, an army, a treasury, subjects, a court and ministers. How could there be a king without subjects, dominion and wealth? Otherwise, anybody could claim to be a king. “Where is your army?” “I do not need one.” “Where is your country?” “It is unnecessary. I am a king without a kingdom, without army, subjects or sovereignty.” Is this possible? Therefore, divine sovereignty necessitates a creation over which its dominion is exercised. There must be evidences of sovereignty. If we try to conceive of a time when creation was nonexistent, when there were no subjects or creatures under divine dominion and control, Divinity itself would disappear; there would be a cessation of the bounty of God, just as the kingship and favor of an earthly monarch would disappear if his kingdom did not exist. The sovereignty of God is eternal. There has been no beginning; there will be no end. This is as evident as the sun at midday, even to one endowed with limited reason. When we consider the phenomenal sun, we see that its heat and light are continuous. There is no cessation to the solar bounty. If the sun at any time were without light or heat, it would not be the sun. How do we recognize the sun? Through its heat and effulgence. If it be deprived of its rays and heat, it is no longer a sun; it is merely a dark globe or sphere in the heavens. The bounties of the sun must be perpetual in order that it may be qualified as a solar center of energy, illumination and attraction.

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Likewise, the divine bounties of the Sun of Reality are perpetual. Its light is forever shining. Its love is forever radiating. Its bounty never ceases. It could not be said that the power and effulgence of God was ever subject to cessation. It could not be claimed that the divinity of the Almighty One had come to an end. For the divinity of God is eternal. Therefore, the divine bounties—whether phenomenal and accidental or spiritual and ideal—are perpetual. But the people of religion are of two kinds: Some worship the sun, and some adore the dawning points

from which the sun rises. For instance, the Jews adore the Mosaic point of dawning, the Zoroastrians that of Zoroaster. The people of Abraham turned to the point of rising in Abraham. When the Sun of Reality transferred its illumination from the Abrahamic to the Mosaic point of dawning, the people of Abraham denied its appearance because they were turning toward the point and not to the Sun of Reality itself. When that Sun of Reality with its divine bestowal, its heavenly glow and effulgence transferred to the Messianic point of rising, the Jews denied its appearance in Jesus, for they were not worshipers of the Sun itself but adored its rising in Moses. Had they been worshipers of the Sun of Reality, they would have turned to Christ instead of denying Him as the Messiah. What was the reason of this deprivation? It was simply because they were imitating fathers and ancestors in forms of belief instead of turning toward the Sun of Divinity. For this reason they were deprived of the bounty which dawned in the Messianic dayspring. Holding tenaciously to the former dawning point, they still remain in this position of deprivation. Consider the people and nations of the earth today and observe this same tenacious allegiance to ancestral belief. He whose father was a Zoroastrian is a Zoroastrian. He whose father was a Buddhist remains a Buddhist. The son of a Muslim continues a Muslim, and so on throughout. Why is this? Because they are slaves and captives of mere imitation. They have not investigated the reality of religion and arrived at its fundamentals and conclusions. The Jew, for instance, has not proved the validity of Moses by investigating reality. He is a Jew because his father was a Jew. He imitates the forms and belief of his fathers and ancestors. There is no thought or mention of reality. And so it is with the other peoples of religion. This is the purpose of our statement that they worship the dawning point rather than the Sun of Reality itself. If in the day of Jesus Christ the Jews had forsaken imitation and investigated reality, they would assuredly have believed in and accepted Him, for the Messianic effulgence was far

greater than the Mosaic. The Sun of Reality, when it appeared from the dawning point of Christ, was as the midsummer sun in brilliancy and beauty. Now, therefore, we must be admonished and realize that mere imitation of fathers and ancestors is fruitless. Nay, rather, we must exert ourselves to the utmost in investigating and turning toward the Sun of Reality, no matter from what dayspring or dawning point it may appear. The phenomenal sun is one sun. If tomorrow it should rise in the West, it is the same sun. We cannot say, "This is not the sun because it has appeared in the West." For East and West are but earthly and imaginary directions. In the station of the sun there is neither East nor West. It is ever shining from its place in the heavens. In the focal point of the solar circle there is no rising, no setting. Therefore, sunrise and sunset have relation to earthly observation and not to the luminary itself. Nay, rather, night in the solar orb is inconceivable. In that center of effulgence, constant light and illumination prevail. Its risings and settings are, therefore, only apparent and not actual. They have relation to our earthly point of view. We could not consider it the sun if there were a cessation of its light, heat and splendor. To do so would be equivalent to calling a black stone a diamond. This would be meaningless. If a man is a miser and you call him generous, it will produce no change in him.

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The purport of this is that God is almighty, but His greatness cannot be brought within the grasp of human limitation. We cannot limit God to a boundary. Man is limited, but the world of Divinity is unlimited. Prescribing limitation to God is human ignorance. God is the Ancient, the Almighty; His attributes are infinite. He is God because His light, His sovereignty, is infinite. If He can be limited to human ideas, He is not God. Strange it is that, notwithstanding these are self-evident truths, man continues to build walls and fences of limitation about God, about Divinity so glorious, illimitable, boundless. Consider the endless phenomena of His

creation. They are infinite; the universe is infinite. Who shall declare its height, its depth and length? It is absolutely infinite. How could an almighty sovereignty, a Divinity so wondrous, be brought within the limitations of faulty human minds even as to terms and definition? Shall we then say that God has performed a certain thing and He will never be able to perform it again? That the Sun of His effulgence once shone upon the world but now has set forever? That His mercy, His grace, His bounty once descended but now have ceased? Is this possible? No! We can never say nor believe with truth that His Manifestation, the adored verity, the Sun of Reality, shall cease to shine upon the world. O God! Thou Who art kind. Verily, certain souls have gathered in this meeting turning to Thee with their hearts and spirits. They are seeking the everlasting bounty. They are in need of Thine infinite mercy. O Lord! Remove the veils from their eyes, and dispel the darkness of ignorance. Confer upon them the light of knowledge and wisdom. Illumine these contrite hearts with the radiance of the Sun of Reality. Make these eyes perceptive through witnessing the lights of Thy sovereignty. Suffer these spirits to rejoice through the great glad tidings, and receive these souls into Thy supreme Kingdom. O Lord! Verily, we are weak; make us mighty. We are poor; assist us from the treasury of Thy munificence. We are dead; resuscitate us through the breath of the Holy Spirit. We lack patience in tests and in long-suffering; permit us to attain the lights of oneness. O Lord! Make this assemblage the cause of upraising the standard of the oneness of the world of humanity, and confirm these souls so that they may become the promoters of international peace. O Lord! Verily, the people are veiled and in a state of contention with each other, shedding the blood and destroying the possessions of each other. Throughout the world there is war and conflict. In every direction there is strife, bloodshed and ferocity. O Lord! Guide human souls in order that they may turn away from warfare and battle, that

they may become loving and kind to each other, that they may enter into
 affiliation and serve
 the oneness and solidarity of humanity.
 O Lord! The horizons of the world are darkened by this dissension. O God!
 Illumine them,
 and through the lights of Thy love let the hearts become radiant. Through the
 blessing of Thy
 bestowal resuscitate the spirits until every soul shall perceive and act in
 accordance with Thy
 teachings. Thou art the Almighty. Thou art the Omniscient. Thou art the Seer. O
 Lord, be
 compassionate to all.
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25 August 1912
 Talk at the New Thought Forum
 Metaphysical Club
 Boston, Massachusetts
 Notes by Edna McKinney
 (Promulgation, pp. 276-280)

O Thou kind God! In the utmost state of humility and submission do we entreat
 and
 supplicate at Thy threshold, seeking Thine endless confirmations and
 illimitable assistance. O
 Thou Lord! Regenerate these souls, and confer upon them a new life. Animate the
 spirits,
 inform the hearts, open the eyes, and make the ears attentive. From Thine
 ancient treasury
 confer a new being and animus, and from Thy preexistent abode assist them to
 attain to new
 confirmations.
 O God! Verily, the world is in need of reformation. Bestow upon it a new
 existence. Give
 it newness of thoughts, and reveal unto it heavenly sciences. Breathe into it a
 fresh spirit, and
 grant unto it a holier and higher purpose.
 O God! Verily, Thou hast made this century radiant, and in it Thou hast
 manifested Thy
 merciful effulgence. Thou hast effaced the darkness of superstitions and

permitted the light of
assurance to shine. O God! Grant that these servants may be acceptable at Thy
threshold.

Reveal a new heaven, and spread out a new earth for habitation. Let a new
Jerusalem descend
from on high. Bestow new thoughts, new life upon mankind. Endow souls with new
perceptions, and confer upon them new virtues. Verily, Thou art the Almighty,
the Powerful.

Thou art the Giver, the Generous.

It is easy to bring human bodies under control. A king can bring under his rule
and authority
the bodies of his subjects throughout a whole country. In former centuries
kings and rulers have
absolutely dominated millions of men and have been thereby enabled to carry out
whatsoever
they desire. If they willed to bestow happiness and peace, they could do so;
and if they
determined to inflict suffering and discomfort, they were equally capable. If
they desired to
send men to the field of battle, none could oppose their authority; and if they
decreed their
kingdoms should enjoy the bliss and serenity of immunity from war, this
condition prevailed.

In a word, kings and rulers have been able to control millions of human beings
and have
exercised that dominion with the utmost despotism and tyranny.

The point is this: that to gain control over physical bodies is an extremely
easy matter, but
to bring spirits within the bonds of serenity is a most arduous undertaking.

This is not the work
of everybody. It necessitates a divine and holy potency, the potency of
inspiration, the power
of the Holy Spirit. For example, Christ was capable of leading spirits into
that abode of serenity.

He was capable of guiding hearts into that haven of rest. From the day of His
manifestation to

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the present time He has been resuscitating hearts and quickening spirits. He
has exercised that
vivifying influence in the realm of hearts and spirits; therefore, His
resuscitating is everlasting.

In this century of the latter times Bahá'u'lláh has appeared and so
resuscitated spirits that
they have manifested powers more than human. Thousands of His followers have
given their

lives; and while under the sword, shedding their blood, they have proclaimed,
“Yá Bahá’u’l-
Abhá!” Such resuscitation is impossible except through a heavenly potency, a
supernatural
power, the divine power of the Holy Spirit. Through a natural and mere human
power this is
impossible. Therefore, the question arises: How is this resuscitation to be
accomplished?
There are certain means for its accomplishment by which mankind is regenerated
and
quickened with a new birth. This is the second birth mentioned in the heavenly
Books. Its
accomplishment is through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The resuscitation or
rebirth of the
spirit of man is through the science of the love of God. It is through the
efficacy of the water
of life. This life and quickening is the regeneration of the phenomenal world.
After the coming
of the spiritual springtime, the falling of the vernal showers, the shining of
the Sun of Reality,
the blowing of the breezes of perfection, all phenomena become imbued with the
life of a new
creation and are reformed in the process of a new genesis. Reflect upon the
material springtime.
When winter comes, the trees are leafless, the fields and meadows withered, the
flowers die
away into dustheaps; in prairie, mountain and garden no freshness lingers, no
beauty is visible,
no verdure can be seen. Everything is clad in the robe of death. Wherever you
look around, you
will find the expression of death and decay. But when the spring comes, the
showers descend,
the sun floods the meadows and plains with light; you will observe creation
clad in a new robe
of expression. The showers have made the meadows green and verdant. The warm
breezes
have caused the trees to put on their garments of leaves. They have blossomed
and soon will
produce new, fresh and delightful fruits. Everything appears endowed with a
newness of life;
a new animus and spirit is everywhere visible. The spring has resuscitated all
phenomena and
has adorned the earth with beauty as it willeth.
Even so is the spiritual springtime when it comes. When the holy, divine
Manifestations or
Prophets appear in the world, a cycle of radiance, an age of mercy dawns.
Everything is

renewed. Minds, hearts and all human forces are reformed, perfections are quickened, sciences, discoveries and investigations are stimulated afresh, and everything appertaining to the virtues of the human world is revitalized. Consider this present century of radiance, and compare it with the past centuries. What a vast difference exists between them! How minds have developed! How perceptions have deepened! How discoveries have increased! What great projects have been accomplished! How many realities have become manifest! How many mysteries of creation have been probed and penetrated! What is the cause of this? It is through the efficacy of the spiritual springtime in which we are living. Day by day the world attains a new bounty. In this radiant century neither the old customs nor the old sciences, crafts, laws and regulations have remained. The old political principles are undergoing change, and a new body politic is in process of formation. Nevertheless, some whose thoughts are congealed and whose souls are bereft of the light of the Sun of Reality seek to arrest this development in the world of the minds of men. Is this possible? In the unmistakable and universal reformation we are witnessing, when outer conditions of humanity are receiving such impetus, when human life is assuming a new aspect, when sciences are stimulated afresh, inventions and discoveries increasing, civic laws undergoing change and moralities evidencing uplift and betterment, is it possible that spiritual impulses and influences should not be renewed and reformed? Naturally, new spiritual thoughts and inclinations must
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also become manifest. If spirituality be not renewed, what fruits come from mere physical reformation? For instance, the body of man may improve, the quality of bone and sinew may advance, the hand may develop, other limbs and members may increase in excellence, but if the mind fails to develop, of what use is the rest? The important factor in human improvement is the mind. In the world of the mind there must needs be development and

improvement. There must be reformation in the kingdom of the human spirit; otherwise, no result will be attained from betterment of the mere physical structure. In this new year new fruits must be forthcoming, for that is the provision and intention of spiritual reformation. The renewal of the leaf is fruitless. From the reformation of bark or branch no fruit will come forth. The renewal of verdure produces nothing. If there be no renewal of fruit from the tree, of what avail is the reformation of bark, blossom, branch and trunk? For a fruitless tree is of no special value. Similarly, of what avail is the reformation of physical conditions unless they are concomitant with spiritual reformations? For the essential reality is the spirit, the foundation is the spirit, the life of man is due to the spirit; the happiness, the animus, the radiance, the glory of man—all are due to the spirit; and if in the spirit no reformation takes place, there will be no result to human existence. Therefore, we must strive with life and heart that the material and physical world may be reformed, human perception become keener, the merciful effulgence manifest and the radiance of reality shine. Then the star of love shall appear and the world of humanity become illumined. The purpose is that the world of existence is dependent for its progress upon reformation; otherwise, it will be as dead. Consider: If a new springtime failed to appear, what would be the effect upon this globe, the earth? Undoubtedly it would become desolate and life extinct. The earth has need of an annual coming of spring. It is necessary that a new bounty should be forthcoming. If it comes not, life would be effaced. In the same way the world of spirit needs new life, the world of mind necessitates new animus and development, the world of souls a new bounty, the world of morality a reformation, the world of divine effulgence ever new bestowals. Were it not for this replenishment, the life of the world would become effaced and extinguished. If this room is not ventilated and the air freshened, respiration will cease after a length of time. If no rain falls, all life organisms will perish. If new light does not come, the

darkness of death will envelop the earth. If a new springtime does not arrive,
life upon this
globe will be obliterated.

Therefore, thoughts must be lofty and ideals uplifted in order that the world
of humanity
may become assisted in new conditions of reform. When this reformation affects
every degree,

then will come the very Day of the Lord of which all the prophets have spoken.
That is the Day

wherein the whole world will be regenerated. Consider: Are the laws of past
ages applicable to

present human conditions? Evidently they are not. For example, the laws of
former centuries

sanctioned despotic forms of government. Are the laws of despotic control
fitted for presentday conditions? How could they be applied to solve the
questions surrounding modern nations?

Similarly, we ask: Would the status of ancient thought, the crudeness of arts
and crafts, the

insufficiency of scientific attainment serve us today? Would the agricultural
methods of the

ancients suffice in the twentieth century? Transportation in the former ages
was restricted to

conveyance by animals. How would it provide for human needs today? If modes of
transportation had not been reformed, the teeming millions now upon the earth
would die of

starvation. Without the railway and the fast-going steamship, the world of the
present day

would be as dead. How could great cities such as New York and London subsist if
dependent

upon ancient means of conveyance? It is also true of other things which have
been reformed in

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proportion to the needs of the present time. Had they not been reformed, man
could not find
subsistence.

If these material tendencies are in such need of reformation, how much greater
the need in

the world of the human spirit, the world of human thought, perception, virtues
and bounties! Is

it possible that that need has remained stationary while the world has been
advancing in every

other condition and direction? It is impossible.

Therefore, we must invoke and supplicate God and strive with the utmost effort
in order

that the world of human existence in all its degrees may receive a mighty

impulse, complete
human happiness be attained and the resuscitation of all spirits and emanations
be realized
through the boundless favor of the mercy of God.
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26 August 1912
Talk at Franklin Square House
Boston, Massachusetts
Notes by Edna McKinney
(Promulgation, pp. 280-284)

Among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the principle of equality of man and woman.
Bahá'u'lláh has said that both belong to humankind and that in the estimation of God they are equal, for each is the complement of the other in the divine creative plan. The only distinction between them in the sight of God is the purity and righteousness of their deeds and actions, for that one is preferred by God who is most nearly in the spiritual image and likeness of the Creator. Throughout the kingdoms of living organisms there is sex differentiation in function, but no preference or distinction is made in favor of either male or female. In the animal kingdom individual sex exists, but rights are equal and without distinction. Likewise, in the plane or kingdom of the vegetable sex appears, but equality of function and right is evident. Inasmuch as sex distinction and preference are not observed in these kingdoms of inferior intelligence, is it befitting the superior station of man that he should make such differentiation and estimate, when as a matter of fact there is no difference indicated in the law of creation? In ancient times and medieval ages woman was completely subordinated to man. The cause of this estimate of her inferiority was her lack of education. A woman's life and intellect were limited to the household. Glimpses of this may be found even in the Epistles of

Saint Paul. In

later centuries the scope and opportunities of a woman's life broadened and increased. Her

mind unfolded and developed; her perceptions awakened and deepened. The question

concerning her was: Why should a woman be left mentally undeveloped? Science is praiseworthy—whether investigated by the intellect of man or woman. So,

little by little,

woman advanced, giving increasing evidence of equal capabilities with man—whether in

scientific research, political ability or any other sphere of human activity. The conclusion is

evident that woman has been outdistanced through lack of education and intellectual facilities.

If given the same educational opportunities or course of study, she would develop the same

capacity and abilities.

There are some who declare that woman is not naturally endowed or imbued with the same

capabilities as man; that she is intellectually inferior to man, weaker in willpower and lacking

his courage. This theory is completely contradicted by history and facts of record. Certain

women of superlative capacity and determination have appeared in the world, peers of man in

intellect and equally courageous. Zenobia was the wife of the governor-general of Athens. Her

husband died, and like the Russian Queen, Catherine, she manifested the highest degree of

capability in the administration of public affairs. The Roman government appointed her to

succeed her husband. Afterward she conquered Syria, conducted a successful campaign in

Egypt and established a memorable sovereignty. Rome sent an army against her under direction

of distinguished commanders. When the two forces met in battle, Zenobia arrayed herself in

gorgeous apparel, placed the crown of her kingdom upon her head and rode forth at the head

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of her army, defeating the Roman legions so completely that they were not able to reorganize.

The Emperor of Rome himself took command of the next army of one hundred thousand

soldiers and marched into Syria. At that time Rome was at the zenith of

greatness and was the
strongest military power in the world. Zenobia withdrew with her forces to
Palmyra and
fortified it to withstand a siege. After two years the Roman Emperor cut off
her supplies, and
she was forced to surrender.
The Romans returned in triumphal procession and pageant to their own country.
They
entered Rome in great pomp and splendor, led by African elephants. After the
elephants there
were lions, then tigers, bears and monkeys, and after the monkeys,
Zenobia—barefooted,
walking, a chain of gold about her neck and a crown in her hand, dignified,
majestic, queenly
and courageous notwithstanding her downfall and defeat.
Among other noted women of history was Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, who held her
kingdom against the armies of Rome for a long time. Catherine, wife of Peter
the Great,
displayed courage and military strategy of the very highest order during the
war between Russia
and Muhammad Páshá. When the cause of Russia seemed hopeless, she took her
jewels and
went before the Turkish victor, presented them to him and pled the justice of
her country's
cause with such convincing skill and diplomacy that peace was declared.
Victoria, Queen of England, was really superior to all the kings of Europe in
ability, justness
and equitable administration. During her long and brilliant reign the British
Empire was
immensely extended and enriched, due to her political sagacity, skill and
foresight.
The history of religion, likewise, furnishes eloquent examples of woman's
capability under
conditions of great difficulty and necessity. The conquest of the Holy Land by
the Israelites
after forty years' wandering in the desert and wilderness of Judea was
accomplished through
the strategy and cunning of a woman.
After the martyrdom of Christ, to Whom be glory, the disciples were greatly
disturbed and
disheartened. Even Peter had denied Christ and tried to shun Him. It was a
woman, Mary
Magdalene, who confirmed the wavering disciples in their faith, saying, "Was
it the body of
Christ or the reality of Christ that ye have seen crucified? Surely it was His
body. His reality is
everlasting and eternal; it hath neither beginning nor ending. Therefore, why

are ye perplexed
and discouraged? Christ always spoke of His being crucified.” Mary Magdalene
was a mere
villager, a peasant woman; yet she became the means of consolation and
confirmation to the
disciples of Christ.

In the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh there have been women who were superior to
men in
illumination, intellect, divine virtues and devotion to God. Among them was
Qurratu’l-‘Ayn.

When she spoke, she was listened to reverently by the most learned men. They
were most

respectful in her presence, and none dared to contradict her. Among the
Bahá’í women in Persia

today there are Rúhu’lláh and others who are gifted with knowledge,
invincible steadfastness,

courage, virtue and power of will. They are superior to men and well-known
throughout Persia.

Briefly, history furnishes evidence that during the past centuries there have
been great

women as well as great men; but in general, owing to lack of educational
advantages, women

have been restricted and deprived of opportunity to become fully qualified and
representative

of humankind. When given the opportunity for acquiring education, they have
shown equal

capacity with men. Some philosophers and writers have considered woman
naturally and by

creation inferior to man, claiming as a proof that the brain of man is larger
and heavier than

that of woman. This is frail and faulty evidence, inasmuch as small brains are
often found

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coupled with superior intellect and large brains possessed by those who are
ignorant, even

imbecilic. The truth is that God has endowed all humankind with intelligence
and perception

and has confirmed all as His servants and children; therefore, in the plan and
estimate of God

there is no distinction between male or female. The soul that manifests pure
deeds and spiritual

graces is most precious in His sight and nearer to Him in its attainments.

The realities of things have been revealed in this radiant century, and that
which is true

must come to the surface. Among these realities is the principle of the

equality of man and
woman—equal rights and prerogatives in all things appertaining to humanity.
Bahá'u'lláh
declared this reality over fifty years ago. But while this principle of
equality is true, it is
likewise true that woman must prove her capacity and aptitude, must show forth
the evidences
of equality. She must become proficient in the arts and sciences and prove by
her
accomplishments that her abilities and powers have merely been latent.
Demonstrations of
force, such as are now taking place in England, are neither becoming nor
effective in the cause
of womanhood and equality. Woman must especially devote her energies and
abilities toward
the industrial and agricultural sciences, seeking to assist mankind in that
which is most needful.
By this means she will demonstrate capability and ensure recognition of
equality in the social
and economic equation. Undoubtedly God will confirm her in her efforts and
endeavors, for in
this century of radiance Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed the reality of the
oneness of the world of
humanity and announced that all nations, peoples and races are one. He has
shown that although
individuals may differ in development and capacity, they are essentially and
intrinsically equal
as human beings, just as the waves of the sea are innumerable and different,
but the reality of
the sea is one. The plurality of humanity may be likened to the waves, but the
reality of
humankind is like the sea itself. All the waves are of the same water; all are
waves of one ocean.
Therefore, strive to show in the human world that women are most capable and
efficient,
that their hearts are more tender and susceptible than the hearts of men, that
they are more
philanthropic and responsive toward the needy and suffering, that they are
inflexibly opposed
to war and are lovers of peace. Strive that the ideal of international peace
may become realized
through the efforts of womankind, for man is more inclined to war than woman,
and a real
evidence of woman's superiority will be her service and efficiency in the
establishment of
universal peace.

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27 August 1912

Talk at Metaphysical Club

Boston, Massachusetts

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 284-289)

Upon the faces of those present I behold the expression of thoughtfulness and wisdom;
therefore, I shall discourse upon a subject involving one of the divine questions, a question of religious and metaphysical importance—namely, the progressive and perpetual motion of elemental atoms throughout the various degrees of phenomena and the kingdoms of existence.
It will be demonstrated and become evident that the origin and outcome of phenomena are identical and that there is an essential oneness in all existing things. This is a subtle principle appertaining to divine philosophy and requiring close analysis and attention. The elemental atoms which constitute all phenomenal existence and being in this illimitable universe are in perpetual motion, undergoing continuous degrees of progression. For instance, let us conceive of an atom in the mineral kingdom progressing upward to the kingdom of the vegetable by entering into the composition and fibre of a tree or plant. From thence it is assimilated and transferred into the kingdom of the animal and finally, by the law and process of composition, becomes a part of the body of man. That is to say, it has traversed the intermediate degrees and stations of phenomenal existence, entering into the composition of various organisms in its journey. This motion or transference is progressive and perpetual, for after disintegration of the human body into which it has entered, it returns to the mineral kingdom whence it came and will continue to traverse the kingdoms of phenomena as before.
This is an illustration designed to show that the constituent elemental atoms

of phenomena
 undergo progressive transference and motion throughout the material kingdoms.
 In its ceaseless progression and journeyings the atom becomes imbued with the
 virtues and
 powers of each degree or kingdom it traverses. In the degree of the mineral it
 possessed mineral
 affinities; in the kingdom of the vegetable it manifested the augmentative
 virtue or power of
 growth; in the animal organism it reflected the intelligence of that degree;
 and in the kingdom
 of man it was qualified with human attributes or virtues.
 Furthermore, the forms and organisms of phenomenal being and existence in each
 of the
 kingdoms of the universe are myriad and numberless. The vegetable plane or
 kingdom, for
 instance, has its infinite variety of types and material structures of plant
 life—each distinct and
 different within itself, no two exactly alike in composition and detail—for
 there are no
 repetitions in nature, and the augmentative virtue cannot be confined to any
 given image or
 shape. Each leaf has its own particular identity—so to speak, its own
 individuality as a leaf.
 Therefore, each atom of the innumerable elemental atoms, during its ceaseless
 motion through
 the kingdoms of existence as a constituent of organic composition, not only
 becomes imbued
 with the powers and virtues of the kingdoms it traverses but also reflects the
 attributes and
 qualities of the forms and organisms of those kingdoms. As each of these forms
 has its
 individual and particular virtue, therefore, each elemental atom of the
 universe has the
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opportunity of expressing an infinite variety of those individual virtues. No
 atom is bereft or
 deprived of this opportunity or right of expression. Nor can it be said of any
 given atom that it
 is denied equal opportunities with other atoms; nay, all are privileged to
 possess the virtues
 existent in these kingdoms and to reflect the attributes of their organisms. In
 the various
 transformations or passages from kingdom to kingdom the virtues expressed by
 the atoms in
 each degree are peculiar to that degree. For example, in the world of the

mineral the atom does
not express the vegetable form and organism, and when through the process of
transmutation
it assumes the virtues of the vegetable degree, it does not reflect the
attributes of animal
organisms, and so on.
It is evident, then, that each elemental atom of the universe is possessed of a
capacity to
express all the virtues of the universe. This is a subtle and abstract
realization. Meditate upon
it, for within it lies the true explanation of pantheism. From this point of
view and perception
pantheism is a truth, for every atom in the universe possesses or reflects all
the virtues of life,
the manifestation of which is effected through change and transformation.
Therefore, the origin
and outcome of phenomena is, verily, the omnipresent God; for the reality of
all phenomenal
existence is through Him. There is neither reality nor the manifestation of
reality without the
instrumentality of God. Existence is realized and possible through the bounty
of God, just as
the ray or flame emanating from this lamp is realized through the bounty of the
lamp, from
which it originates. Even so, all phenomena are realized through the divine
bounty, and the
explanation of true pantheistic statement and principle is that the phenomena
of the universe
find realization through the one power animating and dominating all things, and
all things are
but manifestations of its energy and bounty. The virtue of being and existence
is through no
other agency. Therefore, in the words of Bahá'u'lláh, the first teaching
is the oneness of the
world of humanity.
When the man who is spiritually sagacious and possessed of insight views the
world of
humanity, he will observe that the lights of the divine bounty are flooding all
mankind, just as
the lights of the sun shed their splendor upon all existing things. All
phenomena of material
existence are revealed through the ray emanating from the sun. Without light
nothing would be
visible. Similarly, all phenomena in the inner world of reality receive the
bounties of God from
the source of divine bestowal. This human plane, or kingdom, is one creation,
and all souls are

the signs and traces of the divine bounty. In this plane there are no exceptions; all have been recipients of their bestowals through the heavenly bounty. Can you find a soul bereft of the nearness of God? Can you find one whom God has deprived of its daily sustenance? This is impossible. God is kind and loving to all, and all are manifestations of the divine bounty. This is the oneness of the world of humanity. But some souls are weak; we must endeavor to strengthen them. Some are ignorant, uninformed of the bounties of God; we must strive to make them knowing. Some are ailing; we must seek to restore them to health. Some are immature as children; they must be trained and assisted to attain maturity. We nurse the sick in tenderness and the kindly spirit of love; we do not despise them because they are ill. Therefore, we must exercise extreme patience, sympathy and love toward all mankind, considering no soul as rejected. If we look upon a soul as rejected, we have disobeyed the teachings of God. God is loving to all. Shall we be unjust or unkind to anyone? Is this allowable in the sight of God? God provides for all. Is it befitting for us to prevent the flow of His merciful provisions for mankind? God has created all in His image and likeness. Shall we manifest hatred for His creatures and servants? This would be contrary to the will of God and according to the will of Satan, by which we mean the natural

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inclinations of the lower nature. This lower nature in man is symbolized as Satan—the evil ego within us, not an evil personality outside. Bahá'u'lláh teaches that the foundations of the divine religion are one reality which does not admit of multiplicity or division. Therefore, the commandments and teachings of God are one. The religious differences and divisions which exist in the world are due to blind imitations of forms without knowledge or investigation of the fundamental divine reality which underlies all the religions. Inasmuch as these imitations of ancestral forms are various, dissensions have

arisen among the people of religion. Therefore, it is necessary to free mankind from this subjection to blind belief by pointing the way of guidance to reality itself, which is the only basis of unity.

Bahá'u'lláh says that religion must be conducive to love and unity. If it proves to be the source of hatred and enmity, its absence is preferable; for the will and law of God is love, and love is the bond between human hearts. Religion is the light of the world. If it is made the cause of darkness through human misunderstanding and ignorance, it would be better to do without it.

Religion must conform to science and reason; otherwise, it is superstition. God has created man in order that he may perceive the verity of existence and endowed him with mind or reason to discover truth. Therefore, scientific knowledge and religious belief must be conformable to the analysis of this divine faculty in man.

Prejudices of all kinds—whether religious, racial, patriotic or political—are destructive of divine foundations in man. All the warfare and bloodshed in human history have been the outcome of prejudice. This earth is one home and native land. God has created mankind with equal endowment and right to live upon the earth. As a city is the home of all its inhabitants although each may have his individual place of residence therein, so the earth's surface is one wide native land or home for all races of humankind. Racial prejudice or separation into nations such as French, German, American and so on is unnatural and proceeds from human motive and ignorance. All are the children and servants of God. Why should we be separated by artificial and imaginary boundaries? In the animal kingdom the doves flock together in harmony and agreement. They have no prejudices. We are human and superior in intelligence.

Is it befitting that lower creatures should manifest virtues which lack expression in man?

Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed and promulgated the foundation of international peace. For thousands of years men and nations have gone forth to the battlefield to settle their differences.

The cause of this has been ignorance and degeneracy. Praise be to God! In this radiant century minds have developed, perceptions have become keener, eyes are illumined and ears attentive.

Therefore, it will be impossible for war to continue. Consider human ignorance and

inconsistency. A man who kills another man is punished by execution, but a military genius

who kills one hundred thousand of his fellow creatures is immortalized as a hero. One man

steals a small sum of money and is imprisoned as a thief. Another pillages a whole country and

is honored as a patriot and conqueror. A single falsehood brings reproach and censure, but the

wiles of politicians and diplomats excite the admiration and praise of a nation. Consider the

ignorance and inconsistency of mankind. How darkened and savage are the instincts of

humanity!

Bahá'u'lláh has announced that no matter how far the world of humanity may advance in

material civilization, it is nevertheless in need of spiritual virtues and the bounties of God. The

spirit of man is not illumined and quickened through material sources. It is not resuscitated by

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investigating phenomena of the world of matter. The spirit of man is in need of the protection

of the Holy Spirit. Just as he advances by progressive stages from the mere physical world of

being into the intellectual realm, so must he develop upward in moral attributes and spiritual

graces. In the process of this attainment he is ever in need of the bestowals of the Holy Spirit.

Material development may be likened to the glass of a lamp, whereas divine virtues and

spiritual susceptibilities are the light within the glass. The lamp chimney is worthless without

the light; likewise, man in his material condition requires the radiance and vivification of the

divine graces and merciful attributes. Without the presence of the Holy Spirit he is lifeless.

Although physically and mentally alive, he is spiritually dead. Christ announced, "That which

is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is

spirit,” meaning that man must be born again. As the babe is born into the light of this physical world, so must the physical and intellectual man be born into the light of the world of Divinity. In the matrix of the mother the unborn child was deprived and unconscious of the world of material existence, but after its birth it beheld the wonders and beauties of a new realm of life and being. In the world of the matrix it was utterly ignorant and unable to conceive of these new conditions, but after its transformation it discovers the radiant sun, trees, flowers and an infinite range of blessings and bounties awaiting it. In the human plane and kingdom man is a captive of nature and ignorant of the divine world until born of the breaths of the Holy Spirit out of physical conditions of limitation and deprivation. Then he beholds the reality of the spiritual realm and Kingdom, realizes the narrow restrictions of the mere human world of existence and becomes conscious of the unlimited and infinite glories of the world of God. Therefore, no matter how man may advance upon the physical and intellectual plane, he is ever in need of the boundless virtues of Divinity, the protection of the Holy Spirit and the face of God.

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29 August 1912

Talk at Home of Madame Morey

34 Hillside Avenue, Malden, Massachusetts

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 289-296)

In the Books of the Prophets certain glad tidings are recorded which are absolutely true and free from doubt. The East has ever been the dawning point of the Sun of Reality. All the Prophets of God have appeared there. The religions of God have been promulgated, the teachings of God have been spread and the law of God founded in the East. The

Orient has
always been the center of lights. The West has acquired illumination from the
East, but in some
respects the reflection of the light has been greater in the Occident. This is
especially true of
Christianity. Christ appeared in Palestine, and His teachings were founded
there. Although the
doors of the Kingdom were opened in that country and the bestowals of Divinity
were spread
broadcast from its center, the people of the West have embraced and promulgated
Christianity
more fully than those in the East. The Sun of Reality shone forth from the
horizon of the East,
but its heat and ray are most resplendent in the West, where the radiant
standard of Christ has
been upraised. I have great hopes that the lights of Bahá'u'lláh's
appearance may also find the
fullest manifestation and reflection in these western regions, for the
teachings of Bahá'u'lláh
are especially applicable to the conditions of the people here. The western
nations are endowed
with the capability of understanding the rational and peerless words of
Bahá'u'lláh and
realizing that the essence of the teachings of all the former Prophets can be
found in His
utterance.

The teachings of Christ have been promulgated by Bahá'u'lláh, Who has
also revealed new
teachings applicable to present conditions in the world of humanity. He has
trained the people
of the East through the power and protection of the Holy Spirit, cemented the
souls of humanity
together and established the foundations of international unity.

Through the power of His words the hearts of the people of all religions have
been attuned
in harmony. For instance, among the Bahá'ís in Persia there are Christians,
Muslims,
Zoroastrians, Jews and many others of varying denominations and beliefs who
have been
brought together in unity and love in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Although
these people were
formerly hostile and antagonistic, filled with hatred and bitterness toward
each other,
bloodthirsty and pillaging, considering that animosity and attack were the
means of attaining
the good pleasure of God, they have now become loving and filled with the
radiant zeal of

fellowship and brotherhood, the purpose of them all being service to the world of humanity, promotion of international peace, the unification of the divine religions and deeds of universal philanthropy. By their words and actions they are proving the verity of Bahá'u'lláh.

Consider the animosity and hatred existing today between the various nations of the world.

What disagreements and hostilities arise, what warfare and contention, how much bloodshed,

what injustice and tyranny! Just now there is war in eastern Turkey, also war between Turkey

and Italy. Nations are devoted to conquest and bloodshed, filled with the animus of religious

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hatred, seeking the good pleasure of God by killing and destroying those whom in their

blindness they consider enemies. How ignorant they are! That which is forbidden by God they

consider acceptable to Him. God is love; God seeketh fellowship, purity, sanctity and longsuffering; these are the attributes of Divinity. Therefore, these warring, raging nations have

arisen against Divinity, imagining they are serving God. What gross ignorance this is! What

injustice, blindness and lack of realization! Briefly, we must strive with heart and soul in order

that this darkness of the contingent world may be dispelled, that the lights of the Kingdom shall

shine upon all the horizons, the world of humanity become illumined, the image of God become

apparent in human mirrors, the law of God be well established and that all regions of the world

shall enjoy peace, comfort and composure beneath the equitable protection of God. My

admonition and exhortation to you is this: Be kind to all people, love humanity, consider all

mankind as your relations and servants of the most high God. Strive day and night that

animosity and contention may pass away from the hearts of men, that all religions shall become

reconciled and the nations love each other so that no racial, religious or political prejudice may

remain and the world of humanity behold God as the beginning and end of all existence. God

has created all, and all return to God. Therefore, love humanity with all your

heart and soul. If
you meet a poor man, assist him; if you see the sick, heal him; reassure the
affrighted one,
render the cowardly noble and courageous, educate the ignorant, associate with
the stranger.
Emulate God. Consider how kindly, how lovingly He deals with all, and follow
His example.
You must treat people in accordance with the divine precepts—in other words,
treat them as
kindly as God treats them, for this is the greatest attainment possible for the
world of humanity.
Furthermore, know ye that God has created in man the power of reason, whereby
man is
enabled to investigate reality. God has not intended man to imitate blindly his
fathers and
ancestors. He has endowed him with mind, or the faculty of reasoning, by the
exercise of which
he is to investigate and discover the truth, and that which he finds real and
true he must accept.
He must not be an imitator or blind follower of any soul. He must not rely
implicitly upon the
opinion of any man without investigation; nay, each soul must seek
intelligently and
independently, arriving at a real conclusion and bound only by that reality.
The greatest cause
of bereavement and disheartening in the world of humanity is ignorance based
upon blind
imitation. It is due to this that wars and battles prevail; from this cause
hatred and animosity
arise continually among mankind. Through failure to investigate reality the
Jews rejected Jesus
Christ. They were expecting His coming; by day and night they mourned and
lamented, saying,
“O God! Hasten Thou the day of the advent of Christ,” expressing most
intense longing for the
Messiah; but when Christ appeared, they denied and rejected Him, treated Him
with arrogant
contempt, sentenced Him to death and finally crucified Him. Why did this
happen? Because
they were blindly following imitations, believing that which had descended to
them as a
heritage from their fathers and ancestors, tenaciously holding to it and
refusing to investigate
the reality of Christ. Therefore, they were deprived of the bounties of Christ,
whereas if they
had forsaken imitations and investigated the reality of the Messiah, they would
have surely

been guided to believing in Him. Instead of this they said, “We have heard from our fathers and have read in the Old Testament that Christ must come from an unknown place; now we find that this one has come from Nazareth.” Steeped in the literal interpretation and imitating the beliefs of fathers and ancestors, they failed to understand the fact that although the body of Jesus came from Nazareth, the reality of the Christ came from the unknown place of the divine Kingdom. They also said that the scepter of Christ would be of iron—that is to say, He should wield a sword. When Christ appeared, He did possess a sword; but it was the sword of His tongue with which He separated the false from the true. But the Jews were blind to the spiritual significance and symbolism of the prophetic words. They also expected that the Messiah would

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sit upon the throne of David, whereas Christ had neither throne nor semblance of sovereignty; nay, rather, He was a poor man, apparently abject and vanquished; therefore, how could He be the veritable Christ? This was one of their most insistent objections based upon ancestral interpretation and teaching. In reality, Christ was glorified with an eternal sovereignty and everlasting dominion—spiritual and not temporal. His throne and Kingdom were established in human hearts, where He reigns with power and authority without end. Notwithstanding the fulfillment of all the prophetic signs in Christ, the Jews denied Him and entered the period of their deprivation because of their allegiance to imitations and ancestral forms. Among other objections they said, “We are promised through the tongue of the prophets that Christ at the time of His coming would proclaim the law of the Torah, whereas now we see this person abrogating the commands of the Pentateuch, disturbing our blessed Sabbath and abolishing the law of divorce. He has left nothing of the ancient law of Moses; therefore, he is the enemy of Moses.” In reality, Christ proclaimed and completed the law of Moses. He was

the very helper and assister of Moses. He spread the Book of Moses throughout the world and established anew the fundamentals of the law revealed by Him. He abolished certain unimportant laws and forms which were no longer compatible with the exigencies of the time, such as divorce and plurality of wives. The Jews did not comprehend this, and the cause of their ignorance was blind and tenacious adherence to imitations of ancient forms and teachings; therefore, they finally sentenced Christ to death. They, likewise, said, "Through the tongues of the prophets it was announced that during the time of Christ's appearance the justice of God would prevail throughout the world, tyranny and oppression would be unknown, justice would even extend to the animal kingdom, ferocious beasts would associate in gentleness and peace, the wolf and the lamb would drink from the same spring, the lion and the deer meet in the same meadow, the eagle and quail dwell together in the same nest; but instead of this, we see that during the time of this supposed Christ the Romans have conquered Palestine and are ruling it with extreme tyranny, justice is nowhere apparent, and signs of peace in the animal kingdom are conspicuously absent." These statements and attitudes of the Jews were inherited from their fathers—blind allegiance to literal expectations which did not come to pass during the time of Jesus Christ. The real purport of these prophetic statements was that various peoples, symbolized by the wolf and lamb, between whom love and fellowship were impossible would come together during the Messiah's reign, drink from the same fountain of life in His teachings and become His devoted followers. This was realized when peoples of all religions, nationalities and dispositions became united in their beliefs and followed Christ in humility, associating in love and brotherhood under the shadow of His divine protection. The Jews, being blind to this and holding to their bigoted imitations, were insolent and arrogant toward Christ and crucified Him. Had they investigated the reality of Christ, they would have beheld His beauty and truth. God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize

truth. He
has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred
upon him
the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his
endowment and
equipment for the investigation of reality. Man is not intended to see through
the eyes of
another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain.
Each human
creature has individual endowment, power and responsibility in the creative
plan of God.
Therefore, depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome
of your own
investigation; otherwise, you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance
and deprived of
all the bounties of God. Turn to God, supplicate humbly at His threshold,
seeking assistance
and confirmation, that God may rend asunder the veils that obscure your vision.
Then will your
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eyes be filled with illumination, face to face you will behold the reality of
God and your heart
become completely purified from the dross of ignorance, reflecting the glories
and bounties of
the Kingdom.
Holy souls are like soil which has been plowed and tilled with much earnest
labor, the
thorns and thistles cast aside and all weeds uprooted. Such soil is most
fruitful, and the harvest
from it will prove full and plenteous. In this same way man must free himself
from the weeds
of ignorance, thorns of superstitions and thistles of imitations that he may
discover reality in
the harvests of true knowledge. Otherwise, the discovery of reality is
impossible, contention
and divergence of religious belief will always remain, and mankind, like
ferocious wolves, will
rage and attack each other in hatred and antagonism. We supplicate God that He
may destroy
the veils which limit our vision and that these becloudings, which darken the
way of the
manifestation of the shining lights, may be dispelled in order that the
effulgent Sun of Reality
may shine forth. We implore and invoke God, seeking His assistance and
confirmation. Man

is a child of God, most noble, lofty and beloved by God, his Creator.
Therefore, he must ever
strive that the divine bounties and virtues bestowed upon him may prevail and
control him. Just
now the soil of human hearts seems like black earth, but in the innermost
substance of this dark
soil there are thousands of fragrant flowers latent. We must endeavor to
cultivate and awaken
these potentialities, discover the secret treasure in this very mine and
depository of God, bring
forth these resplendent powers long hidden in human hearts. Then will the
glories of both
worlds be blended and increased and the quintessence of human existence be made
manifest.
We must not be content with simply following a certain course because we find
our fathers
pursued that course. It is the duty of everyone to investigate reality, and
investigation of reality
by another will not do for us. If all in the world were rich and one man poor,
of what use are
these riches to that man? If all the world be virtuous and a man steeped in
vice, what good
results are forthcoming from him? If all the world be resplendent and a man
blind, where are
his benefits? If all the world be in plenty and a man hungry, what sustenance
does he derive?
Therefore, every man must be an investigator for himself. Ideas and beliefs
left by his fathers
and ancestors as a heritage will not suffice, for adherence to these are but
imitations, and
imitations have ever been a cause of disappointment and misguidance. Be
investigators of
reality that you may attain the verity of truth and life.
You have asked why it was necessary for the soul that was from God to make this
journey
back to God? Would you like to understand the reality of this question just as
I teach it, or do
you wish to hear it as the world teaches it? For if I should answer you
according to the latter
way, this would be but imitation and would not make the subject clear.
The reality underlying this question is that the evil spirit, Satan or whatever
is interpreted
as evil, refers to the lower nature in man. This baser nature is symbolized in
various ways. In
man there are two expressions: One is the expression of nature; the other, the
expression of the
spiritual realm. The world of nature is defective. Look at it clearly, casting

aside all superstition
and imagination. If you should leave a man uneducated and barbarous in the
wilds of Africa,
would there be any doubt about his remaining ignorant? God has never created an
evil spirit;
all such ideas and nomenclature are symbols expressing the mere human or
earthly nature of
man. It is an essential condition of the soil of earth that thorns, weeds and
fruitless trees may
grow from it. Relatively speaking, this is evil; it is simply the lower state
and baser product of
nature.

It is evident, therefore, that man is in need of divine education and
inspiration, that the spirit
and bounties of God are essential to his development. That is to say, the
teachings of Christ

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and the Prophets are necessary for his education and guidance. Why? Because
They are the
divine Gardeners Who till the earth of human hearts and minds. They educate
man, uproot the
weeds, burn the thorns and remodel the waste places into gardens and orchards
where fruitful
trees grow. The wisdom and purpose of Their training is that man must pass from
degree to
degree of progressive unfoldment until perfection is attained. For instance, if
a man should live
his entire life in one city, he cannot gain a knowledge of the whole world. To
become perfectly
informed he must visit other cities, see the mountains and valleys, cross the
rivers and traverse
the plains. In other words, without progressive and universal education
perfection will not be
attained.

Man must walk in many paths and be subjected to various processes in his
evolution
upward. Physically he is not born in full stature but passes through
consecutive stages of fetus,
infant, childhood, youth, maturity and old age. Suppose he had the power to
remain young
throughout his life. He then would not understand the meaning of old age and
could not believe
it existed. If he could not realize the condition of old age, he would not know
that he was young.
He would not know the difference between young and old without experiencing the

old. Unless
you have passed through the state of infancy, how would you know this was an
infant beside
you? If there were no wrong, how would you recognize the right? If it were not
for sin, how
would you appreciate virtue? If evil deeds were unknown, how could you commend
good
actions? If sickness did not exist, how would you understand health? Evil is
nonexistent; it is
the absence of good. Sickness is the loss of health; poverty, the lack of
riches. When wealth
disappears, you are poor; you look within the treasure box but find nothing
there. Without
knowledge there is ignorance; therefore, ignorance is simply the lack of
knowledge. Death is
the absence of life. Therefore, on the one hand, we have existence; on the
other, nonexistence,
negation or absence of existence.
Briefly, the journey of the soul is necessary. The pathway of life is the road
which leads to
divine knowledge and attainment. Without training and guidance the soul could
never progress
beyond the conditions of its lower nature, which is ignorant and defective.
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??1 September 1912??
??Talk at Church of the Messiah??
??Montreal, Canada??
??From Stenographic Notes??
?)?(Promulgation, pp. 297-302??

??God, the Almighty, has created all mankind from the dust of earth. He has fashioned them??
??all from the same elements; they are descended from the same race and live upon the same??
??globe. He has created them to dwell beneath the one heaven. As members of the human family??
??and His children He has endowed them with equal susceptibilities. He maintains, protects and??
??is kind to all. He has made no distinction in mercies and graces among

His children. With??

??impartial love and wisdom He has sent forth His Prophets and divine teachings. His teachings??

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are the means of establishing union and fellowship among mankind and awakening love and

kindness in human hearts. He proclaims the oneness of the kingdom of humanity.

He rebukes

those things which create differences and destroy harmony; He commends and praises every

means that will conduce to the solidarity of the human race. He encourages man in every step

of advancement which leads to ultimate union. The Prophets of God have been inspired with

the message of love and unity. The Books of God have been revealed for the upbuilding of

fellowship and union. The Prophets of God have been the servants of reality; Their teachings

constitute the science of reality. Reality is one; it does not admit plurality.

We conclude,

therefore, that the foundation of the religions of God is one foundation.

Notwithstanding this,

certain forms and imitations have been persistently adhered to which have nothing to do with

the foundation of the teachings of the Prophets of God. As these imitations are various and

different, contention and strife prevail among the people of religious beliefs, and the foundation

of the religion of God has become obscured. Like beasts of prey, men are warring and killing

each other, destroying cities and homes, devastating countries and kingdoms.

God has created His servants in order that they may love and associate with each other. He

has revealed the glorious splendor of His sun of love in the world of humanity.

The cause of

the creation of the phenomenal world is love. All the Prophets have promulgated the law of

love. Man has opposed the will of God and acted in opposition to the plan of God. Therefore,

from the beginning of history to the present time the world of humanity has had no lasting rest;

warfare and strife have continuously prevailed, and hearts have manifested hatred toward each

other. The cause of bloodshed and battle, strife and hatred throughout the past has been either

religious, racial, patriotic or political prejudice. Therefore, the world of humanity has ever been in torment. These prejudices are more pronounced in the Orient, where freedom is restricted.

In the nineteenth century the nations of the East were restless and in a state of inner commotion.

The darkness of imitations and forms had enveloped religious belief. The people of religions

were in constant warfare, filled with enmity, hatred and bitterness. In the midst of these

conditions Bahá'u'lláh appeared. He proclaimed the oneness of the world of humanity and

announced that all are the servants of God. He taught that all the religions are beneath the

shadow and protection of the Almighty, that God is compassionate and loving to all, that the

revelations of all the Prophets of the past have been in perfect unity and agreement, that the

heavenly Books have confirmed each other; therefore, why should contention and strife exist

among the people?

As all mankind have been created by the one God, we are sheep under the care and

protection of one Shepherd. Therefore, as His sheep we must associate in accord and

agreement. If one single lamb becomes separated from the flock, the thoughts and efforts of all

the others must be to bring it back again. Consequently, Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed that, inasmuch

as God is the one heavenly Shepherd and all mankind are the sheep of His fold, the religion or

guidance of God must be the means of love and fellowship in the world. If religion proves to

be the source of hatred, enmity and contention, if it becomes the cause of warfare and strife

and influences men to kill each other, its absence is preferable. For that which is productive of

hatred amongst the people is rejected by God, and that which establishes fellowship is beloved

and sanctioned by Him. Religion and divine teachings are like unto a remedy. A remedy must

produce the condition of health. If it occasions sickness, it is wiser and better to have no remedy

whatever. This is the significance of the statement that if religion becomes the cause of warfare

and bloodshed, irreligion and the absence of religion are preferable among mankind.

Bahá'u'lláh has declared that religion must be in accord with science and reason. If it does not correspond with scientific principles and the processes of reason, it is superstition. For God
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has endowed us with faculties by which we may comprehend the realities of things, contemplate reality itself. If religion is opposed to reason and science, faith is impossible; and when faith and confidence in the divine religion are not manifest in the heart, there can be no spiritual attainment. According to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh all religious, racial, patriotic and political prejudice must be abandoned, for these are the destroyers of the real foundation of humanity. He has announced that the religion of God is one, for all revelations of it are based upon reality. Abraham summoned the people to reality; Moses proclaimed reality; Christ founded reality. Likewise, all the Prophets were the servants and promulgators of reality. Reality is one and indivisible. Therefore, the prejudices and bigotries which exist today among the religions are not justifiable, inasmuch as they are opposed to reality. All prejudices are against the will and plan of God. Consider, for instance, racial distinction and enmity. All humanity are the children of God; they belong to the same family, to the same original race. There can be no multiplicity of races, since all are the descendants of Adam. This signifies that racial assumption and distinction are nothing but superstition. In the estimate of God there are no English, French, Germans, Turkish or Persians. All these in the presence of God are equal; they are of one race and creation; God did not make these divisions. These distinctions have had their origin in man himself. Therefore, as they are against the plan and purpose of reality, they are false and imaginary. We are of one physical race, even as we are of one physical plan of material body—each endowed with two eyes, two ears, one head, two feet. Among the animals racial prejudice does not exist. Consider the doves; there is no distinction as to whether it is

an oriental or an
occidental dove. The sheep are all of one race; there is no assumption of
distinction between
an eastern and a western sheep. When they meet, they associate with perfect
fellowship. If a
dove from the West should go to the Orient, it will associate with the eastern
doves
unhesitatingly. There will be no attitude of unwillingness as if saying, "You
belong to the East;
I am from the West." Is it reasonable or allowable that a racial prejudice
which is not observed
by the animal kingdom should be entertained by man?
Consider the prejudice of patriotism. This is one globe, one land, one country.
God did not
divide it into national boundaries. He created all the continents without
national divisions. Why
should we make such division ourselves? These are but imaginary lines and
boundaries. Europe
is a continent; it is not naturally divided; man has drawn the lines and
established the limits of
kingdoms and empires. Man declares a river to be a boundary line between two
countries,
calling this side French and the other side German, whereas the river was
created for both and
is a natural artery for all. Is it not imagination and ignorance which impels
man to violate the
divine intention and make the very bounties of God the cause of war, bloodshed
and
destruction? Therefore, all prejudices between man and man are falsehoods and
violations of
the will of God. God desires unity and love; He commands harmony and
fellowship. Enmity is
human disobedience; God Himself is love.
Bahá'u'lláh has announced that inasmuch as ignorance and lack of
education are barriers
of separation among mankind, all must receive training and instruction. Through
this provision
the lack of mutual understanding will be remedied and the unity of mankind
furthered and
advanced. Universal education is a universal law. It is, therefore, incumbent
upon every father
to teach and instruct his children according to his possibilities. If he is
unable to educate them,
the body politic, the representative of the people, must provide the means for
their education.
In the Orient women were degraded and considered subordinate to man.
Bahá'u'lláh

proclaimed equality of the sexes—that both man and woman are servants of God before Whom

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there is no distinction. Whosoever has a pure heart and renders good deeds is nearer to God and the object of His favor—whether man or woman. The sex distinction which exists in the human world is due to the lack of education for woman, who has been denied equal opportunity for development and advancement. Equality of the sexes will be established in proportion to the increased opportunities afforded woman in this age, for man and woman are equally the recipients of powers and endowments from God, the Creator. God has not ordained distinction between them in His consummate purpose. Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed the adoption of a universal language. A language shall be agreed upon by which unity will be established in the world. Each person will require training in two languages: his native tongue and the universal auxiliary form of speech. This will facilitate intercommunication and dispel the misunderstandings which the barriers of language have occasioned in the world. All people worship the same God and are alike His servants. When they are able to communicate freely, they will associate in friendship and concord, entertain the greatest love and fellowship for each other, and in reality the Orient and Occident will embrace in unity and agreement. The world is in greatest need of international peace. Until it is established, mankind will not attain composure and tranquillity. It is necessary that the nations and governments organize an international tribunal to which all their disputes and differences shall be referred. The decision of that tribunal shall be final. Individual controversy will be adjudged by a local tribunal. International questions will come before the universal tribunal, and so the cause of warfare will be taken away. Fifty years ago Bahá'u'lláh wrote Epistles to the kings and rulers of the world in which the teachings and principles revealed by Him were embodied and set forth. These

Epistles were
 printed in India forty years ago and spread broadcast.
 Briefly, by the promulgation of these principles Bahá'u'lláh has caused
 the prejudices
 which afflicted the people of the Orient to disappear. The communities which
 have accepted
 His teachings are now living together in the greatest love and harmony. When
 you enter a
 meeting of these people, you will find Christians, Jews, Muslims, Zoroastrians,
 Buddhists
 gathered together in perfect fellowship and agreement. In their discussions the
 greatest spirit
 of tolerance and friendship has supplanted the former hostility and hatred
 witnessed among
 them.

I have visited America and find everywhere the evidences of just and equitable
 government.

Therefore, I pray God that these western peoples may become the means of
 establishing
 international peace and spreading the oneness of the world of humanity. May you
 become the
 cause of unity and agreement among the nations. May a lamp be lighted here
 which will
 illumine the whole universe with the oneness of the world of humanity, with
 love between the
 hearts of the children of men, and the unity of all mankind. I hope that you
 may become assisted
 in this supreme accomplishment, that you may raise the flag of international
 peace and
 reconciliation upon this continent, that this government and people may be the
 means of
 spreading these lofty ideals in order that the world of man may find rest, in
 order that the good
 pleasure of the Most High God shall be attained and His favors encircle the
 Orient and
 Occident.

O Thou compassionate, almighty One! This assemblage of souls have turned their
 faces
 unto Thee in supplication. With the utmost humility and submission they look
 toward Thy
 Kingdom and beg Thee for pardon and forgiveness. O God! Endear this assembly to
 Thyself.

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Sanctify these souls, and cast upon them the rays of Thy guidance. Illumine
 their hearts, and

gladden their spirits with Thy glad tidings. Receive all of them in Thy holy Kingdom; confer upon them Thine inexhaustible bounty; make them happy in this world and in the world to come. O God! We are weak; give us strength. We are poor; bestow upon us Thine illimitable treasures. We are sick; grant unto us Thy divine healing. We are impotent; give us Thy heavenly power. O Lord! Make us useful in this world; free us from the condition of self and desire. O Lord! Make us brethren in Thy love, and cause us to be loving toward all Thy children. Confirm us in service to the world of humanity so that we may become the servants of Thy servants, that we may love all Thy creatures and become compassionate to all Thy people. O Lord, Thou art the Almighty. Thou art the Merciful. Thou art the Forgiver. Thou art the Omnipotent.

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1 September 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. William Sutherland Maxwell

716 Pine Avenue West, Montreal, Canada

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 302-305)

I am exceedingly happy to meet you. Praise be to God! I see before me souls who have

unusual capability and the power of spiritual advancement. In reality, the people of this

continent possess great capacity; they are the cause of my happiness, and I ever pray that God

may confirm and assist them to progress in all the degrees of existence. As they have advanced

along material lines, may they develop in idealistic degrees, for material advancement is

fruitless without spiritual progress and not productive of everlasting results.

For example, no

matter how much the physical body of man is trained and developed, there will be no real

progression in the human station unless the mind correspondingly advances. No

matter how much man may acquire material virtues, he will not be able to realize and express the highest possibilities of life without spiritual graces. God has created all earthly things under a law of progression in material degrees, but He has created man and endowed him with powers of advancement toward spiritual and transcendental kingdoms. He has not created material phenomena after His own image and likeness, but He has created man after that image and with potential power to attain that likeness. He has distinguished man above all other created things. All created things except man are captives of nature and the sense world, but in man there has been created an ideal power by which he may perceive intellectual or spiritual realities. He has brought forth everything necessary for the life of this world, but man is a creation intended for the reflection of divine virtues. Consider that the highest type of creation below man is the animal, which is superior to all degrees of life except man. Manifestly, the animal has been created for the life of this world. Its highest virtue is to express excellence in the material plane of existence. The animal is perfect when its body is healthy and its physical senses are whole. When it is characterized by the attributes of physical health, when its physical forces are in working order, when food and surrounding conditions minister to its needs, it has attained the ultimate perfection of its kingdom. But man does not depend upon these things for his virtues. No matter how perfect his health and physical powers, if that is all, he has not yet risen above the degree of a perfect animal. Beyond and above this, God has opened the doors of ideal virtues and attainments before the face of man. He has created in his being the mysteries of the divine Kingdom. He has bestowed upon him the power of intellect so that through the attribute of reason, when fortified by the Holy Spirit, he may penetrate and discover ideal realities and become informed of the mysteries of the world of significances. As this power to penetrate the ideal knowledges is superhuman, supernatural, man becomes the collective center of spiritual

as well as material forces so that the divine spirit may manifest itself in his being, the effulgences of the Kingdom shine within the sanctuary of his heart, the signs of the attributes and perfections of God reveal themselves in a newness of life, the everlasting glory and eternal existence be attained, the knowledge of God illumine, and the mysteries of the realm of might be unsealed.

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Man is like unto this lamp, but the effulgences of the Kingdom are like the rays of the lamp.
Man is like unto the glass, but spiritual splendors are like unto the light within the glass. No matter how translucent the glass may be, as long as there is no light within, it remains dark.
Likewise, man, no matter how much he advances in material accomplishments, will remain like the glass without light if he is deprived of the spiritual virtues.
Material virtues are like unto a perfect body, but this body is in need of the spirit. No matter how handsome and perfect the body may be, if it is deprived of the spirit and its animus, it is dead.
But when that same body is affiliated with the spirit and expressing life, perfection and virtue become realized in it. Deprived of the Holy Spirit and its bounties, man is spiritually dead.
Children, for instance, no matter how good and pure, no matter how healthy their bodies, are, nevertheless, considered imperfect because the power of intellect is not fully manifest in them. When the intellectual power fully displays its influences and they attain to the age of maturity, they are considered as perfect. Likewise, man, no matter how much he may advance in worldly affairs and make progress in material civilization, is imperfect unless he is quickened by the bounties of the Holy Spirit; for it is evident that until he receives that divine impetus he is ignorant and deprived. For this reason Jesus Christ said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." By this Christ meant that unless man is released from the material world, freed from the captivity of materialism and receiving a

portion of the bounties of the spiritual world, he shall be deprived of the bestowals and favors of the Kingdom of God, and the utmost we can say of him is that he is a perfect animal. No one can rightly call him a man. In another place He said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The meaning of this is that if man is a captive of nature, he is like unto an animal because he is only a body physically born—that is, he belongs to the world of matter and remains subject to the law and control of nature. But if he is baptized with the Holy Spirit, if he is freed from the bondage of nature, released from animalistic tendencies and advanced in the human realm, he is fitted to enter into the divine Kingdom. The world of the Kingdom is the realm of divine bestowals and the bounties of God. It is attainment of the highest virtues of humanity; it is nearness to God; it is capacity to receive the bounties of the ancient Lord. When man advances to this station, he attains the second birth. Before his first or physical birth man was in the world of the matrix. He had no knowledge of this world; his eyes could not see; his ears could not hear. When he was born from the world of the matrix, he beheld another world. The sun was shining with its splendors, the moon radiant in the heavens, the stars twinkling in the expansive firmament, the seas surging, trees verdant and green, all kinds of creatures enjoying life here, infinite bounties prepared for him. In the world of the matrix none of these things existed. In that world he had no knowledge of this vast range of existence; nay, rather, he would have denied the reality of this world. But after his birth he began to open his eyes and behold the wonders of this illimitable universe. Similarly, as long as man is in the matrix of the human world, as long as he is the captive of nature, he is out of touch and without knowledge of the universe of the Kingdom. If he attains rebirth while in the world of nature, he will become informed of the divine world. He will observe that another and a higher world exists. Wonderful bounties descend; eternal life awaits; everlasting glory surrounds him. All the signs of reality and greatness are there. He will see

the lights of God.

All these experiences will be his when he is born out of the world of nature into the divine

world. Therefore, for the perfect man there are two kinds of birth: the first, physical birth, is

from the matrix of the mother; the second, or spiritual birth, is from the world of nature. In both

he is without knowledge of the new world of existence he is entering.

Therefore, rebirth means

his release from the captivity of nature, freedom from attachment to this mortal and material

life. This is the second, or spiritual, birth of which Jesus Christ spoke in the Gospels.

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The majority of people are captives in the matrix of nature, submerged in the sea of

materiality. We must pray that they may be reborn, that they may attain insight and spiritual

hearing, that they may receive the gift of another heart, a new transcendent power, and in the

eternal world the unending bestowal of divine bounties.

Today the world of humanity is walking in darkness because it is out of touch with the

world of God. That is why we do not see the signs of God in the hearts of men.

The power of

the Holy Spirit has no influence. When a divine spiritual illumination becomes manifest in the

world of humanity, when divine instruction and guidance appear, then enlightenment follows,

a new spirit is realized within, a new power descends, and a new life is given.

It is like the birth

from the animal kingdom into the kingdom of man. When man acquires these virtues, the

oneness of the world of humanity will be revealed, the banner of international peace will be

upraised, equality between all mankind will be realized, and the Orient and Occident will

become one. Then will the justice of God become manifest, all humanity will appear as the

members of one family, and every member of that family will be consecrated to cooperation

and mutual assistance. The lights of the love of God will shine; eternal happiness will be

unveiled; everlasting joy and spiritual delight will be attained.

I will pray, and you must pray, likewise, that such heavenly bounty may be

realized; that
 strife and enmity may be banished, warfare and bloodshed taken away; that
 hearts may attain
 ideal communication and that all people may drink from the same fountain. May
 they receive
 their knowledge from the same divine source. May all hearts become illumined
 with the rays
 of the Sun of Reality; may all of them enter the university of God, acquire
 spiritual virtues and
 seek for themselves heavenly bounties. Then this material, phenomenal world
 will become the
 mirror of the world of God, and within this pure mirror the divine virtues of
 the realm of might
 will be reflected.
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1 September 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. William Sutherland Maxwell

716 Pine Avenue West, Montreal, Canada

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 306-308)

The subject of immortality has been suggested.
 Life is the expression of composition; and death, the expression of
 decomposition. In the
 world or kingdom of the minerals certain materials or elemental substances
 exist. When
 through the law of creation they enter into composition, a being or organism
 comes into
 existence. For example, certain material atoms are brought together, and man is
 the result.
 When this composition is destroyed and disintegrated, decomposition takes
 place; this is
 mortality, or death. When certain elements are composed, an animal comes into
 being. When
 these elements are scattered or decomposed, this is called the death of the
 animal. Again, certain
 atoms are bound together by chemical affinity; a composition called a flower
 appears. When
 these atoms are dispersed and the composition they have formed is
 disintegrated, the flower
 has come to its end; it is dead. Therefore, it is evident that life is the

expression of composition,
and mortality, or death, is equivalent to decomposition. As the spirit of man
is not composed
of material elements, it is not subject to decomposition and, therefore, has no
death. It is self-evident that the human spirit is simple, single and not
composed in order that it may come to
immortality, and it is a philosophical axiom that the individual or indivisible
atom is
indestructible. At most, it passes through a process of construction and
reconstruction. For
example, these individual atoms are brought together in a composition, and
through this
composition a given organism—such as a man, an animal or a plant—is
created. When this
composition is decomposed, that created organism is brought to an end, but the
component
atoms are not annihilated; they continue to exist because they are single,
individual and not
composed. Therefore, it may be said that these individual atoms are eternal.
Likewise, the
human spirit, inasmuch as it is not composed of individual elements or
atoms—as it is
sanctified above these elements—is eternal. This is a self-evident proof of
its immortality.

Second, consider the world of dreams, wherein the body of man is immovable,
seemingly
dead, not subject to sensation; the eyes do not see, the ears do not hear nor
the tongue speak.
But the spirit of man is not asleep; it sees, hears, moves, perceives and
discovers realities.
Therefore, it is evident that the spirit of man is not affected by the change
or condition of the
body. Even though the material body should die, the spirit continues eternally
alive, just as it
exists and functions in the inert body in the realm of dreams. That is to say,
the spirit is immortal
and will continue its existence after the destruction of the body.

Third, the human body has one form. In its composition it has been transferred
from one
form to another but never possesses two forms at the same time. For example, it
has existed in
the elemental substances of the mineral kingdom. From the mineral kingdom it
has traversed
the vegetable kingdom and its constituent substances; from the vegetable
kingdom it has risen
by evolution into the kingdom of the animal and from thence attained the
kingdom of man.

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After its disintegration and decomposition it will return again to the mineral kingdom, leaving its human form and taking a new form unto itself. During these progressions one form succeeds another, but at no time does the body possess more than one. The spirit of man, however, can manifest itself in all forms at the same time. For example, we say that a material body is either square or spherical, triangular or hexagonal. While it is triangular, it cannot be square; and while it is square, it is not triangular. Similarly, it cannot be spherical and hexagonal at the same time. These various forms or shapes cannot be manifest at the same instant in one material object. Therefore, the form of the physical body of man must be destroyed and abandoned before it can assume or take unto itself another. Mortality, therefore, means transference from one form to another—that is, transference from the human kingdom to the kingdom of the mineral. When the physical man is dead, he will return to dust; and this transference is equivalent to nonexistence. But the human spirit in itself contains all these forms, shapes and figures. It is not possible to break or destroy one form so that it may transfer itself into another. As an evidence of this, at the present moment in the human spirit you have the shape of a square and the figure of a triangle. Simultaneously also you can conceive a hexagonal form. All these can be conceived at the same moment in the human spirit, and not one of them needs to be destroyed or broken in order that the spirit of man may be transferred to another. There is no annihilation, no destruction; therefore, the human spirit is immortal because it is not transferred from one body into another body. Consider another proof: Every cause is followed by an effect and vice versa; there could be no effect without a cause preceding it. Sight is an effect; there is no doubt that behind that effect there is a cause. When we hear a discourse, there is a speaker. We could not hear words unless they proceeded from the tongue of a speaker. Motion without a mover or cause of motion is

inconceivable. Jesus Christ lived two thousand years ago. Today we behold His manifest signs;
His light is shining; His sovereignty is established; His traces are apparent; His bounties are
effulgent. Can we say that Christ did not exist? We can absolutely conclude that Christ existed
and that from Him these traces proceeded.
Still another proof: The body of man becomes lean or fat; it is afflicted with disease, suffers
mutilation; perhaps the eyes become blind, the ears deaf; but none of these imperfections and
failings afflict or affect the spirit. The spirit of man remains in the same condition, unchanged.
A man is blinded, but his spirit continues the same. He loses his hearing, his hand is cut off,
his foot amputated; but his spirit remains the same. He becomes lethargic, he is afflicted with
apoplexy; but there is no difference, change or alteration in his spirit. This is proof that death
is only destruction of the body, while the spirit remains immortal, eternal. Again, all phenomena of the material world are subject to mortality and death, but the
immortal spirit does not belong to the phenomenal world; it is holy and sanctified above
material existence. If the spirit of man belonged to the elemental existence, the eye could see
it, the ear hear it, the hand touch. As long as these five senses cannot perceive it, the proof is
unquestioned that it does not belong to the elemental world and, therefore, is beyond death or
mortality, which are inseparable from that material realm of existence. If being is not subject
to the limitation of material life, it is not subject to mortality.
There are many other proofs of the immortality of the spirit of man. These are but a few of
them.

Salutations!

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2 September 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. William Sutherland Maxwell

716 Pine Avenue West, Montreal, Canada

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 308-312)

Nature is the material world. When we look upon it, we see that it is dark and imperfect.

For instance, if we allow a piece of land to remain in its natural condition, we will find it

covered with thorns and thistles; useless weeds and wild vegetation will flourish upon it, and

it will become like a jungle. The trees will be fruitless, lacking beauty and symmetry; wild

animals, noxious insects and reptiles will abound in its dark recesses. This is the incompleteness

and imperfection of the world of nature. To change these conditions, we must clear the ground and cultivate it so that flowers may grow instead of thorns and weeds—that is to say, we must illumine the dark world of nature. In their primal natural state, the forests are dim, gloomy, impenetrable. Man opens them to the light, clears away the tangled underbrush and plants fruitful trees. Soon the wild woodlands and jungle are changed into productive orchards and beautiful gardens; order has replaced chaos; the dark realm of nature has become illumined and brightened by cultivation.

If man himself is left in his natural state, he will become lower than the animal and continue to grow more ignorant and imperfect. The savage tribes of central Africa are evidences of this. Left in their natural condition, they have sunk to the lowest depths and degrees of barbarism, dimly groping in a world of mental and moral obscurity. If we wish to illumine this dark plane of human existence, we must bring man forth from the hopeless captivity of nature, educate him and show him the pathway of light and knowledge, until, uplifted from his condition of ignorance, he becomes wise and knowing; no longer savage and revengeful, he becomes civilized and kind; once evil and sinister, he is endowed with the attributes of heaven. But left in his natural condition without education and training, it is certain that he will become more depraved and vicious than the animal, even to the extreme degree witnessed among African tribes who practice cannibalism. It is evident, therefore, that the world of nature is incomplete, imperfect until awakened and illumined by the light and stimulus of education. In these days there are new schools of philosophy blindly claiming that the world of nature is perfect. If this is true, why are children trained and educated in schools, and what is the need of extended courses in sciences, arts and letters in colleges and universities? What would be the result if humanity were left in its natural condition without education or training? All scientific discoveries and attainments are the outcomes of knowledge and education. The telegraph, phonograph, telephone were latent and potential in the world of

nature but would
never have come forth into the realm of visibility unless man through education
had penetrated
and discovered the laws which control them. All the marvelous developments and
miracles of
what we call civilization would have remained hidden, unknown and, so to speak,
nonexistent,
if man had remained in his natural condition, deprived of the bounties,
blessings and benefits
of education and mental culture. The intrinsic difference between the ignorant
man and the
astute philosopher is that the former has not been lifted out of his natural
condition, while the
latter has undergone systematic training and education in schools and colleges
until his mind
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has awakened and unfolded to higher realms of thought and perception;
otherwise, both are
human and natural.
God has sent forth the Prophets for the purpose of quickening the soul of man
into higher
and divine recognitions. He has revealed the heavenly Books for this great
purpose. For this
the breaths of the Holy Spirit have been wafted through the gardens of human
hearts, the doors
of the divine Kingdom opened to mankind and the invisible inspirations sent
forth from on
high. This divine and ideal power has been bestowed upon man in order that he
may purify
himself from the imperfections of nature and uplift his soul to the realm of
might and power.
God has purposed that the darkness of the world of nature shall be dispelled
and the imperfect
attributes of the natal self be effaced in the effulgent reflection of the Sun
of Truth. The mission
of the Prophets of God has been to train the souls of humanity and free them
from the thralldom
of natural instincts and physical tendencies. They are like unto Gardeners, and
the world of
humanity is the field of Their cultivation, the wilderness and untrained jungle
growth wherein
They proceed to labor. They cause the crooked branches to become straightened,
the fruitless
trees to become fruitful, and gradually transform this great wild, uncultivated
field into a

beautiful orchard producing wonderful abundance and outcome.
If the world of nature were perfect and complete in itself, there would be no need of such training and cultivation in the human world—no need of teachers, schools and universities, arts and crafts. The revelations of the Prophets of God would not have been necessary, and the heavenly Books would have been superfluous. If the world of nature were perfect and sufficient for mankind, we would have no need of God and our belief in Him. Therefore, the bestowal of all these great helps and accessories to the attainment of divine life is because the world of nature is incomplete and imperfect. Consider this Canadian country during the early history of Montreal when the land was in its wild, uncultivated and natural condition. The soil was unproductive, rocky and almost uninhabitable—vast forests stretching in every direction. What invisible power caused this great metropolis to spring up amid such savage and forbidding conditions? It was the human mind. Therefore, nature and the effect of nature's laws were imperfect. The mind of man remedied and removed this imperfect condition, until now we behold a great city instead of a savage unbroken wilderness. Before the coming of Columbus America itself was a wild, uncultivated expanse of primeval forest, mountains and rivers—a very world of nature. Now it has become the world of man. It was dark, forbidding and savage; now it has become illumined with a great civilization and prosperity. Instead of forests, we behold productive farms, beautiful gardens and prolific orchards. Instead of thorns and useless vegetation, we find flowers, domestic animals and fields awaiting harvest. If the world of nature were perfect, the condition of this great country would have been left unchanged. If a child is left in its natural state and deprived of education, there is no doubt that it will grow up in ignorance and illiteracy, its mental faculties dulled and dimmed; in fact, it will become like an animal. This is evident among the savages of central Africa, who are scarcely higher than the beast in mental development. The conclusion is irresistible that the splendors of the Sun of Truth, the Word

of God, have
been the source and cause of human upbuilding and civilization. The world of
nature is the
kingdom of the animal. In its natural condition and plane of limitation the
animal is perfect.
The ferocious beasts of prey have been completely subject to the laws of nature
in their
development. They are without education or training; they have no power of
abstract reasoning
and intellectual ideals; they have no touch with the spiritual world and are
without conception
of God or the Holy Spirit. The animal can neither recognize nor apprehend the
spiritual power

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of man and makes no distinction between man and itself, for the reason that its
susceptibilities
are limited to the plane of the senses. It lives under the bondage of nature
and nature's laws.

All the animals are materialists. They are deniers of God and without
realization of a
transcendent power in the universe. They have no knowledge of the divine
Prophets and Holy
Books—mere captives of nature and the sense world. In reality they are like
the great
philosophers of this day who are not in touch with God and the Holy
Spirit—deniers of the
Prophets, ignorant of spiritual susceptibilities, deprived of the heavenly
bounties and without
belief in the supernatural power. The animal lives this kind of life blissfully
and untroubled,
whereas the material philosophers labor and study for ten or twenty years in
schools and
colleges, denying God, the Holy Spirit and divine inspirations. The animal is
even a greater
philosopher, for it attains the ability to do this without labor and study. For
instance, the cow
denies God and the Holy Spirit, knows nothing of divine inspirations, heavenly
bounties or
spiritual emotions and is a stranger to the world of hearts. Like the
philosophers, the cow is a
captive of nature and knows nothing beyond the range of the senses. The
philosophers,
however, glory in this, saying, "We are not captives of superstitions; we
have implicit faith in
the impressions of the senses and know nothing beyond the realm of nature,

which contains
and covers everything.” But the cow, without study or proficiency in the
sciences, modestly
and quietly views life from the same standpoint, living in harmony with
nature’s laws in the
utmost dignity and nobility.
This is not the glory of man. The glory of man is in the knowledge of God,
spiritual
susceptibilities, attainment to transcendent powers and the bounties of the
Holy Spirit. The
glory of man is in being informed of the teachings of God. This is the glory of
humanity.
Ignorance is not glory but darkness. Can these souls who are steeped in the
lower strata of
ignorance become informed of the mysteries of God and the realities of
existence while Jesus
Christ was without knowledge of them? Is the intellect of these people greater
than the intellect
of Christ? Christ was heavenly, divine and belonged to the world of the
Kingdom. He was the
embodiment of spiritual knowledge. His intellect was superior to these
philosophers, His
comprehension deeper, His perception keener, His knowledge more perfect. How is
it that He
overlooked and denied Himself everything in this world? He attached little
importance to this
material life, denying Himself rest and composure, accepting trials and
voluntarily suffering
vicissitudes because He was endowed with spiritual susceptibilities and the
power of the Holy
Spirit. He beheld the splendors of the divine Kingdom, embodied the bounties of
God and
possessed ideal powers. He was illumined with love and mercy, and so, likewise,
were all the
Prophets of God.

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3 September 1912

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s address to Socialists and Labor leaders in Coronation
Hall

Montreal, Canada
(Promulgation)

It seems as though all creatures can exist singly and alone. For example, a tree can exist solitary and alone on a given prairie or in a valley or on the mountainside. An animal upon a mountain or a bird soaring in the air might live a solitary life. They are not in need of cooperation or solidarity. Such animated beings enjoy the greatest comfort and happiness in their respective solitary lives.

On the contrary, man cannot live singly and alone. He is in need of continuous cooperation and mutual help. For example, a man living alone in the wilderness will eventually starve. He can never, singly and alone, provide himself with all the necessities of existence. Therefore, he is in need of cooperation and reciprocity. The mystery of this phenomenon, the cause thereof is this: that mankind has been created from one single origin, has branched off from one family.

Thus, in reality, all mankind represents one family. God has not created any difference. He has created all as one that thus this family might live in perfect happiness and well-being.

Regarding reciprocity and cooperation, each member of the body politic should live in the utmost comfort and welfare because each individual member of humanity is a member of the body politic, and if one member is in distress or is afflicted with some disease, all the other members must necessarily suffer. For example, a member of the human organism is the eye. If the eye should be affected, that affliction would affect the whole nervous system. Hence, if a member of the body politic becomes afflicted, in reality, from the standpoint of sympathetic connection, all will share that affliction since this [one afflicted] is a member of the group of members, a part of the whole. Is it possible for one member or part to be in distress and the other members to be at ease? It is impossible! Hence, God has desired that in the body politic of humanity each one shall enjoy perfect welfare and comfort. Although the body politic is one family, yet, because of lack of harmonious relations some

members are comfortable and some in direst misery; some members are satisfied and some are hungry; some members are clothed in most costly garments and some families are in need of food and shelter. Why? Because this family lacks the necessary reciprocity and symmetry. This household is not well arranged. This household is not living under a perfect law. All the laws which are legislated do not ensure happiness. They do not provide comfort. Therefore, a law must be given to this family by means of which all the members of this family will enjoy equal well-being and happiness.

Is it possible for one member of a family to be subjected to the utmost misery and to abject poverty and for the rest of the family to be comfortable? It is impossible unless those members of the family be senseless, atrophied, inhospitable, unkind. Then they would say, "Though
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these members do belong to our family, let them alone. Let us look after ourselves. Let them die. So long as I am comfortable, I am honored, I am happy—this, my brother—let him die. If he be in misery, let him remain in misery, so long as I am comfortable. If he is hungry, let him remain so; I am satisfied. If he is without clothes, so long as I am clothed, let him remain as he is. If he is shelterless, homeless, so long as I have a home, let him remain in the wilderness."

Such utter indifference in the human family is due to lack of control, to lack of a working law, to lack of kindness in its midst. If kindness had been shown to the members of this family, surely all the members thereof would have enjoyed comfort and happiness. Bahá'u'lláh has given instructions regarding every one of the questions confronting humanity. He has given teachings and instructions with regard to every one of the problems with which man struggles. Among them are [the teachings] concerning the question of economics, that all the members of the body politic may enjoy through the working out of this solution the greatest happiness, welfare and comfort without any harm or injury attacking the

general order of things. Thereby no difference or dissension will occur. No sedition or contention will take place. This solution is this:

First and foremost is the principle that to all the members of the body politic shall be given the greatest achievements of the world of humanity. Each one shall have the utmost welfare and well-being. To solve this problem we must begin with the farmer; there will we lay a foundation for system and order because the peasant class and the agricultural class exceed other classes in the importance of their service. In every village there must be established a general storehouse which will have a number of revenues. The first revenue will be that of the tenth or tithes. The second revenue [will be derived] from the animals. The third revenue, from the minerals; that is to say, every mine prospected or discovered, a third thereof will go to this vast storehouse. The fourth is this: whosoever dies without leaving any heirs, all his heritage will go to the general storehouse. Fifth, if any treasures shall be found on the land, they should be devoted to this storehouse. All these revenues will be assembled in this storehouse. As to the first, the tenths or tithes: We will consider a farmer, one of the peasants. We will look into his income. We will find out for instance, what is his annual revenue and also what are his expenditures. Now, if his income be equal to his expenditures, from such a farmer nothing whatever will be taken. That is, he will not be subjected to taxation of any sort, needing as he does all his income. Another farmer may have expenses running up to one thousand dollars, we will say, and his income is two thousand dollars. From such an one a tenth will be required, because he has a surplus. But if his income be ten thousand dollars and his expenses one thousand dollars or his income twenty thousand dollars, he will have to pay as taxes, one fourth. If his income be one hundred thousand dollars, and his expenses five thousand, one third will he have to pay because he has still a surplus since his expenses are five thousand and his income one hundred thousand. If he pays, say, thirty-five thousand dollars, in addition to

the expenditure of five thousand he still has sixty thousand left. But if his expenses be ten thousand and his income two hundred thousand, then he must give an even half because ninety
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thousand will be in that case the sum remaining. Such a scale as this will determine allotment of taxes. All the income from such revenues will go to this general storehouse. Then there must be considered such emergencies as follows: A certain farmer whose expenses run up to ten thousand dollars and whose income is only five thousand will receive necessary expenses from the storehouse. Five thousand dollars will be allotted to him so he will not be in need. Then the orphans will be looked after, all of whose expenses will be taken care of. The cripples in the village—all their expenses will be looked after. The poor in the village—their necessary expenses will be defrayed. And other members who for valid reasons are incapacitated—the blind, the old, the deaf—their comfort must be looked after. In the village no one will remain in need or in want. All will live in the utmost comfort and welfare. Yet no schism will assail the general order of the body politic. Hence, the expenses or expenditures of the general storehouse are now made clear and its activities made manifest. The income of this general storehouse has been shown. Certain trustees will be elected by the people in a given village to look after these transactions. The farmers will be taken care of, and, if after all these expenses are defrayed, any surplus is found in the storehouse, it must be transferred to the national treasury. This system is all thus ordered so that in the village the very poor will be comfortable, the orphans will live happily and well; in a word, no one will be left destitute. All the individual members of the body politic will thus live comfortably and well. For larger cities, naturally, there will be a system on a larger scale. Were I to go into that solution the details thereof would be very lengthy. The result of this [system] will be that each individual member of the body politic will live

most comfortably and happily under obligation to no one. Nevertheless, there will be preservation of degree because in the world of humanity there must needs be degrees. The body politic may well be likened to an army. In this army there must be a general, there must be a sergeant, there must be a marshal, there must be the infantry; but all must enjoy the greatest comfort and welfare.

God is not partial and is no respecter of persons. He has made provision for all. The harvest comes forth for everyone. The rain showers upon everybody and the heat of the sun is destined to warm everyone. The verdure of the earth is for everyone. Therefore, there should be for all humanity the utmost happiness, the utmost comfort, the utmost well-being. But if conditions are such that some are happy and comfortable and some in misery, some are accumulating exorbitant wealth and others are in dire want—under such a system it is impossible for man to be happy and impossible for him to win the good pleasure of God. God is kind to all. The good pleasure of God consists in the welfare of all the individual members of mankind.

A Persian king was one night in his palace, living in the greatest luxury and comfort. Through excessive joy and gladness he addressed a certain man, saying, “Of all my life this is the happiest moment. Praise be to God, from every point prosperity appears and fortune smiles! My treasury is full and the army is well taken care of. My palaces are many; my land unlimited; my family is well off; my honor and sovereignty are great. What more could I want?”

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The poor man at the gate of his palace spoke out, saying: “O kind king! Assuming that you are from every point of view so happy, free from every worry and sadness, do you not worry for us? You say that on your own account you have no worries, but do you never worry about the poor in your land? Is it becoming or meet that you should be so well off and we in such dire want and need? In view of our needs and troubles, how can you rest in your

palace, how can
you even say that you are free from worries and sorrows? As a ruler you must
not be so egoistic
as to think of yourself alone, but you must think of those who are your
subjects. When we are
comfortable, then you will be comfortable; when we are in misery, how can you,
as a king, be
in happiness?"

The purport is this, that we are all inhabiting one globe of earth. In reality
we are one family,
and each one of us is a member of this family. We must all be in the greatest
happiness and
comfort, under a just rule and regulation which is according to the good
pleasure of God, thus
causing us to be happy, for this life is fleeting.

If man were to care for himself only he would be nothing but an animal, for
only the animals
are thus egoistic. If you bring a thousand sheep to a well to kill nine hundred
and ninety-nine,
the one remaining sheep would go on grazing, not thinking of the others and
worrying not at
all about the lost, never bothering that its own kind had passed away, or had
perished or been
killed. To look after one's self only is, therefore, an animal propensity. It
is the animal
propensity to live solitary and alone. It is the animal proclivity to look
after one's own comfort.

But man was created to be a man—to be fair, to be just, to be merciful, to be
kind to all his
species, never to be willing that he himself be well off while others are in
misery and distress.

This is an attribute of the animal and not of man. Nay, rather, man should be
willing to accept
hardships for himself in order that others may enjoy wealth; he should enjoy
trouble for himself
that others may enjoy happiness and well-being. This is the attribute of man.
This is becoming

of man. Otherwise man is not man—he is less than the animal.

The man who thinks only of himself and is thoughtless of others is undoubtedly
inferior to

the animal because the animal is not possessed of the reasoning faculty. The
animal is excused;

but in man there is reason, the faculty of justice, the faculty of
mercifulness. Possessing all

these faculties, he must not leave them unused. He who is so hard-hearted as to
think only of

his own comfort, such an one will not be called man.

Man is he who forgets his own interests for the sake of others. His own comfort
 he forfeits
 for the well-being of all. Nay, rather, his own life must he be willing to
 forfeit for the life of
 mankind. Such a man is the honor of the world of humanity. Such a man is the
 glory of the
 world of mankind. Such a man is the one who wins eternal bliss. Such a man is
 near to the
 threshold of God. Such a man is the very manifestation of eternal happiness.
 Otherwise, men
 are like animals, exhibiting the same proclivities and propensities as the
 world of animals. What
 distinction is there? What prerogatives, what perfection? None whatever!
 Animals are better
 even—thinking only of themselves and negligent of the needs of others.
 Consider how the greatest men in the world—whether among prophets or
 philosophers—
 all have forfeited their own comfort, have sacrificed their own pleasure for
 the well-being of
 humanity. They have sacrificed their own lives for the body politic. They have
 sacrificed their
 own wealth for that of the general welfare. They have forfeited their own honor
 for the honor
 of mankind. Therefore, it becomes evident that this is the highest attainment
 for the world of
 humanity.
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We ask God to endow human souls with justice so that they may be fair, and may
 strive to
 provide for the comfort of all, that each member of humanity may pass his life
 in the utmost
 comfort and welfare. Then this material world will become the very paradise of
 the Kingdom,
 this elemental earth will be in a heavenly state and all the servants of God
 will live in the utmost
 joy, happiness and gladness. We must all strive and concentrate all our
 thoughts in order that
 such happiness may accrue to the world of humanity.
 The question of socialization is very important. It will not be solved by
 strikes for wages.
 All the governments of the world must be united and organize an assembly the
 members of
 which should be elected from the parliaments and the nobles of the nations.
 These must plan
 with utmost wisdom and power so that neither the capitalist suffer from

enormous losses nor
the laborers become needy. In the utmost moderation they should make the law;
then announce
to the public that the rights of the working people are to be strongly
preserved. Also the rights
of the capitalists are to be protected. When such a general plan is adopted by
the will of both
sides, should a strike occur, all the governments of the world collectively
should resist it.
Otherwise, the labor problem will lead to much destruction, especially in
Europe. Terrible
things will take place.
For instance, the owners of properties, mines and factories should share their
incomes with
their employees and give a fairly certain percentage of their products to their
workingmen in
order that the employees may receive, beside their wages, some of the general
income of the
factory so that the employee may strive with his soul in the work.
No more trusts will remain in the future. The question of the trusts will be
wiped away
entirely. Also, every factory that has ten thousand shares will give two
thousand shares of these
ten thousand to its employees and will write the shares in their names, so that
they may have
them, and the rest will belong to the capitalists. Then at the end of the month
or year whatever
they may earn after the expenses and wages are paid, according to the number of
shares, should
be divided among both. In reality, so far great injustice has befallen the
common people. Laws
must be made because it is impossible for the laborers to be satisfied with the
present system.
They will strike every month and every year. Finally, the capitalists will
lose. In ancient times
a strike occurred among the Turkish soldiers. They said to the government:
“Our wages are
very small and they should be increased.” The government was forced to give
them their
demands. Shortly afterwards they struck again. Finally all the incomes went to
the pockets of
the soldiers to the extent that they killed the king, saying: “Why didst thou
not increase the
income so that we might have received more?”
It is impossible for a country to live properly without laws. To solve this
problem rigorous
laws must be made, so that all the governments of the world will be the

protectors thereof.

In the Bolshevistic principles equality is effected through force. The masses who are opposed to the people of rank and to the wealthy class desire to partake of their advantages.

But in the divine teachings equality is brought about through a ready willingness to share.

It is commanded as regards wealth that the rich among the people, and the aristocrats should, by their own free will and for the sake of their own happiness, concern themselves with and care for the poor. This equality is the result of the lofty characteristics and noble attributes of mankind.

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5 September 1912

Talk at St. James Methodist Church

Montreal, Canada

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 312-319)

Praise be to God! It is with a deep realization of happiness that I am present here this

evening, for I am looking upon the faces of those who are earnest in their search for reality and

who sincerely long to attain knowledge of truth. God has created man and endowed him with

the power of reason whereby he may arrive at valid conclusions. Therefore, man must endeavor

in all things to investigate the fundamental reality. If he does not independently investigate, he

has failed to utilize the talent God has bestowed upon him. I am pleased with the American

people because, as a rule, they are independent seekers of the truth; their minds are actively

employed instead of remaining idle and unproductive. This is most praiseworthy.

Some souls imagine that there is a cessation to the bounties of God, as if at one time the

divine bestowals are poured out, at another time withheld from mankind and ceasing. If we

carefully reflect upon this matter, we find that such a statement is in fact a denial of Divinity, for the reality of Divinity is evidenced by virtue of its outpourings or bestowals. The cessation of the bestowals of God at any time would be equivalent to the cessation of the sovereignty of God. The sun is the sun because of its ray and heat; it is the sun because of its bestowal; but if at any time its effulgence, splendor and radiance should cease to emanate, it would no longer be the sun. Consequently, it is inconceivable that the bounties of Divinity should cease, for the attributes of Divinity are everexistent. God has ever been divine; He hath ever exercised His sovereignty and still possesses everlasting divinity and sovereignty. He is like the sun, which has ever had its splendor, heat and radiance and will continue to possess these bounties and attributes. If at any time its splendor and heat should cease, it would no longer be pronounced the sun. Therefore, the sound reasoning mind concludes that the bounties of the Holy Spirit are continuous and that holy souls are ever the recipients of these divine emanations. The potency of the Holy Spirit is everlasting, not temporary; for the sanctity of the Holy Spirit is its power and efficacy manifest in the spirits it quickens. We pray that all of us may become recipients of its bestowals, that we may be illumined by the lights of heaven, edified through the teachings of God and imbued with the virtues of divine character, as mirrors reflecting the light of the sun. Unless the mirror reflects the sunlight, it is only dark, inanimate matter. Likewise, the hearts and spirits of mankind, when deprived and without their portion of the bounties of the Holy Spirit, linger in the abyss of darkness and ignorance. From time immemorial the divine teachings have been successively revealed, and the bounties of the Holy Spirit have ever been emanating. All the teachings are one reality, for reality is single and does not admit multiplicity. Therefore, the divine Prophets are one, inasmuch as They reveal the one reality, the Word of God. Abraham announced teachings founded upon reality, Moses proclaimed reality, Christ established reality and Bahá'u'lláh was

the Messenger and Herald of reality. But humanity, having forsaken the one essential and

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fundamental reality which underlies the religion of God, and holding blindly to imitations of ancestral forms and interpretations of belief, is separated and divided in the strife, contention and bigotry of various sects and religious factions. If all should be true to the original reality of the Prophet and His teaching, the peoples and nations of the world would become unified, and these differences which cause separation would be lost sight of. To accomplish this great and needful unity in reality, Bahá'u'lláh appeared in the Orient and renewed the foundations of the divine teachings. His revelation of the Word embodies completely the teachings of all the Prophets, expressed in principles and precepts applicable to the needs and conditions of the modern world, amplified and adapted to present-day questions and critical human problems. That is to say, the words of Bahá'u'lláh are the essences of the words of the Prophets of the past. They are the very spirit of the age and the cause of the unity and illumination of the East and the West. The followers of His teachings are in conformity with the precepts and commands of all the former heavenly Messengers. Differences and dissensions, which destroy the foundations of the world of humanity and are contrary to the will and good pleasure of God, disappear completely in the light of the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh; difficult problems are solved, unity and love are established. For the good pleasure of God is the effulgence of love and the establishment of unity and fellowship in the human world, whereas discord, contention, warfare and strife are satanic outcomes and contrary to the will of the Merciful. In order that human souls, minds and spirits may attain advancement, tranquillity and vision in broader horizons of unity and knowledge, Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed certain principles or teachings, some of which I will mention.

First, man must independently investigate reality, for the disagreements and

dissensions

which afflict and affect humanity primarily proceed from imitations of ancestral beliefs and

adherences to hereditary forms of worship. These imitations are accidental and without

sanction in the Holy Books. They are the outcomes of human interpretations and teachings

which have arisen, gradually obscuring the real light of divine meaning and causing men to

differ and dissent. The reality proclaimed in the heavenly Books and divine teachings is ever

conducive to love, unity and fellowship.

Second, the oneness of the world of humanity shall be realized, accepted and established.

When we reflect upon this blessed principle, it will become evident and manifest that it is the

healing remedy for all human conditions. All mankind are the servants of the glorious God, our

Creator. He has created all. Assuredly He must have loved them equally; otherwise, He would

not have created them. He protects all. Assuredly He loves His creatures; otherwise, He would

not protect them. He provides for all, proving His love for all without distinction or preference.

He manifests His perfect goodness and loving-kindness toward all. He does not punish us for

our sins and shortcomings, and we are all immersed in the ocean of His infinite mercy.

Inasmuch as God is clement and loving to His children, lenient and merciful toward our

shortcomings, why should we be unkind and unforgiving toward each other? As He loves

humanity without distinction or preference, why should we not love all? Can we conceive of a

plan and policy superior to the divine purpose? Manifestly, we cannot.

Therefore, we must

strive to do the will of the glorious Lord and emulate His policy of loving all mankind. The

wisdom and policy of God are reality and truth, whereas human policy is accidental and limited

to our finite understanding. The policy of God is infinite. We must emulate His example. If a

soul be ailing and infirm, we must produce remedies; if ignorant, we must provide education;

if defective, we must train and perfect that which is lacking; if immature and undeveloped, we

must supply the means of attainment to maturity. No soul should be hated, none

neglected; nay,
rather, their very imperfections should demand greater kindness and tender
compassion.

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Therefore, if we follow the example of the Lord of divinity, we will love all
mankind from our
hearts, and the means of the unity of the world of humanity will become as
evident and manifest
to us as the light of the sun. And from our example the light of the love of
God will be enkindled
among men. For God is love, and all phenomena find source and emanation in that
divine
current of creation. The love of God haloes all created things. Were it not for
the love of God,
no animate being would exist. This is clear, manifest vision and truth unless a
man is veiled by
superstitions and a captive to imaginations, differentiating mankind according
to his own
estimate, loving some and hating others. Such an attitude is most unworthy and
ignoble.

Third, religion must be the mainspring and source of love in the world, for
religion is the
revelation of the will of God, the divine fundamental of which is love.
Therefore, if religion
should prove to be the cause of enmity and hatred instead of love, its absence
is preferable to
its existence.

Fourth, religion must reconcile and be in harmony with science and reason. If
the religious
beliefs of mankind are contrary to science and opposed to reason, they are none
other than
superstitions and without divine authority, for the Lord God has endowed man
with the faculty
of reason in order that through its exercise he may arrive at the verities of
existence. Reason is
the discoverer of the realities of things, and that which conflicts with its
conclusions is the
product of human fancy and imagination.

Fifth, prejudice—whether it be religious, racial, patriotic or political in
its origin and
aspect—is the destroyer of human foundations and opposed to the commands of
God. God has
sent forth His Prophets for the sole purpose of creating love and unity in the
world of human
hearts. All the heavenly Books are the written word of love. If they prove to

be the cause of
prejudice and human estrangement, they have become fruitless. Therefore,
religious prejudice
is especially opposed to the will and command of God. Racial and national
prejudices which
separate mankind into groups and branches, likewise, have a false and
unjustifiable foundation,
for all men are the children of Adam and essentially of one family. There
should be no racial
alienation or national division among humankind. Such distinctions as French,
German,
Persian, Anglo-Saxon are human and artificial; they have neither significance
nor recognition
in the estimation of God. In His estimate all are one, the children of one
family; and God is
equally kind to them. The earth has one surface. God has not divided this
surface by boundaries
and barriers to separate races and peoples. Man has set up and established
these imaginary
lines, giving to each restricted area a name and the limitation of a native
land or nationhood.
By this division and separation into groups and branches of mankind, prejudice
is engendered
which becomes a fruitful source of war and strife. Impelled by this prejudice,
races and nations
declare war against each other; the blood of the innocent is poured out, and
the earth torn by
violence. Therefore, it has been decreed by God in this day that these
prejudices and differences
shall be laid aside. All are commanded to seek the good pleasure of the Lord of
unity, to follow
His command and obey His will; in this way the world of humanity shall become
illuminated
with the reality of love and reconciliation.
Sixth, the world of humanity is in need of the confirmations of the Holy
Spirit. True
distinction among mankind is through divine bestowals and receiving the
intuitions of the Holy
Spirit. If man does not become the recipient of the heavenly bestowals and
spiritual bounties,
he remains in the plane and kingdom of the animal. For the distinction between
the animal and
man is that man is endowed with the potentiality of divinity in his nature,
whereas the animal
is entirely bereft of that gift and attainment. Therefore, if a man is bereft
of the intuitive
breathings of the Holy Spirit, deprived of divine bestowals, out of touch with

the heavenly

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world and negligent of the eternal truths, though in image and likeness he is human, in reality

he is an animal; even as Christ declared, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that

which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This means that if man be a captive of physical

susceptibilities and be lacking the quickening of spiritual emotions, he is merely an animal. But

every soul who possesses spiritual susceptibilities and has attained a goodly portion of the

bestowals of the Holy Spirit is alive with the divine life of the higher Kingdom. The soul that

is portionless and bereft is as dead. Therefore, He said, "Let the dead bury their dead." Just as

the physical body of man is in need of its force of life, even so the human soul is in need of the

divine animus and vivification emanating from the Holy Spirit. Without this vivification and

sustenance, man would be an animal, nay, rather, dead.

Seventh, the necessity of education for all mankind is evident. Children especially must be

trained and taught. If the parent cannot afford to do this owing to lack of means, the body politic

must make necessary provision for its accomplishment. Through the broadening spirit of

education illiteracy will disappear, and misunderstandings due to ignorance will pass away.

Eighth, universal peace will be established among the nations of the world by international

agreement. The greatest catastrophe in the world of humanity today is war.

Europe is a

storehouse of explosives awaiting a spark. All the European nations are on edge, and a single

flame will set on fire the whole of that continent. Implements of war and death are multiplied

and increased to an inconceivable degree, and the burden of military maintenance is taxing the

various countries beyond the point of endurance. Armies and navies devour the substance and

possessions of the people; the toiling poor, the innocent and helpless are forced by taxation to

provide munitions and armament for governments bent upon conquest of territory and defense

against powerful rival nations. There is no greater or more woeful ordeal in the world of humanity today than impending war. Therefore, international peace is a crucial necessity. An arbitral court of justice shall be established by which international disputes are to be settled. Through this means all possibility of discord and war between the nations will be obviated. Ninth, there must be an equality of rights between men and women. Women shall receive an equal privilege of education. This will enable them to qualify and progress in all degrees of occupation and accomplishment. For the world of humanity possesses two wings: man and woman. If one wing remains incapable and defective, it will restrict the power of the other, and full flight will be impossible. Therefore, the completeness and perfection of the human world are dependent upon the equal development of these two wings. Tenth, there shall be an equality of rights and prerogatives for all mankind. Eleventh, one language must be selected as an international medium of speech and communication. Through this means misunderstandings will be lessened, fellowship established and unity assured. These are a few of the principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh. He has provided the remedy for the ailments which now afflict the human world, solved the difficult problems of individual, social, national and universal welfare and laid the foundation of divine reality upon which material and spiritual civilization are to be founded throughout the centuries before us. Praise be to God! I find these two great American nations highly capable and advanced in all that appertains to progress and civilization. These governments are fair and equitable. The motives and purposes of these people are lofty and inspiring. Therefore, it is my hope that these revered nations may become prominent factors in the establishment of international peace and the oneness of the world of humanity; that they may lay the foundations of equality and spiritual

human world,
 revere the divine lights of the Prophets of God and establish the reality of
 unity so necessary
 today in the affairs of nations. I pray that the nations of the East and West
 shall become one
 flock under the care and guidance of the divine Shepherd. Verily, this is the
 bestowal of God
 and the greatest honor of man. This is the glory of humanity. This is the good
 pleasure of God.
 I ask God for this with a contrite heart.
 O my Lord! Thou Who art ever-forgiving! Verily, this assembly hath turned its
 face toward
 Thy Kingdom. Verily, they are all of Thy flock, and Thou art the one Shepherd
 of all. O Thou
 real Shepherd! Educate and train Thy sheep in Thy green and verdant pastures.
 Suffer these
 birds of Thine to build their nests in Thy rose garden. Adorn Thine orchard
 with these fresh
 plants and flowers. Refresh these human trees by Thy shower of beneficence and
 favor. O God!
 Verily, we are all Thy servants—all Thine—and Thou art the One Lord. We all
 adore Thee,
 and Thou art the beneficent Master. O Lord! Render the eyes perceptive that
 they may witness
 the lights of Thy Kingdom. Render the ears attentive that they may hear the
 heavenly summons.
 Resuscitate the spirits that they may be exhilarated through the breath of the
 Holy Spirit. O
 Lord! Verily, we are weak, but Thou art almighty. We are poor, but Thou art
 rich. Have mercy
 upon us. Apportion unto us a goodly share of Thy realities, and lead us into
 the arena of Thine
 attainments. Thou art the Powerful. Thou art the Able. Thou art the kind Lord.
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16 September 1912

Talk at Home of Mrs. Corinne True

5338 Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Gertrude Buikema

(Promulgation, pp. 320-324)

Alláh-u-Abhá! Praise be to God! I have spent a number of days among you, associating with you in love and fragrance. Praise be to God! Your hearts are pure, your faces radiant, your spirits exhilarated through the glad tidings of God. I pray in your behalf, seeking heavenly confirmations for you that each one may become a radiant candle, shedding light in the world of humanity. May you become the quintessence of love. May you prove to be the effulgence of God, replete with the efficacy of the Holy Spirit and the cause of unity and fellowship in the world of humanity, for today mankind has the greatest need of love and agreement. If the world should remain as it is today, great danger will face it. But if reconciliation and unity are witnessed, if security and confidence be established, if with heart and soul we strive in order that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh may find effective penetration in the realities of humankind, inducing fellowship and accord, binding together the hearts of the various religions and uniting divergent peoples, the world of mankind shall attain peace and composure, the will of God will become the will of man and the earth a veritable habitation of angels. Souls shall be educated, vice be dispelled, the virtues of the world of humanity prevail, materialism pass away, religion be strengthened and prove to be the bond which shall cement together the hearts of men. In the world of existence there are various bonds which unite human hearts, but not one of these bonds is completely effective. The first and foremost is the bond of family relationship,

which is not an efficient unity, for how often it happens that disagreement and divergence rend asunder this close tie of association. The bond of patriotism may be a means of fellowship and agreement, but oneness of native land will not completely cement human hearts; for if we review history, we shall find that people of the same race and native land have frequently waged war against each other. Often in civil strife they have shed the same racial blood and destroyed the possessions of their own native kind. Therefore, this bond is not sufficient. Another means of seeming unity is the bond of political association, where governments and rulers have been allied for reasons of intercourse and mutual protection, but which agreement and union afterward became subject to change and violent hatred even to the extreme of war and bloodshed. It is evident that political oneness is not permanently effective. The source of perfect unity and love in the world of existence is the bond and oneness of reality. When the divine and fundamental reality enters human hearts and lives, it conserves and protects all states and conditions of mankind, establishing that intrinsic oneness of the world of humanity which can only come into being through the efficacy of the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit is like unto the life in the human body, which blends all differences of parts and members in unity and agreement. Consider how numerous are these parts and members, but the oneness of the animating spirit of life unites them all in perfect combination. It establishes such a unity in the bodily organism that if any part is subjected to injury or becomes diseased,

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all the other parts and functions sympathetically respond and suffer, owing to the perfect oneness existing. Just as the human spirit of life is the cause of coordination among the various parts of the human organism, the Holy Spirit is the controlling cause of the unity and coordination of mankind. That is to say, the bond or oneness of humanity cannot be effectively established save through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the world of

humanity is a composite
body, and the Holy Spirit is the animating principle of its life.
Therefore, we must strive in order that the power of the Holy Spirit may become
effective
throughout the world of mankind, that it may confer a new quickening life upon
the body politic
of the nations and peoples and that all may be guided to the protection and
shelter of the Word
of God. Then this human world will become angelic, earthly darkness pass away
and celestial
illumination flood the horizons, human defects be effaced and divine virtues
become
resplendent. This is possible and real, but only through the power of the Holy
Spirit. Today the
greatest need of the world is the animating, unifying presence of the Holy
Spirit. Until it
becomes effective, penetrating and interpenetrating hearts and spirits, and
until perfect,
reasoning faith shall be implanted in the minds of men, it will be impossible
for the social body
to be inspired with security and confidence. Nay, on the contrary, enmity and
strife will increase
day by day, and the differences and divergences of nations will be woefully
augmented.
Continual additions to the armies and navies of the world will be made, and the
fear and
certainty of the great pandemic war—the war unparalleled in history—will be
intensified; for
armament, heretofore limited, is now being increased upon a colossal scale.
Conditions are
becoming acute, drawing nigh unto the degree of men warring upon the seas,
warring upon the
plains, warring in the very atmosphere with a violence unknown in former
centuries. With the
growth of armament and preparation the dangers are increasingly great.
We must use our utmost endeavors in order that the Holy Spirit may influence
minds and
hearts toward peace, the bounties of God surround, the divine effulgences
become successive,
human souls advance, minds expand in wider vision, souls become more holy and
the world of
humanity be rid of its great menace. For the betterment of the world
Bahá'u'lláh endured all
the hardships, ordeals and vicissitudes of life, sacrificing His very being and
comfort, forfeiting
His estates, possessions and honor—all that pertains to human existence—not
for one year,

nay, rather, for nearly fifty years. During this long period He was subjected to persecution and abuse, was cast into prison, was banished from His native land, underwent severities and humiliation and was exiled four times. He was first exiled from Persia to Baghdád, thence to Constantinople, thence to Rumelia and finally to the great prison-fortress of 'Akká in Syria, where He passed the remainder of His life. Every day a new oppression and abuse was heaped upon Him until He winged His flight from the dungeon to the supreme world and returned to His Lord. He endured these ordeals and difficulties in order that this earthly human world might become heavenly, that the illumination of the divine Kingdom should become a reality in human hearts, that the individual members of mankind might progress, the power of the Holy Spirit increase its efficacy and penetration and the happiness of the world of humanity be assured. He desired for all tranquillity and composure and exercised loving-kindness toward the nations regardless of conditions and differences. He addressed humanity, saying, "O humankind! Verily, ye are all the leaves and fruits of one tree; ye are all one. Therefore, associate in friendship; love one another; abandon prejudices of race; dispel forever this gloomy darkness of human ignorance, for the century of light, the Sun of Reality hath appeared. Now is the time for affiliation, and now is the period of unity and concord. For thousands of years ye have been contending in warfare and strife. It is enough. Now is the time for unity.

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Lay aside all self-purposes, and know for a certainty that all men are the servants of one God Who will bind them together in love and agreement." Inasmuch as great differences and divergences of denominational belief had arisen throughout the past, every man with a new idea attributing it to God, Bahá'u'lláh desired that there should not be any ground or reason for disagreement among the Bahá'ís. Therefore, with His own pen He wrote the Book of His Covenant, addressing His relations and all

people of
the world, saying, “Verily, I have appointed One Who is the Center of My
Covenant. All must
obey Him; all must turn to Him; He is the Expounder of My Book, and He is
informed of My
purpose. All must turn to Him. Whatsoever He says is correct, for, verily, He
knoweth the texts
of My Book. Other than He, no one doth know My Book.” The purpose of this
statement is
that there should never be discord and divergence among the Bahá’ís but
that they should
always be unified and agreed. In His prayers Bahá’u’lláh also said, “O
God! Whosoever
violates My Covenant, O God, humiliate him. Verily, whosoever violates My
Covenant, O
God, erase and efface him.” In all His Tablets, among which is the Tablet of
the Branch, He
has mentioned and explained the attributes and qualities of the Personage to
Whom He referred
in the Book of His Covenant. He has fully expounded the function and potency of
that
Personage, so that no one shall say, “I understand this from the writings of
Bahá’u’lláh,” for
He has appointed the Center, or Expounder, of the Book. He said, “Verily, He
is the appointed
one; other than He, there is none,” intending that no sects or prejudices
should be formed, and
preventing every man here and there with a new thought from creating dissension
and variance.
It is as though a king should appoint a governor-general. Whosoever obeys him,
obeys the king.
Whosoever violates and disobeys him, violates the king. Therefore, whosoever
obeys the
Center of the Covenant appointed by Bahá’u’lláh has obeyed
Bahá’u’lláh, and whosoever
disobeys Him has disobeyed Bahá’u’lláh. It has nothing to do with Him
(‘Abdu’l-Bahá) at
all—precisely as the governor-general appointed by the king—whosoever obeys
the governor-general obeys the king; whosoever disobeys the governor-general
disobeys the king.
Therefore, you must read the Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh. You must read the
Tablet of the
Branch and regard that which He has so clearly stated. Beware! Beware! lest
anyone should
speak from the authority of his own thoughts or create a new thing out of
himself. Beware!
Beware! According to the explicit Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh you should care

nothing at all for
such a person. Bahá'u'lláh shuns such souls. I have expounded these
things for you, for the
conservation and protection of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, in order
that you may be informed,
lest any souls shall deceive you and lest any souls shall cause suspicion among
you. You must
love all people, and yet if any souls put you in doubt, you must know that
Bahá'u'lláh is severed
from them. Whosoever works for unity and fellowship is a servant of
Bahá'u'lláh, and
Bahá'u'lláh is his assistant and helper. I ask God that He may cause you
to be the very means
of agreement and unity, that He may make you radiant, merciful, heavenly
children of the
divine Kingdom; that you may advance day by day; that you may become as bright
as these
lamps, bestowing light upon all humanity. Salutations and farewell!

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20 September 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. Albert L. Hall

2030 Queen Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Notes by Ellen T. Pursell

(Promulgation, pp. 325-328)

Praise be to God! This is a beautiful and radiant assemblage. It is a merciful gathering, for you have met here in the utmost love and spirituality. There are many meetings in the world, thousands of them perhaps being held at this very moment, mostly for social, political, scientific or commercial purposes; but our gathering here tonight is for God, for heavenly purposes. We are neither attached to commerce nor is our interest scientific; our spirit and motive are solely for the manifestation of divine bestowals. Man possesses two types of virtues: One is material, and the other ideal in character. For example, the body of man expresses certain material virtues, but the spirit of man manifests virtues that are ideal. The sense of sight in man is a physical virtue; but

insight, the power of inner perception, is ideal in its nature. The sense of hearing is a physical endowment, whereas memory in man is ideal. Among other human forces the power of ideation, or faculty of intellection, is material, but the power of love is spiritual. The acquisition of the realities of phenomena is an ideal virtue; likewise, the emotions of man and his ability to prove the existence of God. Realization of moral standards and the world of discovery involve virtues essentially ideal.

If we review history, we will observe that human advancement has been greatest in the development of material virtues. Civilization is the sign and evidence of this progression. Throughout the world, material civilization has attained truly wonderful heights and degrees of efficiency—that is to say, the outward powers and virtues of man have greatly developed, but the inner and ideal virtues have been correspondingly delayed and neglected. It is now the time in the history of the world for us to strive and give an impetus to the advancement and development of inner forces—that is to say, we must arise to service in the world of morality, for human morals are in need of readjustment. We must also render service to the world of intellectuality in order that the minds of men may increase in power and become keener in perception, assisting the intellect of man to attain its supremacy so that the ideal virtues may appear. Before a step is taken in this direction we must be able to prove Divinity from the standpoint of reason so that no doubt or objection may remain for the rationalist. Afterward, we must be able to prove the existence of the bounty of God—that the divine bounty encompasses humanity and that it is transcendental. Furthermore, we must demonstrate that the spirit of man is immortal, that it is not subject to disintegration and that it comprises the virtues of humanity.

Material virtues have attained great development, but ideal virtues have been left far behind. If you should ask a thousand persons, “What are the proofs of the reality of Divinity?”

perhaps not one would be able to answer. If you should ask further, “What proofs have you regarding the essence of God?” “How do you explain inspiration and revelation?” “What are

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the evidences of conscious intelligence beyond the material universe?” “Can you suggest a plan and method for the betterment of human moralities?” “Can you clearly define and differentiate the world of nature and the world of Divinity?”—you would receive very little real knowledge and enlightenment upon these questions. This is due to the fact that development of the ideal virtues has been neglected. People speak of Divinity, but the ideas and beliefs they have of Divinity are, in reality, superstition. Divinity is the effulgence of the Sun of Reality, the manifestation of spiritual virtues and ideal powers. The intellectual proofs of Divinity are based upon observation and evidence which constitute decisive argument, logically proving the reality of Divinity, the effulgence of mercy, the certainty of inspiration and immortality of the spirit. This is, in reality, the science of Divinity. Divinity is not what is set forth in dogmas and sermons of the church. Ordinarily when the word Divinity is mentioned, it is associated in the minds of the hearers with certain formulas and doctrines, whereas it essentially means the wisdom and knowledge of God, the effulgence of the Sun of Truth, the revelation of reality and divine philosophy. Philosophy is of two kinds: natural and divine. Natural philosophy seeks knowledge of physical verities and explains material phenomena, whereas divine philosophy deals with ideal verities and phenomena of the spirit. The field and scope of natural philosophy have been greatly enlarged, and its accomplishments are most praiseworthy, for it has served humanity. But according to the evidence of present world conditions divine philosophy—which has for its object the sublimation of human nature, spiritual advancement, heavenly guidance for the development of the human race, attainment to the breaths of the Holy Spirit and

knowledge of
the verities of God—has been outdistanced and neglected. Now is the time for
us to make an
effort and enable it to advance apace with the philosophy of material
investigation so that
awakening of the ideal virtues may progress equally with the unfoldment of the
natural powers.

In the same proportion that the body of man is developing, the spirit of man
must be
strengthened; and just as his outer perceptions have been quickened, his inner
intellectual
powers must be sensitized so that he need not rely wholly upon tradition and
human precedent.

In divine questions we must not depend entirely upon the heritage of tradition
and former
human experience; nay, rather, we must exercise reason, analyze and logically
examine the
facts presented so that confidence will be inspired and faith attained. Then
and then only the
reality of things will be revealed to us. The philosophers of Greece—such as
Aristotle,
Socrates, Plato and others—were devoted to the investigation of both natural
and spiritual
phenomena. In their schools of teaching they discoursed upon the world of
nature as well as
the supernatural world. Today the philosophy and logic of Aristotle are known
throughout the
world. Because they were interested in both natural and divine philosophy,
furthering the
development of the physical world of mankind as well as the intellectual, they
rendered
praiseworthy service to humanity. This was the reason of the triumph and
survival of their
teachings and principles. Man should continue both these lines of research and
investigation so
that all the human virtues, outer and inner, may become possible. The
attainment of these
virtues, both material and ideal, is conditioned upon intelligent investigation
of reality, by
which investigation the sublimity of man and his intellectual progress is
accomplished. Forms
must be set aside and renounced; reality must be sought. We must discover for
ourselves where
and what reality is. In religious beliefs nations and peoples today are
imitators of ancestors and
forefathers. If a man's father was a Christian, he himself is a Christian; a
Buddhist is the son

of a Buddhist, a Zoroastrian of a Zoroastrian. A gentile or an idolator follows the religious footsteps of his father and ancestry. This is absolute imitation. The requirement in this day is that man must independently and impartially investigate every form of reality. ?????? ?????? ??? ? ??????????

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The great question appertaining to humanity is religion. The first condition is that man must intelligently investigate its foundations. The second condition is that he must admit and acknowledge the oneness of the world of humanity. By this means the attainment of true fellowship among mankind is assured, and the alienation of races and individuals is prevented. All must be considered the servants of God; all must recognize God as the one kind Protector and Creator. In proportion to the acknowledgment of the oneness and solidarity of mankind, fellowship is possible, misunderstandings will be removed and reality become apparent. Then will the light of reality shine forth, and when reality illumines the world, the happiness of humankind will become a verity. Man must spiritually perceive that religion has been intended by God to be the means of grace, the source of life and cause of agreement. If it becomes the cause of discord, enmity and hatred, it is better that man should be without it. For in its teachings we seek the spirit of charity and love to bind the hearts of men together. If, on the contrary, we find it alienates and embitters human hearts, we are justified in casting it aside. Therefore, when man through sincere investigation discovers the fundamental reality of religion, his former prejudices disappear, and his new condition of enlightenment is conducive to the development of the world of humanity. The purport of our subject is that, just as man is in need of outward education, he is likewise in need of ideal refinement; just as the outer sense of sight is necessary to him, he should also possess insight and conscious perception; as he needs hearing, at the same time memory is essential; as a body is indispensable to him, likewise a mind is requisite; one is a material virtue,

the other is ideal. As human creatures fitted and qualified with this dual endowment, we must endeavor through the assistance and grace of God and by the exercise of our ideal power of intellect to attain all lofty virtues, that we may witness the effulgence of the Sun of Reality, reflect the spirit of the Kingdom, behold the manifest evidences of the reality of Divinity, comprehend irrefutable proofs of the immortality of the soul, live in conscious at-one-ment with the eternal world and become quickened and awake with the life and love of God.

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20 September 1912

Talk at Home of Dr. and Mrs. Clement Woolson

870 Laurel Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 329-333)

The materialists hold to the opinion that the world of nature is complete. The divine philosophers declare that the world of nature is incomplete. There is a wide difference between the two. The materialists call attention to the perfection of nature, the sun, moon and stars, the trees in their adornment, the whole earth and the sea—even unimportant phenomena revealing the most perfect symmetry. The divine philosophers deny this seeming perfection and completeness in nature's kingdom, even though admitting the beauty of its scenes and aspects and acknowledging the irresistible cosmic forces which control the colossal suns and planets. They hold that while nature seems perfect, it is, nevertheless, imperfect because it has need of intelligence and education. In proof of this they say that man, though he be a very god in the realm of material creation, is himself in need of an educator. Man undeveloped by education is savage, animalistic, brutal. Laws and regulations, schools, colleges and

universities have for their purpose the training of man and his uplift from the dark borderland of the animal kingdom.

What is the difference between the people of America and the inhabitants of central Africa?

All are human beings. Why have the people of America advanced to a high degree of civilization while the tribes of central Africa remain in extreme ignorance and barbarism? The difference and distinction between them is the degree of education. This is unquestioned. The people of Europe and America have been uplifted by education and training from the world of defects and have ascended toward the realm of perfection, whereas the people of Africa, denied educational development, remain in a natural condition of illiteracy and deprivation, for nature is incomplete and defective. Education is a necessity. If a piece of ground be left in its natural and original state, it will either become a thorny waste or be covered by worthless weeds. When cleared and cultivated, this same unproductive field will yield plentiful harvests of food for human sustenance.

This same difference is noticeable among animals; some have been domesticated, educated, others left wild. The proof is clear that the world of nature is imperfect, the world of education perfect. That is to say, man is rescued from the exigencies of nature by training and culture; consequently, education is necessary, obligatory. But education is of various kinds. There is a training and development of the physical body which ensures strength and growth. There is intellectual education or mental training for which schools and colleges are founded. The third kind of education is that of the spirit. Through the breaths of the Holy Spirit man is uplifted into the world of moralities and illumined by the lights of divine bestowals. The moral world is only attained through the effulgence of the Sun of Reality and the quickening life of the divine spirit. For this reason the holy Manifestations of God appear in the human world. They come to educate and illuminate mankind, to bestow spiritual susceptibilities, to quicken inner perceptions and thereby adorn the reality of man—the human temple—with

divine graces.

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Through Them man may become the point of the emanations of God and the recipient of heavenly bounties. Under the influence of Their teachings he may become the manifestation of the effulgences of God and a magnet attracting the lights of the supreme world. For this reason the holy, divine Manifestations are the first Teachers and Educators of humanity; Their traces are the highest evidences, and Their spiritual tuition is universal in its application to the world of mankind. Their influence and power are immeasurable and unlimited. One heavenly Personage has developed many nations. For example, Jesus Christ, single and unassisted, educated the Roman, Greek and Assyrian nations and all of Europe. It is evident, therefore, that the greatest education is that of the Spirit. The spirit of man must acquire its bounties from the Kingdom of God in order that it may become the mirror and manifestation of lights and the dawning point of divine traces, because the human reality is like the soil. If no bounty of rain descends from heaven upon the soil, if no heat of the sun penetrates, it will remain black, forbidding, unproductive; but when the moistening shower and the effulgent glow of the sun's rays fall upon it, beautiful and redolent flowers grow from its bosom. Similarly, the human spirit or reality of man, unless it becomes the recipient of the lights of the Kingdom, develops divine susceptibilities and consciously reflects the effulgence of God, will not be the manifestation of ideal bounties, for only the reality of man can become the mirror wherein the lights of God are revealed. The reality of man will then be as the spirit of this world, for just as the animus of life quickens the physical human body, so the body of the world will receive its vivification through the animating virtue of the sanctified spirit of man. It is evident that the holy Manifestations and divine dawning points are necessary, for these blessed and glorious Souls are the foremost Teachers and Educators of mankind,

and all human souls are developed through Them by the bounty of the Holy Spirit of God. During the ministry of Jesus Christ in Palestine He was surrounded by people of various nations, including the Jews, all of them living in the condition of extreme ignorance, bereft of the Word of God and darkened in consciousness. Christ educated these people and quickened them with the life of the Word so that they in turn became the instruments of educating the world, illumining the East and the West. Consider the wonderful effect of spiritual education and training. By it the fisherman Peter was transformed into the greatest of teachers. Spiritual education made the disciples radiant lamps in the darkness of the world and caused the Christians of the first and second centuries to become renowned everywhere for their virtues. Even philosophers bore testimony to this. Among them was Galen, the physician, who wrote a book upon the subject of the progress of the nations. He was a celebrated philosopher of the Greeks, although not a Christian. In his book he stated that religious beliefs exercise a tremendous influence upon civilization and that the world is in need of such belief. In proof of this, he said, in substance, "In our time there is a certain people called Christians, who, though neither philosophers nor scholastically trained, are superior to all others as regards their morality. They are perfect in morals. Each one of them is like a great philosopher in morals, ethics and turning toward the Kingdom of God." This is evidence from the testimony of an intelligent outside observer that spiritual education is the light of the world of humanity and that its absence in the world is darkness itself. Bahá'u'lláh appeared in Persia at a time when the darkness of ignorance enveloped the East, and there was no trace of human love and fellowship. Through divine education and the power of the breaths of the Holy Spirit He so refined the souls of the Persians who followed Him that they attained a station of highest intelligence and reflected the attributes of perfection

to the world. Whereas formerly they were ignorant, they became knowing; they were weak, they became mighty; they were without integrity, they became conscientious; they were hostile toward all men, they developed love for humanity; they were spiritually negligent, they became mindful and attentive; they were sleeping, they became awakened; they disagreed among themselves, they united in love and are now striving to render service to the world of humankind. Service to God and mankind is their sole intention; they have neither wish nor desire save that which is in accordance with the good pleasure of God. The good pleasure of God is love for His creatures. The will and plan of God is that each individual member of humankind shall become illumined like unto a lamp, radiant with all the destined virtues of humanity, leading his fellow creatures out of natural darkness into the heavenly light. Therein rests the virtue and glory of the world of humanity. This is the perfection, honor and glory of man; otherwise, man is an animal and without differentiation from the creatures of that lower kingdom.

It is clearly evident that while man possesses powers in common with the animal, he is distinguished from the animal by intellectual attainment, spiritual perception, the acquisition of virtues, capacity to receive the bestowals of Divinity, lordly bounty and emanations of heavenly mercy. This is the adornment of man, his honor and sublimity. Humanity must strive toward this supreme station. Christ has interpreted this station as the second birth. Man is first born from a world of darkness, the matrix of the mother, into this physical world of light. In the dark world from whence he came he had no knowledge of the virtues of this existence. He has been liberated from a condition of darkness and brought into a new and spacious realm where there is sunlight, the stars are shining, the moon sheds its radiance, there are beautiful views, gardens of roses, fruits and all the blessings of the present world. How did he attain these blessings? Through the agency of birth from the mother. Just as man has been physically

born into this world, he may be reborn from the realm and matrix of nature, for the realm of nature is a condition of animalism, darkness and defect. In this second birth he attains the world of the Kingdom. There he witnesses and realizes that the world of nature is a world of gloom, whereas the Kingdom is a world of radiance; the world of nature is a world of defects, the Kingdom is a realm of perfection; the world of nature is a world without enlightenment, the Kingdom of spiritual humanity is a heaven of illumination. Great discoveries and revelations are now possible for him; he has attained the reality of perception; his circle of understanding is illimitably widened; he views the realities of creation, comprehends the divine bounties and unseals the mystery of phenomena. This is the station which Christ has interpreted as the second birth. He says that just as ye were physically born from the mother into this world, ye must be born again from the mother world of nature into the life of the divine Kingdom. May you all attain this second, spiritual birth. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." I pray that the confirmation of God may descend upon you. May you all be born again from this mortal world into the realm of the Kingdom. May you clearly witness the signs of God, sense the virtues of the divine, attain the eternal bounties and perceive the reality of everlasting life.

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24 September 1912

Talk at Home of Mrs. Sidney E. Roberts

Denver, Colorado

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 334-337)

I have come from distant lands of the East to visit you, crossing the great

ocean and
traveling a long distance upon this continent. Consider how I have longed to
meet you, for my
body is frail and weak, incapable of long endurance, yet—praise be to
God!—we have at last
reached Denver. Such a gathering as this is worthy of thanksgiving; it is
peerless and unique
among meetings. Other meetings are held from motives of material
interests—such as social,
political, commercial, educational—but this assemblage has no other purpose
than attainment
to the divine Kingdom; therefore, it is unique, unequaled. The hearts have
turned to God; spirits
are exalted through the glad tidings of God; the intentions of all are directed
to God. What
better meeting could be imagined than this?
Such a gathering is fundamentally spiritual, sincere and most important. But we
must arise
in the accomplishment of its purposes, for our attention is directed toward the
heavenly
Kingdom unto which we must render faithful service. Therefore, all individuals
present here
must be in the attitude of perfect love and fellowship, manifesting the utmost
humility and selfsacrifice, turning our thoughts toward the Kingdom of God so
that our meeting may be an
expression of the glorified hosts of the Supreme Concourse.
Praise be to God! We are living in a century of light. Praise be to God! We are
upon earth
in the day of divine effulgence. Praise be to God! We are alive in this time of
the manifestation
of divine love. Praise be to God that we live in the day of the outpouring of
heavenly bounty.
Praise be to God! This is a day wherein the lights and splendors have awakened
progress
throughout the East and the West. Many holy souls in former times longed to
witness this
century, lamenting night and day, yearning to be upon the earth in this cycle;
but our presence
and privilege is the beneficent gift of the Lord. In His divine mercy and
absolute virtue He has
bestowed this upon us, even as Christ declared, “Many are called but few are
chosen.” Verily,
God has chosen you for His love and knowledge; God has chosen you for the
worthy service
of unifying mankind; God has chosen you for the purpose of investigating
reality and
promulgating international peace; God has chosen you for the progress and

development of
humanity, for spreading and proclaiming true education, for the expression of
love toward your
fellow creatures and the removal of prejudice; God has chosen you to blend
together human
hearts and give light to the human world. The doors of His generosity are wide,
wide open to
us; but we must be attentive, alert and mindful, occupied with service to all
mankind,
appreciating the bestowals of God and ever conforming to His will.
Observe how darkness has overspread the world. In every corner of the earth
there is strife,
discord and warfare of some kind. Mankind is submerged in the sea of
materialism and
occupied with the affairs of this world. They have no thought beyond earthly
possessions and
manifest no desire save the passions of this fleeting, mortal existence. Their
utmost purpose is

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the attainment of material livelihood, physical comforts and worldly enjoyments
such as
constitute the happiness of the animal world rather than the world of man.
The honor of man is through the attainment of the knowledge of God; his
happiness is from
the love of God; his joy is in the glad tidings of God; his greatness is
dependent upon his
servitude to God. The highest development of man is his entrance into the
divine Kingdom,
and the outcome of this human existence is the nucleus and essence of eternal
life. If man is
bereft of the divine bestowals and if his enjoyment and happiness are
restricted to his material
inclinations, what distinction or difference is there between the animal and
himself? In fact, the
animal's happiness is greater, for its wants are fewer and its means of
livelihood easier to
acquire. Although it is necessary for man to strive for material needs and
comforts, his real
need is the acquisition of the bounties of God. If he is bereft of divine
bounties, spiritual
susceptibilities and heavenly glad tidings, the life of man in this world has
not yielded any
worthy fruit. While possessing physical life, he should lay hold of the life
spiritual, and together
with bodily comforts and happiness, he should enjoy divine pleasures and

content. Then is man
worthy of the title man; then will he be after the image and likeness of God,
for the image of
the Merciful consists of the attributes of the heavenly Kingdom. If no fruits
of the Kingdom
appear in the garden of his soul, man is not in the image and likeness of God,
but if those fruits
are forthcoming, he becomes the recipient of ideal bestowals and is enkindled
with the fire of
the love of God. If his morals become spiritual in character, his aspirations
heavenly and his
actions conformable to the will of God, man has attained the image and likeness
of his Creator;
otherwise, he is the image and likeness of Satan. Therefore, Christ hath said,
“Ye shall know
them by their fruits.”
What are the fruits of the human world? They are the spiritual attributes which
appear in
man. If man is bereft of those attributes, he is like a fruitless tree. One
whose aspiration is lofty
and who has developed self-reliance will not be content with a mere animal
existence. He will
seek the divine Kingdom; he will long to be in heaven although he still walks
the earth in his
material body, and though his outer visage be physical, his face of inner
reflection will become
spiritual and heavenly. Until this station is attained by man, his life will be
utterly devoid of
real outcomes. The span of his existence will pass away in eating, drinking and
sleeping,
without eternal fruits, heavenly traces or illumination—without spiritual
potency, everlasting
life or the lofty attainments intended for him during his pilgrimage through
the human world.
You must thank God that your efforts are high and noble, that your endeavors
are worthy, that
your intentions are centered upon the Kingdom of God and that your supreme
desire is the
acquisition of eternal virtues. You must act in accordance with these
requirements. A man may
be a Bahá’í in name only. If he is a Bahá’í in reality, his deeds and
actions will be decisive
proofs of it. What are the requirements? Love for mankind, sincerity toward
all, reflecting the
oneness of the world of humanity, philanthropy, becoming enkindled with the
fire of the love
of God, attainment to the knowledge of God and that which is conducive to human

welfare.

This evening we were speaking of the fellowship and unity of the Persian Bahá'ís. They can truly be called lovers. For example, if one of the friends of God arrived in their city, all the friends would rejoice and assemble together in a meeting with him. If he were ill, they would care for him; if sad, they would comfort him. They would care for him in every way and give unmistakable evidence that there is a spiritual relationship amongst them. Strangers and outsiders are astonished at this love and radiant affection existing among the Bahá'ís. They inquire about it. They observe the unity and agreement manifest among them. They say, "What a beautiful spirit shines in their faces!" All envy it and wish that such a bond
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of love might be witnessed everywhere. Therefore, to you my first admonition is this: Associate most kindly with all; be as one family; pursue this same pathway. Let your intentions be one that your love may permeate and affect the hearts of others so that they may grow to love each other and all attain to this condition of oneness. The world of humanity is filled with darkness; you are its radiant candles. It is very poor; you must be the treasury of the Kingdom. It is exceedingly debased; you must be the cause of its exaltation. It is bereft of divine graces; you must give it impetus and spiritual quickening. According to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh you must love and cherish each individual member of humanity. The first sign of faith is love. The message of the holy, divine Manifestations is love; the phenomena of creation are based upon love; the radiance of the world is due to love; the wellbeing and happiness of the world depend upon it. Therefore, I admonish you that you must strive throughout the human world to diffuse the light of love. The people of this world are thinking of warfare; you must be peacemakers. The nations are self-centered; you must be thoughtful of others rather than yourselves. They are neglectful; you must be mindful. They are asleep; you should be awake and alert. May each one of you be as a shining

star in the
horizon of eternal glory. This is my wish for you and my highest hope. I have
come long
distances that you may attain these attributes and divine favors. Praise be to
God! I have
attended this meeting which has for its purpose the commemoration of God.

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25 September 1912

Talk at Second Divine Science Church

3929 West Thirty-eighth Avenue, Denver, Colorado

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 337-342)

In the Orient I was informed of the lofty purposes and wonderful attainments of
the

American people. When I arrived in this country, I realized that American
ideals are indeed

most praiseworthy and that the people here are lovers of truth. They
investigate reality, and

there is no trace of fanaticism among them. Today the nations of the world are
on the verge of

war, influenced and impelled by prejudices of ignorance and racial fanaticism.
Praise be to

God! You are free from such prejudice, for you believe in the oneness and
solidarity of the

world of humanity. There is no doubt that the divine confirmations will uphold
you.

One of the forms of prejudice which afflict the world of mankind is religious
bigotry and

fanaticism. When this hatred burns in human hearts, it becomes the cause of
revolution,

destruction, abasement of humankind and deprivation of the mercy of God. For
the holy

Manifestations and divine Founders of religion Themselves were completely
unified in love

and agreement, whereas Their followers are characterized by bitter antagonism
and attitudes

of hostility toward each other. God has desired for mankind the effulgence of
love, but through

blindness and misapprehension man has enveloped himself in veils of discord,
strife and hatred.

The supreme need of humanity is cooperation and reciprocity. The stronger the ties of fellowship and solidarity amongst men, the greater will be the power of constructiveness and accomplishment in all the planes of human activity. Without cooperation and reciprocal attitude the individual member of human society remains self-centered, uninspired by altruistic purposes, limited and solitary in development like the animal and plant organisms of the lower kingdoms. The lower creatures are not in need of cooperation and reciprocity. A tree can live solitary and alone, but this is impossible for man without retrogression. Therefore, every cooperative attitude and activity of human life is praiseworthy and foreintended by the will of God. The first expression of cooperation is family relationship, which is unreliable and uncertain in its potency, for it is subject to separation and does not permanently cement together the individual members of humanity. There is also a cooperation and oneness in nativity or race which is likewise not efficient, for although its members may agree in general, they differ radically in personal and particular points of view. Racial association, therefore, will not ensure the requirements of divine relationship. There are other means in the human world by which physical association is established, but these fail to weld together the hearts and spirits of men and are correspondingly inefficient. Therefore, it is evident that God has destined and intended religion to be the cause and means of cooperative effort and accomplishment among mankind. To this end He has sent the Prophets of God, the holy Manifestations of the Word, in order that the fundamental reality and religion of God may prove to be the bond of human unity, for the divine religions revealed by these holy Messengers have one and the same foundation. All will admit, therefore, that the divine religions are intended to be the means of true human

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cooperation, that they are united in the purpose of making humanity one family, for they rest

upon the universal foundation of love, and love is the first effulgence of Divinity.

Each one of the divine religions has established two kinds of ordinances: the essential and the accidental. The essential ordinances rest upon the firm, unchanging, eternal foundations of the Word itself. They concern spiritualities, seek to stabilize morals, awaken intuitive susceptibilities, reveal the knowledge of God and inculcate the love of all mankind. The accidental laws concern the administration of outer human actions and relations, establishing rules and regulations requisite for the world of bodies and their control. These are ever subject to change and supersedure according to exigencies of time, place and condition. For example, during the time of Moses, ten commandments concerning the punishment of murder were revealed in His Book. Divorce was sanctioned and polygamy allowable to a certain extent. If a man committed theft, his hand was cut off. This was drastic law and severe punishment applicable to the time of Moses. But when the time of Christ came, minds had developed, realizations were keener and spiritual perceptions had advanced so that certain laws concerning murder, plurality of wives and divorce were abrogated. But the essential ordinances of the Mosaic dispensation remained unchanged. These were the fundamental realities of the knowledge of God and the holy Manifestations, the purification of morals, the awakening of spiritual susceptibilities—eternal principles in which there is no change or transformation. Briefly, the foundation of the divine religions is one eternal foundation, but the laws for temporary conditions and exigencies are subject to change. Therefore, by adherence to these temporary laws, blindly following and imitating ancestral forms, difference and divergence have arisen among followers of the various religions, resulting in disunion, strife and hatred. Blind imitations and dogmatic observances are conducive to alienation and disagreement; they lead to bloodshed and destruction of the foundations of humanity. Therefore, the religionists of the world must lay aside these imitations and investigate the essential

foundation or reality
 itself, which is not subject to change or transformation. This is the divine
 means of agreement
 and unification.
 The purpose of all the divine religions is the establishment of the bonds of
 love and
 fellowship among men, and the heavenly phenomena of the revealed Word of God
 are intended
 to be a source of knowledge and illumination to humanity. So long as man
 persists in his
 adherence to ancestral forms and imitation of obsolete ceremonials, denying
 higher revelations
 of the divine light in the world, strife and contention will destroy the
 purpose of religion and
 make love and fellowship impossible. Each of the holy Manifestations announced
 the glad
 tidings of His successor, and each One confirmed the message of His
 predecessor. Therefore,
 inasmuch as They were agreed and united in purpose and teaching, it is
 incumbent upon Their
 followers to be likewise unified in love and spiritual fellowship. In no other
 way will discord
 and alienation disappear and the oneness of the world of humanity be
 established.
 After we have proved the validity of the Manifestations of the Word of God by
 investigating
 the divine teachings, we must discover for a certainty whether They have been
 real Educators
 of mankind. Among the revelators of the law of God was Moses. When He appeared,
 all the
 contemporaneous nations rejected Him. Notwithstanding this, single and alone He
 promulgated
 the divine teachings and liberated a nation from the lowest condition of
 degradation and
 bondage. The people of Israel were ignorant, lowly, debased in morals—a race
 of slaves under
 burdensome oppression. Moses led them out of captivity and brought them to the
 Holy Land.
 He educated and disciplined them, established among them the foundations of
 material and
 divine civilization. Through the education of Moses these ignorant people
 attained an advanced
 degree of power and prestige, culminating in the glory of the reign of Solomon.
 From the abyss

of bereavement and slavery they were uplifted to the highest plane of progress and civilized nationhood. It is evident, therefore, that Moses was an Educator and Teacher. The purpose and mission of the holy, divine Messengers is the training and advancement of humanity, the cultivation of divine fruits in the gardens of human hearts, the reflection of heavenly effulgence in the mirrors of human souls, the quickening of mental capacity and the increase of spiritual susceptibilities. When these results and outcomes are witnessed in mankind, the function and mission of the Manifestations are unmistakable. Christ, single and alone, without schooling or outward education and trained to labor in the shop of a carpenter, appeared in the world at the time when the Jewish nation was in the greatest abasement. This radiant Youth, without wealth, power of armies or prestige, rescued the Jews who believed on Him from tyranny and degradation and lifted them to the highest plane of development and glory. Peter, His disciple, was a fisherman. Through the power of Christ he shed light upon all the horizons of the world. Furthermore, various people of the Greek, Roman, Egyptian and Assyrian nations were brought together in unity and agreement; where warfare and bloodshed had existed, humility and love were manifest, and the foundations of divine religion were established, never to be destroyed. This proves that Christ was a heavenly Teacher and Educator of the world of humanity, for such evidences are historical and irrefutable, not based upon tradition and circumstantial report. The power of His Word in cementing these nations together is as clear and evident as the sun at midday. There is no need of further demonstration. The proof of the validity of a Manifestation of God is the penetration and potency of His Word, the cultivation of heavenly attributes in the hearts and lives of His followers and the bestowal of divine education upon the world of humanity. This is absolute proof. The world is a school in which there must be Teachers of the Word of God. The evidence of the ability of these Teachers is efficient education of the graduating classes. In the early part of the nineteenth century the horizon of Persia was shrouded

in great
 darkness and ignorance. The people of that country were in a condition of
 barbarism. Hatred
 and bigotry prevailed among the various religions; bloodshed and hostility were
 frequent
 among sects and denominations of belief. There were no evidences of affiliation
 and unity;
 violent prejudice and antagonism ruled the hearts of men. At such a time as
 this Bahá'u'lláh
 proclaimed the first principle of His mission and teaching—the oneness of the
 world of
 humanity. His second announcement was the investigation of reality; the third
 was the oneness
 of the foundations of the divine religions. Through spiritual education He led
 the people out of
 darkness and ignorance into the clear light of truth, illuminated their hearts
 with the splendor
 of knowledge, laid a true and universal basis for religious teachings,
 cultivated the virtues of
 humanity, conferred spiritual susceptibilities, awakened inner perceptions and
 changed the
 dishonor of prejudiced souls to the highest degree of honor and capacity. Today
 in Persia and
 the Orient you will find the followers of Bahá'u'lláh united in the
 closest ties of fellowship and
 love. They have abandoned religious prejudices and have become as one family.
 When you
 enter their meetings, you will find Christians, Muslims, Buddhists,
 Zoroastrians, Jews and
 representatives of other beliefs present, all conjoined in a wonderful unity
 without a trace of
 bigotry or fanaticism, and the light of the oneness of the world of humanity
 reflected in their
 faces. Day by day they are advancing, manifesting greater and still greater
 love for each other.
 Their faith is fixed upon the unification of mankind, and their highest purpose
 is the oneness
 of religious belief. They proclaim to all humanity the sheltering mercy and
 infinite grace of
 God. They teach the reconciliation of religion with science and reason. They
 show forth in
 words and deeds the reality of love for all mankind as the servants of one God
 and the recipients
 of His universal bounty. These are their thoughts, their beliefs, their guiding
 principles, their
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religion. No trace of religious, racial, patriotic or political prejudice can be found among them, for they are real servants of God and obedient to His will and command. My highest hope and desire is that the strongest and most indissoluble bond shall be established between the American nation and the people of the Orient. This is my prayer to God. May the day come when through divine and spiritual activity in the human world the religions shall be reconciled and all races of mankind come together in unity and love. Fifty years ago Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed the peace of the nations and oneness of the divine religions, addressing His words to all the kings and rulers of the world in specific Tablets. Therefore, my supreme desire is the unity of the East and West, universal peace and the oneness of the world of humanity.

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??7 October 1912??

??Talk to Japanese Young Men's Christian Association??

??Japanese Independent Church, Oakland, California??

??Notes by Bijou Straun??

?)?(Promulgation, pp. 343-348??

??It is a great happiness to be here this evening, especially for the reason that the members of??

??this Association have come from the region of the Orient. For a long time I have entertained a??

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desire to meet some of the Japanese friends. That nation has achieved extraordinary progress in a short space of time—a progress and development which have astonished the world.

Inasmuch as they have advanced in material civilization, they must assuredly possess the capacity for spiritual development. For this reason, I have an excessive longing to meet them.

Praise be to God! This pleasure is now afforded me, for here in this city I am face to face with

a revered group of the Japanese. According to report the people of the Japanese nation are not

prejudiced. They investigate reality. Wherever they find truth, they prove to be its lovers. They

are not attached tenaciously to blind imitations of ancient beliefs and dogmas.

Therefore, it is

my great desire to discourse with them upon a subject in order that the unity and blending

together of the nations of the East and the nations of the West may be furthered and

accomplished. In this way religious, racial and political prejudice, partisan bias and

sectarianism will be dispelled amongst men. Any kind of prejudice is destructive to the body

politic.

When we review history from the beginning of human existence to the present age in which

we live, it is evident all war and conflict, bloodshed and battle, every form of sedition has been

due to some form of prejudice—whether religious, racial or national—to partisan bias and

selfish prejudice of some sort. Even today we witness an upheaval in the Balkans, a war of

religious prejudice. Some years ago when I was living in Rumelia, war broke out among the

religious peoples. There was no attitude of justice or equity whatever amongst them. They pillaged the properties of each other, burning each others' homes and houses, slaughtering men, women and children, imagining that such warfare and bloodshed was the means of drawing near to God. This clearly proved that prejudice is a destroyer of the foundations of the world of humanity, whereas religion was meant to be the cause of fellowship and agreement. Religion must be the cause of love. Religion must be the cause of justice, for the wisdom of the Manifestations of God is directed toward the establishing of the bond of a love which is indissoluble. The bonds which hold together the body politic are not sufficient. These bonds may be mentioned—for instance, the bond of patriotism. This is evidently not a sufficient bond, for how often it happens that people of the same nation wage civil war amongst themselves. The bond of fellowship may be racial, but history proves this is not sufficiently strong, for tremendous wars have broken out between peoples of the same racial lineage. Again, the bond holding men together may be political. How often it happens that the diplomacy of nations makes a treaty of peace one day and on the morrow a declaration of war! It is historically evident and manifest that these bonds are not self-sufficient. The real bond of integrity is religious in character, for religion indicates the oneness of the world of humanity. Religion serves the world of morality. Religion purifies the hearts. Religion impels men to achieve praiseworthy deeds. Religion becomes the cause of love in human hearts, for religion is a divine foundation, the foundation ever conducive to life. The teachings of God are the source of illumination to the people of the world. Religion is ever constructive, not destructive. The foundation of all the divine religions is one. All are based upon reality. Reality does not admit plurality, yet amongst mankind there have arisen differences concerning the Manifestations of God. Some have been Zoroastrians, some are Buddhists, some Jews, Christians, Muslims and so on. This has become a source of divergence, whereas

the teachings
of the holy Souls Who founded the divine religions are one in essence and
reality. All these
have served the world of humanity. All have summoned souls to peace and accord.
All have
proclaimed the virtues of humanity. All have guided souls to the attainment of
perfections, but

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among the nations certain imitations of ancestral forms of worship have arisen.
These
imitations are not the foundation and essence of the divine religions. Inasmuch
as they differ
from the reality and the essential teachings of the Manifestations of God,
dissensions have
arisen, and prejudice has developed. Religious prejudice thus becomes the cause
of warfare
and battle.

If we abandon these timeworn blind imitations and investigate reality, all of
us will be
unified. No discord will remain; antagonism will disappear. All will associate
in fellowship.

All will enjoy the cordial bonds of friendship. The world of creation will then
attain composure.

The dark and gloomy clouds of blind imitations and dogmatic variances will be
scattered and
dispelled; the Sun of Reality will shine most gloriously.

Verily, we should consider the divine Prophets as the intermediaries, but
mankind has made

use of Them as causes of dissension and pretexts for warfare and strife. In
reality, They were

the intermediaries of love and reconciliation. If They were not sources of love
and fellowship

amongst men, then undoubtedly They were not true, for the divine wisdom and
purpose in

sending the Prophets was the manifestation of love in human hearts. Therefore,
we must

investigate reality. First of all, let us determine whether these Prophets were
valid or not by

using rational proofs and shining arguments, not simply by quoting traditionary
evidences,

because traditions are divergent and the source of dissension.

Among the holy, divine Manifestations of God were Moses, Buddha, etc. The
sending of

Prophets has ever been for the training of humanity. They are the first
Educators and Trainers.

If Moses has developed the body politic, there is no doubt that He was a true Teacher and Educator. This will be proof and evidence that He was a Prophet. We shall consider how He was sent to the children of Israel when they were in the abyss of despair, in the lowest degree of ignorance and heedlessness, degraded and under conditions of bondage. Moses rescued these degraded people of Israel from that state of bondage. He raised them from that condition of ignorance, saved them from barbarism and led them into the Holy Land. He educated them, endowed them with sagacious instincts, made them worthy and honorable. He civilized them, raised them to a higher plane of existence until they were enabled to establish a national sovereignty, the great kingdom of Solomon. This proves that Moses was a Teacher and an Educator. He had neither army nor dominion; neither did He possess wealth. It was only through an idealistic power that He cemented them together, proving that He was a Prophet of God, an Educator and Trainer. Likewise, must we set aside prejudice in considering other divine Educators by investigating reality. For instance, let us take Christ. He achieved results greater than Moses. He educated the body politic, trained mighty nations. There is no doubt whatever that such Souls were Prophets, for the mission of Prophethood is education, and these wondrous Souls trained and educated mankind. Christ was a unique Personage, without helper or assistant. Single and solitary He arose to train great and mighty nations; the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Syrians, Chaldeans and Assyrians came under His influence. He was able to bind together many nations, melting them together, as it were, and pouring them into one mold, changing their enmity into love, war into peace. Under His influence satanic souls became veritable angels, tyrannical rulers became just, the human moral standard was raised. This proves that Christ was an Educator, a Teacher and Trainer of nations. If we deny this, it is nought but injustice.

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Blessed souls—whether Moses, Jesus, Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, Confucius or Muhammad—were the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity. How can we deny such irrefutable proof? How can we be blind to such light? How can we dispute the validity of Christ? This is injustice. This is a denial of reality. Man must be just. We must set aside bias and prejudice. We must abandon the imitations of ancestors and forefathers. We ourselves must investigate reality and be fair in judgment.

The old nation of Persia denied all these facts, harboring the utmost hatred and enmity toward other religious beliefs besides their own. We have investigated reality and found that these holy souls were all sent of God. All of them have sacrificed life, endured ordeals and tribulations in order that They might educate us. How can such love be forgotten? The light of Christ is evident. The candle of Buddha is shining. The star of Moses is sparkling. The flame ignited by Zoroaster is still burning. How can we deny Them? It is injustice. It is a denial of complete evidence. If we forsake imitations, all will become united, and no differences will remain to separate us.

We entertain no prejudice against Muhammad. Outwardly the Arabian nation was instrumental in overthrowing the Pársí dominion, the sovereignty of Persia. Therefore, the old Pársí nation manifested the utmost contempt toward the Arabs. But we deal justly and will never abandon the standard of fairness. The Arabians were in the utmost state of degradation. They were bloodthirsty and barbarous, so savage and degraded that the Arabian father often buried his own daughter alive. Consider: Could any barbarism be lower than this? The nation consisted of warring, hostile tribal peoples inhabiting the vast Arabian peninsula, and their business consisted in fighting and pillaging each other, making captive women and children, killing each other. Muhammad appeared among such a people. He educated and unified these barbarous tribes, put an end to their shedding of blood. Through His education they reached such a degree of civilization that they subdued and governed continents and nations. What a great civilization was established in Spain by the Muslims! What a marvelous

civilization was
founded in Morocco by the Moors! What a powerful caliphate or successorship was
set up in
Baghdád! How much Islám served and furthered the cause of science! Why then
should we
deny Muhammad? If we deny Him, we awaken enmity and hatred. By our prejudice
we become
the cause of war and bloodshed, for prejudice was the cause of the tremendous
storm which
swept through human history for thirteen hundred years and still continues.
Even now in the
Balkans a commotion is apparent, reflecting it.
The Christian people number nearly three hundred millions and the Muslims about
the
same. It is no small task to do away with such numbers. And furthermore, why
should they be
obliterated? For these are all servants of the one God. Let us strive to
establish peace between
Christians and Muslims. Is it not better? What is the benefit of war? What is
its fruitage? For
thirteen hundred years there has been warfare and hostility. What good result
has been
forthcoming? Is it not folly? Is God pleased with it? Is Christ pleased? Is
Muhammad? It is
evident that They are not. The Prophets have extolled each other to the utmost.
Muhammad
declared Christ to be the Spirit of God. This is an explicit text of the
Qur'án. He declared Christ
to be the Word of God. He eulogized the disciples of Christ to the utmost. He
bestowed upon
Mary, the mother of Christ, the highest praise. Likewise, Christ extolled
Moses. He spread
broadcast the Old Testament, the Torah, and caused the name of Moses to reach
unto the East
and the West. The purpose is this: that the Prophets Themselves have manifested
the utmost
love toward each other, but the nations who believe and follow Them are hostile
and
antagonistic among themselves.

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The world was in this condition of darkness when Bahá'u'lláh appeared
upon the Persian
horizon. He hoisted the banner of the oneness of the world of humanity. He
proclaimed
international peace. He admonished the Persian nation to investigate reality,

announced that
religion must be the cause of unity and love, that it must be the means of
binding hearts
together, the cause of life and illumination. If religion becomes the cause of
enmity and
bloodshed, then irreligion is to be preferred, for religion is the remedy for
every ailment, and
if a remedy should become the cause of ailment and difficulty, it is better to
abandon it. Today
in Persia you will see the Muslims, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists
assembled together in
the same meeting, living in accordance with the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh,
manifesting utmost
love and accord. Rancor, hatred, antagonism and violence have disappeared; they
live together
as one family.

And ye who are the people of the Orient—the Orient which has ever been the
dawning
point of lights from whence the Sun of Reality has ever shone forth, casting
its effulgence upon
the West—ye, therefore, must become the manifestations of lights. Ye must
become brilliant
lamps. Ye must shine as stars radiating the light of love toward all mankind.
May you be the
cause of love amongst the nations. Thus may the world become witness that the
Orient has ever
been the dawning point of illumination, the source of love and reconciliation.
Make peace with
all the world. Love everybody; serve everybody. All are the servants of God.
God has created
all. He provideth for all. He is kind to all. Therefore, must we be kind to
all.

I am greatly pleased with this meeting. I am joyous and happy, for here in
these western
regions I find Orientals seeking education and who are free from prejudice. May
God assist
you!

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is a center wherein the sciences and arts are taught and studied. Science ever

tends to the
illumination of the world of humanity. It is the cause of eternal honor to man,
and its
sovereignty is far greater than the sovereignty of kings. The dominion of kings
has an ending;
the king himself may be dethroned; but the sovereignty of science is
everlasting and without
end. Consider the philosophers of former times. Their rule and dominion is
still manifest in the
world. The Greek and Roman kingdoms with all their grandeur passed away; the
ancient
sovereignities of the Orient are but memories, whereas the power and influence
of Plato and
Aristotle still continue. Even now in schools and universities of the world
their names are
revered and commemorated, but where do we hear the names of bygone kings
extolled? They
are forgotten and rest in the valley of oblivion. It is evident that the
sovereignty of science is
greater than the dominion of rulers. Kings have invaded countries and achieved
conquest
through the shedding of blood, but the scientist through his beneficent
achievements invades
the regions of ignorance, conquering the realm of minds and hearts. Therefore,
his conquests
are everlasting. May you attain extraordinary progress in this center of
education. May you
become radiant lights flooding the dark regions and recesses of ignorance with
illumination.
Inasmuch as the fundamental principle of the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is
the oneness of the
world of humanity, I will speak to you upon the intrinsic oneness of all
phenomena. This is one
of the abstruse subjects of divine philosophy.
Fundamentally all existing things pass through the same degrees and phases of
development, and any given phenomenon embodies all others. An ancient statement
of the
Arabian philosophers declares that all things are involved in all things. It is
evident that each
material organism is an aggregate expression of single and simple elements, and
a given
cellular element or atom has its coursings or journeyings through various and
myriad stages of
life. For example, we will say the cellular elements which have entered into
the composition
of a human organism were at one time a component part of the animal kingdom; at
another

time they entered into the composition of the vegetable, and prior to that they existed in the kingdom of the mineral. They have been subject to transference from one condition of life to
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another, passing through various forms and phases, exercising in each existence special functions. Their journeyings through material phenomena are continuous. Therefore, each phenomenon is the expression in degree of all other phenomena. The difference is one of successive transferences and the period of time involved in evolutionary process. For example, it has taken a certain length of time for this cellular element in my hand to pass through the various periods of metabolism. At one period it was in the mineral kingdom subject to changes and transferences in the mineral state. Then it was transferred to the vegetable kingdom where it entered into different grades and stations. Afterward it reached the animal plane, appearing in forms of animal organisms until finally in its transferences and coursings it attained to the kingdom of man. Later on it will revert to its primordial elemental state in the mineral kingdom, being subject, as it were, to infinite journeyings from one degree of existence to another, passing through every stage of being and life. Whenever it appears in any distinct form or image, it has its opportunities, virtues and functions. As each component atom or element in the physical organisms of existence is subject to transference through endless forms and stages, possessing virtues peculiar to those forms and stations, it is evident that all phenomena of material being are fundamentally one. In the mineral kingdom this component atom or element possesses certain virtues of the mineral; in the kingdom of the vegetable it is imbued with vegetable qualities or virtues; in the plane of animal existence it is empowered with animal virtues—the senses; and in the kingdom of man it manifests qualities peculiar to the human station. As this is true of material phenomena, how much more evident and essential it

is that
oneness should characterize man in the realm of idealism, which finds its
expression only in
the human kingdom. Verily, the origin of all material life is one and its
termination likewise
one. In view of this fundamental unity and agreement of all phenomenal life,
why should man
in his kingdom of existence wage war or indulge in hostility and destructive
strife against his
fellowman? Man is the noblest of the creatures. In his physical organism he
possesses the
virtues of the mineral kingdom. Likewise, he embodies the augmentative virtue,
or power of
growth, which characterizes the kingdom of the vegetable. Furthermore, in his
degree of
physical existence he is qualified with functions and powers peculiar to the
animal, beyond
which lies the range of his distinctive human mental and spiritual endowment.
Considering this
wonderful unity of the kingdoms of existence and their embodiment in the
highest and noblest
creature, why should man be at variance and in conflict with man? Is it fitting
and justifiable
that he should be at war, when harmony and interdependence characterize the
kingdoms of
phenomenal life below him? The elements and lower organisms are synchronized in
the great
plan of life. Shall man, infinitely above them in degree, be antagonistic and a
destroyer of that
perfection? God forbid such a condition!
From the fellowship and commingling of the elemental atoms life results. In
their harmony
and blending there is ever newness of existence. It is radiance, completeness;
it is
consummation; it is life itself. Just now the physical energies and natural
forces which come
under our immediate observation are all at peace. The sun is at peace with the
earth upon which
it shines. The soft breathing winds are at peace with the trees. All the
elements are in harmony
and equilibrium. A slight disturbance and discord among them might bring
another San
Francisco earthquake and fire. A physical clash, a little quarreling among the
elements as it
were, and a violent cataclysm of nature results. This happens in the mineral
kingdom. Consider,
then, the effect of discord and conflict in the kingdom of man, so superior to

the realm of
inanimate existence. How great the attendant catastrophe, especially when we
realize that man

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is endowed by God with mind and intellect. Verily, mind is the supreme gift of
God. Verily,
intellect is the effulgence of God. This is manifest and self-evident.
For all created things except man are subjects or captives of nature; they
cannot deviate in
the slightest degree from nature's law and control. The colossal sun, center
of our planetary
system, is nature's captive, incapable of the least variation from the law of
command. All the
orbs and luminaries in this illimitable universe are, likewise, obedient to
nature's regulation.
Our planet, the earth, acknowledges nature's omnipresent sovereignty. The
kingdoms of the
mineral, vegetable and animal respond to nature's will and fiat of control.
The great bulky
elephant with its massive strength has no power to disobey the restrictions
nature has laid upon
him; but man, weak and diminutive in comparison, empowered by mind which is an
effulgence
of Divinity itself, can resist nature's control and apply natural laws to his
own uses.
According to the limitations of his physical powers man was intended by
creation to live
upon the earth, but through the exercise of his mental faculties, he removes
the restriction of
this law and soars in the air like a bird. He penetrates the secrets of the sea
in submarines and
builds fleets to sail at will over the ocean's surface, commanding the laws
of nature to do his
will. All the sciences and arts we now enjoy and utilize were once mysteries,
and according to
the mandates of nature should have remained hidden and latent, but the human
intellect has
broken through the laws surrounding them and discovered the underlying
realities. The mind
of man has taken these mysteries out of the plane of invisibility and brought
them into the plane
of the known and visible.
It has classified and adapted these laws to human needs and uses, this being
contrary to the
postulates of nature. For example, electricity was once a hidden, or latent,

natural force. It would have remained hidden if the human intellect had not discovered it. Man has broken the law of its concealment, taken this energy out of the invisible treasury of the universe and brought it into visibility. Is it not an extraordinary accomplishment that this little creature, man, has imprisoned an irresistible cosmic force in an incandescent lamp? It is beyond the vision and power of nature itself to do this. The East can communicate with the West in a few minutes. This is a miracle transcending nature's control. Man takes the human voice and stores it in a phonograph. The voice naturally should be free and transient according to the law and phenomenon of sound, but man arrests its vibrations and puts it in a box in defiance of nature's laws. All human discoveries were once secrets and mysteries sealed and stored up in the bosom of the material universe until the mind of man, which is the greatest of divine effulgences, penetrated them and made them subservient to his will and purpose. In this sense man has broken the laws of nature and is constantly taking out of nature's laboratory new and wonderful things. Notwithstanding this supreme bestowal of God, which is the greatest power in the world of creation, man continues to war and fight, killing his fellowman with the ferocity of a wild animal. Is this in keeping with his exalted station? Nay, rather, this is contrary to the divine purpose manifest in his creation and endowment. If the animals are savage and ferocious, it is simply a means for their subsistence and preservation. They are deprived of that degree of intellect which can reason and discriminate between right and wrong, justice and injustice; they are justified in their actions and not responsible. When man is ferocious and cruel toward his fellowman, it is not for subsistence or safety. His motive is selfish advantage and willful wrong. It is neither seemly nor befitting that such a noble creature, endowed with intellect and lofty thoughts, capable of wonderful achievements and discoveries in sciences and arts, with potential for ever higher perceptions and the accomplishment of divine purposes in life, should seek the blood of his

fellowmen

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upon the field of battle. Man is the temple of God. He is not a human temple. If you destroy a house, the owner of that house will be grieved and wrathful. How much greater is the wrong when man destroys a building planned and erected by God! Undoubtedly, he deserves the judgment and wrath of God. God has created man lofty and noble, made him a dominant factor in creation. He has specialized man with supreme bestowals, conferred upon him mind, perception, memory, abstraction and the powers of the senses. These gifts of God to man were intended to make him the manifestation of divine virtues, a radiant light in the world of creation, a source of life and the agency of constructiveness in the infinite fields of existence. Shall we now destroy this great edifice and its very foundation, overthrow this temple of God, the body social or politic? When we are not captives of nature, when we possess the power to control ourselves, shall we become captives of nature and act according to its exigencies? In nature there is the law of the survival of the fittest. Even if man be not educated, then according to the natural institutes this natural law will demand of man supremacy. The purpose and object of schools, colleges and universities is to educate man and thereby rescue and redeem him from the exigencies and defects of nature and to awaken within him the capability of controlling and appropriating nature's bounties. If we should relegate this plot of ground to its natural state, allow it to return to its original condition, it would become a field of thorns and useless weeds, but by cultivation it will become fertile soil, yielding a harvest. Deprived of cultivation, the mountain slopes would be jungles and forests without fruitful trees. The gardens bring forth fruits and flowers in proportion to the care and tillage bestowed upon them by the gardener. Therefore, it is not intended that the world of humanity should be left to its natural state. It is in need of the education divinely provided for it. The

holy, heavenly
 Manifestations of God have been the Teachers. They are the divine Gardeners Who transform
 the jungles of human nature into fruitful orchards and make the thorny places blossom as the
 rose. It is evident, then, that the intended and especial function of man is to rescue and redeem
 himself from the inherent defects of nature and become qualified with the ideal virtues of
 Divinity. Shall he sacrifice these ideal virtues and destroy these possibilities of advancement?
 God has endowed him with a power whereby he can even overcome the laws and phenomena
 of nature, wrest the sword from nature's hand and use it against nature itself. Shall he, then,
 remain its captive, even failing to qualify under the natural law which commands the survival
 of the fittest? That is to say, shall he continue to live upon the level of the animal kingdom
 without distinction between them and himself in natural impulses and ferocious instincts?
 There is no lower degree nor greater debasement for man than this natural condition of
 animalism. The battlefield is the acme of human degradation, the cause of the wrath of God,
 the destruction of the divine foundation of man.
 Praise be to God! I find myself in an assemblage, the members of which are peace loving
 and advocates of international unity. The thoughts of all present are centered upon the oneness
 of the world of mankind, and every ambition is to render service in the cause of human uplift
 and betterment. I supplicate God that He may confirm and assist you, that each one of you may
 become a professor emeritus in the world of scientific knowledge, a faithful standard-bearer of
 peace and bonds of agreement between the hearts of men.
 Fifty years ago Bahá'u'lláh declared the necessity of peace among the nations and the
 reality of reconciliation between the religions of the world. He announced that the fundamental
 basis of all religion is one, that the essence of religion is human fellowship and that the
 differences in belief which exist are due to dogmatic interpretation and blind imitations which

are at variance with the foundations established by the Prophets of God. He proclaimed that if the reality underlying religious teaching be investigated all religions would be unified, and the purpose of God, which is love and the blending of human hearts, would be accomplished.

According to His teachings if religious belief proves to be the cause of discord and dissension, its absence would be preferable; for religion was intended to be the divine remedy and panacea for the ailments of humanity, the healing balm for the wounds of mankind. If its misapprehension and defilement have brought about warfare and bloodshed instead of remedy and cure, the world would be better under irreligious conditions.

Bahá'u'lláh especially emphasized international peace. He declared that all mankind is the one progeny of Adam and members of one great universal family. If the various races and distinct types of mankind had each proceeded from a different original paternity—in other words, if we had two or more Adams for our human fathers—there might be reasonable ground for difference and divergence in humanity today; but inasmuch as we belong to one progeny and one family, all names which seek to differentiate and distinguish mankind as Italian, German, French, Russian and so on are without significance and sanction. We are all human, all servants of God and all come from Mr. Adam's family. Why, then, all these fallacious national and racial distinctions? These boundary lines and artificial barriers have been created by despots and conquerors who sought to attain dominion over mankind, thereby engendering patriotic feeling and rousing selfish devotion to merely local standards of government. As a rule they themselves enjoyed luxuries in palaces, surrounded by conditions of ease and affluence, while armies of soldiers, civilians and tillers of the soil fought and died at their command upon the field of battle, shedding their innocent blood for a delusion such as "we are Germans," "our enemies are French," etc. , when, in reality, all are humankind, all belong to the one family and posterity of Adam, the original father. This prejudice or limited patriotism

is prevalent throughout the world, while man is blind to patriotism in the larger sense which includes all races and native lands. From every real standpoint there must and should be peace among all nations. God created one earth and one mankind to people it. Man has no other habitation, but man himself has come forth and proclaimed imaginary boundary lines and territorial restrictions, naming them Germany, France, Russia, etc. And torrents of precious blood are spilled in defense of these imaginary divisions of our one human habitation, under the delusion of a fancied and limited patriotism. After all, a claim and title to territory or native land is but a claim and attachment to the dust of earth. We live upon this earth for a few days and then rest beneath it forever. So it is our graveyard eternally. Shall man fight for the tomb which devours him, for his eternal sepulcher? What ignorance could be greater than this? To fight over his grave, to kill another for his grave! What heedlessness! What a delusion! It is my hope that you who are students in this university may never be called upon to fight for the dust of earth which is the tomb and sepulcher of all mankind, but that during the days of your life you may enjoy the most perfect companionship one with another, even as one family—as brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers—associating together in peace and true fellowship.

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10 October 1912

Talk at Open Forum

San Francisco, California

Notes by Bijou Straun

(Promulgation, pp. 355-361)

Although I was feeling indisposed this evening, yet owing to the love I entertain for you I have attended this meeting. For I have heard that this is an open forum, investigating reality; that you are free from blind imitations, desiring to arrive at the truth of things, and that your endeavors are lofty. Therefore, I have thought it expedient to discourse upon the subject of philosophy, which is alike interesting to the East and the West, enabling us to

consider the analogies and differences between the philosophical teachings of the Orient and Occident.

The criterion of judgment in the estimation of western philosophers is sense perception.

They consider that which is tangible or perceptible to the senses to be a reality—that there is

no doubt of its existence. For example, we prove the existence of this light through the sense

of sight; we visualize this room; we see the sun, the green fields; we use our sense of sight to

observe them. The opinion of these philosophers is that such perception is reality, that the

senses are the highest standard of perception and judgment, in which there can neither be doubt

nor uncertainty. In the estimation of the philosophers of the Orient, especially those of Greece

and Persia, the standard of judgment is the intellect. They are of the opinion that the criterion

of the senses is defective, and their proof is that the senses are often deceived and mistaken.

That which is liable to mistake cannot be infallible, cannot be a true standard of judgment.

Among the senses the most powerful and reliable is that of sight. This sense views a mirage

as a body of water and is positive as to its character, whereas a mirage is nonexistent. The sense

of vision, or sight, sees reflected images in a mirror as verities, when reason declares them to

be nonexistent. The eye sees the sun and planets revolving around the earth, whereas in reality

the sun is stationary, central, and the earth revolves upon its own axis. The sense of sight sees

the earth as a plane, whereas the faculty of reason discovers it to be spherical. The eye views

the heavenly bodies in boundless space as small and insignificant, whereas reason declares

them to be colossal suns. The sense of sight beholds a whirling spark of fire as a circle of light

and is without doubt as to it, whereas such a circle is nonexistent. A man sailing in a ship sees

the banks on either side as if they were moving, whereas the ship is moving. Briefly, there are

many instances and evidences which disprove the assertion that tangibilities and sense

impressions are certainties, for the senses are misleading and often mistaken. How, then, can

we rightly declare that they prove reality when the standard or criterion itself is defective?

The philosophers of the East consider the perfect criterion to be reason or intellect, and

according to that standard the realities of all objects can be proved; for, they say, the standard

of reason and intellect is perfect, and everything provable through reason is veritable.

Therefore, those philosophers consider all philosophical deductions to be correct when

weighed according to the standard of reason, and they state that the senses are the assistants

and instruments of reason, and that although the investigation of realities may be conducted

through the senses, the standard of knowing and judgment is reason itself. In this way the

philosophers of the East and West differ and disagree. The materialistic philosophers of the

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West declare that man belongs to the animal kingdom, whereas the philosophers of the East—

such as Plato, Aristotle and the Persians—divide the world of existence or phenomena of life

into two general categories or kingdoms: one the animal kingdom, or world of nature, the other

the human kingdom, or world of reason.

Man is distinguished above the animals through his reason. The perceptions of man are of

two kinds: tangible, or sensible, and reasonable, whereas the animal perceptions are limited to

the senses, the tangible only. The tangible perceptions may be likened to this candle, the

reasonable perceptions to the light. Calculations of mathematical problems and determining

the spherical form of the earth are through the reasonable perceptions. The center of gravity is

a hypothesis of reason. Reason itself is not tangible, perceptible to the senses. Reason is an

intellectual verity or reality. All qualities are ideal realities, not tangible realities. For instance,

we say this man is a scholarly man. Knowledge is an ideal attainment not perceptible to the

senses. When you see this scholarly man, your eye does not see his knowledge, your ear cannot

hear his science, nor can you sense it by taste. It is not a tangible verity.

Science itself is an ideal verity. It is evident, therefore, that the perceptions of man are twofold: the reasonable and the tangible, or sensible.

As to the animal: It is endowed only with sense perception. It is lacking the reasonable perception. It cannot apprehend ideal realities. The animal cannot conceive of the earth as a sphere. The intelligence of an animal located in Europe could never have planned the discovery of the continent of America. The animal kingdom is incapable of discovering the latent mysteries of nature—such as electricity—and bringing them forth from the invisible to the plane of visibility. It is evident that the discoveries and inventions transcend the animal intelligence. The animal cannot penetrate the secrets of genesis and creation. Its mind is incapable of conceiving the verity of ether. It cannot know the mysteries of magnetism because the bestowals of abstract reason and intellect are absent in its endowment. That is to say, the animal in its creation is a captive of the senses. Beyond the tangibilities and impressions of the senses it cannot accept anything. It denies everything. It is incapable of ideal perception and, therefore, a captive of the senses.

Virtue, or perfection, belongs to man, who possesses both the capacity of the senses and ideal perception. For instance, astronomical discoveries are man's accomplishments. He has not gained this knowledge through his senses. The greater part of it has been attained through intellect, through the ideal senses. Man's inventions have appeared through the avenue of his reasonable faculties. All his scientific attainments have come through the faculty of reason.

Briefly, the evidences of intellect or reason are manifest in man. By them he is differentiated from the animal. Therefore, the animal kingdom is distinct and inferior to the human kingdom.

Notwithstanding this, the philosophers of the West have certain syllogisms, or demonstrations, whereby they endeavor to prove that man had his origin in the animal kingdom; that although he is now a vertebrate, he originally lived in the sea; from thence he was transferred to the land

and became vertebrate; that gradually his feet and hands appeared in his anatomical development; then he began to walk upon all fours, after which he attained to human stature, walking erect. They find that his anatomy has undergone successive changes, finally assuming human form, and that these intermediate forms or changes are like links connected. Between man and the ape, however, there is one link missing, and to the present time scientists have not been able to discover it. Therefore, the greatest proof of this western theory of human evolution is anatomical, reasoning that there are certain vestiges of organs found in man which are peculiar to the ape and lower animals, and setting forth the conclusion that man at some time

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in his upward progression has possessed these organs which are no longer functioning but appear now as mere rudiments and vestiges. For example, a serpent has a certain appendage which indicates that at one time it was possessed of long limbs, but as this creature began to find its habitation in the holes of the earth, these limbs, no longer needed, became atrophied and shrunk, leaving but a vestige, or appendage, as an evidence of the time when they were lengthy and serviceable. Likewise, it is claimed man had a certain appendage which shows that there was a time when his anatomical structure was different from his present organism and that there has been a corresponding transformation or change in that structure. The coccyx, or extremity of the human spinal column, is declared to be the vestige of a tail which man formerly possessed but which gradually disappeared when he walked erect and its utility ceased. These statements and demonstrations express the substance of western philosophy upon the question of human evolution. The philosophers of the Orient in reply to those of the western world say: Let us suppose that the human anatomy was primordially different from its present form, that it was gradually

transformed from one stage to another until it attained its present likeness, that at one time it was similar to a fish, later an invertebrate and finally human. This anatomical evolution or progression does not alter or affect the statement that the development of man was always human in type and biological in progression. For the human embryo when examined microscopically is at first a mere germ or worm. Gradually as it develops it shows certain divisions; rudiments of hands and feet appear—that is to say, an upper and a lower part are distinguishable. Afterward it undergoes certain distinct changes until it reaches its actual human form and is born into this world. But at all times, even when the embryo resembled a worm, it was human in potentiality and character, not animal. The forms assumed by the human embryo in its successive changes do not prove that it is animal in its essential character. Throughout this progression there has been a transference of type, a conservation of species or kind. Realizing this we may acknowledge the fact that at one time man was an inmate of the sea, at another period an invertebrate, then a vertebrate and finally a human being standing erect. Though we admit these changes, we cannot say man is an animal. In each one of these stages are signs and evidences of his human existence and destination. Proof of this lies in the fact that in the embryo man still resembles a worm. This embryo still progresses from one state to another, assuming different forms until that which was potential in it—namely, the human image—appears. Therefore, in the protoplasm, man is man. Conservation of species demands it.

The lost link of Darwinian theory is itself a proof that man is not an animal. How is it possible to have all the links present and that important link absent? Its absence is an indication that man has never been an animal. It will never be found. The significance is this: that the world of humanity is distinct from the animal kingdom. This is the teaching of the philosophers of the Orient. They have a proof for it. The proof is that the animals are captives of nature. All existence and phenomena of the lower kingdoms

are captives of nature; the mighty sun, the numberless stars, the kingdoms of the vegetable and mineral, none of these can deviate one hair's breadth from the limitation of nature's laws. They are, as it were, arrested by nature's hands. But man breaks the laws of nature and makes them subservient to his uses. For instance, man is an animate earthly being in common with the animals. The exigency of nature demands that he should be restricted to the earth; but he, by breaking the laws of nature, soars in the atmosphere high above it. By the application of his

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intellect he overcomes natural law and dives beneath the seas in submarines or sails across them in ships. He arrests a mighty force of nature such as electricity and imprisons it in an incandescent lamp. According to the law of nature he should be able to communicate at a distance of, say, one thousand feet; but through his inventions and discoveries he communicates with the East and with the West in a few moments. This is breaking the laws of nature. Man arrests the human voice and reproduces it in a phonograph. At most his voice should be heard only a few hundred feet away, but he invents an instrument which transmits it one thousand miles. In brief, all the present arts and sciences, inventions and discoveries man has brought forth were once mysteries which nature had decreed should remain hidden and latent, but man has taken them out of the plane of the invisible and brought them into the plane of the visible.

This is contrary to nature's laws. Electricity should be a latent mystery, but man discovers it and makes it his servant. He wrests the sword from nature's hand and uses it against nature, proving that there is a power in him which is beyond nature, for it is capable of breaking and subduing the laws of nature. If this power were not supernatural and extraordinary, man's accomplishments would not have been possible. Furthermore, it is evident that in the world of nature conscious knowledge is absent. Nature is without knowing, whereas man is conscious. Nature is devoid of memory; man

possesses
memory. Nature is without perception and volition; man possesses both. It is evident that
virtues are inherent in man which are not present in the world of nature. This is provable from
every standpoint.
If it be claimed that the intellectual reality of man belongs to the world of nature—that it is
a part of the whole—we ask is it possible for the part to contain virtues which the whole does
not possess? For instance, is it possible for the drop to contain virtues of which the aggregate
body of the sea is deprived? Is it possible for a leaf to be imbued with virtues which are lacking
in the whole tree? Is it possible that the extraordinary faculty of reason in man is animal in
character and quality? On the other hand, it is evident and true, though most astounding, that
in man there is present this supernatural force or faculty which discovers the realities of things
and which possesses the power of idealization or intellection. It is capable of discovering
scientific laws, and science we know is not a tangible reality. Science exists in the mind of man
as an ideal reality. The mind itself, reason itself, is an ideal reality and not tangible.
Notwithstanding this, some of the sagacious men declare: We have attained to the
superlative degree of knowledge; we have penetrated the laboratory of nature, studying
sciences and arts; we have attained the highest station of knowledge in the human world; we
have investigated the facts as they are and have arrived at the conclusion that nothing is rightly
acceptable except the tangible, which alone is a reality worthy of credence; all that is not
tangible is imagination and nonsense.
Strange indeed that after twenty years training in colleges and universities man should reach
such a station wherein he will deny the existence of the ideal or that which is not perceptible
to the senses. Have you ever stopped to think that the animal already has graduated from such
a university? Have you ever realized that the cow is already a professor emeritus of that
university? For the cow without hard labor and study is already a philosopher of the superlative

degree in the school of nature. The cow denies everything that is not tangible,
saying, "I can
see! I can eat! Therefore, I believe only in that which is tangible!"
Then why should we go to the colleges? Let us go to the cow.
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??12 October 1912?
??Talk at Temple Emmanu-El?
??450 Sutter Street, San Francisco, California?
??Notes by Bijou Straun?
?)(Promulgation, pp. 361-370?

??The greatest bestowal of God in the world of humanity is religion, for assuredly the divine?
??teachings of religion are above all other sources of instruction and development to man.?
??Religion confers upon man eternal life and guides his footsteps in the world of morality. It?
??opens the doors of unending happiness and bestows everlasting honor upon the human?
??kingdom. It has been the basis of all civilization and progress in the history of mankind.?
??We will, therefore, investigate religion, seeking from an unprejudiced standpoint to?
??discover whether it is the source of illumination, the cause of development and the animating?
??impulse of all human advancement. We will investigate independently, free from the??

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restrictions of dogmatic beliefs, blind imitations of ancestral forms and the influence of mere human opinion; for as we enter this question, we will find some who declare that religion is a cause of uplift and betterment in the world, while others assert just as positively that it is a

detriment and a source of degradation to mankind. We must give these questions thorough and impartial consideration so that no doubt or uncertainty may linger in our minds regarding them.

How shall we determine whether religion has been the cause of human advancement or retrogression?

We will first consider the Founders of the religions—the Prophets—review the story of

Their lives, compare the conditions preceding Their appearance with those subsequent to Their

departure, following historical records and irrefutable facts instead of relying upon traditionary

statements which are open to both acceptance and denial.

Among the great Prophets was Abraham, Who, being an iconoclast and a Herald of the

oneness of God, was banished from His native land. He founded a family upon which the

blessing of God descended, and it was owing to this religious basis and ordination that the

Abrahamic house progressed and advanced. Through the divine benediction noteworthy and

luminous prophets issued from His lineage. There appeared Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph,

Moses, Aaron, David and Solomon. The Holy Land was conquered by the power of the

Covenant of God with Abraham, and the glory of the Solomonic wisdom and sovereignty

dawned. All this was due to the religion of God which this blessed lineage established and

upheld. It is evident that throughout the history of Abraham and His posterity this was the

source of their honor, advancement and civilization. Even today the descendants of His

household and lineage are found throughout the world.

There is another and more significant aspect to this religious impulse and impetus. The

children of Israel were in bondage and captivity in the land of Egypt four hundred years. They

were in an extreme state of degradation and slavery under the tyranny and oppression of the

Egyptians. While they were in the condition of abject poverty, in the lowest degree of

abasement, ignorance and servility, Moses suddenly appeared among them.

Although He was

but a shepherd, such majesty, grandeur and efficiency became manifest in Him through the

power of religion that His influence continues to this day. His Prophethood was established throughout the land, and the law of His Word became the foundation of the laws of the nations.

This unique Personage, single and alone, rescued the children of Israel from bondage through the power of religious training and discipline. He led them to the Holy Land and founded there a great civilization which has become permanent and renowned and under which these people attained the highest degree of honor and glory. He freed them from bondage and captivity. He imbued them with qualities of progressiveness and capability. They proved to be a civilizing people with instincts toward education and scholastic attainment. Their philosophy became renowned; their industries were celebrated throughout the nations. In all lines of advancement which characterize a progressive people they achieved distinction. In the splendor of the reign of Solomon their sciences and arts advanced to such a degree that even the Greek philosophers journeyed to Jerusalem to sit at the feet of the Hebrew sages and acquire the basis of Israelitish law. According to eastern history this is an established fact. Even Socrates visited the Jewish doctors in the Holy Land, consorting with them and discussing the principles and basis of their religious belief. After his return to Greece he formulated his philosophical teaching of divine unity and advanced his belief in the immortality of the spirit beyond the dissolution of the body.

Without doubt, Socrates absorbed these verities from the wise men of the Jews with whom he came in contact. Hippocrates and other philosophers of the Greeks likewise visited Palestine

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and acquired wisdom from the Jewish prophets, studying the basis of ethics and morality, returning to their country with contributions which have made Greece famous. When a movement fundamentally religious makes a weak nation strong, changes a nondescript tribal people into a mighty and powerful civilization, rescues them from captivity and elevates them to sovereignty, transforms their ignorance into knowledge and endows them

with an impetus of advancement in all degrees of development (this is not theory, but historical fact), it becomes evident that religion is the cause of man's attainment to honor and sublimity. But when we speak of religion, we mean the essential foundation or reality of religion, not the dogmas and blind imitations which have gradually encrusted it and which are the cause of the decline and effacement of a nation. These are inevitably destructive and a menace and hindrance to a nation's life—even as it is recorded in the Torah and confirmed in history that when the Jews became fettered by empty forms and imitations, the wrath of God became manifest. When they forsook the foundations of the law of God, Nebuchadnezzar came and conquered the Holy Land. He killed and made captive the people of Israel, laid waste the country and populous cities and burned the villages. Seventy thousand Jews were carried away captive to Babylon. He destroyed Jerusalem, despoiled the great Temple, desecrated the Holy of Holies and burned the Torah, the heavenly book of Scriptures. Therefore, we learn that allegiance to the essential foundation of the divine religions is ever the cause of development and progress, whereas the abandonment and beclouding of that essential reality through blind imitations and adherence to dogmatic beliefs are the causes of a nation's debasement and degradation. After their conquest by the Babylonians the Jews were successively subjugated by the Greeks and Romans. Under the Roman general Titus in A. D. 70 the Holy Land was stripped and pillaged, Jerusalem razed to its foundations and the Israelites scattered broadcast throughout the world. So complete was their dispersion that they have continued without a country and government of their own to the present day. From this review of the history of the Jewish people we learn that the foundation of the religion of God laid by Moses was the cause of their eternal honor and national prestige, the animating impulse of their advancement and racial supremacy and the source of that excellence which will always command the respect and reverence of those who understand their peculiar

destiny and outcome. The dogmas and blind imitations which gradually obscured
 the reality of
 the religion of God proved to be Israel's destructive influences, causing the
 expulsion of these
 chosen people from the Holy Land of their Covenant and promise.
 What, then, is the mission of the divine Prophets? Their mission is the
 education and
 advancement of the world of humanity. They are the real Teachers and Educators,
 the universal
 Instructors of mankind. If we wish to discover whether any one of these great
 Souls or
 Messengers was in reality a Prophet of God, we must investigate the facts
 surrounding His life
 and history, and the first point of our investigation will be the education He
 bestowed upon
 mankind. If He has been an Educator, if He has really trained a nation or
 people, causing it to
 rise from the lowest depths of ignorance to the highest station of knowledge,
 then we are sure
 that He was a Prophet. This is a plain and clear method of procedure, proof
 that is irrefutable.
 We do not need to seek after other proofs. We do not need to mention miracles,
 saying that out
 of rock water gushed forth, for such miracles and statements may be denied and
 refused by
 those who hear them. The deeds of Moses are conclusive evidences of His
 Prophethood. If a
 man be fair, unbiased and willing to investigate reality, he will undoubtedly
 testify to the fact
 that Moses was, verily, a man of God and a great Personage.

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In further consideration of this subject, I wish you to be fair and reasonable
 in your
 judgment, setting aside all religious prejudices. We should earnestly seek and
 thoroughly
 investigate realities, recognizing that the purpose of the religion of God is
 the education of
 humanity and the unity and fellowship of mankind. Furthermore, we will
 establish the point
 that the foundations of the religions of God are one foundation. This
 foundation is not multiple,
 for it is reality itself. Reality does not admit of multiplicity, although each
 of the divine religions
 is separable into two divisions. One concerns the world of morality and the
 ethical training of

human nature. It is directed to the advancement of the world of humanity in general; it reveals and inculcates the knowledge of God and makes possible the discovery of the verities of life.

This is ideal and spiritual teaching, the essential quality of divine religion, and not subject to change or transformation. It is the one foundation of all the religions of God. Therefore, the religions are essentially one and the same.

The second classification or division comprises social laws and regulations applicable to human conduct. This is not the essential spiritual quality of religion. It is subject to change and transformation according to the exigencies and requirements of time and place. For instance, in the time of Noah certain requirements made it necessary that all seafood be allowable or lawful. During the time of the Abrahamic Prophethood it was considered allowable, because of a certain exigency, that a man should marry his aunt, even as Sarah was the sister of Abraham's mother. During the cycle of Adam it was lawful and expedient for a man to marry his own sister, even as Abel, Cain and Seth, the sons of Adam, married their sisters. But in the law of the Pentateuch revealed by Moses these marriages were forbidden and their custom and sanction abrogated. Other laws formerly valid were annulled during the time of Moses. For example, it was lawful in Abraham's cycle to eat the flesh of the camel, but during the time of Jacob this was prohibited. Such changes and transformations in the teaching of religion are applicable to the ordinary conditions of life, but they are not important or essential. Moses lived in the wilderness of Sinai where crime necessitated direct punishment. There were no penitentiaries or penalties of imprisonment. Therefore, according to the exigency of the time and place it was a law of God that an eye should be given for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. It would not be practicable to enforce this law at the present time—for instance, to blind a man who accidentally blinded you. In the Torah there are many commands concerning the punishment of a murderer. It would not be allowable or possible to carry out these ordinances

today. Human conditions and exigencies are such that even the question of capital punishment—the one penalty which most nations have continued to enforce for murder—is now under discussion by wise men who are debating its advisability. In fact, laws for the ordinary conditions of life are only valid temporarily. The exigencies of the time of Moses justified cutting off a man's hand for theft, but such a penalty is not allowable now. Time changes conditions, and laws change to suit conditions. We must remember that these changing laws are not the essentials; they are the accidentals of religion. The essential ordinances established by a Manifestation of God are spiritual; they concern moralities, the ethical development of man and faith in God. They are ideal and necessarily permanent—expressions of the one foundation and not amenable to change or transformation. Therefore, the fundamental basis of the revealed religion of God is immutable, unchanging throughout the centuries, not subject to the varying conditions of the human world. Christ ratified and proclaimed the foundation of the law of Moses. Muhammad and all the Prophets have revoiced that same foundation of reality. Therefore, the purposes and accomplishments of the divine Messengers have been one and the same. They were the source of advancement to the body politic and the cause of the honor and divine civilization of

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humanity, the foundation of which is one and the same in every dispensation. It is evident, then, that the proofs of the validity and inspiration of a Prophet of God are the deeds of beneficent accomplishment and greatness emanating from Him. If He proves to be instrumental in the elevation and betterment of mankind, He is undoubtedly a valid and heavenly Messenger. I wish you to be reasonable and just in your consideration of the following statements: At the time when the Israelites had been dispersed by the power of the Roman Empire and the national life of the Hebrew people had been effaced by their

conquerors—when the law of God had seemingly passed from them and the foundation of the religion of God was apparently destroyed—Jesus Christ appeared. When He arose among the Jews, the first thing He did was to proclaim the validity of the Manifestation of Moses. He declared that the Torah, the Old Testament, was the Book of God and that all the prophets of Israel were valid and true. He extolled the mission of Moses, and through His proclamation the name of Moses was spread throughout the world. Through Christianity the greatness of Moses became known among all nations. It is a fact that before the appearance of Christ, the name of Moses had not been heard in Persia. In India they had no knowledge of Judaism, and it was only through the Christianizing of Europe that the teachings of the Old Testament became spread in that region. Throughout Europe there was not a copy of the Old Testament. But consider this carefully and judge it aright: Through the instrumentality of Christ, through the translation of the New Testament, the little volume of the Gospel, the Old Testament, the Torah, has been translated into six hundred languages and spread everywhere in the world. The names of the Hebrew prophets became household words among the nations, who believed that the children of Israel were, verily, the chosen people of God, a holy nation under the especial blessing and protection of God, and that, therefore, the prophets who had arisen in Israel were the daysprings of revelation and brilliant stars in the heaven of the will of God. Therefore, Christ really promulgated Judaism; for he was a Jew and not opposed to the Jews. He did not deny the Prophethood of Moses; on the contrary, He proclaimed and ratified it. He did not invalidate the Torah; He spread its teachings. That portion of the ordinances of Moses which concerned transactions and unimportant conditions underwent transformation, but the essential teachings of Moses were revoiced and confirmed by Christ without change. He left nothing unfinished or incomplete. Likewise, through the supreme efficacy and power of the Word of God He united most of the nations of the East and the West. This

was
 accomplished at a time when these nations were opposed to each other in
 hostility and strife.
 He led them beneath the overshadowing tent of the oneness of humanity. He
 educated them
 until they became united and agreed, and through His spirit of conciliation the
 Roman, Greek,
 Chaldean and Egyptian were blended in a composite civilization. This wonderful
 power and
 extraordinary efficacy of the Word prove conclusively the validity of Christ.
 Consider how His
 heavenly sovereignty is still permanent and lasting. Verily, this is conclusive
 proof and
 manifest evidence.
 From another horizon we see Muhammad, the Prophet of Arabia, appearing. You
 may not
 know that the first address of Muhammad to His tribe was the statement,
 “Verily, Moses was
 a Prophet of God, and the Torah is a Book of God. Verily, O ye people, ye must
 believe in the
 Torah, in Moses and the prophets. Ye must accept all the prophets of Israel as
 valid.” In the
 Qur’án, the Muslim Bible, there are seven statements or repetitions of the
 Mosaic narrative,
 and in all the historic accounts Moses is praised. Muhammad announces that
 Moses was the
 greatest Prophet of God, that God guided Him in the wilderness of Sinai, that
 through the light
 of guidance Moses hearkened to the summons of God, that He was the Interlocutor
 of God and
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the bearer of the tablet of the Ten Commandments, that all the contemporary
 nations of the
 world arose against Him and that eventually Moses conquered them, for falsehood
 and error
 are ever overcome by truth. There are many other instances of Muhammad’s
 confirmation of
 Moses. I am mentioning but a few. Consider that Muhammad was born among the
 savage and
 barbarous tribes of Arabia, lived among them and was outwardly illiterate and
 uninformed of
 the Holy Books of God. The Arabian people were in the utmost ignorance and
 barbarism. They
 buried their infant daughters alive, considering this to be an evidence of a
 valorous and lofty

nature. They lived in bondage and serfdom under the Persian and Roman governments and were scattered throughout the desert, engaged in continual strife and bloodshed. When the light of Muhammad dawned, the darkness of ignorance was dispelled from the deserts of Arabia. In a short period of time those barbarous peoples attained a superlative degree of civilization which, with Baghdád as its center, extended as far westward as Spain and afterward influenced the greater part of Europe. What proof of Prophethood could be greater than this, unless we close our eyes to justice and remain obstinately opposed to reason? Today the Christians are believers in Moses, accept Him as a Prophet of God and praise Him most highly. The Muslims are, likewise, believers in Moses, accept the validity of His Prophethood, at the same time believing in Christ. Could it be said that the acceptance of Moses by the Christians and Muslims has been harmful and detrimental to those people? On the contrary, it has been beneficial to them, proving that they have been fair-minded and just. What harm could result to the Jewish people, then, if they in return should accept Christ and acknowledge the validity of the Prophethood of Muhammad? By this acceptance and praiseworthy attitude the enmity and hatred which have afflicted mankind so many centuries would be dispelled, fanaticism and bloodshed pass away and the world be blessed by unity and agreement. Christians and Muslims believe and admit that Moses was the Interlocutor of God. Why do you not say that Christ was the Word of God? Why do you not speak these few words that will do away with all this difficulty? Then there will be no more hatred and fanaticism, no more warfare and bloodshed in the Land of Promise. Then there will be peace among you forever. Verily, I now declare to you that Moses was the Interlocutor of God and a most noteworthy Prophet, that Moses revealed the fundamental law of God and founded the real ethical basis of the civilization and progress of humanity. What harm is there in this? Have I lost anything by saying this to you and believing it as a Bahá'í? On the contrary, it

benefits me; and Bahá'u'lláh,
 the Founder of the Bahá'í Movement, confirms me, saying, "You have been
 fair and just in
 your judgment; you have impartially investigated the truth and arrived at a
 true conclusion; you
 have announced your belief in Moses, a Prophet of God, and accepted the Torah,
 the Book of
 God." Inasmuch as it is possible for me to sweep away all evidences of
 prejudice by such a
 liberal and universal statement of belief, why is it not possible for you to do
 likewise? Why not
 put an end to this religious strife and establish a bond of connection between
 the hearts of men?
 Why should not the followers of one religion praise the Founder or Teacher of
 another? The
 other religionists extol the greatness of Moses and admit that He was the
 Founder of Judaism.
 Why do the Hebrews refuse to praise and accept the other great Messengers Who
 have appeared
 in the world? What harm could there be in this? What rightful objection? None
 whatever. You
 would lose nothing by such action and statement. On the contrary, you would
 contribute to the
 welfare of mankind. You would be instrumental in establishing the happiness of
 the world of
 humanity. The eternal honor of man depends upon the liberalism of this modern
 age. Inasmuch
 as our God is one God and the Creator of all mankind, He provides for and
 protects all. We
 acknowledge Him as a God of kindness, justice and mercy. Why then should we,
 His children
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and followers, war and fight, bringing sorrow and grief into the hearts of each
 other? God is
 loving and merciful. His intention in religion has ever been the bond of unity
 and affinity
 between humankind.
 Praise be to God! The medieval ages of darkness have passed away and this
 century of
 radiance has dawned, this century wherein the reality of things is becoming
 evident, wherein
 science is penetrating the mysteries of the universe, the oneness of the world
 of humanity is
 being established, and service to mankind is the paramount motive of all
 existence. Shall we

remain steeped in our fanaticisms and cling to our prejudices? Is it fitting that we should still be bound and restricted by ancient fables and superstitions of the past, be handicapped by superannuated beliefs and the ignorances of dark ages, waging religious wars, fighting and shedding blood, shunning and anathematizing each other? Is this becoming? Is it not better for us to be loving and considerate toward each other? Is it not preferable to enjoy fellowship and unity, join in anthems of praise to the most high God and extol all His Prophets in the spirit of acceptance and true vision? Then, indeed, this world will become a paradise, and the promised Day of God will dawn. Then, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, the wolf and the lamb will drink from the same stream, the owl and the vulture will nest together in the same branches, and the lion and the calf pasture in the same meadow. What does this mean? It means that fierce and contending religions, hostile creeds and divergent beliefs will reconcile and associate, notwithstanding their former hatreds and antagonism. Through the liberalism of human attitude demanded in this radiant century they will blend together in perfect fellowship and love. This is the spirit and meaning of Isaiah's words. There will never be a day when this prophecy will come to pass literally, for these animals by their natures cannot mingle and associate in kindness and love. Therefore, this prophecy symbolizes the unity and agreement of races, nations and peoples who will come together in attitudes of intelligence, illumination and spirituality. The age has dawned when human fellowship will become a reality. The century has come when all religions shall be unified. The dispensation is at hand when all nations shall enjoy the blessings of international peace. The cycle has arrived when racial prejudice will be abandoned by tribes and peoples of the world. The epoch has begun wherein all native lands will be conjoined in one great human family. For all mankind shall dwell in peace and security beneath the shelter of the great tabernacle of the one living God.

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25 October 1912

Talk at Hotel Sacramento

Sacramento, California

Notes by Bijou Straun

(Promulgation, pp. 370-376)

When Christ appeared, certain blessed souls followed His example. They were with their

Master, ever watching and observing His conduct, movements and thoughts. They witnessed

the persecutions which were heaped upon Him and were informed of all the events appertaining

to that marvelous life—recipients of His kindness and favors. After the ascension of Christ they

hastened to various regions of the world, scattering broadcast the teachings and instructions

which He had given them. Through their devotion and efforts other places and remote nations

became informed of the principles revealed by Him.

Through their instrumentality the East was illumined, and the light which flooded the East

flooded the West. This light was the cause of guiding great hosts of people. It proved to be a

preventive of warfare in many instances. This is evidenced in the unification and conjoining of

various nations which had formerly been hostile to each other—such as the Greeks, Romans,

Egyptians, Syrians, Chaldeans and Assyrians. Through Christ the oneness of the world of

humanity received its expression and proved to be the cause of spiritual illumination for

mankind. The breaths of the Holy Spirit became effective in the hearts of people.

Now we have, likewise, come from the Orient, announcing the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh,

Who shone from the horizon of the East. We have observed His life and beheld His deeds. We

have been witnesses of His ordeals and sufferings, observers of His imprisonment and exile.

We are fully acquainted with the persecutions heaped upon His blessed

Personality. Therefore,
 we who are His disciples have been scattered throughout the world in order that
 His teachings
 may be widespread and be heard by every ear. Thus may the people receive the
 glad tidings of
 the dawn of His great dispensation, become aware of the divine evidences
 manifest in Him, be
 informed of the wonderful episodes of His marvelous life, the greatness of His
 power in
 withstanding the kings of the Orient, the might of His spirit in upholding
 under all
 circumstances the standard of the oneness of the world of mankind. Perchance
 you have heard
 or read of Him. I will give you a brief epitome of His life in order that you
 may be informed of
 the history of His great movement and know His teachings.
 Bahá'u'lláh was a Persian personage descended from prominent lineage.
 During His early
 years a Youth Whose name was 'Alí-Muhammad appeared in Persia. He was
 entitled the Báb,
 which means door or gate. The bearer of this title was a great Soul from Whom
 spiritual signs
 and evidences became manifest. He withstood the tests of time and lived
 contrary to the custom
 and usages of Persia. He revealed a new system of faith opposed to the beliefs
 in His country
 and promulgated certain principles contrary to the thoughts of the people. For
 this, that
 remarkable Personality was imprisoned by the Persian government. Eventually, by
 order of the
 government He was martyred. The account of this martyrdom, briefly stated, is
 as follows: He
 was suspended in a square as a target and shot to death. This revered Personage
 foreshadowed
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the advent of another Soul of Whom He said, "When He cometh He shall reveal
 greater things
 unto you."
 Thus, after the martyrdom of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh appeared. The
 government arose against
 Him. The priesthood in Persia opposed Him, subjecting Him to severe
 persecution. His
 possessions were confiscated, His relatives and friends were killed, and He was
 placed in a
 dungeon. For a long period He was imprisoned, chained and subjected to severest

suffering.

Afterward, He was exiled to 'Iráq, or Mesopotamia, from thence to Constantinople, then transferred to Adrianople and finally to 'Akká in Syria. He spent twenty-four years in the prison of 'Akká, where He underwent the severest ordeals and privations without a day or night of relaxation and repose. Notwithstanding this imprisonment and suffering, He manifested utmost spiritual power and majesty. Although imprisoned, He withstood two tyrant kings and eventually overcame both.

Shortly after His imprisonment He addressed Epistles, or Tablets, to all the kings and rulers of the world, summoning them to universal peace, to unity and international brotherhood.

Among these sovereigns was the Sháh of Persia, through whose instrumentality chiefly He had been imprisoned. In His letter to that ruler He arraigned him severely and prophesied his downfall, saying, "Thou art a tyrant; thy country will be laid waste; and thy family, humiliated and debased." He wrote to the Sultán of Turkey in similar terms, saying, "Thy dominion will pass away from thee." The Epistles to the kings and rulers summoning them to international peace were written by Bahá'u'lláh fifty years ago. Everything He wrote has come to pass.

These letters were published in Bombay thirty years ago and are now spread broadcast throughout the world. Briefly, Bahá'u'lláh endured forty years of vicissitudes, ordeals and hardships for the purpose of spreading His teachings, which may be mentioned as follows:

The first teaching is that man should investigate reality, for reality is contrary to dogmatic interpretations and imitations of ancestral forms of belief to which all nations and peoples adhere so tenaciously. These blind imitations are contrary to the fundamental basis of the divine religions, for the divine religions in their central and essential teaching are based upon unity, love and peace, whereas these variations and imitations have ever been productive of warfare, sedition and strife. Therefore, all souls should consider it incumbent upon them to investigate reality. Reality is one; and when found, it will unify all mankind. Reality is

the love of God.

Reality is the knowledge of God. Reality is justice. Reality is the oneness or solidarity of

mankind. Reality is international peace. Reality is the knowledge of verities.

Reality unifies

humanity.

In brief, His theme was that reality underlies all the great religious systems of the world.

He summoned the nations and peoples of the world to it. Hostile nations because of their

acceptance of the reality of His words became unified. Strife, discord and contention among

them passed away; they attained a station of utmost love. At present in Asia those who have

accepted His teachings and followed His example, although formerly most hostile and bitter

toward each other, now associate in brotherhood and fellowship. The strife and warfare of past

times have ceased among them. Jews, Zoroastrians, Christians, Muslims and others have

attained to a superlative state of love and agreement through

Bahá'u'lláh. They now consort

together as one family. They have investigated reality. Reality does not accept multiplicity, nor

is it subject to divisibility. These irreconcilable peoples have become unified and agreed.

The second teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the principle of the oneness of the world of humanity.

God is one; His servants are, likewise, one. God has created all; He is kind to all. Inasmuch as

He is such a tender Father to all, why should His children disagree? Why should they war and

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fight? Like the Heavenly Father we must live in love and unity. Man is the temple of God, the

image and likeness of the Lord. Surely if one should destroy the temple of God, he will incur

the displeasure of the Creator. For this reason, we must live together in amity and love.

Bahá'u'lláh has addressed the world of humanity, saying, "Verily, ye are the fruits of one tree

and the leaves of one branch." This signifies that the entire world of humanity is one tree. The

various nations and peoples are the branches of that tree. Individual members of mankind are

represented by the twigs and blossoms. Why should these parts of the same tree manifest strife and discord toward each other?

The third teaching of Bahá'u'lláh concerns universal peace among the nations, among the religions, among the races and native lands. He has declared that so long as prejudice—whether religious, racial, patriotic, political or sectarian—continues to exist among mankind, universal peace cannot become a reality in the world. From the earliest history of man down to the present time all the wars and bloodshed which have taken place were caused either by religious, racial, political or sectarian bias. Therefore, it is evident that so long as these prejudices continue, the world of humanity cannot attain peace and composure.

Among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is His declaration that religion must be the cause of love and fellowship, must be the source of unity in the hearts of men. If religion becomes a cause of enmity and hatred, it is evident that the abolition of religion is preferable to its promulgation; for religion is a remedy for human ills. If a remedy should be productive of disease, it is certainly advisable to abandon it.

Furthermore, the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh announce that religion must be in conformity with science and reason; otherwise, it is superstition; for science and reason are realities, and religion itself is the Divine Reality unto which true science and reason must conform. God has bestowed the gift of mind upon man in order that he may weigh every fact or truth presented to him and adjudge whether it be reasonable. That which conforms to his reason he may accept as true, while that which reason and science cannot sanction may be discarded as imagination and superstition, as a phantom and not reality. Inasmuch as the blind imitations or dogmatic interpretations current among men do not coincide with the postulates of reason, and the mind and scientific investigation cannot acquiesce thereto, many souls in the human world today shun and deny religion. That is to say, imitations, when weighed in the scales of reason, will not conform to its standard and requirement. Therefore, these souls deny religion and become

irreligious, whereas if the reality of the divine religions becomes manifest to them and the foundation of the heavenly teachings is revealed coinciding with facts and evident truths, reconciling with scientific knowledge and reasonable proof, all may acknowledge them, and irreligion will cease to exist. In this way all mankind may be brought to the foundation of religion, for reality is true reason and science, while all that is not conformable thereto is mere superstition.

The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh also proclaim equality between man and woman, for He has declared that all are the servants of God and endowed with capacity for the attainment of virtues and bestowals. All are the manifestations of the mercy of the Lord. In the creation of God no distinction obtains. All are His servants. In the estimation of God there is no gender. The one whose deeds are more worthy, whose sayings are better, whose accomplishments are more useful is nearest and dearest in the estimation of God, be that one male or female. When we look upon creation, we find the male and female principle apparent in all phenomena of existence. In the vegetable kingdom we find the male and female fig tree, the male and female palm, the mulberry tree and so on. All plant life is characterized by this difference in gender, ?????? ?????? ???? ???????????

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but no distinction or preference is evidenced. Nay, rather, there is perfect equality. Likewise, in the animal kingdom gender obtains; we have male and female, but no distinction or preference. Perfect equality is manifest. The animal, bereft of the degree of human reason and comprehension, is unable to appreciate the questions of suffrage, nor does it assert its prerogative. Man, endowed with his higher reason, accomplished in attainments and comprehending the realities of things, will surely not be willing to allow a great part of humanity to remain defective or deprived. This would be the utmost injustice. The world of humanity is possessed of two wings: the male and the female. So long as these

two wings are
not equivalent in strength, the bird will not fly. Until womankind reaches the
same degree as
man, until she enjoys the same arena of activity, extraordinary attainment for
humanity will not
be realized; humanity cannot wing its way to heights of real attainment. When
the two wings
or parts become equivalent in strength, enjoying the same prerogatives, the
flight of man will
be exceedingly lofty and extraordinary. Therefore, woman must receive the same
education as
man and all inequality be adjusted. Thus, imbued with the same virtues as man,
rising through
all the degrees of human attainment, women will become the peers of men, and
until this
equality is established, true progress and attainment for the human race will
not be facilitated.
The evident reasons underlying this are as follows: Woman by nature is opposed
to war;
she is an advocate of peace. Children are reared and brought up by the mothers
who give them
the first principles of education and labor assiduously in their behalf.
Consider, for instance, a
mother who has tenderly reared a son for twenty years to the age of maturity.
Surely she will
not consent to having that son torn asunder and killed in the field of battle.
Therefore, as woman
advances toward the degree of man in power and privilege, with the right of
vote and control
in human government, most assuredly war will cease; for woman is naturally the
most devoted
and staunch advocate of international peace.
Bahá'u'lláh teaches that material civilization is incomplete,
insufficient and that divine
civilization must be established. Material civilization concerns the world of
matter or bodies,
but divine civilization is the realm of ethics and moralities. Until the moral
degree of the nations
is advanced and human virtues attain a lofty level, happiness for mankind is
impossible. The
philosophers have founded material civilization. The Prophets have founded
divine
civilization. Christ was the Founder of heavenly civilization. Mankind receives
the bounties of
material civilization as well as divine civilization from the heavenly
Prophets. The capacity for
achieving extraordinary and praiseworthy progress is bestowed by Them through

the breaths
 of the Holy Spirit, and heavenly civilization is not possible of attainment or
 accomplishment
 otherwise. This evidences the need of humanity for heavenly bestowals, and
 until these
 heavenly bestowals are received, eternal happiness cannot be realized.
 In brief, the purport is this: The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are
 boundless, innumerable; time
 will not allow us to mention them in detail. The foundation of progress and
 real prosperity in
 the human world is reality, for reality is the divine standard and the bestowal
 of God. Reality
 is reasonableness, and reasonableness is ever conducive to the honorable
 station of man.
 Reality is the guidance of God. Reality is the cause of illumination of
 mankind. Reality is love,
 ever working for the welfare of humanity. Reality is the bond which conjoins
 hearts. This ever
 uplifts man toward higher stages of progress and attainment. Reality is the
 unity of mankind,
 conferring everlasting life. Reality is perfect equality, the foundation of
 agreement between the
 nations, the first step toward international peace.

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26 October 1912
 Talk at Assembly Hall, Hotel Sacramento
 Sacramento, California
 Notes by Bijou Straun
 (Promulgation, pp. 376-380)

I have visited your Capitol and its gardens. No other Capitol has such
 beautiful
 surroundings. Just as it is imposing and distinguished above all others, so may
 the people of
 California become the most exalted and perfect altruists of the world.
 California is, indeed, a
 blessed country. The climate is temperate, the sun ever shining, the fruits
 abundant and
 delicious. All outer blessings are evident here. The Californians are a noble
 people; therefore,

I hope they may make extraordinary progress and become renowned for their virtues.

The issue of paramount importance in the world today is international peace.

The European

continent is like an arsenal, a storehouse of explosives ready for ignition, and one spark will

set the whole of Europe aflame, particularly at this time when the Balkan question is before the

world. Even now war is raging furiously in some places, the blood of innocent people is being

shed, children are made captive, women are left without support, and homes are being

destroyed. Therefore, the greatest need in the world today is international peace. The time is

ripe. It is time for the abolition of warfare, the unification of nations and governments. It is the

time for love. It is time for cementing together the East and the West.

Inasmuch as the Californians seem peace loving and possessed of great worthiness and

capacity, I hope that advocates of peace may daily increase among them until the whole

population shall stand for that beneficent outcome. May the men of affairs in this democracy

uphold the standard of international conciliation. Then may altruistic aims and thoughts radiate

from this center toward all other regions of the earth, and may the glory of this accomplishment

forever halo the history of this country. May the first flag of international peace be upraised in

this state. May the first illumination of reality shine gloriously upon this soil. May this center

and capital become distinguished in all degrees of accomplishment, for the virtues of humanity

and the possibilities of human advancement are boundless. There is no end to them, and

whatever be the degree to which humanity may attain, there are always degrees beyond. There

is no attainment in the contingent realm of which it may be said, "Beyond this state of being

and perfection there is no other," or "This has achieved the superlative degree." No matter how

perfect it may appear, there is always a greater degree of attainment to be reached. Therefore,

no matter how much humanity may advance, there are ever higher stations to be attained

because virtues are unlimited. There is a consummation for everything except virtues, and

although this country has achieved extraordinary progress, I hope that its attainment may be immeasurably greater, for the divine bounties are infinite and unlimited. There are some who believe that the divine bounties are subject to cessation. For example, they think that the revelation of God, the effulgence of God and the bounties of God have ended. This is self-evidently a mistaken idea, for none of these is subject to termination. The reality of Divinity is like unto the sun, and revelation is like unto the rays thereof. If we should

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assert that the bounties of God are not everlasting, we are forced to believe that Divinity can come to an end, whereas the reality of Divinity enfolds all virtues and by reason of these bounties is perfect. Were it not possessed of all these perfections or virtues, it could not be Divinity. The sun is the sun because of its rays, light and heat. If it could be dispossessed of them, it would not be the sun. Therefore, if we say that the divinity or sovereignty of God is accidental and subject to termination, we must perforce think that Divinity itself is accidental, without foundation and not essential. God is the Creator. The word creator presupposes or connotes creation. God is the Provider. The word provider implies recipients of provision. Another name for the Creator is the Resuscitator, which demands the existence of creatures to be resuscitated. If He be not the Provider, how could we conceive of creatures to receive His bounty? If He be not the Lord, how could we conceive of subjects? If He be not the Knower, how could we conceive of those known? If we should say that there was a time in past ages when God was not possessed of His creation or that there was a beginning for the world, it would be a denial of creation and the Creator. Or if we should declare that a time may come when there will be a cessation of divine bounties, we should virtually deny the existence of Divinity. It is as though man should conceive of a king without country, army, treasury and all that constitutes sovereignty or

kingdom. Is it possible to conceive of such a sovereign? A king must be possessed of a dominion, an army and all that appertains to sovereignty in order that his sovereignty may be a reality. It is even so with the reality of Divinity which enfolds all virtues. The sovereignty thereof is everlasting, and the creation thereof is without beginning and without end.

Among the bounties of God is revelation. Hence revelation is progressive and continuous.

It never ceases. It is necessary that the reality of Divinity with all its perfections and attributes should become resplendent in the human world. The reality of Divinity is like an endless ocean.

Revelation may be likened to the rain. Can you imagine the cessation of rain? Ever on the face of the earth somewhere rain is pouring down. Briefly, the world of existence is progressive. It is subject to development and growth. Consider how great has been the progress in this radiant century. Civilization has unfolded. Nations have developed. Industrialism and jurisprudence have expanded. Sciences, inventions and discoveries have increased. All of these show that the world of existence is continuously progressing and developing; and therefore, assuredly, the virtues characterizing the maturity of man must, likewise, expand and grow. The greatest bestowal of God to man is the capacity to attain human virtues. Therefore, the teachings of religion must be reformed and renewed because past teachings are not suitable for the present time. For example, the sciences of bygone centuries are not adequate for the present because sciences have undergone reform. The industrialism of the past will not ensure present efficiency because industrialism has advanced. The laws of the past are being superseded because they are not applicable to this time. All material conditions pertaining to the world of humanity have undergone reform, have achieved development, and the institutes of the past are not to be compared with those of this age. The laws and institutes of former governments cannot be current today, for legislation must be in conformity with the needs and requirements of the body politic at this time.

This has been the case also with the religious teachings so long set forth in

the temples and churches, because they were not based upon the fundamental principles of the religions of God. In other words, the foundation of the divine religions had become obscured and nonessentials of form and ceremony were adhered to—that is, the kernel of religion had apparently disappeared, and only the shell remained. Consequently, it was necessary that the fundamental

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basis of all religious teaching should be restored, that the Sun of Reality which had set should rise again, that the springtime which had refreshed the arena of life in ages gone by should appear anew, that the rain which had ceased should descend, that the breezes which had become stilled should blow once more. Therefore, Bahá'u'lláh appeared from the horizon of the Orient and reestablished the essential foundation of the religious teachings of the world. The worn-out traditional beliefs current among men were removed. He caused fellowship and agreement to exist between the representatives of varying denominations so that love became manifest among the contending religions. He created a condition of harmony among hostile sects and upheld the banner of the oneness of the world of humanity. He established the foundation for international peace, caused the hearts of nations to be cemented together and conferred new life upon the various peoples of the East. Among those who have followed the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh no one says, "I am a Persian," "I am a Turk," "I am a Frenchman," or "I am an Englishman." No one says, "I am a Muslim, upholding the only true religion," "I am a Christian, loyal to my traditional and inherited beliefs," "I am a Jew, following talmudic interpretations," or "I am a Zoroastrian and opposed to all other religions." On the contrary, all have been rescued from religious, racial, political and patriotic prejudices and are now associating in fellowship and love to the extent that if you should attend one of their meetings you would be unable to observe any distinction

between Christian and Muslim, Jew and Zoroastrian, Persian and Turk, Arab and European;
 for their meetings are based upon the essential foundations of religion, and real unity has been established among them. Former antagonisms have passed away; the centuries of sectarian hatred are ended; the period of aversion has gone by; the medieval conditions of ignorance have ceased to exist.

Verily, the century of radiance has dawned, minds are advancing, perceptions are broadening, realizations of human possibilities are becoming universal, susceptibilities are developing, the discovery of realities is progressing. Therefore, it is necessary that we should cast aside all the prejudices of ignorance, discard superannuated beliefs in traditions of past ages and raise aloft the banner of international agreement. Let us cooperate in love and through spiritual reciprocity enjoy eternal happiness and peace.

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31 October 1912
 Talk at Hotel Plaza
 Chicago, Illinois
 Notes by Gertrude Buikema
 (Promulgation, pp. 381-383)

In Los Angeles and San Francisco great interest was manifested in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh by the newspapers, universities and churches. Our addresses were lengthy, the message of the Cause was proclaimed and arguments and evidences advanced. There was no dissent. All heard the glad tidings with complete acquiescence, and praise was unanimous, even including the ministers.

The friends in Los Angeles and San Francisco are very firm in the Covenant. If they sense the least violation on the part of anyone, they shun him entirely; for they know that such a person is engaged in extinguishing the lamps of faith ignited by the light of the Covenant,

thereby producing weakness and indifference in the divine Cause. For instance, the firm ones teach a person. Then the violators go to him and instill suspicion until he becomes lukewarm.

There have been violators here in Chicago for twenty years. What have they done? Nothing.

Have they been able to teach anybody? Have they been able to speak in churches or address

audiences elsewhere? Have they been able to make anybody firm in the Cause?

They are doing

nothing except extinguishing the lamps we ignite. The friends in San Francisco are exceedingly

firm. They do not receive violators in their homes. Recently a violator went to that city. The

Bahá'í friends turned him away, saying, "You are not with us; why do you try to come among

us?" Today the most important principle of faith is firmness in the Covenant, because firmness

in the Covenant wards off differences. Therefore, you must be firm as mountains.

After the departure of Christ many appeared who were instrumental in creating factions,

schisms and discussions. It became difficult to know which one was following the right path.

One of these disturbers was Nestorius, a Syrian, who proclaimed that Christ was not a Prophet

of God. This created a division and sect called the Nestorians. The Catholics declared Jesus

Christ to be the Son of God, even pronouncing Him to be Deity itself. The Protestants

announced the doctrine that Christ embodied two elements: the human and the divine. In brief,

divisions were created in the religion of God, and it was not known which was pursuing the

right pathway because there was no appointed center to whom Christ referred everyone, no

successor whose word was a gateway to the truth. If Christ had revealed a Covenant with some

soul, commanding all to cling to his word and interpretation as correct, it would have been

evident which belief and statement was valid and true.

Inasmuch as there was no appointed explainer of the Book of Christ, everyone made the

claim to authority, saying, "This is the true pathway and others are not."

To ward off such

dissensions as these and prevent any person from creating a division or sect the Blessed

Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh, appointed a central authoritative Personage, declaring Him to be the expounder of the Book. This implies that the people in general do not understand the meanings of the Book, but this appointed One does understand. Therefore, Bahá'u'lláh said, "He is the

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explainer of My Book and the Center of My Testament." In the last verses of the Book instructions are revealed, declaring that, "After Me," you must turn toward a special Personage and "whatsoever He says is correct." In the Book of the Covenant Bahá'u'lláh declares that by these two verses this Personage is meant. In all His Books and Tablets He has praised those who are firm in the Covenant and rebuked those who are not. He said, "Verily, shun those who are shaken in the Covenant. Verily, God is the Confirmer of the firm ones." In His prayers He has said, "O God! Render those who are firm in the Covenant blessed, and degrade those who are not. O God! Be the Protector of him who protecteth Him, and confirm him who confirms the Center of the Covenant." Many utterances are directed against the violators of the Covenant, the purpose being that no dissension should arise in the blessed Cause; that no one should say, "My opinion is this"; and that all may know Who is the authoritative expounder and whatsoever He says is correct. Bahá'u'lláh has not left any possible room for dissension. Naturally, there are some who are antagonistic, some who are followers of self-desire, others who hold to their own ideas and still others who wish to create dissension in the Cause. For example, Judas Iscariot was one of the disciples, yet he betrayed Christ. Such a thing has happened in the past, but in this day the Blessed Perfection has declared, "This person is the expounder of My Book and all must turn to Him." The purpose is to ward off dissension and differences among His followers. Notwithstanding this safeguard and provision against disagreement, there are certain souls here in America and a few in 'Akká who have violated this explicit command. For twenty

years these violators have accomplished nothing. Have they accomplished anything in Chicago? The friends here must be like the friends in San Francisco. Whenever they sense the least violation from anyone, they should say, "Begone! You shall not associate with us."

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1 November 1912

Talk at Home of Mrs. Corinne True

5338 Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Gertrude Buikema

(Promulgation, pp. 383-387)

I am well pleased with every person here this evening and most happy in meeting the friends

of God and maidservants of the Merciful. Praise be to God! The faces are radiant, and the hearts

are attracted to the Kingdom of Abhá. Faith is evident in the countenances of all, and this is a

source of joy. The Blessed Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh, endured hardships and vicissitudes nearly

fifty years. There was no ordeal or difficulty He did not experience, yet He endured all in

perfect joy and happiness.

Those who beheld Him were assured of His great happiness, for no trace of sadness or

sorrow was ever visible upon His face. Even in prison He was like a king enthroned in majesty

and greatness, and He ever bore Himself with supreme confidence and dignity.

When the

officers and grandees of the government were presented to Him, they became respectful at

once. His majesty and dignity were awe-inspiring. Remember: He was a prisoner—He was in

prison. He endured ordeals and calamities for the sole purpose of illuminating us and in order

that our hearts might be attracted to the Kingdom of God, our faces become radiant with the

glad tidings of God; in order that we might be submerged in the ocean of lights and be as

brilliant and shining candles, illuminating the dark recesses and flooding the regions with brightness. Now, as I look around, I observe that your faces—praise be to God!—are shining, your hearts are filled with the love of God, and you are thinking of service in the Cause of God. Therefore, I am very happy to be here, and I hope that this happiness will be with you always—an eternal condition.

We visited San Francisco and from there went to Los Angeles. In these places we found most devoted friends. Truly zealous and aglow with the fire of the love of God, their sole purpose is ever to serve the Kingdom of Abhá. I hope that you may serve even more faithfully and take precedence over all the other friends. May the fire of the love of God be so enkindled in Chicago that all the cities in America shall be ignited. This is my hope. My third visit here expresses the degree of my longing to see you and the extent of my love.

It was thought that I should go direct from San Francisco to New York and thence to the Orient; but impelled by excessive love, I have visited Chicago again to associate with you in fellowship and fragrance. I hope that these three visits may be most productive of future results. May you all become signs of unity; may each one be a standard of Bahá'u'lláh, each one shine as a star, each one become precious and worthy in the Kingdom of God. May you attain such a condition of spirituality that the people will be astounded, saying, “Verily, these souls are proofs in themselves of the validity of Bahá'u'lláh, for through His training they have been completely regenerated. These souls are peerless; they are truly the people of the Kingdom; they are distinguished above the people about them. This is in reality a proof of Bahá'u'lláh. Behold how educated and illumined they have become.”

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When this Cause appeared in the Orient, the friends and followers were self-sacrificing to the utmost, forfeiting everything. It is a significant and wonderful fact that, although the most precious thing on earth is life, yet twenty thousand people offered themselves

willingly in the
pathway of martyrdom. Recently, in Yazd two hundred of the Bahá'í friends
were cruelly slain.
They went to the place of martyrdom in the utmost ecstasy of attraction,
smiling with joy and
gratitude upon their persecutors. Some of them offered sweetmeats to their
executioners,
saying, "Taste of this in order that with sweetness and enjoyment you may
bestow upon us the
blessed cup of martyrdom." Among these beloved and glorified ones were a
number of women
who were subjected to the most cruel manner of execution. Some were cut to
pieces; and their
executioners, not content with such butchery, set others on fire, and their
bodies were
consumed. Throughout these terrible ordeals not a single soul among the
Bahá'í friends
objected or recanted. They offered no resistance, although the Bahá'ís in
that city were most
courageous and strong. In physical strength and fortitude one of these
Bahá'ís could have
withstood many of their enemies, but they accepted martyrdom in the spirit of
complete
resignation and nonresistance. Many of them died, crying out, "O Lord!
Forgive them; they
know not what they do. If they knew, they would not commit this wrong." In
the throes of
martyrdom they willingly offered all they possessed in this life.
It is stated in certain prophecies that when the standard of God appears in the
East, its signs
will become evident in the West. This is truly good news and glad tidings for
you. I hope that
this promise may be fulfilled in you and that all may be able to testify to the
spirit and truth of
the prophetic announcement, saying, "Verily, the standard of God did appear
in the East, and
its tokens have become resplendent in the West." This realization will be a
source of great joy
to all the friends in the Orient who anticipate the good news and await the
glad tidings from
the land of the Occident. They look forward to hearing that the friends in the
West have become
firm and steadfast, that they have distinguished themselves by establishing the
oneness of the
world of humanity, that they are even offering their lives for the foundations
of international
peace, that they have become the lights of the Kingdom and have proved to be

the
 manifestations of divine mercy, that the friends in the West are the expression
 of the favors of
 the Blessed Perfection, the very stars of the bestowal of God, blessed trees
 and flowers in the
 garden of His purity and sanctity. Any good news from here is the cause of
 rejoicing in the East
 and a source of deep gratitude to them. They hold a feast and praise God for
 the blessed tidings.
 If the occasion demanded, they would give their lives for you without the least
 hesitation. The
 friends in the East are all united and agreed.
 There are none who waver in the East, none who oppose the Covenant of God.
 There is not
 a single soul among the Bahá'ís in Persia who is opposed to the Covenant.
 They are all
 steadfast. If any soul wishes to speak in this Cause, they will ask, "Is this
 a word of your own,
 or is it by the authority of the Center of the Covenant? If you have the
 authority of the Center
 of the Covenant, produce it. Where is the letter from Him? Where is His
 signature?" If he
 produces the letter, they will accept it. If he fails to do so, they say, "We
 cannot accept your
 words because they emanate from you only and return to you. We have no command
 from the
 Blessed Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh, to obey you. He has revealed a Book in
 which He has
 covenanted with us to obey an appointed Center of the Covenant. He has not
 covenanted with
 us to obey you. Therefore, the statement you make is rejected. You must furnish
 proof of your
 authority and sanction. We are commanded to turn to one Center. We do not obey
 various
 centers. The Blessed Perfection has made a Covenant with us, and we are holding
 to this
 Covenant and Testament. We do not listen to anything else, for people may arise
 who speak
 words of their own, and we are commanded not to pay attention to them."
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It was not so in former dispensations. Christ, for instance, did not appoint a
 center of
 authority and explanation. He did not say to His followers, "Obey the one
 whom I have
 chosen." Upon one occasion He asked His disciples, "Whom say ye that I

am?" Simon Peter
answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."
Christ, wishing to make
firm the faith of Peter, said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will
build my church,"
meaning that the faith of Peter was the true faith. It was a sanction of
Peter's faith. He did not
say that all should turn to Peter. He did not say, "He is the branch extended
from my ancient
root." He did not say, "O God! Bless all who serve Peter. O God! Degrade
those who are not
obedient to him. Shun him who is a violator of the Covenant. O God! Thou
knowest that I love
all who are steadfast in the Covenant." This has been revealed, however, in
all the Books,
Writings and Epistles of Bahá'u'lláh regarding the appointed Center of
the Covenant in this
dispensation. Therefore, the Bahá'í dispensation is distinguished from all
others in this fact,
the purpose of Bahá'u'lláh being that no one could arise to cause
differences and disunion.
After the departure of Christ various sects and denominations arose, each one
claiming to be
the true channel of Christianity, but none of them possessed a written
authority from Christ;
none could produce proof from Him; yet all claimed His sanction and approval.
Bahá'u'lláh
has written a Covenant and Testament with His own pen, declaring that the One
Whom He has
appointed the Center of the Covenant shall be turned to and obeyed by all.
Therefore, thank
God that Bahá'u'lláh has made the pathway straight. He has clearly
explained all things and
opened every door for advancing souls. There is no reason for hesitation by
anyone. The
purpose of the Covenant was simply to ward off disunion and differences so that
no one might
say, "My opinion is the true and valid one."
Any opinion expressed by the Center of the Covenant is correct, and there is no
reason for
disobedience by anyone. Be watchful, for perchance there may be violators
(náqidín) of the
Covenant among you. Do not listen to them. Read the Book of the Covenant. All
have been
commanded to obey the Covenant, and the first admonition is addressed to the
sons of
Bahá'u'lláh, the Branches: "You must turn to the appointed Center; He

is the expounder of the
Book.”

Should any soul so clearly violate and disobey this command, can he even say he
is a

Bahá'í? If anyone disobeys the explicit command of Christ, can he
truthfully say he is a
Christian?

In conclusion, I would say that I am greatly pleased with this meeting. I shall
pray for you,
seeking confirmation from the Blessed Perfection. Praise be to God! You must be
grateful that

He has chosen you from among the people of the world, that such glorious
bestowal and such
endless graces and favors have been specialized for you. You must not look at
present

accomplishments, for this is but the beginning as it was at the time of Christ.

Before long you

will see that you will be distinguished among all people. In every way the
divine confirmation

will uphold you, and the radiance of the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh will
illumine your

countenances. Be truly grateful for all these blessings. I hope I may always
hear good news of

you, showing that the friends in Chicago are occupied with service in the
divine Cause, filled

with the joy of promoting the Word of God, engaged in spreading the teachings
of Bahá'u'lláh

and manifesting love and kindness to all humanity. This is my hope and
anticipation. I am sure

that you will endeavor to accomplish this so that the friends in Persia and I
may experience the

happiness of the good tidings. May you be a source of joy and happiness to us,
a source of

tranquillity and composure.

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5 November 1912

Talk at Grand Hotel

Cincinnati, Ohio

From Stenographic Notes

(Promulgation, pp. 388-389)

As we are in Cincinnati, the home of President Taft, who has rendered such noble service

in the cause of peace, I will dictate a statement for the people of Cincinnati and America

generally. In the Orient I was informed that there are many lovers of peace in America.

Therefore, I left my native land to associate here with those who are the standard-bearers of

international conciliation and agreement. Having traveled from coast to coast, I find the United

States of America vast and progressive, the government just and equitable, the nation noble

and independent. I attended many meetings where international peace was discussed and am

always extremely happy to witness the results of such meetings, for one of the great principles

of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings is the establishment of agreement among the peoples of the world.

He founded and taught this principle in the Orient fifty years ago. He proclaimed international

unity, summoned the religions of the world to harmony and reconciliation and established

fellowship among many races, sects and communities. At that time He wrote Epistles to the

kings and rulers of the world, calling upon them to arise and cooperate with

Him in spreading
these principles, saying that the stability and advancement of humanity could
only be realized
through the unity of the nations. Through His efforts this principle of
universal harmony and
agreement was practically demonstrated in Persia and other countries. Today in
Persia, for
instance, there are many people of various races and religions who have
followed the
exhortations of Bahá'u'lláh and are living together in love and
fellowship without religious,
patriotic or racial prejudices—Muslims, Jews, Christians, Buddhists,
Zoroastrians and many
others.
America has arisen to spread the teachings of peace, to increase the
illumination of
humankind and bestow happiness and prosperity upon the children of men. These
are the
principles and evidences of divine civilization. America is a noble nation, the
standard-bearer
of peace throughout the world, shedding light to all regions. Foreign nations
are not
untrammelled and free from intrigues and complications like the United States;
therefore, they
are not able to bring about universal harmony. But America—praise be to
God!—is at peace
with all the world and is worthy of raising the flag of brotherhood and
international agreement.
When this is done, the rest of the world will accept. All nations will join in
adopting the
teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revealed more than fifty years ago. In His
Epistles He asked the
parliaments of the world to send their wisest and best men to an international
world conference
which should decide all questions between the peoples and establish universal
peace. This
would be the highest court of appeal, and the parliament of man so long dreamed
of by poets
and idealists would be realized. Its accomplishment would be more far-reaching
than the Hague
tribunal.

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I am most grateful to President Taft for having extended his influence toward
the
establishment of universal peace. What he has accomplished in making treaties

with various
nations is very good, but when we have the interparliamentary body composed of
delegates
from all the nations of the world and devoted to the maintenance of agreement
and goodwill,
the utopian dream of sages and poets, the parliament of man, will be realized.
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6 November 1912

Talk at Universalist Church

Thirteenth and L Streets, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 390-397)

Praise be to God! The standard of liberty is held aloft in this land. You enjoy
political
liberty; you enjoy liberty of thought and speech, religious liberty, racial and
personal liberty.
Surely this is worthy of appreciation and thanksgiving. In this connection let
me mention the
freedom, hospitality and universal welcome extended to me during my recent
travels
throughout America. I wish also to reciprocate fully and completely the warm
greeting and
friendly attitude of the reverend doctor, pastor of this church, whose loving
and quickened
susceptibilities especially command acknowledgment. Surely men who are leaders
of thought
must conform to the example of his kindness and goodwill. Liberalism is
essential in this
day—justness and equity toward all nations and people. Human attitudes must
not be limited;
for God is unlimited, and whosoever is the servant of the threshold of God
must, likewise, be
free from limitations. The world of existence is an emanation of the merciful
attribute of God.
God has shone forth upon the phenomena of being through His effulgence of
mercy, and He is
clement and kind to all His creation. Therefore, the world of humanity must

ever be the
 recipient of bounties from His majesty, the eternal Lord, even as Christ has
 declared, "Be ye
 therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." For
 His bounties, like the
 light and heat of the sun in the material heavens, descend alike upon all
 mankind. Consequently,
 man must learn the lesson of kindness and beneficence from God Himself. Just as
 God is kind
 to all humanity, man also must be kind to his fellow creatures. If his attitude
 is just and loving
 toward his fellowmen, toward all creation, then indeed is he worthy of being
 pronounced the
 image and likeness of God.
 Brotherhood, or fraternity, is of different kinds. It may be family
 association, the intimate
 relationship of the household. This is limited and subject to change and
 disruption. How often
 it happens that in a family love and agreement are changed into enmity and
 antagonism.
 Another form of fraternity is manifest in patriotism. Man loves his fellowmen
 because they
 belong to the same native land. This is also limited and subject to change and
 disintegration as,
 for instance, when sons of the same fatherland are opposed to each other in
 war, bloodshed and
 battle. Still another brotherhood, or fraternity, is that which arises from
 racial unity, the oneness
 of racial origin, producing ties of affinity and association. This, likewise,
 has its limitation and
 liability to change, for often war and deadly strife have been witnessed
 between people and
 nations of the same racial lineage. There is a fourth kind of brotherhood, the
 attitude of man
 toward humanity itself, the altruistic love of humankind and recognition of the
 fundamental
 human bond. Although this is unlimited, it is, nevertheless, susceptible to
 change and
 destruction. Even from this universal fraternal bond the looked-for result does
 not appear. What
 is the looked-for result? Loving-kindness among all human creatures and a firm,
 indestructible

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brotherhood which includes all the divine possibilities and significances in
 humanity.

Therefore, it is evident that fraternity, love and kindness based upon family, native land, race or an attitude of altruism are neither sufficient nor permanent since all of them are limited, restricted and liable to change and disruption. For in the family there is discord and alienation; among sons of the same fatherland, strife and internecine warfare are witnessed; between those of a given race, hostility and hatred are frequent; and even among the altruists, varying aspects of opinion and lack of unselfish devotion give little promise of permanent and indestructible unity among mankind.

Therefore, the Lord of mankind has caused His holy, divine Manifestations to come into the world. He has revealed His heavenly Books in order to establish spiritual brotherhood and through the power of the Holy Spirit has made it practicable for perfect fraternity to be realized among mankind. And when through the breaths of the Holy Spirit this perfect fraternity and agreement are established amongst men—this brotherhood and love being spiritual in character, this loving-kindness being heavenly, these constraining bonds being divine—a unity appears which is indissoluble, unchanging and never subject to transformation. It is ever the same and will forever remain the same. For example, consider the foundation of the brotherhood laid by Christ. Observe how that fraternity was conducive to unity and accord and how it brought various souls to a plane of uniform attainment where they were willing to sacrifice their lives for each other. They were content to renounce possessions and ready to forfeit joyously life itself. They lived together in such love and fellowship that even Galen, the famous Greek philosopher who was not a Christian, in his work entitled “The Progress of the Nations” said that religious beliefs are greatly conducive to the foundation of real civilization.

As a proof thereof he said, “A certain number of people contemporaneous with us are known as Christians. These enjoy the superlative degree of moral civilization. Each one of them is as a great philosopher because they live together in the utmost love and good fellowship. They

sacrifice life for each other. They offer worldly possessions for each other. You can say of the Christian people that they are as one person. There is a bond amongst them that is indissoluble in character.”

It is evident, therefore, that the foundation of real brotherhood, the cause of loving cooperation and reciprocity and the source of real kindness and unselfish devotion is none other than the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Without this influence and animus it is impossible. We may be able to realize some degrees of fraternity through other motives, but these are limited associations and subject to change. When human brotherhood is founded upon the Holy Spirit, it is eternal, changeless, unlimited.

In various parts of the Orient there was a time when brotherhood, loving-kindness and all the praiseworthy qualities of mankind seemed to have disappeared. There was no evidence of patriotic, religious or racial fraternity; but conditions of bigotry, hatred and prejudice prevailed instead. The adherents of each religion were violent enemies of the others, filled with the spirit of hostility and eager for shedding of blood. The present war in the Balkans furnishes a parallel of these conditions. Consider the bloodshed, ferocity and oppression manifested there even in this enlightened century—all of it based fundamentally upon religious prejudice and disagreement. For the nations involved belong to the same races and native lands; nevertheless, they are savage and merciless toward each other. Similar deplorable conditions prevailed in Persia in the nineteenth century. Darkness and ignorant fanaticism were widespread; no trace of fellowship or brotherhood existed amongst the races. On the contrary, human hearts were filled with rage and hatred; darkness and gloom were manifest in human lives and conditions everywhere. At such a time as this Bahá’u’lláh appeared upon the divine horizon, even as the

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glory of the sun, and in that gross darkness and hopelessness of the human world there shone

a great light. He founded the oneness of the world of humanity, declaring that all mankind are as sheep and that God is the real and true Shepherd. The Shepherd is one, and all people are of His flock.

The world of humanity is one, and God is equally kind to all. What, then, is the source of unkindness and hatred in the human world? This real Shepherd loves all His sheep. He leads them in green pastures. He rears and protects them. What, then, is the source of enmity and alienation among humankind? Whence this conflict and strife? The real underlying cause is lack of religious unity and association, for in each of the great religions we find superstition, blind imitation of creeds, and theological formulas adhered to instead of the divine fundamentals, causing difference and divergence among mankind instead of agreement and fellowship. Consequently, strife, hatred and warfare have arisen, based upon this divergence and separation. If we investigate the foundations of the divine religions, we find them to be one, absolutely changeless and never subject to transformation. For example, each of the divine religions contains two kinds of laws or ordinances. One division concerns the world of morality and ethical institutions. These are the essential ordinances. They instill and awaken the knowledge and love of God, love for humanity, the virtues of the world of mankind, the attributes of the divine Kingdom, rebirth and resurrection from the kingdom of nature. These constitute one kind of divine law which is common to all and never subject to change. From the dawn of the Adamic cycle to the present day this fundamental law of God has continued changeless. This is the foundation of divine religion. The second division comprises laws and institutions which provide for human needs and conditions according to exigencies of time and place. These are accidental, of no essential importance and should never have been made the cause and source of human contention. For example, during the time of Moses—upon Him be peace!—according to the exigencies of that period, divorce was permissible. During the cycle of Christ, inasmuch as

divorce was not in conformity with the time and conditions, Jesus Christ abrogated it. In the cycle of Moses plurality of wives was permissible. But during the time of Christ the exigency which had sanctioned it did not exist; therefore, it was forbidden. Moses lived in the wilderness and desert of Sinai; therefore, His ordinances and commandments were in conformity with those conditions. The penalty for theft was to cut off a man's hand. An ordinance of this kind was in keeping with desert life but is not compatible with conditions of the present day. Such ordinances, therefore, constitute the second or nonessential division of the divine religions and are not of importance, for they deal with human transactions which are ever changing according to the requirements of time and place. Therefore, the intrinsic foundations of the divine religions are one. As this is true, why should hostility and strife exist among them? Why should this hatred and warfare, ferocity and bloodshed continue? Is this allowable and justified? God forbid!

An essential principle of Bahá'u'lláh's teaching is that religion must be the cause of unity and love amongst men; that it is the supreme effulgence of Divinity, the stimulus of life, the source of honor and productive of eternal existence. Religion is not intended to arouse enmity and hatred nor to become the source of tyranny and injustice. Should it prove to be the cause of hostility, discord and the alienation of mankind, assuredly the absence of religion would be preferable. Religious teachings are like a course of treatment having for its purpose the cure and healing of mankind. If the only outcome of a course of treatment should be mere diagnosis and fruitless discussion of symptoms, it would be better to abandon and abolish it. In this sense the absence of religion would be at least some progress toward unity.

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Furthermore, religion must conform to reason and be in accord with the conclusions of science. For religion, reason and science are realities; therefore, these

three, being realities,
must conform and be reconciled. A question or principle which is religious in its nature must
be sanctioned by science. Science must declare it to be valid, and reason must confirm it in
order that it may inspire confidence. If religious teaching, however, be at variance with science
and reason, it is unquestionably superstition. The Lord of mankind has bestowed upon us the
faculty of reason whereby we may discern the realities of things. How then can man rightfully
accept any proposition which is not in conformity with the processes of reason and the
principles of science? Assuredly such a course cannot inspire man with confidence and real
belief.

The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh embody many principles; I am giving you only a synopsis.

One of these principles concerns equality between men and women. He declared that as all are
created in the image and likeness of the one God, there is no distinction as to sex in the
estimation of God. He who is purest in heart, whose knowledge exceeds and who excels in

kindness to the servants of God, is nearest and dearest to the Lord, our Creator, irrespective of

sex. In the lower kingdoms, the animal and vegetable, we find sex differentiation in function

and organism. All plants, trees and animals are subject to that differentiation by creation, but

among themselves there is absolute equality without further distinction as to sex. Why, then,

should mankind make a distinction which the lower creatures do not regard? Especially so

when we realize that all are of the same kingdom and kindred; that all are the leaves of one

tree, the waves of one sea? The only reasonable explanation is that woman has not been

afforded the same educational facilities as man. For if she had received the same opportunities

for training and development as man has enjoyed, undoubtedly she would have attained the

same station and level. In the estimate of God no distinction exists; both are as one and possess

equal degrees of capacity. Therefore, through opportunity and development woman will merit

and attain the same prerogatives. When Jesus Christ died upon the cross, the

disciples who
 witnessed His crucifixion were disturbed and shaken. Even Peter, one of the
 greatest of His
 followers, denied Him thrice. Mary Magdalene brought them together and
 confirmed their
 faith, saying, "Why are ye doubting? Why have ye feared? O thou Peter! Why
 didst thou deny
 Him? For Christ was not crucified. The reality of Christ is ever-living,
 everlasting, eternal. For
 that divine reality there is no beginning, no ending, and, therefore, there can
 be no death. At
 most, only the body of Jesus has suffered death." In brief, this woman,
 singly and alone, was
 instrumental in transforming the disciples and making them steadfast. This is
 an evidence of
 extraordinary power and supreme attributes, a proof that woman is the
 equivalent and
 complement of man. The one who is better trained and educated, whose aptitude
 is greater and
 whose ideals are higher is most distinguished and worthy—whether man or
 woman.
 Through the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh the horizon of the East was made
 radiant and
 glorious. Souls who have hearkened to His words and accepted His message live
 together today
 in complete fellowship and love. They even offer their lives for each other.
 They forego and
 renounce worldly possessions for one another, each preferring the other to
 himself. This has
 been due to the declaration and foundation of the oneness of the world of
 humanity. Today in
 Persia there are meetings and assemblages wherein souls who have become
 illumined by the
 teachings of Bahá'u'lláh—representative Muslims, Christians, Jews,
 Zoroastrians, Buddhists
 and of the various denominations of each—mingle and conjoin in perfect
 fellowship and
 absolute agreement. A wonderful brotherhood and love is established among them,
 and all are
 united in spirit and service for international peace. More than twenty thousand
 Bahá'ís have
 given their lives in martyrdom for the Cause of God. The governments of the
 East arose against
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them, bent upon their extermination. They were killed relentlessly, but day by

day their
numbers have increased, day by day they have multiplied in strength and become
more
eloquent. They have been strengthened through the efficacy of a wonderful
spiritual power.
How savage and fearful the ferocity of man against his fellowman! Consider what
is taking
place now in the Balkans, what blood is being shed. Even the wild beasts and
ferocious animals
do not commit such acts. The most ferocious wolf kills but one sheep a day, and
even that for
his food. But now in the Balkans one man destroys ten fellow beings. The
commanders of
armies glory in having killed ten thousand men, not for food, nay, rather, for
military control,
territorial greed, fame and possession of the dust of the earth. They kill for
national
aggrandizement, notwithstanding this terrestrial globe is but a dark world of
grossest matter. It
is a world of sorrow and grief, a world of disappointment and unhappiness, a
world of death.
For after all, the earth is but the everlasting graveyard, the vast, universal
cemetery of all
mankind. Yet men fight to possess this graveyard, waging war and battle,
killing each other.
What ignorance! How spacious the earth is with room in plenty for all! How
thoughtful the
providence which has so allotted that every man may derive his sustenance from
it! The Lord,
our Creator, does not ordain that anyone should starve or live in want. All are
intended to
participate in the blessed and abundant bestowals of our God. Fundamentally,
all warfare and
bloodshed in the human world are due to the lack of unity between the
religions, which through
superstitions and adherence to theological dogmas have obscured the one reality
which is the
source and basis of them all.
As to the American people: This noble nation, intelligent, thoughtful,
reflective, is not
impelled by motives of territorial aggrandizement and lust for dominion. Its
boundaries are
insular and geographically separated from the other nations. Here we find a
oneness of interest
and unity of national policy. These are, indeed, United States. Therefore, this
nation possesses
the capacity and capability for holding aloft the banner of international

peace. May this noble
 people be the cause of unifying humanity. May they spread broadcast the
 heavenly civilization
 and illumination, become the cause of the diffusion of the love of God,
 proclaim the solidarity
 of mankind and be the cause of the guidance of the human race. Therefore, I ask
 that you will
 give this all-important question your most serious consideration and efforts.
 May the world of
 humanity find peace and composure and this dark earth be transformed into a
 realm of radiance.
 May the East and West clasp hands together. May the oneness of God become
 reflected and
 fully revealed in the hearts of humanity and all mankind prove to be the
 manifestations of the
 favors of God.
 Necessarily there will be some who are defective amongst men, but it is our
 duty to enable
 them by kind methods of guidance and teaching to become perfected. Some will be
 found who
 are morally sick; they should be treated in order that they may be healed.
 Others are immature
 and like children; they must be trained and educated so that they may become
 wise and mature.
 Those who are asleep must be awakened; the indifferent must become mindful and
 attentive.
 But all this must be accomplished in the spirit of kindness and love and not by
 strife,
 antagonism nor in a spirit of hostility and hatred, for this is contrary to the
 good pleasure of
 God. That which is acceptable in the sight of God is love. Love is, in reality,
 the first effulgence
 of Divinity and the greatest splendor of God.
 O Thou compassionate Lord, Thou Who art generous and able! We are servants of
 Thine
 sheltered beneath Thy providence. Cast Thy glance of favor upon us. Give light
 to our eyes,
 hearing to our ears, and understanding and love to our hearts. Render our souls
 joyous and
 happy through Thy glad tidings. O Lord! Point out to us the pathway of Thy
 kingdom and
 resuscitate all of us through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Bestow upon us
 life everlasting and
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 confer upon us never-ending honor. Unify mankind and illumine the world of

humanity. May
 we all follow Thy pathway, long for Thy good pleasure and seek the mysteries of
 Thy kingdom.
 O God! Unite us and connect our hearts with Thine indissoluble bond. Verily,
 Thou art the
 Giver, Thou art the Kind One and Thou art the Almighty.
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7 November 1912
 Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons
 1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.
 Notes by Joseph H. Hannen
 (Promulgation, pp. 397-399)

Consider events in the Balkans today where a great conflagration of war is
 furiously raging
 and so much blood is being shed. Virtually the whole world of humanity is
 mourning and
 lamenting because of the revival of these calamitous conditions. Governments
 are in the
 process of change and transformation. The sovereignty of oriental nations is
 tottering;
 outcomes are wrapped in the greatest uncertainty. I desire, therefore, to speak
 to you upon this
 subject.
 I will call your attention more especially to the aspects of this war which
 Bahá'u'lláh
 prophesied forty years ago fully and completely. During His exile and while
 under surveillance
 in the prison of 'Akká He addressed a letter to the Sultán of Turkey. He,
 likewise, sent Epistles
 to Napoleon III and to the Sháh of Persia. All His letters to the kings and
 rulers of the earth
 were compiled in a book published thirty-five years ago in Bombay, India. There
 were several
 editions of this book.
 I have with me a copy of an edition published twenty-two years ago. In 1891
 Professor E.
 G. Browne of Cambridge University, England, wrote a book detailing his visit to
 'Akká. This

was followed by a second volume in which he quoted extracts from Bahá'u'lláh's Epistles to the kings and rulers. There are also translations of some of these Epistles in your libraries.

When you get them, you will read the remarkable statements made by Bahá'u'lláh.

I will read to you from the Arabic text the very words written by Bahá'u'lláh in His Epistle to the Sultán of Turkey. They will be translated to you as I read. "O King! Thou hast committed that by reason of which Muhammad, the Prophet of God, lamenteth in the highest heaven.

Verily, the world hath made thee proud so that thou hast turned away from the face of Him by

Whose light the people of the supreme assembly are illuminated, and ere long thou shalt find

thyself in manifest loss. Thou hast united with the Persian chief in opposition to Me after I

came unto you from the rising place of greatness and might with a matter which has consoled

the eyes of those near unto God. Verily, this is a day wherein the Fire speaketh through all

things, declaring that the Beloved of the two worlds hath come, and on the part of everything

an Interlocutor of the matter hath sprung up to listen unto the Word of thy Lord, the Precious,

the Knowing. Dost thou imagine that thou canst quench the fire which God hath kindled in the

horizons? No! By Himself, the True One, wert thou of those who know. Rather, by that which

thou hast done its burning is increased and its blaze augmented; and it shall encompass the

earth and whosoever is thereupon. Thus the matter hath been decreed, and whosoever is in the

heavens and upon the earth could not withstand His command.

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"The day is approaching when the Land of Mystery [Adrianople], and what is beside it

shall be changed, and shall pass out of the hands of the king, and commotions shall appear, and

the voice of lamentation shall be raised, and the evidences of mischief shall be revealed on all

sides, and confusion shall spread by reason of that which hath befallen these captives at the

hands of the hosts of oppression. The course of things shall be altered, and

conditions shall wax
so grievous, that the very sands on the desolate hills will moan, and the trees
on the mountain
will weep, and blood will flow out of all things. Then wilt thou behold the
people in sore
distress. Was Pharaoh able to hinder God by exercising his dominion when he
rebelled upon
the earth and was of the disobedient? We have indeed manifested the
Interlocutor [Moses] from
his house in spite of his will; verily, we were able to do this. And remember
when Nimrod
kindled the fire of polytheism whereby he would burn the Friend of God
[Abraham]. Verily,
we extinguished the fire by the truth and brought upon Nimrod manifest grief.
Verily, the
oppressor [King of Persia] slew the Beloved of the Worlds [the Báb] that he
might thereby
extinguish the light of God among His creatures and deprive mankind of the pure
water of life
in the days of his Lord, the Mighty, the Kind. We have made the matter manifest
in the country
and elevated His mention among the unitarians. Verily, the Servant hath
assuredly come to
vivify the world and bring to union whosoever is upon the surface of the whole
earth. That
which God willeth shall overcome, and thou shalt see the earth as the garden of
Abhá. Thus
hath it been written by the pen of command in an irrevocable Tablet.”
There are many other prophecies in this book, especially in the Epistle to the
Sháh of Persia,
all of which prophecies have come to pass. As they are lengthy, we will not
have time to quote
them.

The purpose of these quotations is to show that Bahá'u'lláh's great
endeavor in the East
was to unify mankind, to cause them to agree and become reconciled, thereby
manifesting the
oneness of the world of humanity, preparing the way for international peace and
establishing
the foundations of happiness and welfare. But the nations have not hearkened to
His summons
and message. The Persian and Turkish governments arose against His Cause, and
the result is
that both these governments have been disintegrated and broken. Had they been
attentive to
His commands and received His admonitions, they would have been protected. They
would

have enjoyed happiness and prosperity. They would have been bound together in ties of fellowship and brotherhood, availing themselves of the wonderful bounties of love and unity and dwelling in the delectable paradise of the divine Kingdom. But, alas, the commands and guidance of the Blessed One have been neglected and ignored. Day by day they have followed their own devices and imaginations, until now this fire of war is raging most furiously.

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7 November 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 400-402)

In the world of nature we behold the living organisms in a ceaseless struggle for existence.

Everywhere we are confronted by evidences of the physical survival of the fittest. This is the

very source of error and misapprehension in the opinions and theories of men who fail to realize

that the world of nature is inherently defective in cause and outcome and that the defects therein

must be removed by education. For example, consider man himself. If we study human beings

such as the aboriginal tribes of central Africa, who have been reared in complete subjection to

nature's rule, we will find them deficient indeed. They are without religious education; neither

do they give evidences of any advance whatever toward civilization. They have simply grown

and developed in the natural plane of barbarism. We find them bloodthirsty, immoral and

animalistic in type to such an extent that they even kill and devour each other. It is evident,

therefore, that the world of nature unassisted is imperfect because it is a plane upon which the

struggle for physical existence expresses itself.

If a piece of ground is left in its natural state, wild weeds, thorns and trees of the jungle will grow upon it. But if we cultivate that same piece of ground, the result will be that it will rid itself of natural imperfections and become transformed into a beautiful rose garden or an orchard of fruitful trees. This is proof that the world of nature is defective. The founding of schools and establishing of educational systems in the world are intended to replace the defects of nature with virtues and perfections. If there were no defects, there would be no need of training, culture and education, but inasmuch as we find that children need training and schooling, it is a conclusive proof that the world of nature must be developed. Many things show this clearly. One of the basic evidences is the survival of the fittest in the animal kingdom, their ignorance, sensuality and unbridled instincts and passions. Therefore, in the natural world there is need of an Educator and Teacher for mankind. He must be universal in his powers and accomplishments. Teachers are of two kinds: universal and special. The universal Instructors are the Prophets of God, and the special teachers are the philosophers. The philosophers are capable of educating and training a limited circle of human souls, whereas the holy, divine Manifestations of God confer general education upon humanity. They arise to bestow universal moral training. For example, Moses was a universal Teacher. He trained and disciplined the people of Israel, enabled them to rescue themselves from the lowest abyss of despair and ignorance and caused them to attain an advanced degree of knowledge and development. They were captives and in the bondage of slavery; through Him they became free. He led them out of Egypt into the Holy Land and opened the doors of their advancement into higher civilization. Through His training this oppressed and downtrodden people, slaves and captives of the Pharaohs, established the splendor of the Solomonic sovereignty. This is an example of a universal Teacher, a universal Educator. Again, consider Christ: how that marvelous expression of unity bestowed education and ethical training upon the Roman,

Greek, Egyptian,

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Syrian and Assyrian nations and welded together a people from them in a permanent and indissoluble bond. These nations were formerly at enmity and in a state of continual hostility and strife. He cemented them together, caused them to agree, conferred tranquillity upon humanity and established the foundations of human welfare throughout the world. Therefore,

He was a real Educator, the Instructor of reality.

When we review the conditions existing in the East prior to the rise of the Prophet of Arabia,

we find that throughout the Arabian peninsula intense mental darkness and the utmost

ignorance prevailed among its inhabitants. Those tribal peoples were constantly engaged in

war, killing and shedding blood, burning and pillaging the homes of each other and living in

conditions of the utmost debasement and immorality. They were lower and more brutal than

the animals. Muhammad appeared as a Prophet among such a people. He educated these

barbarous tribes, lifted them out of their ignorance and savagery and put an end to the

continuous strife and hatred which had existed among them. He established agreement and

reconciliation among them, unified them and taught them to look upon each other as brothers.

Through His training they advanced rapidly in prestige and civilization. They were formerly

ignorant; they became wise. They were barbarous; they attained refinement and culture. They

were debased and brutal; He uplifted and elevated them. They were humiliated and despised;

their civilization and renown spread throughout the world. This is perfect proof that

Muhammad was an Educator and Teacher.

In the nineteenth century strife and hostility prevailed among the people of the Orient.

Apathy and ignorance characterized the nations. They were indeed gloomy and dark, negligent

of God and under the subjection of the baser instincts and passions of mankind.

The struggle

for existence was intense and universal. At such a time as this

Bahá'u'lláh appeared among them like a luminary in the heavens. He flooded the East with light. He proclaimed new principles and teachings. He laid a basis for new institutions which are the very spirit of modernism, the light of the world, the development of the body politic and eternal honor. The souls who hearkened to these teachings among the various oriental nations immediately renounced the spirit of strife and hostility and began to associate in goodwill and fellowship. From extremes of animosity they attained the acme of love and brotherhood. They had been warring and quarreling; now they became loving and lived together in complete unity and agreement. Among them today you will find no religious, political or patriotic prejudice; they are friendly, loving and associate in the greatest happiness. They have no part in the war and strife which take place in the East; their attitude toward all men is that of goodwill and lovingkindness. A standard of universal peace has been unfurled among them. The light of guidance has flooded their souls. It is light upon light, love upon love. This is the education and training of Bahá'u'lláh. He has led these souls to this standard and given them teachings which ensure eternal illumination. Anyone who becomes well versed in His teachings will say, "Verily, I declare that these words constitute the illumination of humanity, that this is the everlasting honor, that these are heavenly precepts and the cause of never-ending life among men."

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8 November 1912

Talk at Eighth Street Temple, Synagogue

Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 402-410)

God is one, the effulgence of God is one, and humanity constitutes the servants

of that one
God. God is kind to all. He creates and provides for all, and all are under His care and protection. The Sun of Truth, the Word of God, shines upon all mankind; the divine cloud pours down its precious rain; the gentle zephyrs of His mercy blow, and all humanity is submerged in the ocean of His eternal justice and loving-kindness. God has created mankind from the same progeny in order that they may associate in good fellowship, exercise love toward each other and live together in unity and brotherhood. But we have acted contrary to the will and good pleasure of God. We have been the cause of enmity and disunion. We have separated from each other and risen against each other in opposition and strife. How many have been the wars between peoples and nations! What bloodshed! Numberless are the cities and homes which have been laid waste. All of this has been contrary to the good pleasure of God, for He hath willed love for humanity. He is clement and merciful to all His creatures. He hath ordained amity and fellowship amongst men. Most regrettable of all is the state of difference and divergence we have created between each other in the name of religion, imagining that a paramount duty in our religious belief is that of alienation and estrangement, that we should shun each other and consider each other contaminated with error and infidelity. In reality, the foundations of the divine religions are one and the same. The differences which have arisen between us are due to blind imitations of dogmatic beliefs and adherence to ancestral forms of worship. Abraham was the founder of reality. Moses, Christ, Muhammad were the manifestations of reality. Bahá'u'lláh was the glory of reality. This is not simply an assertion; it will be proved. Let me ask your closest attention in considering this subject. The divine religions embody two kinds of ordinances. First, there are those which constitute essential, or spiritual, teachings of the Word of God. These are faith in God, the acquirement of the virtues which characterize perfect manhood, praiseworthy moralities, the acquisition of the bestowals and bounties

emanating from the divine effulgences—in brief, the ordinances which concern the realm of morals and ethics. This is the fundamental aspect of the religion of God, and this is of the highest importance because knowledge of God is the fundamental requirement of man. Man must comprehend the oneness of Divinity. He must come to know and acknowledge the precepts of God and realize for a certainty that the ethical development of humanity is dependent upon religion. He must get rid of all defects and seek the attainment of heavenly virtues in order that he may prove to be the image and likeness of God. It is recorded in the Holy Bible that God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” It is self-evident that the image and likeness mentioned do not apply to the form and semblance of a human being because the reality of Divinity is not limited to any form or figure.

Nay, rather, the

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attributes and characteristics of God are intended. Even as God is pronounced to be just, man must likewise be just. As God is loving and kind to all men, man must likewise manifest lovingkindness to all humanity. As God is loyal and truthful, man must show forth the same attributes in the human world. Even as God exercises mercy toward all, man must prove himself to be the manifestation of mercy. In a word, the image and likeness of God constitute the virtues of God, and man is intended to become the recipient of the effulgences of divine attributes. This is the essential foundation of all the divine religions, the reality itself, common to all. Abraham promulgated this; Moses proclaimed it. Christ and all the Prophets upheld this standard and aspect of divine religion.

Second, there are laws and ordinances which are temporary and nonessential. These

concern human transactions and relations. They are accidental and subject to change according to the exigencies of time and place. These ordinances are neither permanent nor fundamental.

For instance, during the time of Noah it was expedient that seafood be considered as lawful;

therefore, God commanded Noah to partake of all marine animal life. During the time of Moses this was not in accordance with the exigencies of Israel's existence; therefore, a second command was revealed partly abrogating the law concerning marine foods. During the time of Abraham—upon Him be peace!—camel's milk was considered a lawful and acceptable food; likewise, the flesh of the camel; but during Jacob's time, because of a certain vow He made, this became unlawful. These are nonessential, temporary laws. In the Holy Bible there are certain commandments which according to those bygone times constituted the very spirit of the age, the very light of that period. For example, according to the law of the Torah if a man committed theft of a certain amount, they cut off his hand. Is it practicable and reasonable in this present day to cut off a man's hand for the theft of a dollar? In the Torah there are ten ordinances concerning murder. Could these be made effective today? Unquestionably no; times have changed. According to the explicit text of the Bible if a man should change or break the law of the Sabbath or if he should touch fire on the Sabbath, he must be killed. Today such a law is abrogated. The Torah declares that if a man should speak a disrespectful word to his father, he should suffer the penalty of death. Is this possible of enforcement now? No; human conditions have undergone changes. Likewise, during the time of Christ certain minor ordinances conformable to that period were enforced. It has been shown conclusively, therefore, that the foundation of the religion of God remains permanent and unchanging. It is that fixed foundation which ensures the progress and stability of the body politic and the illumination of humanity. It has ever been the cause of love and justice amongst men. It works for the true fellowship and unification of all mankind, for it never changes and is not subject to supersedure. The accidental, or nonessential, laws which regulate the transactions of the social body and everyday affairs of life are changeable and subject to abrogation. Let me ask: What is the purpose of Prophethood? Why has God sent the Prophets?

It is self-evident that the Prophets are the Educators of men and the Teachers of the human race. They come to bestow universal education upon humanity, to give humanity training, to uplift the human race from the abyss of despair and desolation and to enable man to attain the apogee of advancement and glory. The people are in darkness; the Prophets bring them into the realm of light. They are in a state of utter imperfection; the Prophets imbue them with perfections. The purpose of the prophetic mission is none other than the education and guidance of the people. Therefore, we must regard and be on the lookout for the man who is thus qualified—that is to say, any soul who proves to be the Educator of mankind and the Teacher of the human race is undoubtedly the Prophet of His age.

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For example, let us review the events connected with the history of Moses—upon Him be peace! He dwelt in Midian at a time when the children of Israel were in captivity and bondage in the land of Egypt, subjected to every tyranny and severe oppression. They were illiterate and ignorant, undergoing cruel ordeals and experiences. They were in such a state of helplessness and impotence that it was proverbial to state that one Egyptian could overcome ten Israelites. At such a time as this and under such forbidding conditions Moses appeared and shone forth with a heavenly radiance. He saved Israel from the bondage of Pharaoh and released them from captivity. He led them out of the land of Egypt and into the Holy Land. They had been scattered and broken; He unified and disciplined them, conferred upon them the blessing of wisdom and knowledge. They had been slaves; He made them princes. They were ignorant; He made them learned. They were imperfect; He enabled them to attain perfection. In a word, He led them out of their condition of hopelessness and brought them to efficiency in the plane of confidence and valor. They became renowned throughout the ancient world until finally in the zenith and

splendor of their new civilization the glory of the sovereignty of Solomon was attained.

Through the guidance and training of Moses these slaves and captives became the dominating

people amongst the nations. Not only in physical and military superiority were they renowned,

but in all the degrees of arts, letters and refinement their fame was widespread. Even the

celebrated philosophers of Greece journeyed to Jerusalem in order to study with the Israelitish

sages, and many were the lessons of philosophy and wisdom they received. Among these

philosophers was the famous Socrates. He visited the Holy Land and studied with the prophets

of Israel, acquiring principles of their philosophical teaching and a knowledge of their advanced

arts and sciences. After his return to Greece he founded the system known as the unity of God.

The Greek people rose against him, and at last he was poisoned in the presence of the king.

Hippocrates and many other Greek philosophers sat at the feet of the learned Israelitish doctors

and absorbed their expositions of wisdom and inner truth.

Inasmuch as Moses through the influence of His great mission was instrumental in releasing

the Israelites from a low state of debasement and humiliation, establishing them in a station of

prestige and glorification, disciplining and educating them, it is necessary for us to reach a fair

and just judgment in regard to such a marvelous Teacher. For in this great accomplishment He

stood single and alone. Could He have made such a change and brought about such a condition

among these people without the sanction and assistance of a heavenly power?

Could He have

transformed a people from humiliation to glory without a holy and divine support?

None other than a divine power could have done this. Therein lies the proof of Prophethood

because the mission of a Prophet is education of the human race such as this Personage

accomplished, proving Him to be a mighty Prophet among the Prophets and His Book the very

Book of God. This is a rational, direct and perfect proof.

In brief, Moses—upon Whom be peace!—founded the law of God, purified the morals of

the people of Israel and gave them an impetus toward nobler and higher

attainments. But after the departure of Moses, following the decline of the glory of Solomon's era and during the reign of Jeroboam there came a great change in this nation. The high ethical standards and spiritual perfections ceased to exist. Conditions and morals became corrupt, religion was debased, and the perfect principles of the Mosaic law were obscured in superstition and polytheism. War and strife arose among the tribes, and their unity was destroyed. The followers of Jeroboam declared themselves rightful and valid in kingly succession, and the supporters of Rehoboam made the same claim. Finally, the tribes were torn asunder by hostility and hatred, the glory of Israel was eclipsed, and so complete was the degradation that a golden calf was set up as an object of worship in the city of Tyre. Thereupon God sent Elijah, the prophet, who

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redeemed the people, renewed the law of God and established an era of new life for Israel.

History shows a still later change and transformation when this oneness and solidarity were followed by another dispersion of the tribes. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, invaded the Holy Land and carried away captive seventy thousand Israelites to Chaldea, where the greatest reverses, trials and suffering afflicted these unfortunate people. Then the prophets of God again reformed and reestablished the law of God, and the people in their humiliation again followed it. This resulted in their liberation, and under the edict of Cyrus, King of Persia, there was a return to the Holy City. Jerusalem and the Temple of Solomon were rebuilt, and the glory of Israel was restored. This lasted but a short time; the morality of the people declined, and conditions reached an extreme degree until the Roman general Titus took Jerusalem and razed it to its foundations. Pillage and conquest completed the desolation; Palestine became a waste and wilderness, and the Jews fled from the Holy Land of their ancestors. The cause of this disintegration and dispersion was the departure of Israel from the foundation

of the law of God
revealed by Moses—namely, the acquisition of divine virtues, morality, love,
the development
of arts and sciences and the spirit of the oneness of humanity.
I now wish you to examine certain facts and statements which are worthy of
consideration.
My purpose and intention is to remove from the hearts of men the religious
enmity and hatred
which have fettered them and to bring all religions into agreement and unity.
Inasmuch as this
hatred and enmity, this bigotry and intolerance are outcomes of
misunderstandings, the reality
of religious unity will appear when these misunderstandings are dispelled. For
the foundation
of the divine religions is one foundation. This is the oneness of revelation or
teaching. But,
alas, we have turned away from that foundation, holding tenaciously to various
dogmatic forms
and blind imitation of ancestral beliefs. This is the real cause of enmity,
hatred and bloodshed
in the world—the reason of alienation and estrangement among mankind.
Therefore, I wish
you to be very just and fair in your judgment of the following statements.
During the time that the people of Israel were being tossed and afflicted by
the conditions
I have named, Jesus Christ appeared among them. Jesus of Nazareth was a Jew. He
was single
and unaided, alone and unique. He had no assistant. The Jews at once pronounced
Him to be
an enemy of Moses. They declared that He was the destroyer of the Mosaic laws
and
ordinances. Let us examine the facts as they are, investigate the truth and
reality in order to
arrive at a true opinion and conclusion. For a completely fair opinion upon
this question we
must lay aside all we have and investigate independently. This Personage, Jesus
Christ,
declared Moses to have been the Prophet of God and pronounced all the prophets
of Israel as
sent from God. He proclaimed the Torah the very Book of God, summoned all to
conform to
its precepts and follow its teachings. It is an historical fact that during a
period of fifteen
hundred years the kings of Israel were unable to promulgate broadcast the
religion of Judaism.
In fact, during that period the name and history of Moses were confined to the
boundaries of

Palestine and the Torah was a book well known only in that country. But through Christ, through the blessing of the New Testament of Jesus Christ, the Old Testament, the Torah, was translated into six hundred different tongues and spread throughout the world. It was through Christianity that the Torah reached Persia. Before that time there was no knowledge in that country of such a book, but Christ caused its spread and acceptance. Through Him the name of Moses was elevated and revered. He was instrumental in publishing the name and greatness of the Israelitish prophets, and He proved to the world that the Israelites constituted the people of God. Which of the kings of Israel could have accomplished this? Were it not for Jesus Christ, would the Bible, the Torah have reached this land of America? Would the name of Moses be spread throughout the world? Refer to history. Everyone knows that when Christianity was

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spread, there was a simultaneous spread of the knowledge of Judaism and the Torah. Throughout the length and breadth of Persia there was not a single volume of the Old Testament until the religion of Jesus Christ caused it to appear everywhere so that today the Holy Bible is a household book in that country. It is evident, then, that Christ was a friend of Moses, that He loved and believed in Moses; otherwise, He would not have commemorated His name and Prophethood. This is self-evident. Therefore, Christians and Jews should have the greatest love for each other because the Founders of these two great religions have been in perfect agreement in Book and teaching. Their followers should be likewise. We have already stated the valid proofs of Prophethood. We find the very evidences of the validity of Moses were witnessed and duplicated in Christ. Christ was also a unique and single Personage born of the lineage of Israel. By the power of His Word He was able to unite people of the Roman, Greek, Chaldean, Egyptian and Assyrian nations. Whereas they had been cruel, bloodthirsty and hostile, killing, pillaging and taking each other captive, He

cemented them
together in a perfect bond of unity and love. He caused them to agree and
become reconciled.
Such mighty effects were the results of the manifestation of one single Soul.
This proves
conclusively that Christ was assisted by God. Today all Christians admit and
believe that Moses
was a Prophet of God. They declare that His Book was the Book of God, that the
prophets of
Israel were true and valid and that the people of Israel constituted the people
of God. What
harm has come from this? What harm could come from a statement by the Jews that
Jesus was
also a Manifestation of the Word of God? Have the Christians suffered for their
belief in
Moses? Have they experienced any loss of religious enthusiasm or witnessed any
defeat in their
religious belief by declaring that Moses was a Prophet of God, that the Torah
was a Book of
God and that all the prophets of Israel were prophets of God? It is evident
that no loss comes
from this. And now it is time for the Jews to declare that Christ was the Word
of God, and then
this enmity between two great religions will pass away. For two thousand years
this enmity
and religious prejudice have continued. Blood has been shed, ordeals have been
suffered. These
few words will remedy the difficulty and unite two great religions. What harm
could follow
this: that just as the Christians glorify and praise the name of Moses,
likewise the Jews should
commemorate the name of Christ, declare Him to be the Word of God and consider
Him as
one of the chosen Messengers of God?
A few words concerning the Qur'án and the Muslims: When Muhammad appeared,
He
spoke of Moses as the great Man of God. In the Qur'án He refers to the
sayings of Moses in
seven different places, proclaims Him a Prophet and the possessor of a Book,
the Founder of
the law and the Spirit of God. He said, "Whosoever believes in Him is
acceptable in the
estimation of God, and whosoever shuns Him or any of the prophets is rejected
of God." Even
in conclusion He calls upon His own relatives, saying, "Why have ye shunned
and not believed
in Moses? Why have ye not acknowledged the Torah? Why have ye not believed in

the Jewish prophets?" In a certain sūrah of the Qur'ān He mentions the names of twenty-eight of the prophets of Israel, praising each and all of them. To this great extent He has ratified and commended the prophets and religion of Israel. The purport is this: that Muhammad praised and glorified Moses and confirmed Judaism. He declared that whosoever denies Moses is contaminated and even if he repents, his repentance will not be accepted. He pronounced His own relatives infidels and impure because they had denied the prophets. He said, "Because you have not believed in Christ, because you have not believed in Moses, because you have not believed in the Gospels, you are infidels and contaminated." In this way Muhammad has praised the Torah, Moses, Christ and the prophets of the past. He appeared amongst the Arabs, who were a people nomadic and illiterate, barbarous in nature and bloodthirsty. He guided and

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trained them until they attained a high degree of development. Through His education and discipline they rose from the lowest levels of ignorance to the heights of knowledge, becoming masters of erudition and philosophy. We see, therefore that the proofs applicable to one Prophet are equally applicable to another. In conclusion, since the Prophets themselves, the Founders, have loved, praised and testified of each other, why should we disagree and be alienated? God is one. He is the Shepherd of all. We are His sheep and, therefore, should live together in love and unity. We should manifest the spirit of justness and goodwill toward each other. Shall we do this, or shall we censure and pronounce anathema, praising ourselves and condemning all others? What possible good can come from such attitude and action? On the contrary, nothing but enmity and hatred, injustice and inhumanity can possibly result. Has not this been the greatest cause of bloodshed, woe and tribulation in the past? Praise be to God! You are living in a land of freedom. You are blessed with men

of learning,
men who are well versed in the comparative study of religions. You realize the
need of unity
and know the great harm which comes from prejudice and superstition. I ask you,
is not
fellowship and brotherhood preferable to enmity and hatred in society and
community? The
answer is self-evident. Love and fellowship are absolutely needful to win the
good pleasure of
God, which is the goal of all human attainment. We must be united. We must love
each other.
We must ever praise each other. We must bestow commendation upon all people,
thus
removing the discord and hatred which have caused alienation amongst men.
Otherwise, the
conditions of the past will continue, praising ourselves and condemning others;
religious wars
will have no end, and religious prejudice, the prime cause of this havoc and
tribulation, will
increase. This must be abandoned, and the way to do it is to investigate the
reality which
underlies all the religions. This underlying reality is the love of humanity.
For God is one and
humanity is one, and the only creed of the Prophets is love and unity.
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9 November 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons
1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen
(Promulgation, pp. 411-415)

The address delivered last evening in the Jewish synagogue evidently disturbed
some of
the people, including the revered rabbi who called upon me this afternoon.
Together we went
over the ground again, which I shall now review for your benefit.
It was not possible to make the subject completely plain to the rabbi last
night, as he was
very much pressed for time, but today the opportunity was sufficient for a
reconsideration of

the statements in detail. I wish you to understand them thoroughly and memorize them in order that you may discourse with the Jews and thus, perchance, become instrumental in leading them aright.

The quintessence of our subject was this: What is the mission of the Prophet, and what is the object of a divine law? In answer we stated: There is no doubt that the purpose of a divine law is the education of the human race, the training of humanity. All mankind may be

considered as pupils or children who are in need of a divine Educator, a real Teacher. The

essential requirement and qualification of Prophethood is the training and guidance of the

people. Therefore, we shall first consider the efficacy of the teachings of those who have been

followed and accepted as the Prophets of God. The question that must be answered is: Have

They taught mankind? Have They proved Themselves efficient Educators?

Among Them was Moses. We find that He appeared as the leader of the children of Israel

during a period of their captivity. They were in a state of extreme humiliation, ignorance and

heedlessness, living in a very lowly manner in Egypt under conditions of life worse than death.

Imagine an ignorant people, downtrodden and oppressed, thoughtless, negligent and mentally

darkened, held in subjection as slaves. Moses was appointed for their deliverance and training.

He guided them, led them out of bondage into the Holy Land, uplifted them from ignorance

and despair, trained them so that they rose from a condition of lowliness and subjection into

one of honor and importance, and enabled them to reach a high degree of perfection. They

became proficient in sciences and arts, attained a lofty plane of civilization, honorable and

esteemed among nations, whereas formerly they had been lowly and despised. They were

ignorant; they became intelligent, finally reaching that period of supremacy and power

witnessed in the Solomonic sovereignty. Their name became widespread throughout the world,

and they were esteemed for distinct virtues. Even the philosophers of Greece went to Palestine

to drink from the fountains of their wisdom and sit at the feet of their sages.

All these facts
prove that Moses was a Prophet and a Teacher.
As to Christ: He was a single, unique and lowly individual Who appeared at a
time when
the Israelitish nation had fallen from the heights of its glory to the lowest
condition of bondage
and contempt, subject to the tyranny of the Roman Empire, living under a yoke
of humiliation,
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ignorant and negligent of God. The historical records of the Holy Books confirm
these
statements. Christ—this single and unique Personage—appeared amongst these
despised and
degraded people, reflecting a divine power and the potency of the Holy Spirit.
He unified the
various peoples and nations of the world, brought them together in fellowship
and agreement
and gathered them beneath the overshadowing protection of one Word. His
prestige and
mention were not confined to the children of Israel alone, who were at that
time a limited race
and people, but His spiritual power had also permeated and united great
influential nations who
had been warlike and hostile, such as the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Chaldeans,
Syrians and
Assyrians. He dispelled their hostility, healed their hatred, made them a
united people, and by
His Word created the utmost love amongst them so that they advanced
immeasurably in the
degrees of education and human perfection, thereby attaining a never-ending
glory.
The Jews had become dispersed and widely scattered. This single and unique
Personage
overcame all the then known world, founding an everlasting sovereignty, a
mighty nation
indeed. Such a result proved Him to be a great man, the first Educator of His
time, the first
Teacher of His period. What proofs could be greater than these? What would be
more
convincing than this evidence that a single individual resuscitated so many
nations and peoples,
unified so many tribes and sects, removed so much warfare and hatred?
Undoubtedly, such
accomplishment could be wrought only through the power of God and not by mere
human

effort, which is altogether incapable of producing these mighty results. When Christ appeared, the Jews pronounced Him an enemy of Moses. Pharisaical rabbis of that age declared Him to be the destroyer of the Mosaic law and the institutes of the Torah. They proclaimed that He would bring great misfortune to the people of Israel, considering Him the violator of the holy Sabbath and destroyer of the Temple of Solomon. Therefore, they turned away from Him. Let us investigate this and discover whether such accusations were true or false. We will find that in reality Christ caused the name and prestige of Moses to become widespread. Through His efforts and teaching the Book of Moses, the Bible, became known everywhere. In fifteen hundred years there had been but one translation of the Old Testament, the Torah, which translation was made from Hebrew into Greek. But through the instrumentality of Christ's message and teachings it was translated into six hundred tongues and spread to every part of the world. All the kings and prophets of Israel were unable to promulgate the teachings of Judaism and the name of Moses beyond the borders of Palestine, whereas through Christ Judaism became an established religion in Asia, Africa, Europe and the world generally. Through the message of Christ, Moses was everywhere proclaimed a Prophet of God and His Book the Book of God. Shall we consider this Personage an enemy or a friend of Moses? Justice is needed; we must render fair judgment upon this question. Had He been an enemy, He would not have allowed the name and teachings of Moses to become widespread in the world. He would not have promulgated the law and principles of the Torah. Would there have been any mention of Moses in America? Could even the name of Judaism have reached this part of the world through any other instrumentality? Undoubtedly, it was owing to the blessed agency and influence of Christianity that Judaism became established in this western world. Moses had no better friend and sympathizer than Christ. Consider how the illiterate among the Israelites conceal the reality of these facts and continue the delusion that Christ was an enemy

of Moses. All Christians believe in Moses. They declare that He was a Man of God, the Interlocutor and Prophet of God, that His Book was the Book of God, that the people of Israel were the people of God and that all the prophets of Israel were valid and true. They offer unlimited praise, sincere eulogy, and manifest unlimited love for the religion of Moses. What
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harm comes from this? And if the Jews should say that Christ was also the Word of God, the Spirit of God, what harm could follow this statement? Just these few words would be the cause of reconciling the Christians and Jews. The Christians accept Moses and His Book. What harm have they suffered on account of this belief? Have they lost anything because of it? In answer to all these questions the rabbi answered, "No." We continued: What harm could result if the Jews were in a similar attitude toward Christianity, declaring that Christ was the Word of God, that the Gospel is the Book of God? Such an attitude as this would cause the enmity of many centuries to pass away. If we declare that Moses was the Prophet of God and that His Book was the law of God, does it harm our religious standpoint? Not at all. Furthermore, every nation is proud of its great men and heroes even though those great ones may have been atheists or agnostics. Today France glorifies Napoleon Bonaparte, saying, "He was a French military genius," whereas, in reality, he was a tyrant. They say, "Voltaire was ours," although Voltaire was an atheist. "Rousseau was a great man of this nation," and yet Rousseau was irreligious. France is proud of these great men. Feasts are held commemorating them, their names are perpetuated in special days, their memories treasured in prominent places, and there is music and celebration in their honor. The nation is proud of them. And now, do you consider these great men of France greater than Jesus of Nazareth? It is evident that in comparison with Jesus Christ they are as nothing. Consider the grandeur and majesty of Jesus in contrast with such men as we have

mentioned. Consider Him from the standpoint of fame and renown. Where is the station of Christ, and where is their station? What comparison is there? In reality, Christ is incomparable. What harm, then, could come from your declaration that Jesus of Nazareth was a great man of Israelitish birth and, therefore, we love Him? That we have given to the world a great man indeed? That this mighty Personage, Whose Word has spread throughout the world, Who has conquered the East and the West, was an Israelite? Should you not be proud of Him? When you glorify and honor the memory of Christ, rest assured that the Christians will take your hands in real fellowship. All difficulty, hesitancy and restraint will vanish. Consider the troubles and persecutions heaped upon you in Russia for your fanaticism of unbelief. And you must not think that this is ended. This humiliation will continue forever. The time may come when in Europe itself they will arise against the Jews. But your declaration that Christ was the Word of God will end all such trouble. My advice is that in order to become honorable, protected and secure among the nations of the world, in order that the Christians may love and safeguard the Israelitish people, you should be willing to announce your belief in Christ, the Word of God. This is a complete statement; there is nothing more. Is it not thoughtless, ignorant prejudice which restrains you from doing so? Declare that, verily, the Word of God was realized in Him, and all will be right. The rabbi thoughtfully said, "I believe that what you have said is perfectly true, but I must ask one thing of you. Will you not tell the Christians to love us a little more?"

We replied, "We have advised them and will continue to do so."

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9 November 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 415-418)

Every composition is necessarily subject to destruction or disintegration. For instance, this

flower is a composition of various elements; its decomposition is inevitable.

When this

composed form undergoes decomposition—in other words, when these elements separate and

disintegrate—that is what we call the death of the flower. For inasmuch as it is composed of

single elements, the grouping of multitudinous cellular atoms, it is subject to disintegration.

This is the mortality of the flower. Similarly, the body of man is composed of various elements.

This composition of the elements has been given life. When these elements disintegrate, life

disappears, and that is death. Existence in the various planes, or kingdoms, implies

composition; and nonexistence, or death, is decomposition.

But the inner and essential reality of man is not composed of elements and, therefore,

cannot be decomposed. It is not an elemental composition subject to disintegration or death. A

true and fundamental scientific principle is that an element itself never dies and cannot be

destroyed for the reason that it is single and not composed. Therefore, it is not subject to decomposition.

Another evidence or proof of the indestructibility of the reality of man is that it is not

affected by the changes of the physical body. These changing conditions of the bodily

composition are definite and continual. At one time it is normal, at another time abnormal. Now

it is weak, now strong. It suffers injury, a hand may be amputated, a limb broken, an eye

destroyed, an ear deafened or some defect appear in a certain organ, but these changes do not

affect the human spirit, the soul of man. If the body becomes stout or thin, decrepit or strong,

the spirit or soul is unaffected thereby. If a part of the bodily organism be destroyed, even if it

be dismembered completely, the soul continues to function, showing that no changes of the

body affect its operation. We have seen that death and mortality are synonymous

with change
 and disintegration. As we find the soul unaffected by this change and
 disintegration of the body,
 we, therefore, prove it to be immortal; for that which is changeable is
 accidental, evanescent.
 Furthermore, this immortal human soul is endowed with two means of perception:
 One is
 effected through instrumentality; the other, independently. For instance, the
 soul sees through
 the instrumentality of the eye, hears with the ear, smells through the nostrils
 and grasps objects
 with the hands. These are the actions or operations of the soul through
 instruments. But in the
 world of dreams the soul sees when the eyes are closed. The man is seemingly
 dead, lies there
 as dead; the ears do not hear, yet he hears. The body lies there, but he—that
 is, the soul—
 travels, sees, observes. All the instruments of the body are inactive, all the
 functions seemingly
 useless. Notwithstanding this, there is an immediate and vivid perception by
 the soul.
 Exhilaration is experienced. The soul journeys, perceives, senses. It often
 happens that a man
 in a state of wakefulness has not been able to accomplish the solution of a
 problem, and when
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he goes to sleep, he will reach that solution in a dream. How often it has
 happened that he has
 dreamed, even as the prophets have dreamed, of the future; and events which
 have thus been
 foreshadowed have come to pass literally.
 Therefore, we learn that the immortality of the soul, or spirit, is not
 contingent or dependent
 upon the so-called immortality of the body, because the body in the quiescent
 state, in the time
 of sleep, may be as dead, unconscious, senseless; but the soul, or spirit, is
 possessed of
 perceptions, sensations, motion and discovery. Even inspiration and revelation
 are obtained by
 it. How many were the prophets who have had marvelous visions of the future
 while in that
 state! The spirit, or human soul, is the rider; and the body is only the steed.
 If anything affects
 the steed, the rider is not affected by it. The spirit may be likened to the
 light within the lantern.

The body is simply the outer lantern. If the lantern should break, the light is ever the same because the light could shine even without the lantern. The spirit can conduct its affairs without the body. In the world of dreams it is precisely as this light without the chimney glass. It can shine without the glass. The human soul by means of this body can perform its operations, and without the body it can, likewise, have its control. Therefore, if the body be subject to disintegration, the spirit is not affected by these changes or transformations. It is an evident fact that the body does not conduct the process of intellection or thought radiation. It is only the medium of the grossest sensations. This human body is purely animal in type and, like the animal, it is subject only to the grosser sensibilities. It is utterly bereft of ideation or intellection, utterly incapable of the processes of reason. The animal perceives what its eye sees and judges what the ear hears. It perceives according to its animal senses, the scent of the nostril, the taste of the tongue. It comprehends not beyond its sense perceptions. The animal is confined to its feelings and sensibilities, a prisoner of the senses. Beyond these, in the finer higher processes of reasoning, the animal cannot go. For instance, the animal cannot conceive of the earth whereon it stands as a spherical object because the spherical shape of the earth is a matter of conscious reasoning. It is not a matter of sense perception. An animal in Europe could not foresee and plan the discovery of America as Columbus did. It could not take the globe map of the earth and scan the various continents, saying, "This is the eastern hemisphere; there must be another, the western hemisphere." No animal could know these things for the reason that they are referable to intellection. The animal cannot become aware of the fact that the earth is revolving and the sun stationary. Only processes of reasoning can come to this conclusion. The outward eye sees the sun as revolving. It mistakes the stars and the planets as moving about the earth. But reason decides their orbit, knows that the earth is moving and the other worlds fixed, knows that the sun is the solar center and ever occupies the same

place, proves that it is the earth which revolves around it. Such conclusions are entirely intellectual, not according to the senses. Hence, we know that in the human organism there is a center of intellection, a power of intellectual operation which is the discoverer of the realities of things. This power can unravel the mysteries of phenomena. It can comprehend that which is knowable, not alone the sensible.

All the inventions are its products. For all of these have been the mysteries of nature. There was a time when the energy of electricity was a mystery of nature, but that collective reality which is manifest in man discovered this mystery of nature, this latent force. Having discovered it, man brought it into the plane of visibility. All the sciences which we now utilize are the products of that wondrous reality. But the animal is deprived of its operations. The arts we now enjoy are the expressions of that marvelous reality. The animal is bereft of them because these conscious realities are peculiar to the human spirit. All the traces are the outcoming of the perfections which comprehend realities. The animal is bereft of these.

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Such evidences prove conclusively that man is possessed of two realities, as it were: a reality connected with the senses which is shared in common with the animal, and another reality which is conscious and ideal in character. This latter is the collective reality and the discoverer of mysteries. That which discovers the realities of things undoubtedly is not of the elemental substances. It is distinct from them. For mortality and disintegration are the properties inherent in compositions and are referable to things which are subject to sense perceptions, but the collective reality in man, not being so subject, is the discoverer of things.

Therefore, it is real, eternal and does not have to undergo changes and transformations.

There are many other proofs concerning this vital subject, but I shall conclude with the words of Jesus Christ: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" and is acceptable in the

Kingdom of God. This means that just as in the first birth the fetus comes forth from the matrix of the mother into the conditions of the human kingdom, even so the spirit of man must be born out of the matrix of naturalism, out of the baser nature, in order that he may comprehend the great things of the Kingdom of God. He must be born out of mother earth to find the everlasting life. And this collective reality, or spirit, of man, being born out of the world of nature, possessing the attributes of God, will continue to live forever in the eternal realm.

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9 November 1912

Talk at Bahá'í Banquet

Rauscher's Hall, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 418-421)

I feel a keen sense of joy in being present at this banquet this evening, for—praise be to God!—before me are radiant faces, ears attuned to the melodies of the Supreme Concourse, hearts aglow with the fire of the love of God, spirits exhilarated through the glad tidings of God, souls sheltered beneath the overshadowing power of the Kingdom of Abhá. I see before me an assemblage of souls who are of the chosen and not of the many called. And it is my hope that through the favors of Bahá'u'lláh He may continue to attract you to His Kingdom and render you victorious and triumphant in your service to the oneness and solidarity of mankind. May He assist all who are firm in establishing the unity of the inhabitants of this earth. May all of you thereby become my partners and coadjutors in servitude. O Lord! Confirm and aid this assemblage. Confirm these souls through the breaths of Thy Holy Spirit. Enlighten the eyes by the vision of these radiant lights, and make the ears joyful

through the anthems of Thy call to service. O God! Verily, we have gathered
 here in the
 fragrance of Thy love. We have turned to Thy Kingdom. We seek naught save Thee
 and desire
 nothing save Thy good pleasure. O God! Let this food be Thy manna from heaven,
 and grant
 that this assemblage may be a concourse of Thy supreme ones. May they be the
 quickening
 cause of love to humanity and the source of illumination to the human race. May
 they be the
 instruments of Thy guidance upon earth. Verily, Thou art powerful. Thou art the
 Bestower.
 Thou art the Forgiver, and Thou art the Almighty.
 In the world many banquets, assemblages and meetings have been organized, but
 those
 gatherings have been commercial, political, educational or social in their
 purpose and motive.
 Meetings are held for the promotion of financial plans or promulgation of the
 arts and sciences.
 Others have sought to establish agricultural industries or consummate
 territorial agreements.
 Innumerable assemblages have been held for consultation upon subjects of
 learning and
 education. All such meetings have for their object the advancement of
 civilization. But—praise
 be to God!—this banquet and this assemblage are for none other purpose than
 love, for the
 purpose of announcing the divine Kingdom, for the manifestation of the
 ineffable traces of
 God, for reflecting the effulgences of the Kingdom of God, for binding hearts
 together, for
 service to the world of humanity, for the promulgation of humanitarian and
 altruistic realities,
 for the advancement and advocating of international peace, for the illumination
 of the whole
 world. Therefore, such an assemblage is matchless and peerless because other
 assemblages are
 held for a limited object and personal motive, whereas this meeting is for God
 and God only,
 for His love and purpose. It is for love of the hearts of men and the oneness
 of the world of
 humanity. Therefore, we should offer thanks to God, for He has confirmed us in
 attaining to
 the happiness of this occasion. He has appointed us servants of the human
 world, advocates of

peace and unity among the religions, heralds of universal agreement among the races and nations, founders of divine reconciliation among all peoples. It is my fond and fervent hope through the favor of God that this present meeting may be instrumental in ushering in the day when the standard of the oneness of the world of humanity shall be held aloft in America. May it be the first real foundation of international peace, having for its object universal service to man. May it be divine philanthropy without distinctions or differentiations in humankind. May you consider all religions the instruments of God and regard all races as channels of divine manifestation. May you view mankind as the sheep of God and know for a certainty that He is the real Shepherd. Consider how this kind and tender Shepherd cares for all His flock; how He leads them in green pastures and beside the still waters. How well He protects them! Verily, this Shepherd makes no distinctions whatsoever; to all the sheep He is equally kind. Therefore, we must follow the example of God and strive in pathways of goodwill toward all humanity. May we endeavor with heart and soul to reconcile the religions of the earth, unify the peoples and races and blend the nations in a perfect solidarity. May we uphold the flag of international agreement and enkindle a light which shall illumine all regions with the radiance of oneness. May our purposes centralize in the earnest desire of attaining the good pleasure of God, and may our supreme energies be directed to welding together the human household. Let us not regard our own respective capacities; nay, rather, let us regard forever the favors and bounties of God. The drop must not estimate its own limited capacity; it must realize the volume and sufficiency of the ocean, which ever glorifieth the drop. The tender and simple seed, solitary though it may be, must not look upon its own lack of power. Nay, rather, its attention must ever be directed to the sun, in the rays of which it finds life and quickening; and it must ever consider the downpour of the cloud of mercy. For the bounty of the cloud, the effulgence and heat of the sun and the breath of the vernal zephyrs

can transform the tiny seed and develop it into a mighty tree. And may you remember that a single infinitesimal atom in the ray of the sun through a shining beam of the solar energy becomes glorified and radiant. Therefore, let us ever trust in God and seek confirmation and assistance from Him. Let us have perfect and absolute confidence in the bounty of the Kingdom. Review the events surrounding souls of bygone times in the beginning of their day; and again consider them when, through the aid and assistance of God, they proved to be the mighty ones of God. Remember that Peter was a fisherman, but through the bounty of the Kingdom he became the great apostle. Mary Magdalene was a villager of lowly type, yet that selfsame Mary was transformed and became the means through which the confirmation of God descended upon the disciples. Verily, she served the Kingdom of God with such efficiency that she became well-known and oft mentioned by the tongues of men. Even today she is shining from the horizon of eternal majesty. Consider how infinite is the bounty of God that a woman such as Mary Magdalene should be selected by God to become the channel of confirmation to the disciples and a light of nearness in His Kingdom. Consequently, trust ye in the bounty and grace of God, and rest assured in the bestowals of His eternal outpouring. I hope that each one of you may become a shining light even as these electric lights are now brilliant in their intensity. Nay, may each one of you be a luminary like unto a sparkling star in the heaven of the divine Will. This is my supplication at the throne of God. This is my hope through the favors of Bahá'u'lláh. I offer this prayer in behalf of all of you and beg with a contrite heart that you may be assisted and glorified with an eternal bestowal.

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10 November 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 421-425)

What is the reality of Divinity, or what do we understand by God?

When we consider the world of existence, we find that the essential reality underlying any

given phenomenon is unknown. Phenomenal, or created, things are known to us only by their

attributes. Man discerns only manifestations, or attributes, of objects, while the identity, or

reality, of them remains hidden. For example, we call this object a flower.

What do we

understand by this name and title? We understand that the qualities appertaining to this

organism are perceptible to us, but the intrinsic elemental reality, or identity, of it remains

unknown. Its external appearance and manifest attributes are knowable; but the inner being,

the underlying reality or intrinsic identity, is still beyond the ken and perception of our human

powers. Inasmuch as the realities of material phenomena are impenetrable and unknowable and

are only apprehended through their properties or qualities, how much more this is true

concerning the reality of Divinity, that holy essential reality which transcends the plane and

grasp of mind and man? That which comes within human grasp is finite, and in relation to it

we are infinite because we can grasp it. Assuredly, the finite is lesser than the infinite; the

infinite is ever greater. If the reality of Divinity could be contained within the grasp of human

mind, it would after all be possessed of an intellectual existence only—a mere intellectual

concept without extraneous existence, an image or likeness which had come within the

comprehension of finite intellect. The mind of man would be transcendental thereto. How could

it be possible that an image which has only intellectual existence is the reality of Divinity,

which is infinite? Therefore, the reality of Divinity in its identity is beyond the range of human

intellection because the human mind, the human intellect, the human thought are

limited,
 whereas the reality of Divinity is unlimited. How can the limited grasp the
 unlimited and
 transcend it? Impossible. The unlimited always comprehends the limited. The
 limited can never
 comprehend, surround nor take in the unlimited. Therefore, every concept of
 Divinity which
 has come within the intellection of a human being is finite, or limited, and is
 a pure product of
 imagination, whereas the reality of Divinity is holy and sacred above and
 beyond all such
 concepts.
 But the question may be asked: How shall we know God? We know Him by His
 attributes.
 We know Him by His signs. We know Him by His names. We know not what the
 reality of the
 sun is, but we know the sun by the ray, by the heat, by its efficacy and
 penetration. We
 recognize the sun by its bounty and effulgence, but as to what constitutes the
 reality of the solar
 energy, that is unknowable to us. The attributes characterizing the sun,
 however, are knowable.
 If we wish to come in touch with the reality of Divinity, we do so by
 recognizing its phenomena,
 its attributes and traces, which are widespread in the universe. All things in
 the world of
 phenomena are expressive of that one reality. Its lights are shining, its heat
 is manifest, its
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 power is expressive, and its education, or training, resplendent everywhere.
 What proof could
 there be greater than that of its functioning or its attributes which are
 manifest? This plant or
 this flower—we ask: Does it exist or not? Can this plant—this
 flower—comprehend the reality
 of man? Can it put itself in touch with the human existence or reality?
 Evidently not. It is
 entirely out of tune with the human kingdom; it is not possessed of the
 capacity, although both
 man and the flower have been created. But the difference in the degrees between
 the vegetable
 and the human is ever a hindrance, an obstacle. Inasmuch as the degree of
 capacity appertaining
 to this plant is inferior to our human kingdom, it is entirely impossible for
 the plant, which is

inferior, to comprehend man, who is superior, although both are accidental, or created. We are created; likewise, this plant is existent, this mineral exists, this wood exists. But can this flooring here comprehend those who are standing upon it? It cannot, because sight and hearing are properties or faculties belonging to a higher kingdom than the mineral. The difference between these two kingdoms, the vast difference between the mineral kingdom and the human kingdom, is a hindrance to comprehension. How, then, can the reality of man, which is accidental, ever comprehend the Reality of God, which is eternal? It is self-evidently an impossibility. Hence we can observe the traces and attributes of God, which are resplendent in all phenomena and shining as the sun at midday, and know surely that these emanate from an infinite source. We know that they come from a source which is infinite indeed. Furthermore, it is a philosophical principle that the existence of phenomena implies composition and that mortality, or nonexistence, is equivalent to decomposition. For example, certain elements have come together, and as a result of that composition man is here. Certain elements have entered into the structure of this flower. Certain organic or cellular elements have been utilized in the composition of every animal organism. Therefore, we can state that existence necessitates composition, and death is another expression for decomposition. When there is disintegration amongst these composing elements, that is death; that is mortality. The elements which have gone into the body of this flower and which have given existence to this form and shape will finally disintegrate; this beautiful organism will decompose; and this we call mortality, death. Consequently, the conclusion is that life means composition, and death is equivalent to decomposition. On this account the materialists are of the opinion that life is the mere conjoining of elemental substances into myriad forms and shapes. The materialist comes to the conclusion that life, in other words, means composition; that wherever we find single elements combined in aggregate form, there we behold the phenomena of organic

life; that every organic composition is organic life. Now if life means composition of elements, then the materialist may come to the conclusion of the nonnecessity of a composer, the nonnecessity of a creator; for composition is all there is to it, and that is accomplished by adhesion or cohesion. In response to this we say that composition must needs be of three kinds: One form of composition is termed philosophically the accidental, another the involuntary, and a third the voluntary. As to the first, or accidental, composition: This would signify that certain elements through inherent qualities and powers of attraction or affinity have been gathered together, have blended, and so composed a certain form, being or organism. This can be proven to be false; for composition is an effect, and philosophically no effect is conceivable without causation. No effect can be conceived of without some primal cause. For example, this heat is an effect; but that energy which gives forth this phenomenon of heat is the cause. This light is an effect, but back of it is the energy which is the cause. Is it possible for this light to be separated from the energy whereof it is a property? That is impossible and inconceivable. It is self-evidently false. Accidental composition is, therefore, a false theory and may be excluded.

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As to the second form of composition—involuntary: This means that each element has within itself as an inherent property the power of composition. For example, the inherent quality of fire is burning, or heat; heat is a property of fire. Humidity is the inherent nature or property of water. You cannot conceive H₂O, which is the chemical form of water, without having humidity associated; for that is an inherent quality of water. The power of attraction has as its function attractive, or magnetic, qualities. We cannot separate attraction from that power. The power of repulsion has as its function repelling—sending off. You cannot separate the effect from the cause. If these premises be true—and they are

self-evident—then it would be impossible for a composite being, for the elements which have gone into the makeup of a composite organism, ever to be decomposed because the inherent nature of each element would be to hold fast together. As fire cannot be separated from heat, likewise the elemental being could not be subjected to decomposition, and this does not hold true because we see decomposition everywhere. Hence this theory is untrue, inasmuch as we observe that after each composition there is a process of decomposition which forever ends it. By this we learn that composition as regards phenomena is neither accidental nor involuntary. Then what have we left as a form of composition? It is the voluntary form of composition, which means that composition is effected through a superior will, that there is will expressed in this motive or action. It is thus proved that the existence of phenomena is effected through the eternal Will, the Will of the Living, Eternal and Self-subsistent, and this is a rational proof concerning composition whereof there is no doubt or uncertainty. Furthermore, it is quite evident that our kind of life, our form of existence, is limited and that the reality of all accidental phenomena is, likewise, limited. The very fact that the reality of phenomena is limited well indicates that there must needs be an unlimited reality, for were there no unlimited, or infinite, reality in life, the finite being of objects would be inconceivable. To make it plainer for you, if there were no wealth in the world, you would not have poverty. If there were no light in the world, you could not conceive of darkness, for we know things philosophically by their antitheses. We know, for example, that poverty is the lack of wealth. Where there is no knowledge, there is no ignorance. What is ignorance? It is the absence of knowledge. Therefore, our limited existence is a conclusive proof that there is an unlimited reality, and this is a shining proof and evident argument. Many are the proofs concerning this matter, but there is not time to go into the subject further. This is our last evening, and I ask God that His confirmations may encompass you, that

your hearts may become radiant, that your eyes become illumined through
witnessing the signs
of God, that your ears hearken to the anthems of heaven, that your faces be set
aglow with the
radiant light of the Word of God. May you all be united, may you be agreed, may
you serve
the solidarity of mankind. May you be well-wishers of all humanity. May you be
assistants of
every poor one. May you be nurses for the sick. May you be sources of comfort
to the broken
in heart. May you be a refuge for the wanderer. May you be a source of courage
to the affrighted
one. Thus, through the favor and assistance of God may the standard of the
happiness of
humanity be held aloft in the center of the world and the ensign of universal
agreement be
unfurled.

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10 November 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Hannen

1252 Eighth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 425-428)

This is a beautiful assembly. I am very happy that white and black are
together. This is the
cause of my happiness, for you all are the servants of one God and, therefore,
brothers, sisters,
mothers and fathers. In the sight of God there is no distinction between whites
and blacks; all
are as one. Anyone whose heart is pure is dear to God—whether white or black,
red or yellow.
Among the animals colors exist. The doves are white, black, red, blue; but
notwithstanding this
diversity of color they flock together in unity, happiness and fellowship,
making no distinction
among themselves, for they are all doves. Man is intelligent and thoughtful,
endowed with

powers of mind. Why, then, should he be influenced by distinction of color or race, since all belong to one human family? There is no sheep which shuns another as if saying, "I am white, and you are black." They graze together in complete unity, live together in fellowship and happiness. How then can man be limited and influenced by racial colors? The important thing is to realize that all are human, all are one progeny of Adam. Inasmuch as they are all one family, why should they be separated?

I had a servant who was black; his name was Isfandíyár. If a perfect man could be found in the world, that man was Isfandíyár. He was the essence of love, radiant with sanctity and perfection, luminous with light. Whenever I think of Isfandíyár, I am moved to tears, although he passed away fifty years ago. He was the faithful servant of Bahá'u'lláh and was entrusted with His secrets. For this reason the Sháh of Persia wanted him and inquired continually as to his whereabouts. Bahá'u'lláh was in prison, but the Sháh had commanded many persons to find Isfandíyár. Perhaps more than one hundred officers were appointed to search for him. If they had succeeded in catching him, they would not have killed him at once. They would have cut his flesh into pieces to force him to tell them the secrets of Bahá'u'lláh. But Isfandíyár with the utmost dignity used to walk in the streets and bazaars. One day he came to us. My mother, my sister and myself lived in a house near a corner. Because our enemies frequently injured us, we were intending to go to a place where they did not know us. I was a child at that time. At midnight Isfandíyár came in. My mother said, "O Isfandíyár, there are a hundred policemen seeking for you. If they catch you, they will not kill you at once but will torture you with fire. They will cut off your fingers. They will cut off your ears. They will put out your eyes to force you to tell them the secrets of Bahá'u'lláh. Go away! Do not stay here." He said, "I cannot go because I owe money in the street and in the stores. How can I go? They will say that the servant of Bahá'u'lláh has bought and consumed the goods and supplies of the storekeepers

without paying for them. Unless I pay all these obligations, I cannot go. But if they take me, never mind. If they punish me, there is no harm in that. If they kill me, do not be grieved. But to go away is impossible. I must remain until I pay all I owe. Then I will go.” For one month
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Isfandíyár went about in the streets and bazaars. He had things to sell, and from his earnings he gradually paid his creditors. In fact, they were not his debts but the debts of the court, for all our properties had been confiscated. Everything we had was taken away from us. The only things that remained were our debts. Isfandíyár paid them in full; not a single penny remained unpaid. Then he came to us, said good-bye and went away. Afterward Bahá’u’lláh was released from prison. We went to Baghdád, and Isfandíyár came there. He wanted to stay in the same home. Bahá’u’lláh, the Blessed Perfection, said to him, “When you fled away, there was a Persian minister who gave you shelter at a time when no one else could give you protection. Because he gave you shelter and protected you, you must be faithful to him. If he is satisfied to have you go, then come to us; but if he does not want you to go, do not leave him.” His master said, “I do not want to be separated from Isfandíyár. Where can I find another like him, with such sincerity, such faithfulness, such character, such power? Where can I find one? O Isfandíyár! I am not willing that you should go, yet if you wish to go, let it be according to your own will.” But because the Blessed Perfection had said, “You must be faithful,” Isfandíyár stayed with his master until he died. He was a point of light. Although his color was black, yet his character was luminous; his mind was luminous; his face was luminous. Truly, he was a point of light. Then it is evident that excellence does not depend upon color. Character is the true criterion of humanity. Anyone who possesses a good character, who has faith in God and is firm, whose actions are good, whose speech is good—that one is accepted at the threshold

of God no matter
 what color he may be. In short—praise be to God!—you are the servants of
 God. The love of
 Bahá'u'lláh is in your hearts. Your souls are rejoicing in the glad
 tidings of Bahá'u'lláh. My
 hope is that the white and the black will be united in perfect love and
 fellowship, with complete
 unity and brotherhood. Associate with each other, think of each other, and be
 like a rose garden.
 Anyone who goes into a rose garden will see various roses, white, pink, yellow,
 red, all growing
 together and replete with adornment. Each one accentuates the beauty of the
 other. Were all of
 one color, the garden would be monotonous to the eye. If they were all white or
 yellow or red,
 the garden would lack variety and attractiveness; but when the colors are
 varied, white, pink,
 yellow, red, there will be the greatest beauty. Therefore, I hope that you will
 be like a rose
 garden. Although different in colors, yet—praise be to God!—you receive
 rays from the same
 sun. From one cloud the rain is poured upon you. You are under the training of
 one Gardener,
 and this Gardener is kind to all. Therefore, you must manifest the utmost
 kindness towards
 each other, and you may rest assured that whenever you are united, the
 confirmations of the
 Kingdom of Abhá will reach you, the heavenly favors will descend, the bounties
 of God will
 be bestowed, the Sun of Reality will shine, the cloud of mercy will pour its
 showers, and the
 breeze of divine generosity will waft its fragrances upon you.
 I hope you will continue in unity and fellowship. How beautiful to see blacks
 and whites
 together! I hope, God willing, the day may come when I shall see the red men,
 the Indians, with
 you, also Japanese and others. Then there will be white roses, yellow roses,
 red roses, and a
 very wonderful rose garden will appear in the world.

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10 November 1912

Talk at 1901 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

(Promulgation, pp. 428-430)

I am greatly pleased with the friends in Washington and experience real happiness in meeting them. Likewise, I am pleased with the friends from Baltimore, for I have observed that their hearts are attracted to the love of Bahá'u'lláh. Their vision is extended toward the Kingdom of Bahá. Their spirits are rejoicing in the glad tidings of Abhá. Verily, they are servants of the Cause of God. All are engaged in service, and the perfection of their desire is to enter into the Kingdom of Abhá and draw near unto God. For that reason I am very happy and well pleased with them. I pray for you all. May the favors of the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, encompass you, and may the lights of the Sun of Reality be your illumination. May you all become united and assured. May you serve the Cause of God as one single, united force. I give you the glad tidings that the confirmations of God will descend upon you. Be ye assured of this. Ye will become illumined. Ye will become conquerors. But after I leave, some people may arise in opposition, heaping persecutions upon you in their bitterness, and in the newspapers there may be articles published against the Cause. Rest ye in the assurance of firmness. Be well poised and serene, remembering that this is only as the harmless twittering of sparrows and that it will soon pass away. If such things do not happen, the fame of the Cause will not become widespread, and the summons of God will not be heard. Consider the history of the past. Recall, for instance, the days of Christ and the events subsequent thereto. How many were the books written against Him! What calumnies were attributed to Him! How violent were the utterances in the temples against Him! How many the accusations! What hatred and persecution! How they scoffed at Him in derision and contempt! Consider the titles and epithets they bestowed upon His majesty! They even designated Him Beelzebub—Satan. They said Beelzebub had been captured and crucified. They placed a crown

of thorns upon Beelzebub's head and paraded Him through the streets. This was
 the name the
 Jews bestowed upon Christ; it is written in the Gospel. There were many other
 forms of reviling
 and persecution, spitting in His beautiful face, cursing and anathematizing,
 bowing backward
 toward Him, saying, "Peace be on thee, thou king of the Jews!" "Peace be
 on thee, thou
 destroyer of the temple!" "Peace be on thee, thou king and pretender who
 would restore the
 temple in three days!" The philosophers of the times, Romans and Greeks,
 wrote against Christ.
 Even the kings wrote books of abuse, calumny and contempt. One of these kings
 was a Caesar.
 He was also a philosopher. In his book he says, concerning the people of
 Christ, "The most
 degraded of people are the Christians. The most immoral of the people of this
 time are the
 Christians. Jesus of Nazareth has led them astray. O people! If you wish to
 know who Jesus is
 and what Christian means, go and ask his relatives. Go and ask the Jews who
 know him. See
 what a bad person he is, how degraded he is." There were many similar
 accounts. But remember
 that these statements did not affect the cause of Christianity. On the
 contrary, Christianity
 advanced daily in power and potency.
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Day by day the majesty of Christ grew in splendor and effulgence. Therefore, my
 purpose
 is to warn and strengthen you against accusations, criticisms, revilings and
 derision in
 newspaper articles or other publications. Be not disturbed by them. They are
 the very
 confirmation of the Cause, the very source of upbuilding to the Movement. May
 God confirm
 the day when a score of ministers of the churches may arise and with bared
 heads cry at the top
 of their voices that the Bahá'ís are misguided. I would like to see that
 day, for that is the time
 when the Cause of God will spread. Bahá'u'lláh has pronounced such as
 these the couriers of
 the Cause. They will proclaim from pulpits that the Bahá'ís are fools, that
 they are a wicked
 and unrighteous people, but be ye steadfast and unwavering in the Cause of God.

They will
spread the message of Bahá'u'lláh.
His Honor Mírzá Abu'l-Fadl has written a treatise answering the
criticisms of a London
preacher. Each one of you should have a copy. 148 Read, memorize and reflect
upon it. Then,
when accusations and criticisms are advanced by those unfavorable to the Cause,
you will be
well armed.

Mirza Abul Fazl Gulpaygan, The Brilliant Proof (Chicago: Press of Bahai News
Service, 1912). The booklet
was published under the direction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá while He was in
America.

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15 November 1912
Talk at Home of Miss Juliet Thompson
48 West Tenth Street, New York
Notes by Hooper Harris
(Promulgation, pp. 431-437)

I have spoken in the various Christian churches and in the synagogues, and in
no
assemblage has there been a dissenting voice. All have listened, and all have
conceded that the
teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are superlative in character, acknowledging that
they constitute the
very essence or spirit of this new age and that there is no better pathway to
the attainment of
its ideals. Not a single voice has been raised in objection. At most there have
been some who
have refused to acknowledge the mission of Bahá'u'lláh, although even
these have admitted
that He was a great teacher, a most powerful soul, a very great man. Some who
could find no
other pretext have said, "These teachings are not new; they are old and
familiar; we have heard
them before." Therefore, I will speak to you upon the distinctive
characteristics of the
manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh and prove that from every standpoint His

Cause is distinguished
from all others. It is distinguished by its didactic character and method of
exposition, by its
practical effects and application to present world conditions, but especially
distinguished from
the standpoint of its spread and progress.

When Bahá'u'lláh appeared in Persia, all the contemporaneous religious
sects and systems
rose against Him. His enemies were kings. The enemies of Christ were the Jews,
the Pharisees;
but the enemies of Bahá'u'lláh were rulers who could command armies and
bring hundreds of
thousands of soldiers into the arena of operation. These kings represented some
fifty million
people, all of whom under their influence and domination were opposed to
Bahá'u'lláh.

Therefore, in effect Bahá'u'lláh, singly and alone, virtually withstood
fifty million enemies.

Yet these great numbers, instead of being able to dominate Him, could not
withstand His
wonderful personality and the power and influence of His heavenly Cause.

Although they were
determined upon extinguishing the light in that most brilliant lantern, they
were ultimately
defeated and overthrown, and day by day His splendor became more radiant. They
made every
effort to lessen His greatness, but His prestige and renown grew in proportion
to their endeavors
to diminish it. Surrounded by enemies who were seeking His life, He never
sought to conceal
Himself, did nothing to protect Himself; on the contrary, in His spiritual
might and power He
was at all times visible before the faces of men, easy of access, serenely
withstanding the
multitudes who were opposing Him. At last His banner was upraised.

If we study historical record and review the pages of Holy Writ, we will find
that none of
the Prophets of the past ever spread His teachings or promulgated His Cause
from a prison. But
Bahá'u'lláh upheld the banner of the Cause of God while He was in a
dungeon, addressing the
kings of the earth from His prison cell, severely arraigning them for their
oppression of their
subjects and their misuse of power. The letter He sent to the Sháh of Persia
under such
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conditions may now be read by anyone. His Epistles to the Sultán of Turkey, Napoleon III, Emperor of France, and to the other rulers of the world including the President of the United States are, likewise, current and available. The book containing these Epistles to the kings was published in India about thirty years ago and is known as the Súratu'l-Haykal ("Discourse of the Temple"). Whatever is recorded in these Epistles has happened. Some of the prophecies contained in them came to pass after two years; others were fulfilled after five, ten and twenty years. The most important prophecies relative to events transpiring in the Balkans are being fulfilled at the present time though written long ago. For instance, in the Epistle which Bahá'u'lláh addressed to the Sultán of Turkey, the war and the occurrences of the present day were foretold by Him. These events were also prophesied in the Tablet He addressed to the city of Constantinople, even to the details of happenings now being witnessed in that city. While addressing these powerful kings and rulers He was a prisoner in a Turkish dungeon. Consider how marvelous it was for a prisoner under the eye and control of the Turks to arraign so boldly and severely the very king who was responsible for His imprisonment. What power this is! What greatness! Nowhere in history can the record of such a happening be found. In spite of the iron rule and absolute dominion of these kings, His function was to withstand them; and so constant and firm was He that He caused their banners to come down and His own standard to be upraised. For today the flags of both the Persian and the Ottoman Empires are trailing in the dust, whereas the ensign of Bahá'u'lláh is being held aloft in the world both in the East and in the West. Consider what a mighty power this is! What a decisive argument! Although a prisoner in a fortress, He paid no heed to these kings, regarded not their power of life and death, but, on the contrary, addressed them in plain and fearless language, announcing explicitly that the time would come when their sovereignty would be brought low and His own dominion be established.

He said in substance, "Erelong you will find yourselves in manifest loss.
 Your sovereignties
 will be laid waste; your empires will become a wilderness and a heap of ruins;
 hosts from
 without will invade and subdue your lands; lamentation and mourning will rise
 from your
 homes. There will be no throne; there will be no crown; there will be no
 palace; there will be
 no armies. Nay, rather, all these will be brought low; but the standard of the
 Cause of God will
 be held aloft. Then will you see that hosts and hosts will enter the Cause of
 God and that this
 mighty revelation will be spread throughout the world." Read the prophecies
 contained in the
 Súratu'l-Haykal and ponder carefully over them.
 This is one of the characteristics of Bahá'u'lláh's message and
 teachings. Can you find
 events and happenings of this kind in any other prophetic dispensation? If so,
 in what cycle
 have similar things taken place? Do you find such specific prophecies and
 explicit statements
 concerning the future in the Holy Books of the past? We will now compare the
 teachings of
 Bahá'u'lláh with the Holy Words which have descended in the former
 cycles.
 First among the great principles revealed by Him is that of the investigation
 of reality. The
 meaning is that every individual member of humankind is exhorted and commanded
 to set
 aside superstitious beliefs, traditions and blind imitation of ancestral forms
 in religion and
 investigate reality for himself. Inasmuch as the fundamental reality is one,
 all religions and
 nations of the world will become one through investigation of reality. The
 announcement of
 this principle is not found in any of the sacred Books of the past.
 A second characteristic principle of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is that
 which commands
 recognition of the oneness of the world of humanity. Addressing all mankind, He
 says, "Ye are
 all the leaves of one tree." There are no differences or distinctions of race
 among you in the
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 sight of God. Nay, rather, all are the servants of God, and all are submerged
 in the ocean of His

oneness. Not a single soul is bereft. On the contrary, all are the recipients of the bounties of God. Every human creature has a portion of His bestowals and a share of the effulgence of His reality. God is kind to all. Mankind are His sheep, and He is their real Shepherd. No other scriptures contain such breadth and universality of statement; no other teachings proclaim this unequivocal principle of the solidarity of humanity. As regards any possible distinctions, the utmost that Bahá'u'lláh says is that conditions among men vary, that some, for instance, are defective. Therefore, such souls must be educated in order that they may be brought to the degree of perfection. Some are sick and ailing; they must be treated and cared for until they are healed. Some are asleep; they need to be awakened. Some are immature as children; they should be helped to attain maturity. But all must be loved and cherished. The child must not be disliked simply because it is a child. Nay, rather, it should be patiently educated. The sick one must not be avoided nor slighted merely because he is ailing. Nay, rather, he must be regarded with sympathy and affection and treated until he is healed. The soul that is asleep must not be looked upon with contempt but awakened and led into the light. Bahá'u'lláh teaches that religion must be in conformity with science and reason. If belief and teaching are opposed to the analysis of reason and principles of science, they are not worthy of acceptance. This principle has not been revealed in any of the former Books of divine teaching. Another fundamental announcement made by Bahá'u'lláh is that religion must be the source of unity and fellowship in the world. If it is productive of enmity, hatred and bigotry, the absence of religion would be preferable. This is a new principle of revelation found only in the utterances of Bahá'u'lláh. Again, Bahá'u'lláh declares that all forms of prejudice among mankind must be abandoned and that until existing prejudices are entirely removed, the world of humanity will not and cannot attain peace, prosperity and composure. This principle cannot be found in any other

sacred volume than the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.
 Another teaching is that there shall be perfect equality between men and women.
 Why
 should man create a distinction which God does not recognize? In the kingdoms
 below man
 sex exists, but the distinction between male and female is neither repressive
 nor restrictive. The
 mare, for instance, is as strong and often more speedy than the horse.
 Throughout the animal
 and vegetable kingdoms there is perfect equality between the sexes. In the
 kingdom of mankind
 this equality must likewise exist, and the one whose heart is purest, whose
 life and character
 are highest and nearest to the divine standard is most worthy and excellent in
 the sight of God.
 This is the only true and real distinction, be that one man or woman.
 Bahá'u'lláh has announced the necessity for a universal language which
 shall serve as a
 means of international communication and thus remove misunderstandings and
 difficulties.
 This teaching is set forth in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas ("Most Holy Book")
 published fifty years ago.
 He has also proclaimed the principle that all mankind shall be educated and
 that no illiteracy
 be allowed to remain. This practical remedy for the need of the world cannot be
 found in the
 text of any other sacred Books.
 He teaches that it is incumbent upon all mankind to become fitted for some
 useful trade,
 craft or profession by which subsistence may be assured, and this efficiency is
 to be considered
 as an act of worship.
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The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are boundless and without end in their
 far-reaching benefit to
 mankind. The point and purpose of our statement today is that they are new and
 that they are
 not found in any of the religious Books of the past. This is in answer to the
 question, "What
 has Bahá'u'lláh brought that we have not heard before?" Therefore, it
 is conclusive and evident
 that the Manifestation of God in this day is distinguished from all former
 appearances and
 revelations by His majesty, His power and the efficacy and application of His
 Word.

All the Prophets of God were scorned and persecuted. Consider Moses. The people called Him a murderer. They said, "You killed a man and fled from punishment and retribution. Is it possible after your former deeds that you could become a Prophet?" Many similar experiences are recorded concerning the holy, divine Messengers. How bitter and severe was the persecution to which They were subjected! Consider how they endeavored to efface and belittle Christ. They placed upon His head a crown of thorns and paraded Him through the streets and bazaars in mockery crying, "Peace be upon thee, thou king of the Jews!" Some would bow to Him backward, saying in scornful tones, "Thou king of the Jews!" or "Lord of lords, peace be upon thee!" Still others would spit upon His blessed countenance. In brief, the persecutions which Christ suffered during the time of His manifestation are mentioned in the books of the old cycle, Jewish, Roman or Greek. No praises were bestowed upon Him. The only recognition and acceptance offered Him was from His believers and followers. Peter, for instance, was one who praised Him; and the other disciples spoke in His behalf. Numerous books were written against Him. In the history of the Church you will find record of the hatred and antagonism manifested by the Roman, Greek and Egyptian philosophers, attributing calumnies and ascribing imperfection to Him. But during the manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh, from the day of His appearance to the time of His departure, the people of all nations acknowledged His greatness, and even those who were His most bitter enemies have said of Him, "This man was truly great; his influence was mighty and wonderful. This personage was glorious; his power was tremendous, his speech most eloquent; but, alas, he was a misleader of the people." This was the essence of their praise, eulogy and denial. It is evident that the authors of such statements, although His enemies, were profoundly impressed by His greatness and majesty. Some of His enemies have even written poems about Him, which though intended for satire and sarcastic allusion, have in reality been praise. For instance, a certain poet opposed to His Cause has said, "Beware! Beware! lest ye

approach this person, for he is possessed of such power and of such an eloquent
 tongue that he
 is a sorcerer. He charms men, he drugs them; he is a hypnotizer. Beware!
 Beware! lest you read
 his book follow his example and associate with his companions because they are
 the possessors
 of tremendous power and they are misleaders.” That is to say, this poet used
 such
 characterizations, believing them to be terms of belittlement and
 disparagement, unaware that
 they were in reality praises, because a wise man, after reading such a warning,
 would say, “The
 power of this man must unquestionably be very great if even his enemies
 acknowledge it.
 Undoubtedly, such a power is heavenly in its nature.” This was one of the
 reasons why so many
 were moved to investigate. The more His enemies wrote against Him, the more the
 people were
 attracted and the greater the number who came to inquire about the truth. They
 would say,
 “This is remarkable. This is a great man, and we must investigate. We must
 look into this cause
 to find out what it all means, to discover its purpose, examine its proofs and
 learn for ourselves
 what it signifies.” In this way the malign and sinister statements of His
 enemies caused the
 people to become friendly and approach the Cause. In Persia the mullás went so
 far as to
 proclaim from the pulpits against the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh casting their
 turbans upon the
 ground—a sign of great agitation—and crying out, “O people! This
 Bahá’u’lláh is a sorcerer

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who is seeking to mesmerize you; he is alienating you from your own religion
 and making you
 his own followers. Beware! lest you read his book. Beware! lest you associate
 with his friends.”
 Bahá’u’lláh, speaking of these very ones who were attacking and decrying
 Him, said, “They
 are My heralds; they are the ones who are proclaiming My message and spreading
 My Word.
 Pray that they may be multiplied, pray that their number may increase and that
 they may cry
 out more loudly. The more they abuse Me by their words and the greater their
 agitation, the

more potent and mighty will be the efficacy of the Cause of God, the more
luminous the light
of the Word and the greater the radiance of the divine Sun. And eventually the
gloomy darkness
of the outer world will disappear, and the light of reality will shine until
the whole earth will
be effulgent with its glory.”
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16 November 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, p. 437)

Wherever the mention of Bahá'u'lláh rises up, that is the paradise of
Abhá. Wherever
purified, severed and illumined souls are found, that is the paradise of Bahá.
Tíhrán is the
paradise of Bahá'u'lláh, for souls are found there you cannot call human;
they are angels. In
reality, the Bahá'í friends in that city are of the heavenly host. Whenever
I think of them, I
become happy.
The Blessed Perfection suffered innumerable ordeals and calamities, but during
His
lifetime He trained in all regions many souls who were peerless. The purpose of
the appearance
of the Manifestations of God is the training of the people. That is the only
result of Their
mission, the real outcome. The outcome of the whole life of Jesus was the
training of eleven
disciples and two women. Why did He suffer troubles, ordeals and calamities?
For the training
of these few followers. That was the result of His life. The product of the
life of Christ was not
the churches but the illumined souls of those who believed in Him. Afterward,
they spread His
teachings.
It is my hope that you all may become the product of the life of
Bahá'u'lláh and the
outcomes of His heavenly training. When the people ask you, “What has
Bahá'u'lláh

accomplished?" say to them, "He has created these; He has trained us."

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17 November 1912

Talk at Genealogical Hall

252 West Fifty-eighth Street, New York

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 437-443)

This is a blessed meeting, for these revered souls have come together in complete unity and

with an intelligent purpose. It is an occasion of great joy to me. Before me are faces radiant

with the glad tidings of God, hearts aglow with the fire of the love of God, ears attuned to the

melodies of the Kingdom and eyes illumined by the signs and evidences of Divinity.

All created things have their degree, or stage, of maturity. The period of maturity in the life

of a tree is the time of its fruit bearing. The maturity of a plant is the time of its blossoming and

flower. The animal attains a stage of full growth and completeness, and in the human kingdom

man reaches his maturity when the lights of intelligence have their greatest power and

development.

From the beginning to the end of his life man passes through certain periods, or stages, each

of which is marked by certain conditions peculiar to itself. For instance, during the period of

childhood his conditions and requirements are characteristic of that degree of intelligence and

capacity. After a time he enters the period of youth, in which his former conditions and needs

are superseded by new requirements applicable to the advance in his degree. His faculties of

observation are broadened and deepened; his intelligent capacities are trained and awakened;

the limitations and environment of childhood no longer restrict his energies and

accomplishments. At last he passes out of the period of youth and enters the

stage, or station,
of maturity, which necessitates another transformation and corresponding
advance in his sphere
of life activity. New powers and perceptions clothe him, teaching and training
commensurate
with his progression occupy his mind, special bounties and bestowals descend in
proportion to
his increased capacities, and his former period of youth and its conditions
will no longer satisfy
his matured view and vision.
Similarly, there are periods and stages in the life of the aggregate world of
humanity, which
at one time was passing through its degree of childhood, at another its time of
youth but now
has entered its long presaged period of maturity, the evidences of which are
everywhere visible
and apparent. Therefore, the requirements and conditions of former periods have
changed and
merged into exigencies which distinctly characterize the present age of the
world of mankind.
That which was applicable to human needs during the early history of the race
could neither
meet nor satisfy the demands of this day and period of newness and
consummation. Humanity
has emerged from its former degrees of limitation and preliminary training. Man
must now
become imbued with new virtues and powers, new moralities, new capacities. New
bounties,
bestowals and perfections are awaiting and already descending upon him. The
gifts and graces
of the period of youth, although timely and sufficient during the adolescence
of the world of
mankind, are now incapable of meeting the requirements of its maturity. The
playthings of
childhood and infancy no longer satisfy or interest the adult mind.
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From every standpoint the world of humanity is undergoing a reformation. The
laws of
former governments and civilizations are in process of revision; scientific
ideas and theories
are developing and advancing to meet a new range of phenomena; invention and
discovery are
penetrating hitherto unknown fields, revealing new wonders and hidden secrets
of the material
universe; industries have vastly wider scope and production; everywhere the

world of mankind
is in the throes of evolutionary activity indicating the passing of the old
conditions and advent
of the new age of reformation. Old trees yield no fruitage; old ideas and
methods are obsolete
and worthless now. Old standards of ethics, moral codes and methods of living
in the past will
not suffice for the present age of advancement and progress.
This is the cycle of maturity and reformation in religion as well. Dogmatic
imitations of
ancestral beliefs are passing. They have been the axis around which religion
revolved but now
are no longer fruitful; on the contrary, in this day they have become the cause
of human
degradation and hindrance. Bigotry and dogmatic adherence to ancient beliefs
have become
the central and fundamental source of animosity among men, the obstacle to
human progress,
the cause of warfare and strife, the destroyer of peace, composure and welfare
in the world.
Consider conditions in the Balkans today: fathers, mothers, children in grief
and lamentation,
the foundations of life overturned, cities laid waste and fertile lands made
desolate by the
ravages of war. These conditions are the outcome of hostility and hatred
between nations and
peoples of religion who imitate and adhere to the forms and violate the spirit
and reality of the
divine teachings.
While this is true and apparent, it is, likewise, evident that the Lord of
mankind has
bestowed infinite bounties upon the world in this century of maturity and
consummation. The
ocean of divine mercy is surging, the vernal showers are descending, the Sun of
Reality is
shining gloriously. Heavenly teachings applicable to the advancement in human
conditions
have been revealed in this merciful age. This reformation and renewal of the
fundamental
reality of religion constitute the true and outworking spirit of modernism, the
unmistakable
light of the world, the manifest effulgence of the Word of God, the divine
remedy for all human
ailment and the bounty of eternal life to all mankind.
Bahá'u'lláh, the Sun of Truth, has dawned from the horizon of the Orient,
flooding all
regions with the light and life which will never pass away. His teachings,

which embody the
divine spirit of the age and are applicable to this period of maturity in the
life of the human
world, are:

- The oneness of the world of humanity
- The protection and guidance of the Holy Spirit
- The foundation of all religion is one
- Religion must be the cause of unity
- Religion must accord with science and reason
- Independent investigation of truth
- Equality between men and women
- The abandoning of all prejudices among mankind
- Universal peace

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- Universal education
- A universal language
- Solution of the economic problem
- An international tribunal.

Everyone who truly seeks and justly reflects will admit that the teachings of
the present day
emanating from mere human sources and authority are the cause of difficulty and
disagreement
amongst mankind, the very destroyers of humanity, whereas the teachings of
Bahá'u'lláh are
the very healing of the sick world, the remedy for every need and condition. In
them may be
found the realization of every desire and aspiration, the cause of the
happiness of the world of
humanity, the stimulus and illumination of mentality, the impulse for
advancement and uplift,
the basis of unity for all nations, the fountain source of love amongst
mankind, the center of
agreement, the means of peace and harmony, the one bond which will unite the
East and the
West.

After every night there is a morn. In the supreme wisdom of God it is decreed
that when
the gross darkness of religious hatred and hostility, the obscurity of
religious ignorance,
superstition and blind imitations cover the world, the Sun of Truth shall arise
and the spirit of
reality become manifest and reflected in human hearts. At such a time as this
Bahá'u'lláh
appeared upon the horizon of the Orient. For fifty years He endured the
greatest hardships and

ordeal, ever striving to dispel the darkness of religious conditions, to remove the cause of enmity and rancor, to awaken the world of humanity from the beds of negligence and heedlessness by the flashing light of the glorious glad tidings and trumpet tone of the heavenly call and summons. For the spread of this message He offered His life and bore every vicissitude.

... He was always under the threat and menace of the sword, yet He uplifted the standard of divine teachings and flooded the world of the East with illumination. In the Orient today the light of the heavenly glad tidings is visible everywhere, the divine call is heard, the effulgence of the Sun of Reality is shining, the precious rain is pouring down from the clouds of mercy, and the breaths of the Holy Spirit are bestowing fresh life upon the hearts of men. Ere long the darkness will pass away entirely, and the regions of the East will become completely illumined; enmity, hatred, ignorance and bigotry will no longer remain; the satanic powers which destroy human equality and religious unity will be dethroned, and the nations will dwell in peace and harmony under the overspreading banner of the oneness of humanity. Therefore, we supplicate the Lord our God with sincere and contrite hearts, asking aid and assistance in the accomplishment of this mighty end: that the nations shall be unified in the Word of God; that war, enmity and hatred between races, religions, native lands and denominations shall disappear and be forever unknown; and that peoples and nations shall spiritually embrace each other in the indissoluble bond and power of the love of God. Then will the world of humanity become radiant and the human race enjoy to the fullest capacity the graces of divine bestowal.

So long as religious discord and enmity continue among mankind, the world of humanity will find neither happiness, rest nor composure. Pray that God may assist in this heavenly undertaking, that the world of mankind shall be saved from the ordeals of ignorance, blindness and spiritual death. Then will you behold light upon light, joy upon joy, absolute happiness reigning everywhere, the people of the religions

consorting together in fragrance and felicity, this world in its maturity
becoming the reflection
of the eternal Kingdom and this terrestrial abode of man the very paradise of
God. Pray for
this! Pray for this!
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O my God! O my God! Verily, Thou dost perceive those who are present here
turning unto
Thee, relying upon Thee. O my Lord! O my Lord! Illumine their eyes by the light
of love, and
enkindle their hearts by the rays streaming from the heaven of the Supreme
Concourse. Suffer
them to become the signs of Thy bestowal amongst the people and the standards
of Thy grace
amongst mankind. O Lord! Make those who are here the hosts of heaven, and
through their
service and instrumentality subdue the hearts of humanity. Cause Thy great
mercy to descend
upon them, and render all Thy friends victorious. Direct them that they may
turn toward Thy
Kingdom of mercy and proclaim Thy name among the people. May they lead the
people to the
bounty of Thy most great guidance.
O Lord! O Lord! Cast the glance of Thy mercy upon them all.
O Lord! O Lord! Ordain for them the beauty of Thy holiness in Thy Kingdom of
eternity.
O Lord! O Lord! Protect them in every test, make every foot firm in the pathway
of Thy
love, and help them to be as mighty mountains in Thy Cause so that their faith
shall not be
wavering, their sight shall not be dimmed nor hindered from witnessing the
lights emanating
from Thy supreme Kingdom. Verily, Thou art the Generous. Thou art the Almighty.
Verily,
Thou art the Clement, the Merciful.

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18 November 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank K. Moxey

575 Riverside Drive, New York
Notes by Esther Foster
(Promulgation, pp. 442-447)

I offer thanks to God for this meeting with you. From the outer standpoint such meetings are inconceivable, for we are orientals whereas you are occidentals. Between us there is no patriotic, linguistic, racial, commercial nor political relation. No worldly bond nor connection of any kind exists between us that would justify such a gathering as this. The love of God has brought us together, and this is the best of means and motive. Every other bond of friendship is limited in effectiveness, but fellowship based upon the love of God is unlimited, everlasting, divine and radiant. Therefore, we must be thankful to God for uniting us in love and agreement, praise Him for creating such affinity between us that those from the faraway Orient may associate with the beloved ones of the West in the utmost fragrance. Surely for everything there is an all-comprehending wisdom, especially for the great and important affairs of life. The supreme and most important happening in the human world is the Manifestation of God and the descent of the law of God. The holy, divine Manifestations did not reveal themselves for the purpose of founding a nation, sect or faction. They did not appear in order that a certain number might acknowledge Their Prophethood. They did not declare Their heavenly mission and message in order to lay the foundation for a religious belief. Even Christ did not become manifest that we should merely believe in Him as the Christ, follow Him and adore His mention. All these are limited in scope and requirement, whereas the reality of Christ is an unlimited essence. The infinite and unlimited Reality cannot be bounded by any limitation. Nay, rather, Christ appeared in order to illumine the world of humanity, to render the earthly world celestial, to make the human kingdom a realm of angels, to unite the hearts, to enkindle the light of love in human souls, so that such souls might become independent, attaining complete unity and fellowship, turning to God, entering into the divine Kingdom,

receiving the bounties and bestowals of God and partaking of the manna from
 heaven. Through
 Christ they were intended to be baptized by the Holy Spirit, attain a new
 spirit and realize the
 everlasting life. All the holy precepts and the announcements of prophetic laws
 were for these
 various and heavenly purposes. Therefore, we offer thanks to God that although
 no earthly
 relation obtains among us, yet—praise be to God!—ideal and divine bonds
 blend us together.
 We have gathered here in this meeting, eagerly anticipating the showing forth
 of the divine
 bestowals.
 In past centuries the nations of the world have imagined that the law of God
 demanded
 blind imitation of ancestral forms of belief and worship. For example, the Jews
 were captives
 of hereditary racial religious observances. The Muslims, likewise, have been
 held in the
 bondage of traditionary forms and ceremonials. The Christians also have been
 implicit
 followers of ancient tradition and hereditary teaching. At the same time the
 basic foundation
 of the religion of God, which was ever the principle of love, unity and the
 fellowship of
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humanity, has been forsaken and cast aside, each religious system holding
 tenaciously to
 imitations of ancestral forms as the supreme essential. Therefore, hatred and
 hostility have
 appeared in the world instead of the divine fruitage of unity and love. By
 reason of this it has
 been impossible for the followers of religion to meet together in fellowship
 and agreement.
 Even contact and communication have been considered contaminating, and the
 outcome has
 been a condition of complete alienation and mutual bigotry. There has been no
 investigation of
 the essential underlying basis of reality. One whose father was a Jew
 invariably proved to be a
 Jew, a Muslim was born of a Muslim, a Buddhist was a Buddhist because of the
 faith of his
 father before him, and so on. In brief, religion was a heritage descending from
 father to son,
 ancestry to posterity, without investigation of the fundamental reality;

consequently, all religionists were veiled, obscured and at variance. Praise be to God! We are living in this most radiant century wherein human perceptions have developed and investigations of real foundations characterize mankind. Individually and collectively man is proving and penetrating into the reality of outer and inner conditions. Therefore, it has come to pass that we are renouncing all that savors of blind imitation, and impartially and independently investigating truth. Let us understand what constitutes the reality of the divine religions. If a Christian sets aside traditionary forms and blind imitation of ceremonials and investigates the reality of the Gospels, he will discover that the foundation principles of the teachings of Christ were mercy, love, fellowship, benevolence, altruism, the resplendence or radiance of divine bestowals, acquisition of the breaths of the Holy Spirit and oneness with God. Furthermore, he will learn that Christ declared that the Father "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." The meaning of this declaration is that the mercy of God encircles all mankind, that not a single individual is deprived of the mercy of God, and no soul is denied the resplendent bestowals of God. The whole human race is submerged in the sea of the mercy of the Lord, and we are all the sheep of the one divine Shepherd. Whatever shortcomings exist among us must be remedied. For example, those who are ignorant must be educated so that they may become wise; the sick must be treated until they recover; those who are immature must be trained in order to reach maturity; those asleep must be awakened. All this must be accomplished through love and not through hatred and hostility. Furthermore, Jesus Christ, referring to the prophecy of Isaiah, spoke of those who having eyes, see not, having ears, hear not, having hearts, understand not; yet they were to be healed. Therefore, it is evident that the bounties of Christ transformed the eye which was blind into a seeing one, rendered the ear which was formerly deaf, attentive, and made the hard, callous heart tender and sensitive. In

other words, the meaning is that although the people possess external eyes, yet the insight, or perception, of the soul is blind; although the outer ear hears, the spiritual hearing is deaf; although they possess conscious hearts, they are without illumination; and the bounties of Christ save souls from these conditions. It is evident, then, that the manifestation of the Messiah was synonymous with universal mercy. His providence was universal, and His teachings were for all. His lights were not restricted to a few. Every Christ came to the world of mankind. Therefore, we must investigate the foundation of divine religion, discover its reality, reestablish it and spread its message throughout the world so that it may become the source of illumination and enlightenment to mankind, the spiritually dead become alive, the spiritually blind receive sight and those who are inattentive to God become awakened. The teachings and ordinances of the divine religions are of two kinds. The first are spiritual and essential in nature—such as faith in God, faith in Christ, faith in Moses, faith in Abraham, faith in Muhammad, the love of God and the oneness of the world of humanity. These divine

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principles shall be spread throughout the world. Strife and enmity shall disappear, ignorance, hatred and hostility cease and all the human race be bound together. The second kind of ordinances and teachings concern the outer conditions and transactions of the world of mankind. They are the nonessential, accidental or temporary laws of human affairs which are subject to change and transformation according to the exigencies of time and place. For instance, during the time of Moses divorce was permitted, but in the time of Christ it was made unlawful. In the Torah there are ten commandments concerning retribution for murder, which would not be possible to enforce at the present time and under existing conditions of the world. Therefore, these nonessential, temporary laws are superseded and abrogated to suit the

exigencies and requirements of successive periods.
But the followers of the divine religions have turned away from the principles and ordinances which are essential and unchanging in the Word of God, forsaking those fundamental realities which have to do with the life of the human world, the eternal life—such as the love of God, faith in God, philanthropy, knowledge, spiritual perception, divine guidance—holding these to be contingent and nonessential while wrangling and disagreeing over such questions as whether divorce is lawful or unlawful, or whether this or that observance of a minor law is orthodox and true. The Jews consider divorce lawful; the Catholic Christians deem it unlawful; the outcome is discord and hostility between them. If they would investigate the one fundamental reality underlying the laws revealed by Moses and Christ, this condition of hatred and misunderstanding would be dispelled and divine unity prevail. Christ commanded that if we are smitten upon the right cheek, we should turn the other cheek also. Consider what is happening now in the Balkans. What conformity with the teachings of Christ do we witness in that deplorable picture? Has not man absolutely forgotten and forsaken the divine command of Christ? In fact, such discord and warfare are evidences of disagreement upon the non-essential precepts and laws of religious belief. Investigation of the one fundamental reality and allegiance to the essential unchanging principles of the Word of God can alone establish unity and love in human hearts. Throughout the Orient in the nineteenth century spiritual darkness prevailed, and the religions were submerged in the ocean of blind imitations and adherence to hereditary forms. There was no trace of the essential foundation of divine revelation. Because of this, hostility and hatred surrounded mankind; discord, rancor and warfare afflicted humanity; blood overspread the horizons of the eastern world. Instead of fellowship and agreement, religion had become the cause of hatred; instead of unity, it produced discord, enmity and strife. The conditions were similar to those existing in the Balkans today, where it might appear as if the

basis of divine religion were war and conflict, the adherents of one religion
 seeking to extirpate
 and destroy another, and the adherents of both imbued with the fanatical
 impulse to kill. They
 consider the pathway to the good pleasure of God a pathway of blood, and the
 more a religionist
 kills, the nearer he draws to God. These are the results of blind imitations.
 How gloomy and
 destructive to humanity is such an outcome! If this be the foundation of divine
 religion, its
 absence is preferable; for even the infidels do not shed blood in this way, nor
 are they hostile
 toward each other. The forces of hostility and strife are the religions of the
 present day, and
 that which should have contributed to the illumination and betterment of the
 world has become
 productive of gross darkness and degradation.
 To resume: Consider how similar blind imitations had made the darkness in the
 Orient allencircling. At such a time Bahá'u'lláh dawned from the eastern
 horizon like the glory of the
 sun. He renewed the basis of the religions of God, destroyed blind adherence to
 ancestral forms
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and established in their stead love and spiritual fellowship so that no strife,
 discord or hostility
 remained. This reconciliation of divergent sects is visible and evident. They
 now live together
 in love and unity. If you should enter one of their meetings, you would realize
 that they have
 become as one race, one native land, one religion; that they associate together
 in brotherhood
 and agreement. Praise be to God! These blind imitations and this darkness have
 ceased to exist,
 and the reality of the oneness of humanity has been practically proven.
 I consider the American people a highly civilized and intelligent nation, a
 nation
 investigating truth and reality. It is my hope that through the efforts of this
 noble nation the
 solidarity of humanity may be continually advanced, that the illumination of
 the human world
 may become widespread, that the banner of universal peace may be held aloft,
 the lamp of the
 oneness of the human world be ignited and the hearts of the East and West be
 conjoined. Then
 the reality of the divine religions shall become resplendent and refulgent,

indicating that they
were meant to be the cause of unity and love and that through them heavenly
bestowals have
ever been conferring light upon the human world.

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23 November 1912

Talk at Banquet

Great Northern Hotel

118 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 447-448)

Throughout the world there are innumerable meetings and assemblages, more or
less

important according to their measure of contribution to human betterment, yet
limited in their

purpose and object to material questions and outcomes. They are political,
commercial or

educational in character; they seek to promote economic advancement, further
agricultural

purposes, encourage scientific research and assist discoveries; they provide
for the

establishment of new institutions, plan financial measures and agree upon laws
of civic and

social control. Such meetings are useful, but their influence and intention do
not extend beyond

the material welfare and government of mankind—that is to say, they serve
material

civilization.

This meeting of yours tonight is very different in character. It is a universal
gathering; it is

heavenly and divine in purpose because it serves the oneness of the world of
humanity and

promotes international peace. It is devoted to the solidarity and brotherhood
of the human race,

the spiritual welfare of mankind, unity of religious belief through knowledge
of God and the

reconciliation of religious teaching with the principles of science and reason.

It promotes love

and fraternity among all humankind, seeks to abolish and destroy barriers which
separate the

human family, proclaims the equality of man and woman, instills divine precepts

and morals,
illuminates and quickens minds with heavenly perception, attracts the infinite
bestowals of God,
removes racial, national and religious prejudices and establishes the
foundation of the heavenly
Kingdom in the hearts of all nations and peoples. The effect of such an
assembly as this is
conducive to divine fellowship and strengthening of the bond which cements and
unifies hearts.

This is the indestructible bond of spirit which conjoins the East and West. By
it the very

foundations of race prejudice are uprooted and destroyed, the banner of
spiritual democracy is
hoisted aloft, the world of religion is purified from superannuated beliefs and
hereditary

imitations of forms, and the oneness of the reality underlying all religions is
revealed and

disclosed. For such a meeting is established upon the very foundation of the
laws of God.

Therefore, in its constraining spiritual bond it unites all religions and
reconciles all sects,

denominations and factions in kindness and love toward each other. In this
way and by the

instrumentality of such a gathering the causes of animosity, hatred and bigotry
are removed,

and enmity and discord pass away entirely. Every limiting and restricting
movement or meeting

of mere personal interest is human in nature. Every universal movement
unlimited in scope and

purpose is divine. The Cause of God is advanced whenever and wherever a
universal meeting

is established among mankind.

Therefore, endeavor that your attitudes and intentions here tonight be
universal and

altruistic in nature. Consecrate and devote yourselves to the betterment and
service of all the

human race. Let no barrier of ill feeling or personal prejudice exist between
these souls, for

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when your motives are universal and your intentions heavenly in character, when
your

aspirations are centered in the Kingdom, there is no doubt whatever that you
will become the

recipients of the bounty and good pleasure of God.

This meeting is, verily, the noblest and most worthy of all meetings in the

world because
 of these underlying spiritual and universal purposes. Such a banquet and
 assemblage command
 the sincere devotion of all present and invite the downpouring of the blessings
 of God.
 Therefore, be ye assured and confident that the confirmations of God are
 descending upon you,
 the assistance of God will be given unto you, the breaths of the Holy Spirit
 will quicken you
 with a new life, the Sun of Reality will shine gloriously upon you, and the
 fragrant breezes of
 the rose gardens of divine mercy will waft through the windows of your souls.
 Be ye confident
 and steadfast; your services are confirmed by the powers of heaven, for your
 intentions are
 lofty, your purposes pure and worthy. God is the helper of those souls whose
 aim is to serve
 humanity and whose efforts and endeavors are devoted to the good and betterment
 of all
 mankind.

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29 November 1912
 Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney
 780 West End Avenue, New York
 Notes by Esther Foster
 (Promulgation, pp. 449-452)

This evening I wish to speak to you concerning the mystery of sacrifice. There
 are two
 kinds of sacrifice: the physical and the spiritual. The explanation made by the
 churches
 concerning this subject is, in reality, superstition. For instance, it is
 recorded in the Gospel that
 Christ said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man
 eat of this bread,
 he shall live for ever." He also said, "This [wine] is my blood ... which
 is shed for many for
 the remission of sins." These verses have been interpreted by the churches in
 such a
 superstitious way that it is impossible for human reason to understand or
 accept the explanation.
 They say that Adam disobeyed the command of God and partook of the fruit of the

forbidden tree, thereby committing a sin which was transmitted as a heritage to His posterity.

They teach that because of Adam's sin all His descendants have, likewise, committed transgression and have become responsible through inheritance; that, consequently, all mankind deserves punishment and must make retribution; and that God sent forth His Son as a sacrifice in order that man might be forgiven and the human race delivered from the consequences of Adam's transgression.

We wish to consider these statements from the standpoint of reason. Could we conceive of the Divinity, Who is Justice itself, inflicting punishment upon the posterity of Adam for Adam's own sin and disobedience? Even if we should see a governor, an earthly ruler punishing a son for the wrongdoing of his father, we would look upon that ruler as an unjust man. Granted the father committed a wrong, what was the wrong committed by the son? There is no connection between the two. Adam's sin was not the sin of His posterity, especially as Adam is a thousand generations back of the man today. If the father of a thousand generations committed a sin, is it just to demand that the present generation should suffer the consequences thereof?

There are other questions and evidences to be considered. Abraham was a Manifestation of God and a descendant of Adam; likewise, Ishmael, Isaac, Jeremiah and the whole line of prophets including David, Solomon and Aaron were among His posterity. Were all these holy men condemned to a realm of punishment because of a deed committed by the first father, because of a mistake said to have been made by their mutual and remotest ancestor Adam? The explanation is made that when Christ came and sacrificed Himself, all the line of holy Prophets who preceded Him became free from sin and punishment. Even a child could not justly make such an assertion. These interpretations and statements are due to a misunderstanding of the meanings of the Bible.

In order to understand the reality of sacrifice let us consider the crucifixion and death of

Jesus Christ. It is true that He sacrificed Himself for our sake. What is the meaning of this?

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When Christ appeared, He knew that He must proclaim Himself in opposition to all the nations

and peoples of the earth. He knew that mankind would arise against Him and inflict upon Him

all manner of tribulations. There is no doubt that one who put forth such a claim as Christ

announced would arouse the hostility of the world and be subjected to personal abuse. He

realized that His blood would be shed and His body rent by violence.

Notwithstanding His

knowledge of what would befall Him, He arose to proclaim His message, suffered all

tribulation and hardships from the people and finally offered His life as a sacrifice in order to

illumine humanity—gave His blood in order to guide the world of mankind. He accepted every

calamity and suffering in order to guide men to the truth. Had He desired to save His own life,

and were He without wish to offer Himself in sacrifice, He would not have been able to guide

a single soul. There was no doubt that His blessed blood would be shed and His body broken.

Nevertheless, that Holy Soul accepted calamity and death in His love for mankind. This is one

of the meanings of sacrifice.

As to the second meaning: He said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven.”

It was not the body of Christ which came from heaven. His body came from the womb of Mary,

but the Christly perfections descended from heaven; the reality of Christ came down from

heaven. The Spirit of Christ and not the body descended from heaven. The body of Christ was

but human. There could be no question that the physical body was born from the womb of

Mary. But the reality of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the perfections of Christ all came from

heaven. Consequently, by saying He was the bread which came from heaven He meant that the

perfections which He showed forth were divine perfections, that the blessings within Him were

heavenly gifts and bestowals, that His light was the light of Reality. He said,

“If any man eat
 of this bread, he shall live for ever.” That is to say, whosoever assimilates
 these divine
 perfections which are within me will never die; whosoever has a share and
 partakes of these
 heavenly bounties I embody will find eternal life; he who takes unto himself
 these divine lights
 shall find everlasting life. How manifest the meaning is! How evident! For the
 soul which
 acquires divine perfections and seeks heavenly illumination from the teachings
 of Christ will
 undoubtedly live eternally. This is also one of the mysteries of sacrifice.
 In reality, Abraham sacrificed Himself, for He brought heavenly teachings to
 the world and
 conferred heavenly food upon mankind.
 As to the third meaning of sacrifice, it is this: If you plant a seed in the
 ground, a tree will
 become manifest from that seed. The seed sacrifices itself to the tree that
 will come from it.
 The seed is outwardly lost, destroyed; but the same seed which is sacrificed
 will be absorbed
 and embodied in the tree, its blossoms, fruit and branches. If the identity of
 that seed had not
 been sacrificed to the tree which became manifest from it, no branches,
 blossoms or fruits
 would have been forthcoming. Christ outwardly disappeared. His personal
 identity became
 hidden from the eyes, even as the identity of the seed disappeared; but the
 bounties, divine
 qualities and perfections of Christ became manifest in the Christian community
 which Christ
 founded through sacrificing Himself. When you look at the tree, you will
 realize that the
 perfections, blessings, properties and beauty of the seed have become manifest
 in the branches,
 twigs, blossoms and fruit; consequently, the seed has sacrificed itself to the
 tree. Had it not
 done so, the tree would not have come into existence. Christ, like unto the
 seed, sacrificed
 Himself for the tree of Christianity. Therefore, His perfections, bounties,
 favors, lights and
 graces became manifest in the Christian community, for the coming of which He
 sacrificed
 Himself.

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As to the fourth significance of sacrifice: It is the principle that a reality sacrifices its own characteristics. Man must sever himself from the influences of the world of matter, from the world of nature and its laws; for the material world is the world of corruption and death. It is the world of evil and darkness, of animalism and ferocity, bloodthirstiness, ambition and avarice, of self-worship, egotism and passion; it is the world of nature. Man must strip himself of all these imperfections, must sacrifice these tendencies which are peculiar to the outer and material world of existence.

On the other hand, man must acquire heavenly qualities and attain divine attributes. He must become the image and likeness of God. He must seek the bounty of the eternal, become the manifestor of the love of God, the light of guidance, the tree of life and the depository of the bounties of God. That is to say, man must sacrifice the qualities and attributes of the world of nature for the qualities and attributes of the world of God. For instance, consider the substance we call iron. Observe its qualities; it is solid, black, cold. These are the characteristics of iron. When the same iron absorbs heat from the fire, it sacrifices its attribute of solidity for the attribute of fluidity. It sacrifices its attribute of darkness for the attribute of light, which is a quality of the fire. It sacrifices its attribute of coldness to the quality of heat which the fire possesses so that in the iron there remains no solidity, darkness or cold. It becomes illumined and transformed, having sacrificed its qualities to the qualities and attributes of the fire.

Likewise, man, when separated and severed from the attributes of the world of nature, sacrifices the qualities and exigencies of that mortal realm and manifests the perfections of the Kingdom, just as the qualities of the iron disappeared and the qualities of the fire appeared in their place.

Every man trained through the teachings of God and illumined by the light of His guidance, who becomes a believer in God and His signs and is enkindled with the fire of the love of God, sacrifices the imperfections of nature for the sake of divine perfections.

Consequently, every
perfect person, every illumined, heavenly individual stands in the station of
sacrifice. It is my
hope that through the assistance and providence of God and through the bounties
of the
Kingdom of Abhá you may be entirely severed from the imperfections of the
world of nature,
purified from selfish, human desires, receiving life from the Kingdom of Abhá
and attaining
heavenly graces. May the divine light become manifest upon your faces, the
fragrances of
holiness refresh your nostrils and the breath of the Holy Spirit quicken you
with eternal life.

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2 December 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney
780 West End Avenue, New York
Notes by Edna McKinney
(Promulgation, pp. 452-453)

These are the days of my farewell to you, for I am sailing on the fifth of the month.

Wherever I went in this country, I returned always to New York City. This is my fourth or fifth

visit here, and now I am going away to the Orient. It will be difficult for me to visit this country

again except it be the will of God. I must, therefore, give you my instructions and exhortations

today, and these are none other than the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

You must manifest complete love and affection toward all mankind. Do not exalt yourselves above others, but consider all as your equals, recognizing them as the servants of

one God. Know that God is compassionate toward all; therefore, love all from the depths of

your hearts, prefer all religionists before yourselves, be filled with love for every race, and be

kind toward the people of all nationalities. Never speak disparagingly of

others, but praise
 without distinction. Pollute not your tongues by speaking evil of another.
 Recognize your
 enemies as friends, and consider those who wish you evil as the wishers of
 good. You must not
 see evil as evil and then compromise with your opinion, for to treat in a
 smooth, kindly way
 one whom you consider evil or an enemy is hypocrisy, and this is not worthy or
 allowable. You
 must consider your enemies as your friends, look upon your evil-wishers as your
 well-wishers
 and treat them accordingly. Act in such a way that your heart may be free from
 hatred. Let not
 your heart be offended with anyone. If someone commits an error and wrong
 toward you, you
 must instantly forgive him. Do not complain of others. Refrain from
 reprimanding them, and
 if you wish to give admonition or advice, let it be offered in such a way that
 it will not burden
 the hearer. Turn all your thoughts toward bringing joy to hearts. Beware!
 Beware! lest ye offend
 any heart. Assist the world of humanity as much as possible. Be the source of
 consolation to
 every sad one, assist every weak one, be helpful to every indigent one, care
 for every sick one,
 be the cause of glorification to every lowly one, and shelter those who are
 overshadowed by
 fear.
 In brief, let each one of you be as a lamp shining forth with the light of the
 virtues of the
 world of humanity. Be trustworthy, sincere, affectionate and replete with
 chastity. Be
 illumined, be spiritual, be divine, be glorious, be quickened of God, be a
 Bahá'í.

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2 December 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney

780 West End Avenue, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 453-457)

You are all welcome. This is a goodly assemblage. Praise be to God! The hearts are directed to the Kingdom of Abhá, and souls are rejoiced by the glad tidings of God. I will speak to you concerning the special teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. All the divine principles announced by the tongue of the Prophets of the past are to be found in the words of Bahá'u'lláh; but in addition to these He has revealed certain new teachings which are not found in any of the sacred Books of former times. I shall mention some of them; the others, which are many in number, may be found in the Books, Tablets and Epistles written by Bahá'u'lláh—such as the Hidden Words, the Glad Tidings, the Words of Paradise, Tajallíyát, Tarázát and others. Likewise, in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas there are new teachings which cannot be found in any of the past Books or Epistles of the Prophets. A fundamental teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the oneness of the world of humanity. Addressing mankind, He says, “Ye are all leaves of one tree and the fruits of one branch.” By this it is meant that the world of humanity is like a tree, the nations or peoples are the different limbs or branches of that tree, and the individual human creatures are as the fruits and blossoms thereof. In this way Bahá'u'lláh expressed the oneness of humankind, whereas in all religious teachings of the past the human world has been represented as divided into two parts: one known as the people of the Book of God, or the pure tree, and the other the people of infidelity and error, or the evil tree. The former were considered as belonging to the faithful, and the others to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel—one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy, and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. Bahá'u'lláh removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity, and this principle is specialized in His teachings, for He has submerged all mankind in the sea of divine generosity. Some are asleep; they need to be awakened. Some are ailing; they need to be healed. Some are immature as children; they need to be trained. But all are recipients of the bounty and bestowals of God. Another new principle revealed by Bahá'u'lláh is the injunction to investigate truth—that

is to say, no man should blindly follow his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears and investigate the truth himself in order that he may follow the truth instead of blind acquiescence and imitation of ancestral beliefs.

Bahá'u'lláh has announced that the foundation of all the religions of God is one, that oneness is truth and truth is oneness which does not admit of plurality. This teaching is new and specialized to this Manifestation.

He sets forth a new principle for this day in the announcement that religion must be the cause of unity, harmony and agreement among mankind. If it is the cause of discord and

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hostility, if it leads to separation and creates conflict, the absence of religion would be preferable in the world.

Furthermore, He proclaims that religion must be in harmony with science and reason. If it does not conform to science and reconcile with reason, it is superstition. Down to the present day it has been customary for man to accept a religious teaching, even though it was not in accord with human reason and judgment. The harmony of religious belief with reason is a new

vista which Bahá'u'lláh has opened for the soul of man.

He establishes the equality of man and woman. This is peculiar to the teachings of

Bahá'u'lláh, for all other religions have placed man above woman.

A new religious principle is that prejudice and fanaticism—whether sectarian, denominational, patriotic or political—are destructive to the foundation of human solidarity;

therefore, man should release himself from such bonds in order that the oneness of the world of humanity may become manifest.

Universal peace is assured by Bahá'u'lláh as a fundamental accomplishment of the religion

of God—that peace shall prevail among nations, governments and peoples, among religions,

races and all conditions of mankind. This is one of the special characteristics of the Word of

God revealed in this Manifestation.

Bahá'u'lláh declares that all mankind should attain knowledge and acquire

an education.

This is a necessary principle of religious belief and observance, characteristically new in this dispensation.

He has set forth the solution and provided the remedy for the economic question. No

religious Books of the past Prophets speak of this important human problem.

He has ordained and established the House of Justice, which is endowed with a political as

well as a religious function, the consummate union and blending of church and state. This

institution is under the protecting power of Bahá'u'lláh Himself. A

universal, or international,

House of Justice shall also be organized. Its rulings shall be in accordance with the commands

and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, and that which the Universal House of Justice ordains shall be

obeyed by all mankind. This international House of Justice shall be appointed and organized

from the Houses of Justice of the whole world, and all the world shall come under its

administration.

As to the most great characteristic of the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, a specific teaching not

given by any of the Prophets of the past: It is the ordination and appointment of the Center of

the Covenant. By this appointment and provision He has safeguarded and protected the religion

of God against differences and schisms, making it impossible for anyone to create a new sect

or faction of belief. To ensure unity and agreement He has entered into a Covenant with all the

people of the world, including the interpreter and explainer of His teachings, so that no one

may interpret or explain the religion of God according to his own view or opinion and thus

create a sect founded upon his individual understanding of the divine Words.

The Book of the

Covenant or Testament of Bahá'u'lláh is the means of preventing such a possibility, for

whosoever shall speak from the authority of himself alone shall be degraded. Be ye informed

and cognizant of this. Beware lest anyone shall secretly question or deny this to you. There are

some people of self-will and desire who do not communicate their intentions to you in clear

language. They envelop their meanings in secret statements and insinuations.

For instance, they
praise a certain individual, saying he is wise and learned, that he was
glorified in the presence
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of Bahá'u'lláh, conveying this to you in an insidious way or by
innuendos. Be ye aware of this!
Be awakened and enlightened! For Christ has said that no one hides the lamp
under a bushel.
The purport of my admonition is that certain people will endeavor to influence
you in the
direction of their own personal views and opinions. Therefore, be upon your
guard in order that
none may assail the oneness and integrity of Bahá'u'lláh's Cause.
Praise be to God!
Bahá'u'lláh left nothing unsaid. He explained everything. He left no room
for anything further
to be said. Yet there are some who for the sake of personal interest and
prestige will attempt to
sow the seeds of sedition and disloyalty among you. To protect and safeguard
the religion of
God from this and all other attack, the Center of the Covenant has been named
and appointed
by Bahá'u'lláh. Therefore, if anyone should set forth a statement in
praise or recognition of
another than this appointed Center, you must ask him to produce a written proof
of the authority
he follows. Let him show you a trace from the pen of the Center of the Covenant
Himself,
substantiating his praise and support of any other than the rightful one.
Inform him that you are
not permitted to accept the words of everyone. Say to him, "It is possible to
love and praise a
person today, to accept and follow another tomorrow and still another next day.
Therefore, we
cannot afford to listen to this or that individual. Where are your proofs and
writings? Where is
your authority from the pen of the Center of the Covenant?"
My purpose is to explain to you that it is your duty to guard the religion of
God so that none
shall be able to assail it outwardly or inwardly. If you find harmful teachings
are being set forth
by some individual, no matter who that individual be, even though he should be
my own son,
know, verily, that I am completely severed from him. If anyone speaks against
the Covenant,

even though he should be my son, know that I am opposed to him. Those who speak falsehoods,
who covet worldly things and seek to accumulate the riches of this earth are not of me. But
when you find a person living up to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh,
following the precepts of the
Hidden Words, know that he belongs to Bahá'u'lláh; and, verily, I
proclaim that he is of me.
If, on the other hand, you see anyone whose deeds and conduct are contrary to
and not in
conformity with the good pleasure of the Blessed Perfection and against the
spirit of the Hidden
Words, let that be your standard and criterion of judgment against him, for
know that I am
altogether severed from him no matter who he may be. This is the truth.
The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are boundless and illimitable. You have
asked me what new
principles have been revealed by Him. I have mentioned a few only. There are
many others,
but time does not permit their mention tonight. I, therefore, pray to God that
you may be
strengthened in good deeds. I pray that God may confirm you in order that you
may live
according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.
Upon ye be Bahá'u'l-Abhá!
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3 December 1912

Talk at Home of Dr. and Mrs. Florian Krug
830 Park Avenue, New York
(Promulgation, pp. 457-458)

You have assembled here this afternoon in the utmost love, engaged in the commemoration of God. It is my hope that this gathering may increase in number day by day; that you may become more and more attracted, more spiritual, more illumined, acquire knowledge of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh from each other and be able to spread the message of truth. May your hearts become so attracted that the instant a question is asked, you will be able to give the right answer and that the truth of the Holy Spirit may speak through your tongues. Be ye helpful through the providence and favor of the Blessed Perfection, for His favors change a drop into an ocean, cause a seed to become a tree and make an atom as glorious as the sun. His graces are boundless. The treasure houses of God are filled with bounties. God, Who hath shown favors unto others, will certainly bestow favors upon you. I offer supplication to the Kingdom of Abhá and seek extraordinary blessings and confirmations in your behalf in order that your tongues may become fluent, your hearts like clear mirrors flooded with the rays of the Sun of Truth, your thoughts expanded, your comprehension more vivid and that you may progress in the plane of human perfections.

Until man acquires perfections himself, he will not be able to teach perfections to others.

Unless man attains life himself, he cannot convey life to others. Unless he finds light, he cannot reflect light. We must, therefore, endeavor ourselves to attain to the perfections of the world of humanity, lay hold of everlasting life and seek the divine spirit in order that we may thereby

be enabled to confer life upon others, be enabled to breathe life into others.

You must offer supplications unto the Kingdom of Abhá and seek eternal bounties from

Him. You must pray that your hearts may become filled with glorious lights, even as a purified

mirror; then will the lights of the Sun of Truth shine therein. You must supplicate and pray to

God every night and every day, seeking His assistance and help, saying:

O Lord! We are weak; strengthen us. O God! We are ignorant; make us knowing. O Lord!

We are poor; make us wealthy. O God! We are dead; quicken us. O Lord! We are humiliation

itself; glorify us in Thy Kingdom. If Thou dost assist us, O Lord, we shall become as

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scintillating stars. If Thou dost not assist us, we shall become lower than the earth. O Lord!

Strengthen us. O God! Confer victory upon us. O God! Enable us to conquer self and overcome

desire. O Lord! Deliver us from the bondage of the material world. O Lord!

Quicken us through

the breath of the Holy Spirit in order that we may arise to serve Thee, engage in worshipping

Thee and exert ourselves in Thy Kingdom with the utmost sincerity. O Lord, Thou art powerful.

O God, Thou art forgiving. O Lord, Thou art compassionate.

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3 December 1912

Talk to Mr. Kinney's Bible Class

780 West End Avenue, New York

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 458-460)

I have been informed that the purpose of your class meeting is to study the significances and mysteries of the Holy Scriptures and understand the meaning of the divine Testaments. It is a cause of great happiness to me that you are turning unto the Kingdom of God, that you desire to approach the presence of God and to become informed of the realities and precepts of God. It is my hope that you may put forth your most earnest endeavor to accomplish this end, that you may investigate and study the Holy Scriptures word by word so that you may attain knowledge of the mysteries hidden therein. Be not satisfied with words, but seek to understand the spiritual meanings hidden in the heart of the words. The Jews read the Old Testament night and day, memorizing its words and texts yet without comprehending a single meaning or inner significance, for had they understood the real meanings of the Old Testament, they would have become believers in Christ, inasmuch as the Old Testament was revealed to prepare His coming. As the Jewish doctors and rabbis did not believe in Christ, it is evident that they were ignorant of the real significance of the Old Testament. It is difficult to comprehend even the words of a philosopher; how much more difficult it is to understand the Words of God. The divine Words are not to be taken according to their outer sense. They are symbolical and contain realities of spiritual meaning. For instance, in the book of Solomon's songs you will read about the bride and bridegroom. It is evident that the physical bride and bridegroom are not intended. Obviously, these are symbols conveying a hidden and inner significance. In the same way the Revelations of St. John are not to be taken literally, but spiritually. These are the mysteries of God. It is not the reading of the words that profits you; it is the understanding of their meanings. Therefore, pray God that you may be enabled to comprehend the mysteries of the divine Testaments. Consider the symbolical meanings of the Words and teachings of Christ. He said, "I am the

living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever.”

When the Jews heard this, they took it literally and failed to understand the significance of His meaning and teaching. The spiritual truth which Christ wished to convey to them was that the reality of Divinity within Him was like a blessing which had come down from heaven and that he who partook of this blessing should never die. That is to say, bread was the symbol of the perfections which had descended upon Him from God, and he who ate of this bread, or endowed himself with the perfections of Christ, would undoubtedly attain to everlasting life.

The Jews did not understand Him, and taking the words literally, said, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Had they understood the real meaning of the Holy Book, they would have become believers in Christ.

All the texts and teachings of the holy Testaments have intrinsic spiritual meanings. They are not to be taken literally. I, therefore, pray in your behalf that you may be given the power

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of understanding these inner real meanings of the Holy Scriptures and may become informed of the mysteries deposited in the words of the Bible so that you may attain eternal life and that your hearts may be attracted to the Kingdom of God. May your souls be illumined by the light of the Words of God, and may you become repositories of the mysteries of God, for no comfort is greater and no happiness is sweeter than spiritual comprehension of the divine teachings. If a man understands the real meaning of a poet’s verses such as those of Shakespeare, he is pleased and rejoiced. How much greater his joy and pleasure when he perceives the reality of the Holy Scriptures and becomes informed of the mysteries of the Kingdom! I pray that the divine blessings may descend upon you day by day, that your hearts may be opened to perceive the inner significances of the Word of God. There is no fruit in knowing the mere letters of the Book. Most of the Jews had memorized the texts of the Old Testament

and repeated them night and day, but inasmuch as they were ignorant of the meanings, they were deprived of the bounties of Christ. I pray that you may be quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit and illumined by the rays of the Sun of Truth. May you be favored with heavenly blessings in the threshold of God and attain to eternal life. This is my prayer. May God bless and enlighten you.

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3 December 1912

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney

780 West End Avenue, New York

Notes by Edna McKinney

(Promulgation, pp. 460-461)

I have attended more meetings in New York than in all the other cities combined. Day and

night, individually and collectively you have listened to the teachings and exhortations of

Bahá'u'lláh. I have proclaimed unto you the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God and explained

the wishes of the Blessed Perfection. I have set forth that which is conducive to human progress

and shown you the humility of servitude. The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh have been clearly

interpreted. The time has now come when I must leave you; therefore, this will be our farewell

meeting.

I am greatly pleased with you all and rejoice that you have shown me the utmost kindness

and affection. It is my desire that Bahá'u'lláh shall be pleased with you, that you may follow

His precepts and become worthy of His confirmations. The requirements are that your minds

must be illumined, your souls must be rejoiced with the glad tidings of God, you must become

imbued with spiritual moralities, your daily life must evidence faith and assurance, your hearts

must be sanctified and pure, reflecting a high degree of love and attraction toward the Kingdom

of Abhá. You must become the lamps of Bahá'u'lláh so that you may shine
with eternal light

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and be the proofs and evidences of His truth. Then will such signs of purity
and chastity be
witnessed in your deeds and actions that men will behold the heavenly radiance
of your lives
and say, “Verily, ye are the proofs of Bahá'u'lláh. Verily,
Bahá'u'lláh is the True One, for He
has trained such souls as these, each one of which is a proof in himself.”
They will say to others,
“Come and witness the conduct of these souls; come and listen to their words,
behold the
illumination of their hearts, see the evidences of the love of God in them,
consider their
praiseworthy morals, and discover the foundations of the oneness of humanity
firmly implanted
within them. What greater proof can there be than these people that the message
of Bahá'u'lláh
is truth and reality?” It is my hope that each one of you shall be a herald
of God, proclaiming
the evidences of His appearance, in words, deeds and thoughts. Let your actions
and utterances
be a witness that you are of the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh. These are the
duties enjoined upon
you by Bahá'u'lláh.
Bahá'u'lláh endured the greatest hardships. He found neither rest by
night nor peace by
day. He was constantly under the stress of great calamity—now in prison, now
in chains, now
threatened by the sword—until finally He broke the cage of captivity, left
this mortal world
and ascended to the heaven of God. He endured all these tribulations for our
sakes and suffered
these deprivations that we might attain the bestowals of divine bounty.
Therefore, we must be
faithful to Him and turn away from our own selfish desires and fancies in order
that we may
accomplish that which is required of us by our Lord.
It is my wish that you shall arise to live according to these teachings and
exhortations; that
all of us may be divinely strengthened, enter the paradise of the spiritual
Kingdom, diffuse the
lights of the Sun of Truth, cause the waves of this Most Great Ocean to reach
all human souls

so that this world of earth may be transformed into the world of heaven and
this devastated
ground be changed into the paradise of Abhá.

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4 December 1912

Talk to Theosophical Society

2228 Broadway, New York

Notes by Esther Foster

(Promulgation, pp. 462-468)

Those who are uninformed of the world of reality, who do not comprehend
existing things,
who are without perception of the inner truth of creation, who do not penetrate

the real
mysteries of material and spiritual phenomena and who possess only a
superficial idea of
universal life and being are but embodiments of pure ignorance. They believe
only that which
they have heard from their fathers and ancestors. Of themselves they have no
hearing, no sight,
no reason, no intellect; they rely solely upon tradition. Such persons imagine
that the dominion
of God is an accidental dominion, or Kingdom.
For instance, they believe that this world of existence was created six or
seven thousand
years ago, as if God did not reign before that time and had no creation before
that period. They
think that Divinity is accidental, for to them Divinity is dependent upon
existing things,
whereas, in reality, as long as there has been a God, there has been a
creation. As long as there
has been light, there have been recipients of that light, for light cannot
become manifest unless
those things which perceive and appreciate it exist. The world of Divinity
presupposes creation,
presupposes recipients of bounty, presupposes the existence of worlds. No
Divinity can be
conceived as separate from creation, for otherwise it would be like imagining
an empire without
a people. A king must needs have a kingdom, must needs have an army and
subjects. Is it
possible to be a king and have no country, no army, no subjects? This is an
absurdity. If we say
that there was a time when there was no country, no army and no subjects, how
then could
there have been a king and ruler? For these things are essential to a king.
Consequently, just as the reality of Divinity never had a beginning—that is,
God has ever
been a Creator, God has ever been a Provider, God has ever been a Quickener,
God has ever
been a Bestower—so there never has been a time when the attributes of God
have not had
expression. The sun is the sun because of its rays, because of its heat. Were
we to conceive of
a time when there was a sun without heat and light, it would imply that there
had been no sun
at all and that it became the sun afterward. So, likewise, if we say there was
a time when God
had no creation or created beings, a time when there were no recipients of His
bounties and

that His names and attributes had not been manifested, this would be equivalent to a complete denial of Divinity, for it would mean that Divinity is accidental. To explain it still more clearly, if we think that fifty thousand years ago or one hundred thousand years ago there was no creation, that there were then no worlds, no human beings, no animals, this thought of ours would mean that previous to that period there was no Divinity. If we should say that there was a time when there was a king but there were no subjects, no army, no country for him to rule over, it would really be asserting that there was a time when no king existed and that the king is accidental. It is, therefore, evident that inasmuch as the reality of Divinity is without a beginning, creation is also without a beginning. This is as clear as the sun. When we contemplate this vast machinery of omnipresent power, perceive this illimitable space and its innumerable worlds, it will become evident to us that the lifetime of this infinite creation is more than six thousand years; nay, it is very, very ancient. ?????? ?????? ???? ???????????

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Notwithstanding this, we read in Genesis in the Old Testament that the lifetime of creation is but six thousand years. This has an inner meaning and significance; it is not to be taken literally. For instance, it is said in the Old Testament that certain things were created in the first day. The narrative shows that at that time the sun was not yet created. How could we conceive of a day if no sun existed in the heavens? For the day depends upon the light of the sun. Inasmuch as the sun had not been made, how could the first day be realized? Therefore, these statements have significances other than literal. To be brief: Our purpose is to show that the divine sovereignty, the Kingdom of God, is an ancient sovereignty, that it is not an accidental sovereignty, just as a kingdom presupposes the existence of subjects, of an army, of a country; for otherwise the state of dominion, authority and kingdom cannot be conceived of. Therefore, if we should imagine that the creation is

accidental, we would be forced to admit that the Creator is accidental, whereas the divine bounty is ever flowing, and the rays of the Sun of Truth are continuously shining. No cessation is possible to the divine bounty, just as no cessation is possible to the rays of the sun. This is clear and obvious.

Thus there have been many holy Manifestations of God. One thousand years ago, two hundred thousand years ago, one million years ago, the bounty of God was flowing, the radiance of God was shining, the dominion of God was existing.

Why do these holy Manifestations of God appear? What is the wisdom and purpose of Their coming? What is the outcome of Their mission? It is evident that human personality appears in two aspects: the image or likeness of God, and the aspect of Satan. The human reality stands between these two: the divine and the satanic. It is manifest that beyond this material body, man is endowed with another reality, which is the world of exemplars constituting the heavenly body of man. In speaking, man says, "I saw," "I spoke," "I went."

Who is this I? It is obvious that this I is different from this body. It is clear that when man is thinking, it is as though he were consulting with some other person. With whom is he consulting? It is evident that it is another reality, or one aside from this body, with whom he enters into consultation when he thinks, "Shall I do this work or not?" "What will be the result of my doing this?" Or when he questions the other reality, "What is the objection to this work if I do it?" And then that reality in man communicates its opinion to him concerning the point at issue.

Therefore, that reality in man is clearly and obviously other than his body—an ego with which man enters into consultation and whose opinion man seeks.

Often a man makes up his mind positively about a matter; for instance, he determines to undertake a journey. Then he thinks it over—that is, he consults his inner reality—and finally concludes that he will give up his journey. What has happened? Why did he abandon his original purpose? It is evident that he has consulted his inner reality, which expresses to him

the disadvantages of such a journey; therefore, he defers to that reality and changes his original intention.

Furthermore, man sees in the world of dreams. He travels in the East; he travels in the West; although his body is stationary, his body is here. It is that reality in him which makes the journey while the body sleeps. There is no doubt that a reality exists other than the outward, physical reality. Again, for instance, a person is dead, is buried in the ground. Afterward, you see him in the world of dreams and speak with him, although his body is interred in the earth.

Who is the person you see in your dreams, talk to and who also speaks with you? This again proves that there is another reality different from the physical one which dies and is buried.

Thus it is certain that in man there is a reality which is not the physical body. Sometimes the

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body becomes weak, but that other reality is in its own normal state. The body goes to sleep, becomes as one dead; but that reality is moving about, comprehending things, expressing them and is even conscious of itself.

This other and inner reality is called the heavenly body, the ethereal form which corresponds to this body. This is the conscious reality which discovers the inner meaning of things, for the outer body of man does not discover anything. The inner ethereal reality grasps the mysteries of existence, discovers scientific truths and indicates their technical application.

It discovers electricity, produces the telegraph, the telephone and opens the door to the world of arts. If the outer material body did this, the animal would, likewise, be able to make scientific and wonderful discoveries, for the animal shares with man all physical powers and limitations.

What, then, is that power which penetrates the realities of existence and which is not to be found in the animal? It is the inner reality which comprehends things, throws light upon the mysteries of life and being, discovers the heavenly Kingdom, unseals the mysteries of God and

differentiates man from the brute. Of this there can be no doubt. As we have before indicated, this human reality stands between the higher and the lower in man, between the world of the animal and the world of Divinity. When the animal proclivity in man becomes predominant, he sinks even lower than the brute. When the heavenly powers are triumphant in his nature, he becomes the noblest and most superior being in the world of creation. All the imperfections found in the animal are found in man. In him there is antagonism, hatred and selfish struggle for existence; in his nature lurk jealousy, revenge, ferocity, cunning, hypocrisy, greed, injustice and tyranny. So to speak, the reality of man is clad in the outer garment of the animal, the habiliments of the world of nature, the world of darkness, imperfections and unlimited baseness. On the other hand, we find in him justice, sincerity, faithfulness, knowledge, wisdom, illumination, mercy and pity, coupled with intellect, comprehension, the power to grasp the realities of things and the ability to penetrate the truths of existence. All these great perfections are to be found in man. Therefore, we say that man is a reality which stands between light and darkness. From this standpoint his nature is threefold: animal, human and divine. The animal nature is darkness; the heavenly is light in light. The holy Manifestations of God come into the world to dispel the darkness of the animal, or physical, nature of man, to purify him from his imperfections in order that his heavenly and spiritual nature may become quickened, his divine qualities awakened, his perfections visible, his potential powers revealed and all the virtues of the world of humanity latent within him may come to life. These holy Manifestations of God are the Educators and Trainers of the world of existence, the Teachers of the world of humanity. They liberate man from the darkness of the world of nature, deliver him from despair, error, ignorance, imperfections and all evil qualities. They clothe him in the garment of perfections and exalted virtues. Men are ignorant; the Manifestations of God make them wise. They are animalistic; the Manifestations make

them human. They are savage and cruel; the Manifestations lead them into
 kingdoms of light
 and love. They are unjust; the Manifestations cause them to become just. Man is
 selfish; They
 sever him from self and desire. Man is haughty; They make him meek, humble and
 friendly.
 He is earthly; They make him heavenly. Men are material; the Manifestations
 transform them
 into divine semblance. They are immature children; the Manifestations develop
 them into
 maturity. Man is poor; They endow him with wealth. Man is base, treacherous and
 mean; the
 Manifestations of God uplift him into dignity, nobility and loftiness.
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These holy Manifestations liberate the world of humanity from the imperfections
 which
 beset it and cause men to appear in the beauty of heavenly perfections. Were it
 not for the
 coming of these holy Manifestations of God, all mankind would be found on the
 plane of the
 animal. They would remain darkened and ignorant like those who have been denied
 schooling
 and who never had a teacher or trainer. Undoubtedly, such unfortunates will
 continue in their
 condition of need and deprivation.
 If the mountains, hills and plains of the material world are left wild and
 uncultivated under
 the rule of nature, they will remain an unbroken wilderness, no fruitful tree
 to be found
 anywhere upon them. A true cultivator changes this forest and jungle into a
 garden, training its
 trees to bring forth fruit and causing flowers to grow in place of thorns and
 thistles. The holy
 Manifestations are the ideal Gardeners of human souls, the divine Cultivators
 of human hearts.
 The world of existence is but a jungle of disorder and confusion, a state of
 nature producing
 nothing but fruitless, useless trees. The ideal Gardeners train these wild,
 uncultivated human
 trees, cause them to become fruitful, water and cultivate them day by day so
 that they adorn
 the world of existence and continue to flourish in the utmost beauty.
 Consequently, we cannot say that the divine bounty has ceased, that the glory
 of Divinity
 is exhausted or the Sun of Truth sunk into eternal sunset, into that darkness

which is not
followed by light, into that night which is not followed by a sunrise and dawn,
into that death
which is not followed by life, into that error which is not followed by truth.
Is it conceivable
that the Sun of Reality should sink into an eternal darkness? No! The sun was
created in order
that it may shed light upon the world and train all the kingdoms of existence.
How then can the
ideal Sun of Truth, the Word of God, set forever? For this would mean the
cessation of the
divine bounty, and the divine bounty by its very nature is continuous and
ceaseless. Its sun is
ever shining; its cloud is ever producing rain; its breezes are ever blowing;
its bestowals are
all-comprehending; its gifts are ever perfect. Consequently, we must always
anticipate, always
be hopeful and pray to God that He will send unto us His holy Manifestations in
Their most
perfect might, with the divine penetrative power of His Word, so that these
heavenly Ones may
be distinguished above all other beings in every respect, in every attribute,
just as the glorious
sun is distinguished above all stars.
Although the stars are scintillating and brilliant, the sun is superior to them
in luminous
effulgence. Similarly, these holy, divine Manifestations are and must always be
distinguished
above all other beings in every attribute of glory and perfection in order that
it may be proven
that the Manifestation is the true Teacher and real Trainer; that He is the Sun
of Truth, endowed
with a supreme splendor and reflecting the beauty of God. Otherwise, it is not
possible for us
to train one human individual and then after training him, believe in him and
accept him as the
holy Manifestation of Divinity. The real Manifestation of God must be endowed
with divine
knowledge and not dependent upon learning acquired in schools. He must be the
Educator, not
the educated; His standard, intuition instead of tuition. He must be perfect
and not imperfect,
great and glorious instead of being weak and impotent. He must be wealthy in
the riches of the
spiritual world and not indigent. In a word, the holy, divine Manifestation of
God must be
distinguished above all others of mankind in every aspect and qualification in

order that He
may be able to train effectively the human body politic, eliminate the darkness
enshrouding the
human world, uplift humanity from a lower to a higher kingdom, be able through
the
penetrative power of His Word to promote and spread broadcast the beneficent
message of
universal peace among men, bring about the unification of mankind in religious
belief through
a manifest divine power, harmonize all sects and denominations and convert all
native lands
and nationalities into one native land and fatherland.

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It is our hope that the bounties of God will encompass us all, the gifts of the
divine become
manifest, the lights of the Sun of Truth illumine our eyes, inspire our hearts,
convey to our
souls cheerful glad tidings of God, cause our thoughts to become lofty and our
efforts to be
productive of glorious results. In a word, it is our hope that we may attain to
that which is the
summit of human aspirations and wishes.

I have been in America nine months and have traveled to all the large cities,
speaking before
various assemblages, proclaiming to them the oneness of the world of humanity,
summoning
all to union, harmony and oneness. I have indeed received the greatest kindness
from the

American people. I look upon them as a noble nation, capable of every
perfection. Tomorrow

I am going away to Europe, and now I bid farewell to you all, seeking for you
the divine mercy,

the eternal glory and everlasting life; and I pray that you may attain the
highest station of

humanity. I am greatly pleased with this meeting. My happiness is great. I
shall never forget

you. You shall always live in my thought. I shall always pray and supplicate
before the

Kingdom of God and seek heavenly blessings for you.

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Talk on Day of Departure

On Board Steamship Celtic, New York
Notes by Mariam Haney
(Promulgation, pp. 468-470)

This is my last meeting with you, for now I am on the ship ready to sail away. These are my final words of exhortation. I have repeatedly summoned you to the cause of the unity of the world of humanity, announcing that all mankind are the servants of the same God, that God is the creator of all; He is the Provider and Life-giver; all are equally beloved by Him and are His servants upon whom His mercy and compassion descend. Therefore, you must manifest the greatest kindness and love toward the nations of the world, setting aside fanaticism, abandoning religious, national and racial prejudice.

The earth is one native land, one home; and all mankind are the children of one Father. God has created them, and they are the recipients of His compassion. Therefore, if anyone offends another, he offends God. It is the wish of our heavenly Father that every heart should rejoice and be filled with happiness, that we should live together in felicity and joy. The obstacle to human happiness is racial or religious prejudice, the competitive struggle for existence and inhumanity toward each other.

Your eyes have been illumined, your ears are attentive, your hearts knowing. You must be free from prejudice and fanaticism, beholding no differences between the races and religions.

You must look to God, for He is the real Shepherd, and all humanity are His sheep. He loves them and loves them equally. As this is true, should the sheep quarrel among themselves? They should manifest gratitude and thankfulness to God, and the best way to thank God is to love one another.

Beware lest ye offend any heart, lest ye speak against anyone in his absence, lest ye estrange yourselves from the servants of God. You must consider all His servants as your own family and relations. Direct your whole effort toward the happiness of those who are despondent, bestow food upon the hungry, clothe the needy, and glorify the humble. Be a helper to every

helpless one, and manifest kindness to your fellow creatures in order that ye may attain the good pleasure of God. This is conducive to the illumination of the world of humanity and eternal felicity for yourselves. I seek from God everlasting glory in your behalf; therefore, this is my prayer and exhortation. Consider what is happening in the Balkans. Human blood is being shed, properties are destroyed, possessions pillaged, cities and villages devastated. A world-enkindling fire is astir in the Balkans. God has created men to love each other; but instead, they kill each other with cruelty and bloodshed. God has created them that they may cooperate and mingle in accord; but instead, they ravage, plunder and destroy in the carnage of battle. God has created them to be the cause of mutual felicity and peace; but instead, discord, lamentation and anguish rise from the hearts of the innocent and afflicted.

As to you: Your efforts must be lofty. Exert yourselves with heart and soul so that, perchance, through your efforts the light of universal peace may shine and this darkness of

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estrangement and enmity may be dispelled from amongst men, that all men may become as one family and consort together in love and kindness, that the East may assist the West and the West give help to the East, for all are the inhabitants of one planet, the people of one original native land and the flocks of one Shepherd. Consider how the Prophets Who have been sent, the great souls who have appeared and the sages who have arisen in the world have exhorted mankind to unity and love. This has been the essence of their mission and teaching. This has been the goal of their guidance and message. The Prophets, saints, seers and philosophers have sacrificed their lives in order to establish these principles and teachings amongst men. Consider the heedlessness of the world, for notwithstanding the efforts and sufferings of the Prophets of God, the nations and peoples are still engaged in hostility and fighting. Notwithstanding the heavenly

commandments to love
one another, they are still shedding each other's blood. How heedless and
ignorant are the
people of the world! How gross the darkness which envelops them! Although they
are the
children of a compassionate God, they continue to live and act in opposition to
His will and
good pleasure. God is loving and kind to all men, and yet they show the utmost
enmity and
hatred toward each other. God is the Giver of life to them, and yet they
constantly seek to
destroy life. God blesses and protects their homes; they rage, sack and destroy
each other's
homes. Consider their ignorance and heedlessness!
Your duty is of another kind, for you are informed of the mysteries of God.
Your eyes are
illuminated; your ears are quickened with hearing. You must, therefore, look
toward each other
and then toward mankind with the utmost love and kindness. You have no excuse
to bring
before God if you fail to live according to His command, for you are informed
of that which
constitutes the good pleasure of God. You have heard His commandments and
precepts. You
must, therefore, be kind to all men; you must even treat your enemies as your
friends. You must
consider your evil-wishers as your well-wishers. Those who are not agreeable
toward you must
be regarded as those who are congenial and pleasant so that, perchance, this
darkness of
disagreement and conflict may disappear from amongst men and the light of the
divine may
shine forth, so that the Orient may be illumined and the Occident filled with
fragrance, nay, so
that the East and West may embrace each other in love and deal with one another
in sympathy
and affection. Until man reaches this high station, the world of humanity shall
not find rest,
and eternal felicity shall not be attained. But if man lives up to these divine
commandments,
this world of earth shall be transformed into the world of heaven, and this
material sphere shall
be converted into a paradise of glory. It is my hope that you may become
successful in this
high calling so that like brilliant lamps you may cast light upon the world of
humanity and
quicken and stir the body of existence like unto a spirit of life. This is

eternal glory. This is
everlasting felicity. This is immortal life. This is heavenly attainment. This
is being created in
the image and likeness of God. And unto this I call you, praying to God to
strengthen and bless
you.

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Prayer

97 Cadogan Gardens, London

December 26th, 1912

(Paris, pp. 176-177)

“Should Prayer take the form of action?”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “Yes: In the Bahá’í Cause arts, sciences and all
crafts are (counted as)

worship. The man who makes a piece of notepaper to the best of his ability,
conscientiously,

concentrating all his forces on perfecting it, is giving praise to God.

Briefly, all effort and

exertion put forth by man from the fullness of his heart is worship, if it is
prompted by the

highest motives and the will to do service to humanity. This is worship: to
serve mankind and

to minister to the needs of the people. Service is prayer. A physician
ministering to the sick,

gently, tenderly, free from prejudice and believing in the solidarity of the
human race, he is

giving praise.”

“What is the purpose of our lives?”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “To acquire virtues. We come from the earth; why were we
transferred from

the mineral to the vegetable kingdom—from the plant to the animal kingdom? So
that we may

attain perfection in each of these kingdoms, that we may possess the best
qualities of the

mineral, that we may acquire the power of growing as in the plant, that we may
be adorned

with the instincts of the animal and possess the faculties of sight, hearing,
smell, touch and

taste, until from the animal kingdom we step into the world of humanity and are
gifted with

reason, the power of invention, and the forces of the spirit.”

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The Four Kinds of Love
97 Cadogan Gardens, London
Saturday, January 4th, 1913
(Paris, pp. 179-181)

What a power is love! It is the most wonderful, the greatest of all living powers.

Love gives life to the lifeless. Love lights a flame in the heart that is cold.

Love brings hope

to the hopeless and gladdens the hearts of the sorrowful.

In the world of existence there is indeed no greater power than the power of love. When

the heart of man is aglow with the flame of love, he is ready to sacrifice all—even his life. In

the Gospel it is said God is love.

There are four kinds of love. The first is the love that flows from God to man; it consists of

the inexhaustible graces, the Divine effulgence and heavenly illumination.

Through this love

the world of being receives life. Through this love man is endowed with physical existence,

until, through the breath of the Holy Spirit—this same love—he receives eternal life and

becomes the image of the Living God. This love is the origin of all the love in the world of

creation.

The second is the love that flows from man to God. This is faith, attraction to the Divine,

enkindlement, progress, entrance into the Kingdom of God, receiving the Bounties of God,

illumination with the lights of the Kingdom. This love is the origin of all philanthropy; this

love causes the hearts of men to reflect the rays of the Sun of Reality.

The third is the love of God towards the Self or Identity of God. This is the transfiguration

of His Beauty, the reflection of Himself in the mirror of His Creation. This is the reality of

love, the Ancient Love, the Eternal Love. Through one ray of this Love all other love exists.

The fourth is the love of man for man. The love which exists between the hearts of believers is prompted by the ideal of the unity of spirits. This love is attained through the knowledge of God, so that men see the Divine Love reflected in the heart. Each sees in the other the Beauty of God reflected in the soul, and finding this point of similarity, they are attracted to one another in love. This love will make all men the waves of one sea, this love will make them all the stars of one heaven and the fruits of one tree. This love will bring the realization of true accord, the foundation of real unity.

But the love which sometimes exists between friends is not (true) love, because it is subject to transmutation; this is merely fascination. As the breeze blows, the slender trees yield. If the wind is in the East the tree leans to the West, and if the wind turns to the West the tree leans to the East. This kind of love is originated by the accidental conditions of life. This is not love, it is merely acquaintanceship; it is subject to change. Today you will see two souls apparently in close friendship; tomorrow all this may be changed. Yesterday they were ready to die for one another, today they shun one another's society! This is not love; it is the yielding of the hearts to the accidents of life. When that which has caused this "love" to exist passes, the love passes also; this is not in reality love.

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Love is only of the four kinds that I have explained. (a) The love of God towards the identity of God. Christ has said God is Love. (b) The love of God for His children—for His servants. (c) The love of man for God and (d) the love of man for man. These four kinds of love originate from God. These are rays from the Sun of Reality; these are the Breathings of the Holy Spirit; these are the Signs of the Reality.

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Address by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at the Friends’ Meeting House
St. Martin’s Lane, London, W. C.
Sunday, January 12th, 1913
(Paris, pp. 173-176)

About one thousand years ago a society was formed in Persia called the Society of the Friends, who gathered together for silent communion with the Almighty. They divided Divine philosophy into two parts: one kind is that of which the knowledge can be acquired through lectures and study in schools and colleges. The second kind of philosophy was that of the Illuminati, or followers of the inner light. The schools of this philosophy were held in silence. Meditating, and turning their faces to the Source of Light, from that central Light the mysteries of the Kingdom were reflected in the hearts of these

people. All the Divine problems were solved by this power of illumination.
 This Society of Friends increased greatly in Persia, and up to the present time
 their societies
 exist. Many books and epistles were written by their leaders. When they
 assemble in their
 meeting-house they sit silently and contemplate; their leader opens with a
 certain proposition,
 and says to the assembly "You must meditate on this problem." Then, freeing
 their minds from
 everything else, they sit and reflect, and before long the answer is revealed
 to them. Many
 abstruse divine questions are solved by this illumination.
 Some of the great questions unfolding from the rays of the Sun of Reality upon
 the mind
 of man are: the problem of the reality of the spirit of man; of the birth of
 the spirit; of its birth
 from this world into the world of God; the question of the inner life of the
 spirit and of its fate
 after its ascension from the body.
 They also meditate upon the scientific questions of the day, and these are
 likewise solved.
 These people, who are called "Followers of the inner light," attain to a
 superlative degree
 of power, and are entirely freed from blind dogmas and imitations. Men rely on
 the statements
 of these people: by themselves—within themselves—they solve all mysteries.
 If they find a solution with the assistance of the inner light, they accept it,
 and afterwards
 they declare it: otherwise they would consider it a matter of blind imitation.
 They go so far as
 to reflect upon the essential nature of the Divinity, of the Divine revelation,
 of the manifestation
 of the Deity in this world. All the divine and scientific questions are solved
 by them through
 the power of the spirit.
 Bahá'u'lláh says there is a sign (from God) in every phenomenon: the sign
 of the intellect
 is contemplation and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is
 impossible for a man to
 do two things at one time—he cannot both speak and meditate.
 It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own
 spirit. In
 that state of mind you put certain questions to your spirit and the spirit
 answers: the light breaks
 forth and the reality is revealed.

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You cannot apply the name “man” to any being void of this faculty of meditation; without it he would be a mere animal, lower than the beasts. Through the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life; through it he receives the breath of the Holy Spirit—the bestowal of the Spirit is given in reflection and meditation. The spirit of man is itself informed and strengthened during meditation; through it affairs of which man knew nothing are unfolded before his view. Through it he receives Divine inspiration, through it he receives heavenly food. Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that state man abstracts himself: in that state man withdraws himself from all outside objects; in that subjective mood he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life and can unfold the secrets of things-in-themselves. To illustrate this, think of man as endowed with two kinds of sight; when the power of insight is being used the outward power of vision does not see. This faculty of meditation frees man from the animal nature, discerns the reality of things, puts man in touch with God. This faculty brings forth from the invisible plane the sciences and arts. Through the meditative faculty inventions are made possible, colossal undertakings are carried out; through it governments can run smoothly. Through this faculty man enters into the very Kingdom of God. Nevertheless some thoughts are useless to man; they are like waves moving in the sea without result. But if the faculty of meditation is bathed in the inner light and characterized with divine attributes, the results will be confirmed. The meditative faculty is akin to the mirror; if you put it before earthly objects it will reflect them. Therefore if the spirit of man is contemplating earthly subjects he will be informed of these. But if you turn the mirror of your spirits heavenwards, the heavenly constellations and the rays of the Sun of Reality will be reflected in your hearts, and the virtues of the Kingdom will be obtained. Therefore let us keep this faculty rightly directed—turning it to the

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Tablet Revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
To a Friend Resident in Paris
August 28th, 1913
(Paris, pp. 182-184)

O Thou my beloved daughter!
Thine eloquent and fluent letter was perused in a garden, under the cool shade
of a tree,
while the gentle breeze was wafting. The means of physical enjoyment was spread
before the
eyes and thy letter became the cause of spiritual enjoyment. Truly, I say, it
was not a letter but
a rose-garden adorned with hyacinths and flowers.
It contained the sweet fragrance of paradise and the zephyr of Divine Love blew
from its
roseate words.
As I have not ample time at my disposal, I will give herein a brief, conclusive
and
comprehensive answer. It is as follows:
In this Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh, the women go neck and neck with the
men. In no
movement will they be left behind. Their rights with men are equal in degree.
They will enter
all the administrative branches of politics. They will attain in all such a
degree as will be
considered the very highest station of the world of humanity and will take part
in all affairs.
Rest ye assured. Do ye not look upon the present conditions; in the not far
distant future the
world of women will become all-refulgent and all-glorious, For His Holiness
Bahá’u’lláh Hath
Willed It so! At the time of elections the right to vote is the inalienable
right of women, and the
entrance of women into all human departments is an irrefutable and
incontrovertible question.
No soul can retard or prevent it.
But there are certain matters, the participation in which is not worthy of
women. For
example, at the time when the community is taking up vigorous defensive
measures against the

attack of foes, the women are exempt from military engagements. It may so happen that at a given time warlike and savage tribes may furiously attack the body politic with the intention of carrying on a wholesale slaughter of its members; under such a circumstance defense is necessary, but it is the duty of men to organize and execute such defensive measures and not the women—because their hearts are tender and they cannot endure the sight of the horror of carnage, even if it is for the sake of defense. From such and similar undertakings the women are exempt.

As regards the constitution of the House of Justice, Bahá'u'lláh addresses the men. He says:

“O ye men of the House of Justice!”

But when its members are to be elected, the right which belongs to women, so far as their voting and their voice is concerned, is indisputable. When the women attain to the ultimate

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degree of progress, then, according to the exigency of the time and place and their great

capacity, they shall obtain extraordinary privileges. Be ye confident on these accounts. His

Holiness Bahá'u'lláh has greatly strengthened the cause of women, and the rights and

privileges of women is one of the greatest principles of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Rest ye assured! Erelong

the days shall come when the men addressing the women, shall say: “Blessed are ye! Blessed

are ye! Verily ye are worthy of every gift. Verily ye deserve to adorn your heads with the crown

of everlasting glory, because in sciences and arts, in virtues and perfections ye shall become

equal to man, and as regards tenderness of heart and the abundance of mercy and sympathy

ye are superior.”

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O ye esteemed ones who are pioneers among the well-wishers of the world of humanity!160

The letters which ye sent during the war were not received, but a letter dated February 11th, 1916, has just come to hand, and immediately an answer is being written. Your intention deserves a thousand praises, because you are serving the world of humanity, and this is

conducive to the happiness and welfare of all. This recent war has proved to the world and the people that war is destruction while universal peace is construction; war is death while peace is life; war is rapacity and bloodthirstiness while peace is beneficence and humaneness; war is an appurtenance of the world of nature while peace is of the foundation of the religion of God; war is darkness upon darkness while peace is heavenly light; war is the destroyer of the edifice of mankind while peace is the everlasting life of the world of humanity; war is like a devouring wolf while peace is like the angels of heaven; war is the struggle for existence while peace is mutual aid and cooperation among the peoples of the world and the cause of the good pleasure of the True One in the heavenly realm.

There is not one soul whose conscience does not testify that in this day there is no more important matter in the world than that of universal peace. Every just one bears witness to this and adores that esteemed Assembly because its aim is that this darkness may be changed into light, this bloodthirstiness into kindness, this torment into bliss, this hardship into ease and this enmity and hatred into fellowship and love. Therefore, the effort of those esteemed souls is worthy of praise and commendation.

But the wise souls who are aware of the essential relationships emanating from the realities of things consider that one single matter cannot, by itself, influence the human reality as it ought and should, for until the minds of men become united, no important matter can be accomplished. At present universal peace is a matter of great importance, but unity of conscience is essential, so that the foundation of this matter may become secure, its establishment firm and its edifice strong.

Therefore Bahá'u'lláh, fifty years ago, expounded this question of universal peace at a time when He was confined in the fortress of 'Akká and was wronged and imprisoned. He wrote about this important matter of universal peace to all the great sovereigns of the world, and established it among His friends in the Orient. The horizon of the East was in utter darkness,

nations displayed the utmost hatred and enmity towards each other, religions thirsted for each other's blood, and it was darkness upon darkness. At such a time Bahá'u'lláh shone forth like the sun from the horizon of the east and illumined Persia with the lights of these teachings.

This is 'Abdu'l-Bahá's reply to a letter addressed to Him by the Executive Committee of the Central Organization for a Durable Peace. The Tablet, described by Shoghi Effendi in God Passes By as of "far-reaching importance", and dated 17 December 1919, was despatched to the Committee at The Hague by the hands of a special delegation.
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Among His teachings was the declaration of universal peace. People of different nations, religions and sects who followed Him came together to such an extent that remarkable gatherings were instituted consisting of the various nations and religions of the East. Every soul who entered these gatherings saw but one nation, one teaching, one pathway, one order, for the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh were not limited to the establishment of universal peace. They embraced many teachings which supplemented and supported that of universal peace. Among these teachings was the independent investigation of reality so that the world of humanity may be saved from the darkness of imitation and attain to the truth; may tear off and cast away this ragged and outgrown garment of a thousand years ago and may put on the robe woven in the utmost purity and holiness in the loom of reality. As reality is one and cannot admit of multiplicity, therefore different opinions must ultimately become fused into one. And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the oneness of the world of humanity; that all human beings are the sheep of God and He is the kind Shepherd. This Shepherd is kind to all the sheep, because He created them all, trained them, provided for them and protected them. There is no doubt that the Shepherd is kind to all the sheep and should there be among these sheep ignorant ones, they must be educated; if there be children, they must be

trained until they
reach maturity; if there be sick ones, they must be cured. There must be no
hatred and enmity,
for as by a kind physician these ignorant, sick ones should be treated.
And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is that religion must be the cause
of fellowship
and love. If it becomes the cause of estrangement then it is not needed, for
religion is like a
remedy; if it aggravates the disease then it becomes unnecessary.
And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is that religion must be in
conformity with science
and reason, so that it may influence the hearts of men. The foundation must be
solid and must
not consist of imitations.
And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is that religious, racial,
political, economic and
patriotic prejudices destroy the edifice of humanity. As long as these
prejudices prevail, the
world of humanity will not have rest. For a period of 6,000 years history
informs us about the
world of humanity. During these 6,000 years the world of humanity has not been
free from
war, strife, murder and bloodthirstiness. In every period war has been waged in
one country or
another and that war was due to either religious prejudice, racial prejudice,
political prejudice
or patriotic prejudice. It has therefore been ascertained and proved that all
prejudices are
destructive of the human edifice. As long as these prejudices persist, the
struggle for existence
must remain dominant, and bloodthirstiness and rapacity continue. Therefore,
even as was the
case in the past, the world of humanity cannot be saved from the darkness of
nature and cannot
attain illumination except through the abandonment of prejudices and the
acquisition of the
morals of the Kingdom.
If this prejudice and enmity are on account of religion consider that religion
should be the
cause of fellowship, otherwise it is fruitless. And if this prejudice be the
prejudice of nationality
consider that all mankind are of one nation; all have sprung from the tree of
Adam, and Adam
is the root of the tree. That tree is one and all these nations are like
branches, while the
individuals of humanity are like leaves, blossoms and fruits thereof. Then the
establishment of

various nations and the consequent shedding of blood and destruction of the edifice of humanity result from human ignorance and selfish motives.

As to the patriotic prejudice, this is also due to absolute ignorance, for the surface of the

earth is one native land. Every one can live in any spot on the terrestrial globe. Therefore all

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the world is man's birthplace. These boundaries and outlets have been devised by man. In the

creation, such boundaries and outlets were not assigned. Europe is one continent, Asia is one

continent, Africa is one continent, Australia is one continent, but some of the souls, from

personal motives and selfish interests, have divided each one of these continents and considered

a certain part as their own country. God has set up no frontier between France and Germany;

they are continuous. Yet, in the first centuries, selfish souls, for the promotion of their own

interests, have assigned boundaries and outlets and have, day by day, attached more importance

to these, until this led to intense enmity, bloodshed and rapacity in subsequent centuries. In the

same way this will continue indefinitely, and if this conception of patriotism remains limited

within a certain circle, it will be the primary cause of the world's destruction. No wise and just

person will acknowledge these imaginary distinctions. Every limited area which we call our

native country we regard as our motherland, whereas the terrestrial globe is the motherland of

all, and not any restricted area. In short, for a few days we live on this earth and eventually we

are buried in it, it is our eternal tomb. Is it worth while that we should engage in bloodshed and

tear one another to pieces for this eternal tomb? Nay, far from it, neither is God pleased with

such conduct nor would any sane man approve of it.

Consider! The blessed animals engage in no patriotic quarrels. They are in the utmost

fellowship with one another and live together in harmony. For example, if a dove from the east

and a dove from the west, a dove from the north and a dove from the south chance to arrive, at

the same time, in one spot, they immediately associate in harmony. So is it with all the blessed animals and birds. But the ferocious animals, as soon as they meet, attack and fight with each other, tear each other to pieces and it is impossible for them to live peaceably together in one spot. They are all unsociable and fierce, savage and combative fighters. Regarding the economic prejudice, it is apparent that whenever the ties between nations become strengthened and the exchange of commodities accelerated, and any economic principle is established in one country, it will ultimately affect the other countries and universal benefits will result. Then why this prejudice? As to the political prejudice, the policy of God must be followed and it is indisputable that the policy of God is greater than human policy. We must follow the Divine policy and that applies alike to all individuals. He treats all individuals alike: no distinction is made, and that is the foundation of the Divine Religions. And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the origination of one language that may be spread universally among the people. This teaching was revealed from the pen of Bahá'u'lláh in order that this universal language may eliminate misunderstandings from among mankind. And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the equality of women and men. The world of humanity has two wings—one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of women becomes equal to the world of men in the acquisition of virtues and perfections, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be. And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is voluntary sharing of one's property with others among mankind. This voluntary sharing is greater than equality, and consists in this, that man should not prefer himself to others, but rather should sacrifice his life and property for others. But this should not be introduced by coercion so that it becomes a law and man is compelled to follow it. Nay, rather, man should voluntarily and of his own choice sacrifice his property and life for others, and spend willingly for the poor, just as is done in

Persia among the Bahá'ís.

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And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is man's freedom, that through the ideal Power he should be free and emancipated from the captivity of the world of nature; for as long as man is captive to nature he is a ferocious animal, as the struggle for existence is one of the exigencies of the world of nature. This matter of the struggle for existence is the fountain-head of all calamities and is the supreme affliction.

And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is that religion is a mighty bulwark. If the edifice of religion shakes and totters, commotion and chaos will ensue and the order of things will be utterly upset, for in the world of mankind there are two safeguards that protect man from wrongdoing. One is the law which punishes the criminal; but the law prevents only the manifest crime and not the concealed sin; whereas the ideal safeguard, namely, the religion of God, prevents both the manifest and the concealed crime, trains man, educates morals, compels the adoption of virtues and is the all-inclusive power which guarantees the felicity of the world of mankind. But by religion is meant that which is ascertained by investigation and not that which is based on mere imitation, the foundations of Divine Religions and not human imitations.

And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is that although material civilization is one of the means for the progress of the world of mankind, yet until it becomes combined with Divine civilization, the desired result, which is the felicity of mankind, will not be attained. Consider!

These battleships that reduce a city to ruins within the space of an hour are the result of material civilization; likewise the Krupp guns, the Mauser rifles, dynamite, submarines, torpedo boats, armed aircraft and bombers—all these weapons of war are the malignant fruits of material civilization. Had material civilization been combined with Divine civilization, these fiery weapons would never have been invented. Nay, rather, human energy would have been wholly

devoted to useful inventions and would have been concentrated on praiseworthy discoveries.

Material civilization is like a lamp-glass. Divine civilization is the lamp itself and the glass

without the light is dark. Material civilization is like the body. No matter how infinitely

graceful, elegant and beautiful it may be, it is dead. Divine civilization is like the spirit, and the

body gets its life from the spirit, otherwise it becomes a corpse. It has thus been made evident

that the world of mankind is in need of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Without the spirit the

world of mankind is lifeless, and without this light the world of mankind is in utter darkness.

For the world of nature is an animal world. Until man is born again from the world of nature,

that is to say, becomes detached from the world of nature, he is essentially an animal, and it is

the teachings of God which convert this animal into a human soul.

And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the promotion of education.

Every child must

be instructed in sciences as much as is necessary. If the parents are able to provide the expenses

of this education, it is well, otherwise the community must provide the means for the teaching

of that child.

And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are justice and right. Until these are realized on

the plane of existence, all things shall be in disorder and remain imperfect.

The world of

mankind is a world of oppression and cruelty, and a realm of aggression and error.

In fine, such teachings are numerous. These manifold principles, which constitute the

greatest basis for the felicity of mankind and are of the bounties of the Merciful, must be added

to the matter of universal peace and combined with it, so that results may accrue. Otherwise

the realization of universal peace by itself in the world of mankind is difficult. As the teachings

of Bahá'u'lláh are combined with universal peace, they are like a table provided with every

kind of fresh and delicious food. Every soul can find, at that table of infinite bounty, that which

he desires. If the question is restricted to universal peace alone, the remarkable results which

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are expected and desired will not be attained. The scope of universal peace must be such that all the communities and religions may find their highest wish realized in it. The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are such that all the communities of the world, whether religious, political or ethical, ancient or modern, find in them the expression of their highest wish. For example, the people of religions find, in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, the establishment of Universal Religion—a religion that perfectly conforms with present conditions, which in reality effects the immediate cure of the incurable disease, which relieves every pain, and bestows the infallible antidote for every deadly poison. For if we wish to arrange and organize the world of mankind in accordance with the present religious imitations and thereby to establish the felicity of the world of mankind, it is impossible and impracticable—for example, the enforcement of the laws of the Torah and also of the other religions in accordance with present imitations. But the essential basis of all the Divine Religions which pertains to the virtues of the world of mankind and is the foundation of the welfare of the world of man, is found in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh in the most perfect presentation. Similarly, with regard to the peoples who clamour for freedom: the moderate freedom which guarantees the welfare of the world of mankind and maintains and preserves the universal relationships, is found in its fullest power and extension in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. So with regard to political parties: that which is the greatest policy directing the world of mankind, nay, rather, the Divine policy, is found in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Likewise with regard to the party of “equality” which seeks the solution of the economic problems: until now all proposed solutions have proved impracticable except the economic proposals in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh which are practicable and cause no distress to society. So with the other parties: when ye look deeply into this matter, ye will discover that the

highest aims of those parties are found in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. These teachings constitute the all-inclusive power among all men and are practicable. But there are some teachings of the past, such as those of the Torah, which cannot be carried out at the present day. It is the same with the other religions and the tenets of the various sects and the different parties. For example, the question of universal peace, about which Bahá'u'lláh says that the Supreme Tribunal must be established: although the League of Nations has been brought into existence, yet it is incapable of establishing universal peace. But the Supreme Tribunal which Bahá'u'lláh has described will fulfil this sacred task with the utmost might and power. And His plan is this: that the national assemblies of each country and nation—that is to say parliaments—should elect two or three persons who are the choicest of that nation, and are well informed concerning international laws and the relations between governments and aware of the essential needs of the world of humanity in this day. The number of these representatives should be in proportion to the number of inhabitants of that country. The election of these souls who are chosen by the national assembly, that is, the parliament, must be confirmed by the upper house, the congress and the cabinet and also by the president or monarch so these persons may be the elected ones of all the nation and the government. The Supreme Tribunal will be composed of these people, and all mankind will thus have a share therein, for every one of these delegates is fully representative of his nation. When the Supreme Tribunal gives a ruling on any international question, either unanimously or by majority rule, there will no longer be any pretext for the plaintiff or ground of objection for the defendant. In case any of the governments or nations, in the execution of the irrefutable decision of the Supreme Tribunal,

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be negligent or dilatory, the rest of the nations will rise up against it, because all the

governments and nations of the world are the supporters of this Supreme Tribunal. Consider what a firm foundation this is! But by a limited and restricted League the purpose will not be realized as it ought and should. This is the truth about the situation, which has been stated. 161

Consider how powerful are the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. At a time when He was in the prison of 'Akká and was under the restrictions and threats of two bloodthirsty kings, His teachings, notwithstanding this fact, spread with all power in Persia and other countries. Should any teaching, or any principle, or any community fall under the threat of a powerful and bloodthirsty monarch, it would be annihilated within a short space of time. At present and for fifty years the Bahá'ís in Persia and most regions have been under severe restrictions and the threat of sword and spear. Thousands of souls have given their lives in the arena of sacrifice and have fallen as victims under the swords of oppression and cruelty. Thousands of esteemed families have been uprooted and destroyed. Thousands of children have been made fatherless. Thousands of fathers have been bereft of their sons. Thousands of mothers have wept and lamented for their boys who have been beheaded. All this oppression and cruelty, rapacity and bloodthirstiness did not hinder or prevent the spread of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. They spread more and more every day, and their power and might became more evident. It may be that some foolish person among the Persians will affix his name to the contents of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh or to the explanations given in the letters of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and send it to that esteemed Assembly. Ye must be aware of this fact, for any Persian who seeks fame or has some other intention will take the entire contents of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and publish them in his own name or in that of his community, just as happened at the Universal Races Congress in London before the war. A Persian took the substance of the Epistles of Bahá'u'lláh, entered that Congress, gave them forth in his own name and published them, whereas the wording was exactly that of Bahá'u'lláh. Some such souls have gone to Europe

and have caused confusion in the minds of the people of Europe and have disturbed the thoughts of some Orientalists. Ye must bear this fact in mind, for not a word of these teachings was heard in Persia before the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh. Investigate this matter so that it may become to you evident and manifest. Some souls are like parrots. They learn any note which they may hear, and sing it, but they themselves are unaware of what they utter. There is a sect in Persia at present made up of a few souls who are called Bábís, who claim to be followers of the Báb, whereas they are utterly unaware of Him. They have some secret teachings which are entirely opposed to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and in Persia people know this. But when these souls come to Europe, they conceal their own teachings and utter those of Bahá'u'lláh, for they know that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are powerful and they therefore declare publicly those teachings of Bahá'u'lláh in their own name. As to their secret teachings, they say that they are taken from the Bayán and the Bayán is from the Báb. When ye obtain the translation of the Bayán, which has been translated in Persia, ye will discover the truth that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are utterly opposed to the teachings of this sect. Beware lest ye disregard this fact. Should ye desire to investigate the matter further, enquire from Persia. In brief, when you traverse the regions of the world, thou shalt conclude that all progress is the result of association and co-operation, while ruin is the outcome of animosity and hatred. Notwithstanding this, the world of humanity does not take warning, nor does it awake from the

The foregoing paragraphs are published in Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá (Haifa: Bahá'í World

Centre, 1982), number 227.

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slumber of heedlessness. Man is still causing differences, quarrels and strife in order to marshal the cohorts of war and, with his legions, rush into the field of bloodshed and slaughter.

Then again, consider the phenomenon of composition and decomposition, of

existence and
non-existence. Every created thing in the contingent world is made up of many
and varied
atoms, and its existence is dependent on the composition of these. In other
words, a conjunction
of simple elements takes place so that from this composition a distinct
organism is produced.
The existence of all things is based upon this principle. But when the order is
deranged,
decomposition is produced and disintegration sets in, then that thing ceases to
exist. That is,
the annihilation of all things is caused by decomposition and disintegration.
Therefore
attraction and composition between the various elements is the means of life,
and discord, and
division produce death. Thus the cohesive and attractive forces in all things
lead to the
appearance of fruitful results and effects, while estrangement and alienation
of things lead to
disturbance and annihilation. Through affinity and attraction all living things
like plants,
animals and men come into existence, while division and discord bring about
decomposition
and destruction.
Consequently, that which is conducive to association and attraction and unity
among the
sons of men is the means of the life of the world of humanity, and whatever
causes division,
repulsion and remoteness leads to the death of humankind.
And if, as you pass by fields and plantations, where the plants, flowers and
sweet-smelling
herbs are growing luxuriantly together, forming a pattern of unity, this is an
evidence of the
fact that that plantation and garden is flourishing under the care of a skilful
gardener. But when
you see it in a state of disorder and irregularity you infer that it has lacked
the training of an
efficient farmer and thus has produced weeds and tares.
It therefore becomes manifest that amity and cohesion are indicative of the
training of the
Real Educator, and dispersion and separation a proof of savagery and
deprivation of divine
education.
A critic may object, saying that peoples, races, tribes and communities of the
world are of
different and varied customs, habits, tastes, character, inclinations and
ideas, that opinions and

thoughts are contrary to one another, and how, therefore, is it possible for real unity to be revealed and perfect accord among human souls to exist? In answer we say that differences are of two kinds. One is the cause of annihilation and is like the antipathy existing among warring nations and conflicting tribes who seek each other's destruction, uprooting one another's families, depriving one another of rest and comfort and unleashing carnage, and this is blameworthy. The other kind which is a token of diversity is the essence of perfection and the cause of the appearance of divine bestowals. Consider the flowers of a garden: though differing in kind, colour, form and shape, yet, inasmuch as they are refreshed by the waters of one spring, revived by the breath of one wind, invigorated by the rays of one sun, this diversity increases their charm, and adds unto their beauty. Thus when that unifying force, the penetrating influence of the Word of God, takes effect, the difference of customs, manners, habits, ideas, opinions and dispositions embellishes the world of humanity, and this is praiseworthy. This diversity, this difference is like the naturally created dissimilarity and variety of the limbs and organs of the human body, for each one contributes to the beauty, efficiency and perfection of the whole. When these different limbs and organs come under the influence of man's sovereign soul, and the soul's power

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pervades the limbs and members, veins and arteries of the body, then difference reinforces harmony, diversity strengthens love, and multiplicity is the greatest factor for co-ordination. How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruits, the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and colour! Diversity of hues, form and shape, enriches and adorns the garden, and heightens the effect thereof. In like manner, when divers shades of thought, temperament and character, are brought together under the power and influence of one central agency, the beauty and glory of human perfection will

be revealed and made manifest. Naught but the celestial potency of the Word of God, which rules and transcends the realities of all things, is capable of harmonizing the divergent thoughts, sentiments, ideas, and convictions of the children of men. Verily, it is the penetrating power in all things, the mover of souls and the binder and regulator in the world of humanity. Praise be to God, today the splendour of the Word of God has illumined every horizon, and from all sects, races, tribes, nations, and communities souls have come together in the light of one Word, assembled, united and agreed in perfect harmony. Some time ago, during the war, a letter was written regarding the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh which may appropriately be appended to this epistle¹⁶²:

O peoples of the world! The Sun of Truth hath risen to illumine the whole earth, and to spiritualize the community of man. Laudable are the results and the fruits thereof, abundant the holy evidences deriving from this grace. This is mercy unalloyed and purest bounty; it is light for the world and all its peoples; it is harmony and fellowship, and love and solidarity; indeed it is compassion and unity, and the end of foreignness; it is the being at one, in complete dignity and freedom, with all on earth.

The Blessed Beauty saith: "Ye are all the fruits of one tree, the leaves of one branch." Thus hath He likened this world of being to a single tree, and all its peoples to the leaves thereof, and the blossoms and fruits. It is needful for the bough to blossom, and leaf and fruit to flourish, and upon the interconnection of all parts of the world-tree, dependeth the flourishing of leaf and blossom, and the sweetness of the fruit. For this reason must all human beings powerfully sustain one another and seek for everlasting life; and for this reason must the lovers of God in this contingent world become the mercies and the blessings sent forth by that clement King of the seen and unseen realms. Let them purify their sight and behold all humankind as leaves and blossoms and fruits of the tree of being. Let them at all times concern themselves with doing a kindly thing

for one of their
 fellows, offering to someone love, consideration, thoughtful help. Let them see
 no one as their
 enemy, or as wishing them ill, but think of all humankind as their friends;
 regarding the alien
 as an intimate, the stranger as a companion, staying free of prejudice, drawing
 no lines.
 In this day, the one favoured at the Threshold of the Lord is he who handeth
 round the cup
 of faithfulness; who bestoweth, even upon his enemies, the jewel of bounty, and
 lendeth, even
 to his fallen oppressor, a helping hand; it is he who will, even to the
 fiercest of his foes, be a

This appended section is published in Selections from the Writings of
 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (Haifa: Bahá’í World

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loving friend. These are the Teachings of the Blessed Beauty, these the
 counsels of the Most
 Great Name.

O ye dear friends! The world is at war and the human race is in travail and
 mortal combat.

The dark night of hate hath taken over, and the light of good faith is blotted
 out. The peoples

and kindreds of the earth have sharpened their claws, and are hurling
 themselves one against

the other. It is the very foundation of the human race that is being destroyed.

It is thousands of

households that are vagrant and dispossessed, and every year seeth thousands
 upon thousands

of human beings weltering in their lifeblood on dusty battlefields. The tents
 of life and joy are

down. The generals practice their generalship, boasting of the blood they shed,
 competing one

with the next in inciting to violence. “With this sword,” saith one of
 them, “I beheaded a

people!” And another: “I toppled a nation to the ground!” And yet

another: “I brought a

government down!” On such things do men pride themselves, in such do they
 glory! Love—

righteousness—these are everywhere censured, while despised are harmony, and
 devotion to

the truth.

The Faith of the Blessed Beauty is summoning mankind to safety and love, to

amity and
peace; it hath raised up its tabernacle on the heights of the earth, and
directeth its call to all
nations. Wherefore, O ye who are God's lovers, know ye the value of this
precious Faith, obey
its teachings, walk in this road that is drawn straight, and show ye this way
to the people. Lift
up your voices and sing out the song of the Kingdom. Spread far and wide the
precepts and
counsels of the loving Lord, so that this world will change into another world,
and this
darksome earth will be flooded with light, and the dead body of mankind will
arise and live; so
that every soul will ask for immortality, through the holy breaths of God.
Soon will your swiftly passing days be over, and the fame and riches, the
comforts, the joys
provided by this rubbish-heap, the world, will be gone without a trace. Summon
ye, then, the
people to God, and invite humanity to follow the example of the Company on
high. Be ye
loving fathers to the orphan, and a refuge to the helpless, and a treasury for
the poor, and a cure
for the ailing. Be ye the helpers of every victim of oppression, the patrons of
the disadvantaged.
Think ye at all times of rendering some service to every member of the human
race. Pay ye no
heed to aversion and rejection, to disdain, hostility, injustice: act ye in the
opposite way. Be ye
sincerely kind, not in appearance only. Let each one of God's loved ones
centre his attention
on this: to be the Lord's mercy to man; to be the Lord's grace. Let him do
some good to every
person whose path he crosseth, and be of some benefit to him. Let him improve
the character
of each and all, and reorient the minds of men. In this way, the light of
divine guidance will
shine forth, and the blessings of God will cradle all mankind: for love is
light, no matter in
what abode it dwelleth; and hate is darkness, no matter where it may make its
nest. O friends
of God! That the hidden Mystery may stand revealed, and the secret essence of
all things may
be disclosed, strive ye to banish that darkness for ever and ever.

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??Second Tablet to The Hague??

??1 July 1920??

?)?(Tablets to The Hague, pp. 9-10??

??To the esteemed members of the Executive Committee of the Central
Organization for a??

??Durable Peace,??

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Your reply, dated 12 June 1920, to my letter was received with the utmost
gratitude. God
be praised, it testified to the unity of thought and purpose that existeth
between us and you, and
expressed sentiments of the heart that bear the hallmark of sincere affection.
We Bahá'ís have the greatest affinity for your esteemed organization, and
dispatched
therefore two distinguished individuals to you in order to forge a strong bond.
For in this day
the cause of universal peace is of paramount importance amongst all human
affairs and is the
greatest instrument for securing the very life and felicity of mankind. Bereft
of this effulgent
reality, humanity can in no wise find true composure or real advancement but
will, day by day,
sink ever deeper into misery and wretchedness.
This last terrible war hath clearly proven that humanity cannot withstand the
effects of
modern instruments of warfare. The future can in no wise be compared to the
past, for earlier

weapons and armaments had but a feeble effect, whilst modern ones can, in a brief span of time, strike at the very roots of the world of humanity and surpass the limits of its endurance.

In this age, therefore, universal peace is like unto the sun, which bestoweth life upon all things, and it is thus incumbent upon all to endeavour in the path of this mighty cause. Now, we indeed share this common goal with you and strive toward it with all our strength, renouncing even our lives, our kindred, and our substance for its sake.

As ye have no doubt heard, in Persia thousands of souls have offered up their lives in this path, and thousands of homes have been laid waste. Despite this, we have in no wise relented, but have continued to endeavour unto this very moment and are increasing our efforts as day followeth day, because our desire for peace is not derived merely from the intellect: It is a matter of religious belief and one of the eternal foundations of the Faith of God. That is why we strive with all our might and, forsaking our own advantage, rest, and comfort, forgo the pursuit of our own affairs; devote ourselves to the mighty cause of peace; and consider it to be the very foundation of the Divine religions, a service to His Kingdom, the source of eternal life, and the greatest means of admittance into the heavenly realm.

Today the benefits of universal peace are recognized amongst the people, and likewise the harmful effects of war are clear and manifest to all. But in this matter, knowledge alone is far from sufficient: A power of implementation is needed to establish it throughout the world. Ye should therefore consider how the compelling power of conscience can be awakened, so that this lofty ideal may be translated from the realm of thought into that of reality. For it is clear and evident that the execution of this mighty endeavour is impossible through ordinary human feelings but requireth the powerful sentiments of the heart to transform its potential into reality.

Indeed, all on earth know that an upright character is praiseworthy and acceptable and that baseness of character is blameworthy and rejected, that justice and fairness are favoured and agreeable whilst cruelty and tyranny are unacceptable and rejected.

Notwithstanding this, all people, but for a few, are devoid of a praiseworthy character and bereft of a sense of justice.

The power of conscience is therefore needed, and spiritual sentiments are required, that souls may feel compelled to evince a goodly character. It is our firm belief that the power of implementation in this great endeavour is the penetrating influence of the Word of God and the confirmations of the Holy Spirit.

We are bound to you by the strongest ties of love and unity. We long with heart and soul

for the day to arrive when the tabernacle of the oneness of humanity will have been raised in

the midmost heart of the world and the banner of universal peace unfurled in all regions. The

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oneness of humanity must therefore be established, that the edifice of universal peace may be raised in turn.

Your organization, which is a well-wisher of the world of humanity, is highly esteemed in

the eyes of the Bahá'ís. Therefore kindly accept our highest regards and keep us ever informed

of the progress of the cause of universal peace in Europe through your efforts.

We hope that

our communications will remain constant.

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??Tablet to To Dr. Forel Resident in Switzerland??

?)?(Tablet to Dr. Forel??

??O revered personage, lover of truth! Thy letter dated 28 July 1921 hath been received. The??

??contents thereof were most pleasing and indicated that, praised be the Lord, thou art as yet??

??young, and searchest after truth, that thy power of thought is strong and the discoveries of thy??

??mind manifest.??

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Numerous copies of the epistle I had written to Dr. Fisher¹⁶³ are spread far and wide and

every one knoweth that it hath been revealed in the year 1910. Apart from this, numerous

epistles have been written before the war upon the same theme, and reference, too, hath been

made to these questions in the Journal of the San Francisco University, the date whereof is

known beyond any doubt. ¹⁶⁴ In like manner have the philosophers of broad vision praised

highly the discourse eloquently delivered in the above-named University. ¹⁶⁵ A copy of that

paper is thus enclosed and forwarded. Thy works are no doubt of great benefit, and if published,

send us a copy of each.

By materialists, whose belief with regard to Divinity hath been explained, is not meant

philosophers in general, but rather that group of materialists of narrow vision who worship that

which is sensed, who depend upon the five senses only, and whose criterion of knowledge is

limited to that which can be perceived by the senses. All that can be sensed is to them real,

whilst whatever falleth not under the power of the senses is either unreal or doubtful. The

existence of the Deity they regard as wholly doubtful.

It is as thou hast written, not philosophers in general but narrow-minded materialists that

are meant. As to deistic philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, they are indeed

worthy of esteem and of the highest praise, for they have rendered distinguished services to

mankind. In like manner we regard the materialistic, accomplished, moderate

philosophers,
who have been of service (to mankind).
We regard knowledge and wisdom as the foundation of the progress of mankind,
and extol
philosophers who are endowed with broad vision. Peruse carefully the San
Francisco
University Journal that the truth may be revealed to thee.
Now concerning mental faculties, they are in truth of the inherent properties
of the soul,
even as the radiation of light is the essential property of the sun. The rays
of the sun are renewed
but the sun itself is ever the same and unchanged. Consider how the human
intellect develops
and weakens, and may at times come to naught, whereas the soul changeth not.
For the mind
to manifest itself, the human body must be whole; and a sound mind cannot be
but in a sound
body, whereas the soul dependeth not upon the body. It is through the power of
the soul that
the mind comprehendeth, imagineth and exerteth its influence, whilst the soul
is a power that
is free. The mind comprehendeth the abstract by the aid of the concrete, but
the soul hath
limitless manifestations of its own. The mind is circumscribed, the soul
limitless. It is by the
aid of such senses as those of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch, that the
mind
comprehendeth, whereas the soul is free from all agencies. The soul as thou
observest, whether
it be in sleep or waking, is in motion and ever active. Possibly it may, whilst
in a dream, unravel
an intricate problem, incapable of solution in the waking state. The mind,
moreover,
understandeth not whilst the senses have ceased to function, and in the
embryonic stage and in
early infancy the reasoning power is totally absent, whereas the soul is ever
endowed with full
strength. In short, the proofs are many that go to show that despite the loss
of reason, the power

Based on historical documents, it is possible that “Dr. Fisher” refers to
Dr. Josephine Fallscheer.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá refers to His talk at Stanford University, Palo Alto,
California, in 1912, which was published in
the local newspaper and is also included in the collection of His talks in
America, entitled The Promulgation of
Universal Peace.

There ‘Abdu’l-Bahá distinguishes the materialistic and empirical philosophy of the modern West from the standard rationalistic philosophy of the Greeks and Persians, and highlights the difference between theories of the essence of nature and of the origin of man.

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of the soul would still continue to exist. The spirit however possesseth various grades and stations.

As to the existence of spirit in the mineral: it is indubitable that minerals are endowed with

a spirit and life according to the requirements of that stage. This unknown secret, too, hath

become known unto the materialists who now maintain that all beings are endowed with life,

even as He saith in the Qur’án, ‘All things are living’.

In the vegetable world, too, there is the power of growth, and that power of growth is the

spirit. In the animal world there is the sense of feeling, but in the human world there is an allembracing power. In all the preceding stages the power of reason is absent, but the soul existeth

and revealeth itself. The sense of feeling understandeth not the soul, whereas the reasoning

power of the mind proveth the existence thereof.

In like manner the mind proveth the existence of an unseen Reality that embraceth all

beings, and that existeth and revealeth itself in all stages, the essence whereof is beyond the

grasp of the mind. Thus the mineral world understandeth neither the nature nor the perfections

of the vegetable world; the vegetable world understandeth not the nature of the animal world,

neither the animal world the nature of the reality of man that discovereth and embraceth all

things.

The animal is the captive of nature and cannot transgress the rules and laws thereof. In man,

however, there is a discovering power that transcendeth the world of nature and controlleth and

interfereth with the laws thereof. For instance, all minerals, plants and animals are captives of

nature. The sun itself with all its majesty is so subservient to nature that it hath no will of its

own and cannot deviate a hair’s-breadth from the laws thereof. In like manner all other beings,

whether of the mineral, the vegetable or the animal world, cannot deviate from
 the laws of
 nature, nay, all are the slaves thereof. Man, however, though in body the
 captive of nature is
 yet free in his mind and soul, and hath the mastery over nature.
 Consider: according to the law of nature man liveth, moveth and hath his being
 on earth,
 yet his soul and mind interfere with the laws thereof, and even as the bird he
 flieth in the air,
 saileth speedily upon the seas and as the fish soundeth the deep and
 discovereth the things
 therein. Verily this is a grievous defeat inflicted upon the laws of nature.
 So is the power of electrical energy: this unruly violent force that cleaveth
 mountains is yet
 imprisoned by man within a globe! This is manifestly interfering with the laws
 of nature.
 Likewise man discovereth those hidden secrets of nature that in conformity with
 the laws
 thereof must remain concealed, and transfereth them from the invisible plane to
 the visible.
 This, too, is interfering with the law of nature. In the same manner he
 discovereth the inherent
 properties of things that are the secrets of nature. Also he bringeth to light
 the past events that
 have been lost to memory, and foreseeth by his power of induction future
 happenings that are
 as yet unknown. Furthermore, communication and discovery are limited by the
 laws of nature
 to short distances, whereas man, through that inner power of his that
 discovereth the reality of
 all things, connecteth the East with the West. This, too, is interfering with
 the laws of nature.
 Similarly, according to the law of nature all shadows are fleeting, whereas man
 fixeth them
 upon the plate, and this, too, is interference with a law of nature. Ponder and
 reflect: all
 sciences, arts, crafts, inventions and discoveries, have been once the secrets
 of nature and in
 conformity with the laws thereof must remain hidden; yet man through his
 discovering power
 interfereth with the laws of nature and transfereth these hidden secrets from
 the invisible to the
 visible plane. This again is interfering with the laws of nature.
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In fine, that inner faculty in man, unseen of the eye, wresteth the sword from

the hands of
nature, and giveth it a grievous blow. All other beings, however great, are
bereft of such
perfections. Man hath the powers of will and understanding, but nature hath
them not. Nature
is constrained, man is free. Nature is bereft of understanding, man
understandeth. Nature is
unaware of past events, but man is aware of them. Nature forecasteth not the
future; man by
his discerning power seeth that which is to come. Nature hath no consciousness
of itself, man
knoweth about all things.
Should any one suppose that man is but a part of the world of nature, and he
being endowed
with these perfections, these being but manifestations of the world of nature,
and thus nature is
the originator of these perfections and is not deprived therefrom, to him we
make reply and
say: the part dependeth upon the whole; the part cannot possess perfections
whereof the whole
is deprived.
By nature is meant those inherent properties and necessary relations derived
from the
realities of things. And these realities of things, though in the utmost
diversity, are yet
intimately connected one with the other. For these diverse realities an
all-unifying agency is
needed that shall link them all one to the other. For instance, the various
organs and members,
the parts and elements, that constitute the body of man, though at variance,
are yet all connected
one with the other by that all-unifying agency known as the human soul, that
causeth them to
function in perfect harmony and with absolute regularity, thus making the
continuation of life
possible. The human body, however, is utterly unconscious of that all-unifying
agency, and yet
acteth with regularity and dischargeth its functions according to its will.
Now concerning philosophers, they are of two schools. Thus Socrates the wise
believed in
the unity of God and the existence of the soul after death; as his opinion was
contrary to that
of the narrow-minded people of his time, that divine sage was poisoned by them.
All divine
philosophers and men of wisdom and understanding, when observing these endless
beings,
have considered that in this great and infinite universe all things end in the

mineral kingdom,
 that the outcome of the mineral kingdom is the vegetable kingdom, the outcome
 of the
 vegetable kingdom is the animal kingdom and the outcome of the animal kingdom
 the world
 of man. The consummation of this limitless universe with all its grandeur and
 glory hath been
 man himself, who in this world of being toiled and suffereth for a time, with
 divers ills and
 pains, and ultimately disintegrates, leaving no trace and no fruit after him.
 Were it so, there is
 no doubt that this infinite universe with all its perfections has ended in sham
 and delusion with
 no result, no fruit, no permanence and no effect. It would be utterly without
 meaning. They
 were thus convinced that such is not the case, that this Great Workshop with
 all its power, its
 bewildering magnificence and endless perfections, cannot eventually come to
 naught. That still
 another life should exist is thus certain, and, just as the vegetable kingdom
 is unaware of the
 world of man, so we, too, know not of the Great Life hereafter that followeth
 the life of man
 here below. Our non-comprehension of that life, however, is no proof of its
 non-existence. The
 mineral world, for instance, is utterly unaware of the world of man and cannot
 comprehend it,
 but the ignorance of a thing is no proof of its non-existence. Numerous and
 conclusive proofs
 exist that go to show that this infinite world cannot end with this human life.
 Now concerning the Essence of Divinity: in truth it is on no account determined
 by anything
 apart from its own nature, and can in no wise be comprehended. For whatsoever
 can be
 conceived by man is a reality that hath limitations and is not unlimited; it is
 circumscribed, not
 all-embracing. It can be comprehended by man, and is controlled by him.
 Similarly it is certain
 that all human conceptions are contingent, not absolute; that they have a
 mental existence, not
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 a material one. Moreover, differentiation of stages in the contingent world is
 an obstacle to
 understanding. How then can the contingent conceive the Reality of the
 absolute? As

previously mentioned, differentiation of stages in the contingent plane is an obstacle to understanding. Minerals, plants and animals are bereft of the mental faculties of man that discover the realities of all things, but man himself comprehendeth all the stages beneath him. Every superior stage comprehendeth that which is inferior and discovereth the reality thereof, but the inferior one is unaware of that which is superior and cannot comprehend it. Thus man cannot grasp the Essence of Divinity, but can, by his reasoning power, by observation, by his intuitive faculties and the revealing power of his faith, believe in God, discover the bounties of His Grace. He becometh certain that though the Divine Essence is unseen of the eye, and the existence of the Deity is intangible, yet conclusive spiritual proofs assert the existence of that unseen Reality. The Divine Essence as it is in itself is however beyond all description. For instance, the nature of ether is unknown, but that it existeth is certain by the effects it produceth, heat, light and electricity being the waves thereof. By these waves the existence of ether is thus proven. And as we consider the outpourings of Divine Grace we are assured of the existence of God. For instance, we observe that the existence of beings is conditioned upon the coming together of various elements and their non-existence upon the decomposition of their constituent elements. For decomposition causeth the dissociation of the various elements. Thus, as we observe the coming together of elements giveth rise to the existence of beings, and knowing that beings are infinite, they being the effect, how can the Cause be finite? Now, formation is of three kinds and of three kinds only: accidental, necessary and voluntary. The coming together of the various constituent elements of beings cannot be accidental, for unto every effect there must be a cause. It cannot be compulsory, for then the formation must be an inherent property of the constituent parts and the inherent property of a thing can in no wise be dissociated from it, such as light that is the revealer of things, heat that causeth the expansion of elements and the solar rays which are the essential

property of the
 sun. Thus under such circumstances the decomposition of any formation is
 impossible, for the
 inherent properties of a thing cannot be separated from it. The third formation
 remaineth and
 that is the voluntary one, that is, an unseen force described as the Ancient
 Power, causeth these
 elements to come together, every formation giving rise to a distinct being.
 As to the attributes and perfections such as will, knowledge, power and other
 ancient
 attributes that we ascribe to that Divine Reality, these are the signs that
 reflect the existence of
 beings in the visible plane and not the absolute perfections of the Divine
 Essence that cannot
 be comprehended. For instance, as we consider created things we observe
 infinite perfections,
 and the created things being in the utmost regularity and perfection we infer
 that the Ancient
 Power on whom dependeth the existence of these beings, cannot be ignorant; thus
 we say He
 is All-Knowing. It is certain that it is not impotent, it must be then
 All-Powerful; it is not poor,
 it must be All-Possessing; it is not non-existent, it must be Ever-Living. The
 purpose is to show
 that these attributes and perfections that we recount for that Universal
 Reality are only in order
 to deny imperfections, rather than to assert the perfections that the human
 mind can conceive.
 Thus we say His attributes are unknowable.
 In fine, that Universal Reality with all its qualities and attributes that we
 recount is holy
 and exalted above all minds and understandings. As we, however, reflect with
 broad minds
 upon this infinite universe, we observe that motion without a motive force, and
 an effect
 without a cause are both impossible; that every being hath come to exist under
 numerous
 influences and continually undergoeth reaction. These influences, too, are
 formed under the
 action of still other influences. For instance, plants grow and flourish
 through the outpourings
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of vernal showers, whilst the cloud itself is formed under various other
 agencies and these
 agencies in their turn are reacted upon by still other agencies. For example,

plants and animals
grow and develop under the influence of what the philosophers of our day
designate as
hydrogen and oxygen and are reacted upon by the effects of these two elements;
and these in
turn are formed under still other influences. The same can be said of other
beings whether they
affect other things or be affected. Such process of causation goes on, and to
maintain that this
process goes on indefinitely is manifestly absurd. Thus such a chain of
causation must of
necessity lead eventually to Him who is the Ever-Living, the All-Powerful, who
is Self-
Dependent and the Ultimate Cause. This Universal Reality cannot be sensed, it
cannot be seen.
It must be so of necessity, for it is All-Embracing, not circumscribed, and
such attributes qualify
the effect and not the cause.
And as we reflect, we observe that man is like unto a tiny organism contained
within a fruit;
this fruit hath developed out of the blossom, the blossom hath grown out of the
tree, the tree is
sustained by the sap, and the sap formed out of earth and water. How then can
this tiny organism
comprehend the nature of the garden, conceive of the gardener and comprehend
his being? That
is manifestly impossible. Should that organism understand and reflect, it would
observe that
this garden, this tree, this blossom, this fruit would in no wise have come to
exist by themselves
in such order and perfection. Similarly the wise and reflecting soul will know
of a certainty
that this infinite universe with all its grandeur and perfect order could not
have come to exist
by itself.
Similarly in the world of being there exist forces unseen of the eye, such as
the force of
ether previously mentioned, that cannot be sensed, that cannot be seen.
However, from the
effects it produceth, that is from its waves and vibrations, light, heat,
electricity appear and are
made evident. In like manner is the power of growth, of feeling, of
understanding, of thought,
of memory, of imagination and of discernment; all these inner faculties are
unseen of the eye
and cannot be sensed, yet all are evident by the effects they produce.
Now as to the infinite Power that knoweth no limitations; limitation itself

proveth the
 existence of the unlimited, for the limited is known through the unlimited,
 just as weakness
 itself proveth the existence of power, ignorance the existence of knowledge,
 poverty the
 existence of wealth. Without wealth there would be no poverty, without
 knowledge no
 ignorance, without light no darkness. Darkness itself is a proof of the
 existence of light for
 darkness is the absence of light.
 Now concerning nature, it is but the essential properties and the necessary
 relations inherent
 in the realities of things. And though these infinite realities are diverse in
 their character yet
 they are in the utmost harmony and closely connected together. As one's
 vision is broadened
 and the matter observed carefully, it will be made certain that every reality
 is but an essential
 requisite of other realities. Thus to connect and harmonize these diverse and
 infinite realities
 an all-unifying Power is necessary, that every part of existent being may in
 perfect order
 discharge its own function. Consider the body of man, and let the part be an
 indication of the
 whole. Consider how these diverse parts and members of the human body are
 closely connected
 and harmoniously united one with the other. Every part is the essential
 requisite of all other
 parts and has a function by itself. It is the mind that is the all-unifying
 agency that so uniteth
 all the component parts one with the other that each dischargeth its specific
 function in perfect
 order, and thereby co-operation and reaction are made possible. All parts
 function under certain
 laws that are essential to existence. Should that all-unifying agency that
 directeth all these parts
 be harmed in any way there is no doubt that the constituent parts and members
 will cease
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 functioning properly; and though that all-unifying agency in the temple of man
 be not sensed
 or seen and the reality thereof be unknown, yet by its effects it manifesteth
 itself with the
 greatest power.
 Thus it hath been proven and made evident that these infinite beings in this

wondrous
universe will discharge their functions properly only when directed and controlled by that
Universal Reality, so that order may be established in the world. For example, interaction and
co-operation between the constituent parts of the human body are evident and indisputable, yet
this does not suffice; an all-unifying agency is necessary that shall direct and control the
component parts, so that these through interaction and co-operation may discharge in perfect
order their necessary and respective functions.
You are well aware, praised be the Lord, that both interaction and co-operation are evident
and proven amongst all beings, whether large or small. In the case of large bodies interaction
is as manifest as the sun, whilst in the case of small bodies, though interaction be unknown, yet
the part is an indication of the whole. All these interactions therefore are connected with that
all-embracing power which is their pivot, their centre, their source and their motive power.
For instance, as we have observed, co-operation among the constituent parts of the human
body is clearly established, and these parts and members render services unto all the component
parts of the body. For instance, the hand, the foot, the eye, the ear, the mind, the imagination
all help the various parts and members of the human body, but all these interactions are linked
by an unseen, all-embracing power, that causeth these interactions to be produced with perfect
regularity. This is the inner faculty of man, that is his spirit and his mind, both of which are
invisible.
In like manner consider machinery and workshops and the interaction existing among the
various component parts and sections, and how connected they are one with the other. All these
relations and interactions, however, are connected with a central power which is their motive
force, their pivot and their source. This central power is either the power of steam or the skill
of the mastermind.
It hath therefore been made evident and proved that interaction, co-operation and
interrelation amongst beings are under the direction and will of a motive Power

which is the
 origin, the motive force and the pivot of all interactions in the universe.
 Likewise every arrangement and formation that is not perfect in its order we
 designate as
 accidental, and that which is orderly, regular, perfect in its relations and
 every part of which is
 in its proper place and is the essential requisite of the other constituent
 parts, this we call a
 composition formed through will and knowledge. There is no doubt that these
 infinite beings
 and the association of these diverse elements arranged in countless forms must
 have proceeded
 from a Reality that could in no wise be bereft of will or understanding. This
 is clear and proven
 to the mind and no one can deny it. It is not meant, however, that that
 Universal Reality or the
 attributes thereof have been comprehended. Neither its Essence nor its true
 attributes hath any
 one comprehended. We maintain, however, that these infinite beings, these
 necessary relations,
 this perfect arrangement must of necessity have proceeded from a source that is
 not bereft of
 will and understanding, and this infinite composition cast into infinite forms
 must have been
 caused by an all-embracing Wisdom. This none can dispute save he that is
 obstinate and
 stubborn, and denieth the clear and unmistakable evidence, and becometh the
 object of the
 blessed Verse: 'They are deaf, they are dumb, they are blind and shall return
 no more'.

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Now regarding the question whether the faculties of the mind and the human soul
 are one
 and the same. These faculties are but the inherent properties of the soul, such
 as the power of
 imagination, of thought, of understanding; powers that are the essential
 requisites of the reality
 of man, even as the solar ray is the inherent property of the sun. The temple
 of man is like unto
 a mirror, his soul is as the sun, and his mental faculties even as the rays
 that emanate from that
 source of light. The ray may cease to fall upon the mirror, but it can in no
 wise be dissociated
 from the sun.
 In short, the point is this, that the world of man is supernatural in its

relation to the vegetable kingdom, though in reality it is not so. Relatively to the plant, the reality of man, his power of hearing and sight, are all supernatural, and for the plant to comprehend that reality and the nature of the powers of man's mind is impossible. In like manner for man to comprehend the Divine Essence and the nature of the great Hereafter is in no wise possible. The merciful outpourings of that Divine Essence, however, are vouchsafed unto all beings and it is incumbent upon man to ponder in his heart upon the effusions of the Divine Grace, the soul being counted as one, rather than upon the Divine Essence itself. This is the utmost limit for human understanding. As it hath previously been mentioned, these attributes and perfections that we recount of the Divine Essence, these we have derived from the existence and observation of beings, and it is not that we have comprehended the essence and perfection of God. When we say that the Divine Essence understandeth and is free, we do not mean that we have discovered the Divine Will and Purpose, but rather that we have acquired knowledge of them through the Divine Grace revealed and manifested in the realities of things.

Now concerning our social principles, namely the teachings of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh spread far and wide fifty years ago, they verily comprehend all other teachings. It is clear and evident that without these teachings progress and advancement for mankind are in no wise possible. Every community in the world findeth in these Divine Teachings the realization of its highest aspirations. These teachings are even as the tree that beareth the best fruits of all trees. Philosophers, for instance, find in these heavenly teachings the most perfect solution of their social problems, and similarly a true and noble exposition of matters that pertain to philosophical questions. In like manner men of faith behold the reality of religion manifestly revealed in these heavenly teachings, and clearly and conclusively prove them to be the real and true remedy for the ills and infirmities of all mankind. Should these sublime teachings be

diffused, mankind shall be freed from all perils, from all chronic ills and sicknesses. In like manner are the Bahá'í economic principles the embodiment of the highest aspirations of all wage-earning classes and of economists of various schools. In short, all sections and parties have their aspirations realized in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. As these teachings are declared in churches, in mosques and in other places of worship, whether those of the followers of Buddha or of Confucius, in political circles or amongst materialists, all shall bear witness that these teachings bestow a fresh life upon mankind and constitute the immediate remedy for all the ills of social life. None can find fault with any of these teachings, nay rather, once declared they will all be acclaimed, and all will confess their vital necessity, exclaiming, 'Verily this is the truth and naught is there beside the truth but manifest error. '

In conclusion, these few words are written, and unto everyone they will be a clear and conclusive evidence of the truth. Ponder them in thine heart. The will of every sovereign prevaieth during his reign, the will of every philosopher findeth expression in a handful of disciples during his lifetime, but the Power of the Holy Spirit shineth radiantly in the realities

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of the Messengers of God, and strengtheneth Their will in such wise as to influence a great nation for thousands of years and to regenerate the human soul and revive mankind. Consider how great is this power! It is an extraordinary Power, an all-sufficient proof of the truth of the mission of the Prophets of God, and a conclusive evidence of the power of Divine Inspiration.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

Haifa, 21 September 1921

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44-45?? ??????:??

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46-47?? ??????????:??

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?)?(London, pp. 51-113?? ??????:??

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?)?(Paris, pp. 19-21?? ??????????:??

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?)?(Paris, pp. 21-22?? ??????????:??

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?(?????? ??? ????? ????) 63-56 .??)(Paris, pp.
23-27?? ??????????:??

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?)?(Paris, pp. 33-35?? ??????????:??

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41-43?? ??????:??

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35-39?? ??????:??

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?)?(Paris, pp. 39-41?? ??????:??

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43-45?? ??????:??

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?(???? ? ? ? ?)87-79 .??)(Paris, pp.
45-49?? ??:??

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57-59?? ??????????:??

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60-62?? ??????:??

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167-168? ?????:??

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?)?(Paris, pp. 154-155?? ??????????:??

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?)?(Paris, pp. 178-179?? ??????????:??

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?)?(London, pp. 122-125?? ??????????:??

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168-172?? ??:??

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Kinney; 780 West?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??
??)End Avenue??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 3-4?? ??????????:??

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Phillips; 39 West Sixty-?? ???? ? ????
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?(?????? ???? ???? ????)11-8 .??)?(Promulgation,
pp. 7-9?? ??????????:??

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MacNutt; 935?? ????? ? ????
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??)Eastern Parkway??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 4-7?? ??????:??

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Mrs. Alexander?? ????? ? ??? ?????:??
??)Morten; 141 East Twenty-first Street??

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?(?????? ???? ???? ????)12-11 .??)(Promulgation,

pp. 9-11?? ??????:??

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Mills; 327 West?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

??)End Avenue??

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?(?????? ???? ???? ????)16-13 .??)?(Promulgation,

pp. 16-18?? ??????????:??

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Street?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?Union Meeting of Advanced?? ??????? ??

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]??)Thought Centers [New Thought Forum??

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pp. 14-16?? ??????:??

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Tenth?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 11-13??

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Street??? ?????? ??? ? ????
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pp. 18-20?? ??????????:??
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Street?? ???? ? ??? ?????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 20-22??

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Kinney; 780 West?? ??? ? ??? ?????:??

??)End Avenue??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 23-25??

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Emery; 273?? ??? ? ??? ?????:??

??)West Ninetieth Street??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 25-29??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 29-32??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 32-34?

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pp. 35-37?

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pp. 39-42??

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pp. 44-46?? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 56-57?? ????????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 65-67??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 67-69??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 69-70??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 71-72??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 77-78??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 79-83??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 83-84??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 84-87??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 87-91??
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?(?????? ? ? ? ? ?)59-57 .??)(Promulgation,
pp. 91-93?? ??????:??

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Fiftieth Street?? ??? ? ??? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 93-96??
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Center?? ??? ? ??? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 97-100??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 101-103??
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Swingle?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, p. 104?? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 105-110??
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??146??
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??227 Riverside Drive?? ???? ? ????
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 111-113??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 113-116??
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?? 12??? ?1912?? ?????? ??
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??148??
?? 25??? ? 26????????????? ?1330??
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[Methodic] Episcopal?? ????? ? ????? ??????:??
??)Church; West 104th Street??

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Forum?? ????????? ?? ??????????:??

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?(?????? ??? ????? ?????)71-60 .??)(Promulgation,
pp. 116-122?? ??????????:??

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Society?? ?????? ?? ????????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 123-126??
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??150??
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Central Park West?? ????? ? ??? ?????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 126-129??
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Avenues?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 129-132?
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??152?
?? 4????????? ?1330? ?????? ?
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Fourteenth Street? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 133-137?
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??1044??

?? 22??? ?1912?? ?????? ??
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??153??
?? 5??? ? 6????????????? ?1330??
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?(?????? ???? ???? ????)76-71 .??)(Promulgation,
pp. 140-143?? ??????????:??

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?(????? ?? ???? ????)82-77 .??
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??155??
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Breed; 367 Harvard?? ? ? ?
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??)Street??

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pp. 138-139?? ????????:??

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?(????? ?? ???? ????)91-86 .??
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?? 9????????????? ?1330?? ?????? ??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 143-146??
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??158??
?? 9??? ? 10???????????? ?1330??
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???? (?Mount Morris Baptist [Beats?? ???? ?
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??)Church; Fifth Avenue and 126th Street??

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?(?????? ???? ???? ????)97-91 .??)(Promulgation,
pp. 147-150?? ??????:??

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?? 28??? ?1912?? ?????? ??
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Fourteenth Street?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 150-153??

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Kinney; 780 West?? ????? ? ??? ?????:??

??)End Avenue??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 154-156??

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Broadway and Seventy-?? ???? ? ???? ?

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?(?????? ??? ????? ????)106-98 .??)?(Promulgation,
pp. 156-160?? ??????????:??

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?(?????? ??? ????? ????)109-107 .??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 161-163??
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?? 17???????????????? ?1330?? ??????? ??
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Street?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 163-171??
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?? 17??? ? 18????????? ?1330??
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?? 20??? ? 21??? ? 30????????? ?1330?
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???? ? ???? (?)Mrs. Newton?? ? ?
(?)Mrs. Rivers?? ? ? ??:?

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Avenue?? ? ? ??:?

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?(???? ? ? ? ?)138-129 .??)?(Promulgation,
pp. 172-176?? ??:?

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pp. 176-182?? ??????:?
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Kinney; 780 West?? ???? ? ???
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Flatbush?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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MacNutt; 935 Eastern?? ????? ? ????

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Street?? ????? ? ?????? ??????:??

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?(????? ? ? ? ?)153-151 .?? (?????
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 205-206??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 207-213??

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Englewood?? ???? ? ???? ??:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 216-217??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 218-220??
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?(???? ? ? ? ?)169-161 .?)(Promulgation,
pp. 220-225? ??:?

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?(?????? ??? ????? ?????)175-170 .??)(Promulgation,
pp. 225-228?? ??????????:??
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?(?????? ??? ????? ?????)180-176 .??
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?? 27??? ? 28???? ?1330?? ??????? ??
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????? ??? ?????? (?)Mrs. Newton?? ??? ??????
(?)Mrs. Rivers?? ????? ? ?????? ??????:??

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?(????? ?? ???? ????)185-181 .??
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Fourth Avenue and?? ???? ? ??? ?????:??
??)Twentieth Street??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 228-235??
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830 Park Avenue?? ???? ? ???? ?????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 245-247??
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Parsons?? ????? ? ????? ??????:??

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Avenue?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 289-296??

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Sutherland Maxwell? ? ? ? ??:?
?)716 Pine Avenue West?

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 306-308?
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Sutherland Maxwell? ? ? ? ??:?
?)716 Pine Avenue West?

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pp. 308-312? ??:?

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(?)Socialists and Labor leaders?? ??????? ??
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Church?? ??? ? ??? ????:??

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??221??
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True; 5338 Kenmore Avenue?? ???? ? ????
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 320-324??
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South?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 325-328??

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Laurel?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 329-333??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 334-337??
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Thirty-eighth?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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Men’s Christian Association?? ??????? ??
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pp. 343-348?? ??????????:??

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pp. 348-355?? ??????:??

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pp. 355-361?? ??????:??

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Emmanu-El; 450 Sutter Street?? ???? ? ???
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pp. 361-370?? ??????:??

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Hotel Sacramento?? ???? ? ???? ?????:??

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True; 5338 Kenmore Avenue?? ????? ? ????

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Parsons; 1700?? ??? ? ??? ?????:??
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Parsons; 1700?? ??? ? ??? ?????:??
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Parsons; 1700?? ???? ? ??? ?????:??

??Eighteenth Street, NW??

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Parsons; 1700?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??
??Eighteenth Street, NW??

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Parsons; 1700?? ??? ? ??? ??????:??

??Eighteenth Street, NW??

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Hannen; 1252 Eighth?? ???? ? ????
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Tenth Street?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??

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Street?? ??? ? ??? ??????:??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 437-443??

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Moxey; 575 Riverside?? ????? ? ????

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 442-447??

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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 447-448??
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Kinney; 780 West?? ???? ? ????
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 449-452??
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Emery; 273?? ???? ? ????
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Kinney; 780 West?? ???? ? ????
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Kinney; 780 West?? ???? ? ???? ??????:??
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?)?(Promulgation, pp. 453-457??
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pp. 457-458?? ??????????:??

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West End Avenue?? ??? ? ??? ?????:??

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Kinney; 780 West?? ???? ? ???? ?????:??

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?(?????? ???? ???? ????)330-328 .??)(Promulgation,

pp. 460-461?? ??????????:??

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pp. 462-468?? ??????????:??

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pp. 468-470?? ??????:??

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?)?(Paris, pp. 176-177?? ??????????:??

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?(?????? ??? ?????? ??????)90-86 .??
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?)?(Paris, pp. 179-181?? ??????:??

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?(????? ??? ???? ????)93-90 .??
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Lane? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

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?)?(Paris, pp. 173-176? ? ? ? ? ? ?

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?)?(Paris, pp. 182-184?? ??????:??

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Talks of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

«Including All Published Talks and Utterances in Persian and English»
(Single Volume)

177 B.E. – 2020 A.D.

Compiled by: Payman Rowhani

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