

**Note: talks in ""s were given that title originally, talks without, have been given a title to aid in identifying the talk.**

## **Table of Contents**

<a href="#">"A Scene from a Bahá'í Journey".....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Talks with a Date.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Address at Green Acre.....</a>	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">"Speech given at Green Acre Annual Meeting".....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">"Green Acre Annual Meeting".....</a>	<a href="#">14</a>
<a href="#">"Qurratu'l-'Ayn".....</a>	<a href="#">16</a>
<a href="#">"The Ancient Covenant of God".....</a>	<a href="#">24</a>
<a href="#">"The Five Kinds of Spirit".....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">"Evening Speech given at Feast".....</a>	<a href="#">34</a>
<a href="#">"Nineteen-day Feasts".....</a>	<a href="#">38</a>
<a href="#">"Divine Physical and Spiritual Healing".....</a>	<a href="#">42</a>
<a href="#">"11th and 12th Chapters of Revelations".....</a>	<a href="#">48</a>
<a href="#">"Speech given on the return of Mr. and Mrs. H. F Ober from 'Akká".....</a>	<a href="#">56</a>
<a href="#">Brief Introduction to the Bahá'í Movement.....</a>	<a href="#">60</a>
<a href="#">"Immortality".....</a>	<a href="#">62</a>
<a href="#">"Questions asked at Forest Temple Service".....</a>	<a href="#">65</a>
<a href="#">Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.....</a>	<a href="#">66</a>
<a href="#">A visit with 'Abdu'l-Bahá.....</a>	<a href="#">69</a>
<a href="#">"Martyrdom".....</a>	<a href="#">72</a>
<a href="#">"Incidents in the life of Mírzá Fádil".....</a>	<a href="#">79</a>
<a href="#">"Address given in the Arts and Crafts Barn at Willow Cotte".....</a>	<a href="#">87</a>
<a href="#">"Immortality".....</a>	<a href="#">93</a>
<a href="#">"The Parliament of Man".....</a>	<a href="#">100</a>
<a href="#">"Speech before the Canadian Club".....</a>	<a href="#">105</a>
<a href="#">"A New Vision of Immortality".....</a>	<a href="#">109</a>
<a href="#">"Address to the Young Hebrew: Progress of the Jews in Persia".....</a>	<a href="#">118</a>
<a href="#">"The Fulfillment of the Prophecies of the Old and New Testament in this Age".....</a>	<a href="#">124</a>
<a href="#">Address in Minnesota.....</a>	<a href="#">131</a>
<a href="#">"The Bahá'í Movement and Its Universal Principals".....</a>	<a href="#">136</a>
<a href="#">"Professor Jináb-i-Fádil of Persia Before Members of Kiwanis Club".....</a>	<a href="#">144</a>

<a href="#"><u>"Persian Mysticism"</u></a> .....	148
<a href="#"><u>"The Bahá'í Movement"</u></a> .....	161
<a href="#"><u>Address to the Spiritualists</u></a> .....	170
<a href="#"><u>An Untitled Talk</u></a> .....	174
<a href="#"><u>"The Solution of the Economic Problem"</u></a> .....	179
<a href="#"><u>Talk at Home of Mrs. Collins</u></a> .....	185
<a href="#"><u>"Persian Mysticism"</u></a> .....	197
<a href="#"><u>"Old and New Life in Persia"</u></a> .....	205
<a href="#"><u>"The Poets of Persia"</u></a> .....	214
<a href="#"><u>Presentation to Hindustan Club</u></a> .....	220
<a href="#"><u>"Grounds of Mashriqu'l-Adhkar"</u></a> .....	225
<a href="#"><u>Address at A.M.E. Church</u></a> .....	227
<a href="#"><u>O&amp;A at home of Mrs. Revell</u></a> .....	234
<a href="#"><u>Address to A.M.E. Church</u></a> .....	238
<a href="#"><u>Some Bahá'í Principles</u></a> .....	245
<a href="#"><u>Address to Spiritualist Church</u></a> .....	252
<a href="#"><u>Address to Y.M.C.A (colored)</u></a> .....	259
<a href="#"><u>At Miss M. Washington's House</u></a> .....	265
<a href="#"><u>Questions and Answers</u></a> .....	267
<a href="#"><u>"Reconstruction of Jerusalem"</u></a> .....	270
<a href="#"><u>Address at Green Acre</u></a> .....	276
<a href="#"><u>"Suggestions Regarding the Study of the Íqán"</u></a> .....	279
<a href="#"><u>"An Interview of Mr. George Thompson, Secretary of the Colored Y.M.C.A."</u></a> .....	281
<a href="#"><u>"Customs and Manners of Persia"</u></a> .....	286
<a href="#"><u>Address to Spiritualists</u></a> .....	290
<a href="#"><u>"Persian Mystics and Their Teachings"</u></a> .....	298
<a href="#"><u>Talks without a Date</u></a> .....	305
<a href="#"><u>"Fellowship for World Unity"</u></a> .....	306
<a href="#"><u>"Universal Consciousness of Christ"</u></a> .....	312
<a href="#"><u>"Palestine During the Days of Reconstruction"</u></a> .....	318
<a href="#"><u>"Modern Education in Persia"</u></a> .....	324
<a href="#"><u>Address to Poor Farm</u></a> .....	328
<a href="#"><u>Address to Calvary Baptist Church</u></a> .....	332
<a href="#"><u>Talk Given in Bethel</u></a> .....	337
<a href="#"><u>Christ</u></a> .....	342

<a href="#"><u>Theosophist's Meeting.....</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>344</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Talk on History of Persia.....</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>349</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Q&amp;A with Bahá'ís.....</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>355</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Qurratu'l-'Ayn.....</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>361</u></a>

# “A Scene from a Bahá’í Journey”

AN APPRECIATION FROM A FRIEND

Eager light-hearted students crowded into a lecture-room of a Canadian University to hear the word of an Oriental philosopher. The great square hall was soon astir with that peculiar ante-lecture sound combination of swishing skirts, banging chairs, the flip of turning pages and the buzz of half-suppressed voices. All were excitedly awaiting a novel experience, for a visit from a professor of an Oriental University was a rare event in Canada.

But Jean Sheridan, sitting in the far window corner by herself, felt no tremor of pleasurable anticipation. Aimlessly, she had followed the class into this extra noon-hour lecture. Drooping shoulders, dark circles traced by sleepless nights beneath trouble-shadowed eyes, and the unhappy downward curve of her lips expressed the weariness of a soul face to face with the biggest crisis of her life.

“Why, oh why are human beings so treacherous and so unkind to each other?” was the cry wrung from the agony of a young heart meeting its first real sorrow.

In the enthusiasm of an ardent desire to improve her college, Jean had led a demand for reform in the residence conditions of the women students. Pure and altruistic though the spirit of the agitation was, it failed. Of what avail is even the passionate fervor of youth, when pitted against the relentless rock of a vested interest? In an effort of self-preservation, those whose comfort was threatened by the proposed reforms, had set afloat an ugly rumor as to the motive of the leader of the rebellion, and this had grown with the rapidity and the certainty of a persistently pushed snow-ball, until it had thoroughly damaged Jean’s position among her fellow students, and thus successfully blocked all further attempts to force change in the system.

The soul of Jean was sickened by this first encounter with the poisoned weapons of a long established order. The sweetness of girlhood had fled from her heart, and pain had rolled itself into a hard knot of hatred in her mind. She wanted revenge. She craved power to make the enemy suffer as she had suffered. It was the

face of a bitter woman that looked out upon the campus. She wished, because she knew revenge was impossible, that she, like the maple leaves lured by the autumn winds from their haven of the tree-tops, could be swept by some unseen force far away to a lovelier land of untroubled life.

She turned from the window with a start, suddenly realizing that the Dean had entered, accompanied by two gentlemen, distinguished by the olive complexion of Western Asia. One of them, the elder, wore a long black cassock-like robe and a white fez. The radiance of this man's face was almost disturbing. Something in his personality shook Jean out of the absorbing interest in her own trouble, and made her feel ashamed of the longing for revenge which had reigned so supremely in her mind until just the last few minutes.

"What is happening to me?" she wondered, "I never met any-one who made me feel so ill at ease."

Abruptly she rose, becoming suddenly conscious that her head was throbbing with pain. She wanted to get away from this disquieting influence and out in to the healing fresh air. She left her place at the window and crossed the room, moving towards the door. As she approached the center of the room, she met the eyes of the Oriental philosopher. He smiled upon her and the strange happy beauty of the smile told Jean she must not leave the hall. In the front row there was a vacant seat, and Jean, almost as one in trance, took it.

The lecture, on the new conditions of womanhood in Persia, was given in the Persian by the philosopher and translated into rich and graceful English by the other gentleman, the interpreter. So full of loving understanding was the relation between these two men that Jean could hardly realize the division into Persian and English. The lecturer told of a woman's movement, different far from ours in its inspiration, an uprising not forced by economic complications but developed as one of the twelve principles taught by a Persian prophet, Bahá'u'lláh, and his son 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He spoke of the suffering and martyrdom of the pioneer preachers of the new conception of womanhood by the heavy hand of custom and of the sacrifice demanded of all those who followed in their wake. From the concrete facts of Persian history he turned to the more philosophic consideration of the cleansing value of persecution to the soul. He said that without it the growth of soul would be retarded, that without it the soul could never learn the cardinal principle of all great and true religions, the love of one's enemy. It seemed to Jean, that as the Persian paused between sentences to allow the interpreter to present the idea in English, his eyes sought hers in question, as if he were saying, "This is all for you, are you making it yours?"

The soul of Jean was alert. Suffering had made her sensitive, and she caught, on the wings of intuition, more thought, more spiritual knowledge than was possible for the speaker to put into actual words. Everything about the man was expressive, to her quickened perception. The liquid tones of joy in his voice, the quiet dignity of bearing, and above all the mystic power of his eyes, before whose light it seemed to her no sin could remain in secure hiding, told her of a life made fragrant by a glorious and self-renouncing devotion to a great hope for humanity. She knew that here was a man who counted it a privilege to suffer in order that humanity might have a fresh realization of the nearness of God, one who had learned, through the tortures of persecution, to bear no personal ill-feeling to the persecutor. She knew that the shining serenity of his personality had been born of that ecstatic moment of high consciousness when the soul realizes the inevitableness of the persecutor, and learns that he deserves not the reviling tongue, not the stiletto vengeance, but the thanks of the heart which has been taught through his persecution, lessons other-wise far out of reach.

Jean's life grew by leaps and bounds as she listened and looked and drew from the Oriental philosopher and secrets of creative living. The cloud of depression lifted, and she began to see the application of this teaching of "radiant acquiescence" to her own problem. A thrill of resolute courage passed through her, and she was glad that her life, too, had not been without experience of the flames of persecution.

Too soon, the address was over. The gay and light-hearted students rushed away, mindful of nothing but the delayed lunch-hour. For them the sway of novelty was past: habit must have its toll.

But Jean had forgotten lunch, had forgotten everything but the simple words of understanding uttered in oriental grace of expression that hour.

"Could I," she wondered, "Ought I to tell him how much it meant to me?"

Shyness made her hesitate. She thought perhaps others would come to him with words of appreciation. But the room was rapidly emptying. No one intended to thank the visitor in person.

"I cannot let him go, away without some expression of gratitude. I must – perhaps only I knew all that he meant. I will."

Jean's heart quaked in the presence of the Dean, with whom the lecturer was conversing, and whom she knew regarded her with disfavor, but she approached them bravely, determined that one so wise and good and beautiful should not go un-thanked. The Persian saw her coming and stepped forward to meet her. He gave her his hand in greeting, and before she managed to utter a word, he said in English, "Thank you, thank you very much."

He smiled upon her and studied her face for a minute. Then he turned to the interpreter with a few words in Persian.

The interpreter nodded, laughed happily, and said to the girl:

“His Excellency says that he noticed you in the audience and that not in all his travels in America, has he seen a face more expressive of glowing spiritual joy.”

Thus did the great change come into the life of Jean Sheridan. What matter is only one among the many listeners had caught the promise of a new Eternity. To her, as if to the whole West, the East had given a token of faith.

Lawrence Huston

(M. I. L.)

Talks with a Date

# 1

## Address at Green Acre

23 August 1923—Green Acre, Eliot, Maine

As we study human anatomy we find on one side the physiological, and come to know there are two principles in man composed first of material elements and second of spiritual or elusive substance which we call force or energy. These two forces, physical and psychological, are ever combating in the body of man and these opposite pokes have to be brought together in harmony and union. The physical side is finite, limited, dark. The spiritual side is infinite, luminous. All idiosyncrasies, limitations, all difference, anger, jealousies arise from the kingdom of matter; while the realm of spirit is free and untrammelled, unconscious of obstacles and struggles which are visible on the material plane.

One of the greatest phantasms of life is time. Time is an illusion and limited. Space is circumscribed, belonging to this globe. We state a certain person is sixty or seventy or one hundred years old; that some child is sick, another has a normal life. All these qualities belong to the world of time. It is otherwise in the world of eternity which is free from all these.

Another phantasm is space. We state that one person is born in Turkey, another in France or the United States. All these spaces belong to the material world and have nothing to do with spirit. Rend asunder the veil covering time and space, and arising above the conditions of time and space we enter the realm of reality, exhaustless, never-ending, Divine, pouring down energy on the creatures without consideration of time and space,

Philosophically, we divide time into three parts; past, present, future. These three categories belong to the material world. For example a child is born into the world, and we speak of the time before its birth as the past, the time when it is reared as the present, and the time which does not exist materially as belonging to the future—These relate to the material world; in spirit there is neither past, present, nor future. Spirit lives in the everlasting Yea, Again we divide time into day and night and also into seasons. If we could find wings strong and powerful enough to soar in the Kingdom of Light there would be neither day nor night but an everlasting ocean of light. We would be swimming in Light. All individual ideas of property and virtues belong to the material, physical and

incarnate world. Inasmuch as we are so encircled by these fetters and chains put upon us by the tyranny of time and space, we cannot realize a world free from these, a world of eternal time and space. Nevertheless now and then the veil is rent asunder and spiritual receptivity is realized. In a moment we are given a realization that will last the rest of life on this terrestrial globe. Those spiritual moments realized intensely in the life of each sincere seeker are the saving grace of humanity. When the soul returns from this pilgrimage he will realize a contrast as great as a bird in a cage, and not rest till he finds another opportunity to take the same journey. No matter how much the bird desires to fly upward to the Kingdom of eternity, if its wings are besmeared with water and clay of materialism it cannot disentangle itself and wing its way to the realm of Truth.. Again, no matter how strong man is, muscularly, if his hands and feet are manacled he cannot put them to use according to his inclination and desire. The Wisdom of Divinity requires man to live according to the laws of creation. Instead of fighting them, he must put himself in the current of those laws and bring about not only his own salvation but that of mankind. He must gain such a spiritual realization of life. While absorbed in material things he must put himself in contact with the spiritual world. It is impossible to hold two things in the hand at one time, or for two things to occupy the same space at one time, or to have two beloveds in the heart at the same time. Lovers and sweethearts, no matter how much we may speak according to the Persian poets are jealous. Now in the line of the material side of life, if pleasure and desire and seeking after the tinsel and gaudy appearances of the world fill the human heart, there is no place for spiritual realities. On the other hand, when the heart becomes the throne of the beloved Reality, that heart will embody God and God alone will be all sufficient and all comprehending. This Old Testament injunction always is quite significant: Love thy Creator with all thy heart and soul, etc. It means the heart become free and disentangled from material desire and absorbed in the realities of the higher Kingdom. This love and attachment for the higher realms gives man the strength to effectively dispense with the tyranny of time and space and gain equilibrium, which will be a perfect balance between the higher and lower. When we become acquainted with the lives of the Man of God and His followers, we come in contact with certain events which are improbable, nay impossible. The law of nature impinges upon us self-preservation. It is inviolable. Every person is influenced by it. But when we study the life of the Man of God He is free, has abrogated and repealed that law and lives a life of altruism, giving himself to others. Moreover the Man of God always longs and prays for sacrifice, so attached is He to the Principle so enunciated that He desires to give up life.

“As I pass along the streets and look at the trees I pray to the Lord of mankind that any one of these trees may become a cross upon which I may be crucified.” Such renunciation of life is opposite to the

material and physical. We love to have the comforts of life, but here is one who renounces life the sake of the Principles for which he stands. In 1908 through the Committee of Union and Progress 'Abdu'l-Bahá was freed from imprisonment. Since that time he would refer with pleasure and happiness to those days of imprisonment, those happy days and joyous years of life, because he sacrificed his Spirit for God and was put in prison for His sake.

Whether we review the history of Christian martyrs of Rome of Bahá'í martyrs in Persia, we come to the same startling discovery with joy. They suffered, felt pangs of pain, but had gained the power, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, to neutralize the pain with the higher happiness in the pleasure of their Lord. We may say some events in the lives of the Christian martyrs were exaggerated, but we cannot say this about the tortures of the Bahá'í martyrs. There is a higher power that compels men and women to accept them joyfully. For example, if one is living in a small village, having no education, surrounded by the gossips of the day, and suddenly hears a report that there is a wonderful country beyond this with broad universal people who are happy and joyous, he says "I am going to leave this village." He may go through many sufferings but in his anticipation to reach the city he forgets all these things. Now the only difference between the villager and the martyr is this that the villager has not realized a perfect picture of the city but the martyr has a perfect picture of the Divine Realm and gives up life with perfect understanding and realization. Martyrdom does not mean only to give up life physically. More real and more stony is the road of self-effacement of opinions and convictions which are superannuated ideas from our forbearers. That is a road on which we are called to walk. When after struggles and efforts we have reached this world of realization, we see and feel we are dwelling in the world of Light minus darkness, of Love minus hatred, the world of oneness free from duality, a world encircled with union, brotherhood, joy felicity, of eternal companionship and happiness.

## 2

# “Speech given at Green Acre Annual Meeting”

Date Unspecified, 1920—Green Acre, Eliot, Maine

This foundation is under the heavenly attraction. It is under the surveillance of such people who have perceived the soul of reality. The eye of God is on this foundation, from the Supreme Concourse the spirit of God is supporting this foundation. Confirmation and assistance is on this foundation, because the attention of His Holiness, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is concentrating towards here. When the attention of His Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is centered here we know God is going to assist you. It is evident that this place will be improved and advanced, we must be sure and certain that the future of Green Acre will be a brilliant future. The future of this will be like a magnet that will attract the whole world. It is like the electricity. People will fix their eyes and gaze on this place with astonishment and surprise and the spirit of the holy people will vibrate all these places. Harmonies will echo through the trees of this place and this will come to pass continually. So we are perfectly sure that this foundation will be built upon a solid place, and this Green Acre is the English name for `Akká, which was the place of the resplendence of God. This place will have a brilliant and very great future. This association is one of the universal associations, and of course next year it will be more developed and more progressive than this year. All the great foundations and systems and affairs that you see in the world today were started on a small scale. All the foundations which are existing by the power and confirmation of God will no doubt progress. All those that are confirmed by the power of God. So, our hope is that his place will become one of the most important places in the world.

PARTING SPEECH OF MÍRZÁ FADIL

The days which I have spent in Green Acre will never be forgotten. Not only with my visible eye I saw, but with my invisible eye I saw

that the very air of Green Acre is impregnated with spirituality. The atmosphere of Green Acre is the atmosphere of love and good fellowship. A hundred thousand times blessed by that lady, Miss Sarah Farmer, who founded this place. That love and that joy and that exhilaration which was created in my heart by standing here will ever remain with me and be carried away. If the friends scatter from this place and go away to their homes, their cities and their work they must carry away the spirit of these meetings, of these gatherings, and bring into their lives some of the sweetness and joy that they have gained by communion with the holy souls and with each other. We must go away like a globe of fire so that we may carry away this flame of love and ignite the hearts, and illumine the minds with the spirit of love and fellowship and divine association. So that we may throw this great flame of love deposited in our hearts by 'Abdu'l-Bahá into the hearts of others. We must wage war with the armies of darkness, ignorance, and superstition. We are actually engaged in a warfare. We are fighting with the legions of the night. We are waging war with the squadrons of divisions and strife amongst the people. We must defeat the armies of prejudice and envy and hatred which are amongst the people. What is our reinforcement? It is the array of the Kingdom of God, the same array which reinforced and caused the conquest of the Disciples of Christ and His followers.

We all hope and trust that when we go away from this blessed spot to our various homes we may spread the fragrances of love, unity and amity. One of the Persian Bahá'í poets who has passed into the life beyond and whose anthology is published says: "As long as we are in existence to unify all the children of men we are not to remain silent for one instant, nor should we stop working for one second." The result of the labor of the Bahá'ís must be universal love, universal brotherhood and universal association amongst all mankind.

# 3

## “Green Acre Annual Meeting”

Date Unspecified, 1920—Green Acre, Eliot, Maine

This foundation is under the heavenly attraction. It is under the surveillance of such people who have perceived the soul of reality. The eye of God is on this foundation from the Supreme Concurrence the Spirit of God is supporting this foundation. Confirmation and assistance is on this foundation. Because the attention of His Holiness, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is concentrating towards here. When the attention of His Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, is centered here we know God is going to assist you. It is evident that this place will be improved and advanced, we must be sure and certain that the future of Green Acre will be a brilliant future. The future of this will be like a magnet that will attract the whole world. It is like electricity. People will fix their eyes and gaze on this place with astonishment and surprise and the spirit of the holy people will vibrate all these places. Harmonies will echo through the trees of this place and this will come to pass continually. So we are perfectly sure that this foundation will be built upon a solid place, and this Green Acre is the English name for ‘Akká, which was the place of the resplendence of God. This place will have a brilliant and very great future. This association is one of the universal associations, and of course next year it will be more developed and more progressive than this year. All the great foundations and systems and affairs that you see in the world today were started on a small scale. All the foundations which are existing by the power and confirmation of God will no doubt progress. All those that are confirmed by the power of God. So our hope is that this place will become one of the most important places in the world.

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# 4

## “Qurratu’l-‘Ayn”

Sunday, 25 July 1920—Green Acre, Eliot,  
Maine

The wise philosophers of the past have likened the world of humanity unto one body. Just as the individual often is subjected to dire diseases and sicknesses, and that individual man is in need to the wise physician to treat him, for every kind of disease is in need of a wise physician and diagnostician in order to determine the disease and prescribe the right medicine, likewise the body of the commonwealth of humanity today is subjected to many sicknesses, economical and spiritual diseases, and they remove these diseases and heal the body of mankind we are in need of the Divine and spiritual physician.

The prophets of God who have come from time immemorial have been these great physicians who have healed the diseases of the body politic through their wisdom, their inspiration and influence. During the last six thousand years many divine physicians have come, many spiritual doctors have appeared and they have from age to age, from generation to generation prescribed the medicine for the healing of nations.

If we universalize our vision and be cosmopolitan in our sentiments and look over the conditions of the world we realize that the whole world is in need of a great spiritual physician to heal these social diseases. In the world of religion we have many prejudices. In the world of politics we have many dissensions. In the world of economics we have many struggles, and in the world of equal rights between men and women we have many problems to solve in this day. The holy books of the past revelations are the prescriptions given by these divine physicians, but mankind instead of following the directions of these able and successful doctors, through their inadvertence and heedlessness have laid aside these divine prescriptions and consequently the diseases instead of being helped are aggravated, and through the prescriptions given by man the diseases are increased in number and virulence.

The forward looking men and women of this twentieth century undoubtedly, with intelligence and knowledge realize that today the

world is in a very acute condition and unless we practice the gist and essence of these spiritual prescriptions revised and revealed in a new form we will be at a loss and we are walking in the road of distraction. Now one of the great chronic diseases which had enveloped the social body, which has permeated to the very core of this body, has been the lack of equality between men and women. Men and women are likened to the two hands of the body politic, or they are likened unto the two eyes of the body. The world of humanity and its progress is dependent upon the strengthening and reinforcing of these two pillars of the body politic, and so far as the wisdom of God is concerned. He has left between men and women no difference and distinction whatever.

Before the inauguration of this spiritual day, before the appearance of His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh, there were many differences and distinctions between men and women in the Orient. In the Orient the station of women had reached such a low depth, and the lack of opportunity on the part of women to develop their God-given faculties was so patent and manifest that no westerner can conceive in his mind. The question which made it worse and made it very difficult for the reformers to bring about better conditions was that the religious teachers in the Orient considered the veiling of the women a religious principle, and consequently the rest of the people were prejudiced against the unveiling of the fair sex. You can realize very easily how difficult and almost impossible it is to take away from the brains of men those superstitions and those opinions which have been taught them from the day they were born.

There were two laws which were practically universal all over the east, first was polygamy and the second was divorce. The education of the girls was looked upon as heresy and anyone who came forward and taught the question of the education of the women as anathema and he was looked upon as a dangerous man and consequently they did not even encourage the girls to read and write their own native language. They thought if the girls learned to read and write they would use this in their love affairs and they would become immoral and loose in their habits to such an extent they brought forward these ideas and they were accepted by the mass of the people. The veiling of women was so universally practiced that just as you put your dead people here in a white cloth, there they put these living dead humans in black cloth while they are walking around the streets. If a westerner passed through the streets and saw these living walking black things with a white veil before the face he would be astonished, he would think he had entered into another world. The religious belief was if a man looked into the face of a strange woman, or he happened to hear her voice, or if the woman came to look into the face of a strange man or listened to his voice or shook hands with him they both had to be stoned. While the women in this country are out and walking

around, in Persia they seldom are out, they are not allowed to leave the house except on rare occasions and when a man reached the age of maturity and he desired to marry he would not be allowed to see the girl who had the privilege and honor to be his wife but all these arrangements were made by the mother or sister who would go to the house and pick out a girl and explain to him the charming manners, etc. of the girl, and he had to believe all their description. Thus the girls were never allowed to leave their homes and it was as if these homes had been turned into coffins and tombs, in brief they were the paralyzed, asphyxiated members of the body politic.

And again you ought to realize that this veiling, this low degree of women had been on account of their religious opinions, not on account of political or racial difference, but the bigotry of religious opinion was bringing down a people to this condition, and as it is said ignorance often leads to bliss, so the Oriental women were blissfully ignorant and blissfully happy. Thus you realize that these terrible conditions among women could not be removed by any political or social reforms whatever. Thus the estate of women was flooded in the black cloud of superstition until the sun of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh dawned from the Horizon of Persia. The soft and gentle breezes of Divine Providence wafted from the Paradise of Glory and Beauty and passed over these dead trees of humanity, and suddenly through this spirit of resurrection they were revived refreshed and brought into this kingdom of excellencies of mankind. The minds were unsealed from the chains of superstitions and ignorance and the souls came out of the tombs of inadvertency and walked on the face of the earth. Thousands of people, men and women, received an abundant share from these spiritual fountains of the Lord descending from heaven, and they all arose with one mind and with one power to disseminate the seeds of wisdom and knowledge in the fields of the hearts of the people of the Orient. The walls of fanaticism were broken down.

The first woman in the Orient who arose with self-sacrifice and with a mighty power to emancipate her sisters from the shadow of superstition and ignorance was the great heroine Qurratu'l-'Ayn. Seventy-three years ago Qurratu'l-'Ayn lived in this world. She was the daughter of a famous theologian and her uncles belonged to the same school of learning. In the world of vision she came to believe in the validity and authoritativeness of this dispensation, and she saw with her own eyes that the founder of this spiritual exaltation which came over her by beholding the founder of the Bahá'í movement engaged in such spiritual communion, sowed in her heart the seed of faith and strange to relate she remembered years afterward the words and sentences of that prayer which was uttered by the founder. When she awakened she read through all the theological and religious books to find if there was such a prayer which she heard in the world of vision, but she could not find it. Years afterwards when the founder of this movement was presented

to her she found the exact prayer and this was a link in the chain of her faith. Through reading the words of the founder of this movement she grasped a new life she was fired with a new enthusiasm and she became a divine being endowed with the spiritual powers for the salvation of her sex. In the realm of poetry and literature she achieved phenomenal success, she wrote many poems and books fired with spiritual expressions and with exalted ideals for the emancipation and the freedom of the people of that country. In all her poems, in all her writings, which are truly inspirational, she calls all the people to lay down the old superannuated garments of the past ages and clothe themselves with the new and brilliant garments of the new hope and new visions of this century of all centuries. The first revolutionary step of this wonderful woman was to leave her family, her children, her home and with one maid-servant she started to travel through out Persia lecturing and speaking on the new ideals and the new age and calling to thousands of people that the sun of universal freedom had dawned from the Horizon of the Orient. But the cities of Persia are not so tolerant and lenient to the lecturers as they are in America where one may travel from city to city, organize any kind of a meeting he likes and write in the newspapers and invite everyone to come listen to his, far from this. Another difference which she had to confront was the lack of traveling facilities as there is not a single mile of railroad all over Persia and often she had to walk miles and miles over hills and valleys to achieve her work of liberalization. In whatever city she entered no sooner she opened her mouth and began to speak about the bounties of this glorious age, of the freedom and liberty that has come to women, the people not realizing and feeling these divine sentiments, these spiritual emotions, they would gather around her, laughing at her, stoning her and finally they would take her and threw her out of the city, and she had to gather her strength and continue her missionary work.

In many cities she was captured and thrown into prison, later she would be released, in other cities she was stoned, but the more she suffered in the path of her Faith and her convictions, the greater became the flame of her love in her work of freedom. But she was not satisfied with this great work. In the history of Persia there is no instance whatever of a woman leaving her family and people and breaking all conventions and coming out into the public, but she went to the very center of the Mohammedan world where the pope and cardinals of the Mohammedan religion live, she went there to speak about the freedom of women. Bahá'u'lláh had filled her with such a spirit, with such power, with such overcoming spirituality that with courage she came to them and they were humbled before her. Her power of eloquence and the fluency of her tongue was so marvelous and startling that all the people were drawn to her like the iron filing is attracted to the magnet. Having arrived at that center of religious learning of the Mohammedan world she called

forth the leaders to gather a large controversial meeting, and these leaders were so astounded and taken aback that they had nothing to do but to obey, and she came forward and addressed them in the most fiery and spiritual way, that all the authorities were melted into tears. Through the medium of these meetings she was enabled to illumine the minds and the hearts of a number of the religious leaders both amongst men and women and these people later became the champions of the equality between the two sexes. Finally the Mohammedan clergy were astounded and amazed at the manifest progress of her ideals among the lower classes, and they thought that their authority would be diminished. Thus they appealed to the Turkish government to expel her from that city.

Having arrived from that center of learning to Baghdad immediately she started her work again and called a meeting of the leaders of religion and theology and began to speak, and at the end of that speech they were all bewitched and enamored through the efficacy of her words. Having finished this second part of her work she returned to her home and the first thing that she had to meet was the objections of her father and other members of her family. These people were of the theological class and they had the greatest desire to influence her that the Báb's movement was wrong, so they made a number of meetings but in each meeting they were defeated. Finally having realized that they could not convince her of the rightness of their cause they put her into a prison and ordered that her body be branded with hot irons. While she was in this prison it is reported that daily she would turn her face toward the throne of the Almighty saying: Oh lord I have suffered for Thy cause, I have arisen to spread Thy message, I have no other hope save Thy good pleasure If my death would be conducive to the prosperity of Thy dispensation I am more than happy. I am ready at every moment to give up my life in this Cause. Through the wonderful power of Bahá'u'lláh she was released from this prison and this restraint. This instance in itself covers a large part of her history which can be read at a later time. Again restless and enthusiastic she arose in the midst of the people. Finally her work became so universal, her reforms took her into so many various strata of Persian society that the government was alarmed and captured her.

In order to convince the people that she is going to be a martyr for the cause of the equality of men and women, that she will be ready to give her life to prove that the veiling and seclusion of the women was nothing more than superstition, she prepared a wonderful plan. At the time there was a wonderful park in which were gathered large numbers of Bahá'ís, and Bahá'u'lláh was among them. They had come here to be engaged in a momentous conference. All of a sudden without preparation, without informing the people who were in the garden she left her room without any veil, she entered the park and joined the conference and to the utter

astonishment of the men she addressed them. With an overflowing heart, with an eloquent tongue, with a supernatural, enthusiasm she called upon the people: "Oh men, the new day has come, the diamond age of the Lord of Lords is in our midst the time of the unity of the human race is at hand, the age of the equality of men and women is here. The period has come in which all these fanaticisms and superstitions must be cast away from the tabernacles of the hearts. The age has come in which perfect equality between men and women must be established. The age has come in which one divine commonwealth; one spiritual society must be unfurled before the faces of men. The age has come in which the banner of universal peace must wave on the apex of the world. In brief the day has come in which the Manifestation of the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings has appeared, and He has freed the women from the shackles of ignorance and superstition of the fanatical people."

You can never imagine what an effect her speech had on these people. The psychology of their minds was so different—they were not accustomed to hearing the voice of a women, and they had never before heard such fiery words. Thus before entering this conference she had given her life already for the equality of men and women. After this great event she was captured and brought to Tīhrán. The Sháh of Persia at the time was autocratic and he was free to dispose of the lives of his subjects the way he pleased. The heads of the religion of Persia were influencing the king that they feared that the spirit of these teachings would revolutionize his government and throw down this throne. But the king was rather interested to find out something about the magnetic personality of this woman, so he called her into his presence. The then king of Persia was so despotic that no one dared to speak before him, and anyone who entered into his presence had to prostrate himself seven times before the king would address him for he was not responsible to anyone . When Qurratu'l-'Ayn appeared in the presence of the King, like one of the heroines of the past she opened her tongue fearlessly and courageously and delivered a wonderful talk to him about the power and bounties of this day that the king began to tremble and fear. Later on he was again anxious to see her as he was so affected by this magnificent speech that his own cabinet did not like him to see her again so he issued an order to put her on prison. In the beginning her imprisonment was not very severe. Now and then there were a few friends who could go and see her and talk with her. At that time there was a wedding in the house of one of the ministers of Persia and the members of this family requested the Sháh to permit Qurratu'l-'Ayn to attend this wedding. No sooner she entered this banquet where the musicians were playing and everyone was having a good time than she began to speak to them about this cause and the freedom of women and all those present were women. Her speech was so magnificent her presence so attractive and her words so intellectual that the

musicians and singers soon forgot their work and they all gathered around to hear her words—she changed the natural and spiritual attitude of all those who were present. When she returned to her prison they reported to the Sháh of Persia that the time had come for the killing of this women for as long as she lives she will keep the state in a turmoil, her fiery spirit and religious ideals will completely upset the government. Thus the necessary order of the king emanated from his palace that she had to be done away with. And while she was being executed she was in a state of prayer speaking to the executioners that she was giving up her life for the fact of the equality of the rights of mankind for the fact of the better condition of women and for the realization of the dreams and hopes of her sex.

Aside from Qurratu'l-'Ayn there were other splendid Bahá'í women who have rendered monumental services to the women of the East. Hundreds of them were martyred. Thus through the self-sacrifice of these women the whole world was entirely changed and a new era dawned for women and little by little the Bahá'í teachings were spread among all classes of society. Now there are numerous schools for the girls founded and conducted on modern principles of education in which the new girls of Persia are engaged in studying and learning. In the beginning the Bahá'ís attempted to establish a few schools but the Mullás ordered them to be destroyed but now the idea is so widely spread that even the Mohammedans are taking a forward step. The question of polygamy and divorce is reduced to a very few outlying localities and the matter of the equality of men and women has become of paramount importance before the statesmen and reformers.

From a universal standpoint the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is for the equalization of the denizens of the earth of all the communities and nations the oneness of religion, international peace and the founding of the court of arbitration the inculcation of an international language. This is a new diamond age in which we live this is a great spiritual salvation for the founding of which we are called upon. This is not a church or a sect. This is the collective center of the virtues and perfections of the world of humanity. This is that wireless telegraph which is communicating between all the hearts and all the souls. The prophets the savants the thinkers of the past six thousand years have been all serving and giving up their lives for the realization of the ideas of this age. God in order to actualize these universal principles has sacrificed himself in thousands of souls like Qurratu'l-'Ayn. They were fired with the holy spirit of the Lord. With joyousness and gladsomeness they went forward toward the altar of sacrifice. Our hope and our prayer is that the sun of this glorious age may illumine all the horizons of the earth.

CLOSING PRAYER

O Lord! I declare that thou has brought us from the world of the unknown into the world of the known and educated and trained us under the shadow of Thy mercy and providence and broadened in this great day Thy straight and universal path. We beg of Thee and supplicate Thee to illumine the eyes, to grant hearing to the ears, to rend asunder the veils from the hearts so that we may become freed from superstitions and differences and walk in Thy straight, manifest and divine highway. May we attain to the new paradise, may we enter into Thy glorious kingdom. Thou art the powerful, the merciful, the omnipotent.

# 5

## “The Ancient Covenant of God”

Sunday, 29 July, 1920— Green Acre, Eliot, Maine

Today it is recorded in our program that I should speak to you of the Ancient Covenant of God. Praise be to God these noble souls who are present in this meeting are well informed with the mysteries of the Holy Books. The creation of the world and all its phenomena culminates in the most noble creation, which is man. In other words the mineral and vegetable and the animal kingdoms are only the stepping stones that man may advance and attain to the knowledge of the Merciful. God, the Merciful, has formed man so that he may become the recipient of infinite progress and advancement. For this reason, he has deposited in men a power, a force, which is capable of infinite achievement and advancement. The world of humanity has two kinds of progress, material progress and spiritual progress. Material progress is enhanced and accomplished through the power and bounty and favors of spiritual progress. Material achievements and accomplishments without spiritual power, without nearness to God, without divine faith, without heavenly illumination is like unto the body without the soul—lifeless, dead.

From time immemorial, God, the Almighty has sent spiritual teachers and heavenly prophets for the guidance of mankind and for the realization of ethical and moral advancement in the realm of the spirit. Amongst every nation and tribe and people the Universal Father has sent His messengers and mouthpieces so they may illuminate the kingdoms of the hearts with the rays of the sun of reality. The names of some of these prophets are known to some of us while the names of the majority are unknown. From those true and glorious agents God made his light shine forth and he made his will manifest and clear to the inhabitants of the globe. Therefore, we can assert without any denial on the part of any soul that all the Prophets of God have come into the world for the illumination and guidance of the people. That They have sacrificed Their lives for the upliftment and general welfare of humanity. They sacrificed Their

personality and accepted martyrdom in order to serve the children of Man, in order to enlighten the court of the spirit. Through his consummate wisdom God prophesies and predicts in all the Books of Revelation that a day will come at the end of the Age when there will be a new Day, a new Age where mankind will walk in the light of the sun and there will be no night, there will be eternal day. A Golden Age, the principles and institutes of which will be diametrically opposed to the principles and institutes of former cycles and ages. God "covenanted", in other words, he took a Covenant from His own Prophets and Messengers in those gloomy and dark Ages that this Day is assured, that it will come to pass and this was a Covenant between God and all these Prophets that came to enlighten mankind with the light of wisdom and knowledge. The nearer we draw to this glorious Age the clearer the prophesies of these prophets become until the Prophetic Age of the Israelites dawned. The Hebrew Prophets predicted clearly and most manifestly the coming of this wonderful age, and without any circumlocution. We have even the day and the year in which this Glorious Sun will dawn from Eternity. They defined the locality, the horizon from which this Orb will dawn, filling the immensity of the space of the universe with the lights of His wisdom and truth, and they said that locality will be the Holy Land where all the past prophets and messengers have been born and lived part of their lives. Hence we can see that all these past prophets labored and toiled in the vineyard of the Lord where all the past prophets and messengers have been born and lived part of their lives. Hence we can see that all these past prophets labored and toiled in the vineyard of the Lord and prepared the minds of the people, cultivated their characters and intelligences so that they might be ready to receive the Most Great Cause.

His Holiness, Christ, made the people ready through his spiritual teachings for the reception of this Glorious Day. To him all the prophets were like the shining and scintillating stars in the Heaven of Revelation and everyone of these stars guided the souls to the goal of perfection. His Holiness, Christ, referred to this Day by clearly revealing the fact that in that Day Divinity with all its spirits will [establish] universal love, with all its majesty and amity between nations, with all its bounty, and will be revealed in the assemblage of mankind. What is the significance and glory and perfection of such a marvelous Day, that all these prophets and messengers labored for and toiled for and gave-up their lives for, it is no other Day than a Day in which all the children of men will be surrounded with the atmosphere of universal and divine salvation which embraces all mankind and brings under the universal tent of mankind all the flock. This is the Day in which the distressed souls, the grief-stricken souls of mankind that have been kept separate from each other for Ages will be again brought together into one harmonious whole. This is the day in which all the divisions and differences will be removed from amongst the people of the world.

That is why we say that all the past prophets have served the Glories of this Day and have sown the seeds of this Day in the hearts and minds.

After all these successful Great Entities, after all these Infinite Messengers of hope, seventy years ago the Sun of Reality dawned. The Luminary of this glorious Cycle which was no other than the Luminary and Covenant which was covenanted by God in all the past Ages shown forth from the Horizon of the Divine Heaven. This Holiness, 'Abdu'l-Bahá arose with heavenly force and celestial power in the Holy Land to spread the rays of this Sun of Reality and to infiltrate the hearts of men with the highest and noblest ideals of God, and man, in this diamond Age. Who is 'Abdu'l-Bahá ? He is the embodiment of the reality of the Spirit of Brahma, of Zoroaster, of Moses, of Christ, and in brief the reality of Truth, the reality of Realities, the Sun of this new social order, of this divine century which is none other than the promised Sun of all the prophets in the Old and New Testament. What are his teachings? What are His principles which lay the foundation for the proclamation of the oneness of this Divine Civilization? What is the difference between this Day in which we live and all the days which have preceded us? The difference between this Day and the bygone Days is like unto the night and day. The former centuries were centuries of darkness. This century is the century of union. In the past civilizations there were many churches, many temples, many synagogues, thousands of mosques covering the face of the earth. Self-interest was the nucleus around which the interest of these religions and sects and devotees of former dispensations revolved. They loved themselves and they hated all those who were outside of the fold. Owing to this fact for six thousand years we have an unbroken record of warfare, destruction, strife and discussions, but in this new glorious period there will be one universal, all-embracing religion. God is One, His pathway is one, His temple is one, the temple of immensity. In the past ages there were differences amongst nations and governments and these nations continually waged war and battle with might and managed to annihilate and defeat each other at the point of bayonets and swords. But in this divine century there will be the oneness of nations. All the communities of the earth are descended from one father and mother, Adam and Eve.[Sentence is Cut off]

*'O, ye people of the earth! Ye are the leaves, ye are the branches, the blossoms and the fruits of one tree'.*

The past Age was an Age of injustice and tyranny and oppression of women, in other words extreme inequality between the rights of men and women. But the cardinal principle of this spiritual century will be the encouragement of perfect amity between men and women. In other words this principle will become so universal that even the ends of the earth will receive a bounteous share of this great principle of amity. In former Ages war and battles were waged on account of conquest, but in this Day there will be established in

the world the Court of Arbitral Justice, the Parliament of Man in which all the nations will decide their disputes.

In the past centuries, the former traditions and creeds of religions were illogical and contrary to the postulates of science and reason, and consequently superstition had covered the larger part of the earth. The fundamental principles of religion had faded away and the people were holding fast to creeds and rituals. But in this Day the spirit of religion, the essence of the teachings of religion, the quintessence of the power and might of religion, which is no other than love and amity universalized, will cover the face of the earth as the waters cover the sea. The past Age had hundreds of languages and dialects, but in this Age there will be an international auxiliary language which will be studied by all the children of the world and it will be used as a means of communication between all the tribes of the world.

To recapitulate: This century is the century of union, accord and agreement; former centuries were centuries of discord and disagreement. This is the Age which has been prophesied by all the past prophets. The Sun of this Covenant, the Sun of this Age is His Holiness, 'Abdu'l-Bahá who lives on the slope of Mount Carmel, the same Mount Carmel about which much is written in the Old Testament. All the prophets have prophesied that the Sun of that Day, the divine rays of which will bring into the world new conditions and a better state of life, spiritual and physical, will dawn from the horizon of Mount Carmel in Palestine. The nascent stage of dawn of this Day started in Persia, but the ideas of the people of the World generally and the people of the Orient especially were at that time very limited and narrow, they could not conceive the bright vision of the future, neither could they think universally in terms of international principles. They could not comprehend the vastness of these Days nor the infinite expanse of this divine heaven, because they were limited within narrow circles they were living in a narrow circles of communal [community] life. They could not get out of these small circles and walk in the light of the universality which is infinite in its extent. That is why the governments of Persia and Turkey gathered their forces together to extinguish the light of Bahá'u'lláh and to stop the growth of the Cause. However, we can never quench the Light of Reality, it has not been done in any Age. Especially since this is the glorious age of lights, it is the century of crafts and art, it is the period in which even material and physical civilization shall envelope the globe.

There are many intellects and brains which have been made ready through cultivation and educational processes to accept these principles of universalism. No one, in fact very few will accept the narrow materialism of the past, the prejudice of religion, the bigotry of sects, the fanaticism of sectarianism, the minds have outgrown these conditions and even the statuary of humanity has thrown off that garment of old ideas. If we come across some people who are

still holding to those old tenets they are in the minority and passing away with the old age. However the Bahá'ís could not get out of that complexity of difficulties so easily as we have heard that thousands and thousands of them had to give-up their lives. More than twenty thousand had to give up their lives so that these teachings should be spread throughout the Orient, nay throughout the World. That is why today we hearken to the call of Bahá'u'lláh raised from each utterance. And peace and the brotherhood of man and general disarmament of all the nations. We are assured by the heavenly confirmations that although we are now living at the early dawn, at the twilight of this glorious Revelation, yet as the sun rises step by step and swims through the heavenly heights, the whole world of phenomena, the whole world of creation will be submerged in the Ocean of Light and Beauty.

This is the Day of the Covenant of God, and this is that Covenant which has been prophesized by all the Prophets and Messengers of the past, and the Center of that Covenant is living today in our midst, 'Abdu'l-Bahá . All the prophets lived and served the Cause of love, of good fellowship. All the prominent and eminent philosophers of the past gave up their lives for the realization of this Utopia. But the conditions of the former ages, the lack of communication between the peoples of the different countries, they could not realize their dream of these Ages.

God works through means, and therefore before the appearance of this Universal Messenger, the material means, the inventions and discoveries which helped to unite the ends of the world were brought about, and consequently in a physical manner the world was united and now we are in the dawn of the spiritual unity of mankind. The railroads, the fast steamers, the wireless telegraph and the telephone have made this world to have the appearance of one building. Within the short space of a few minutes news is flashed from one end of the world to the other, but in the Ages of the past Prophets these nations were entirely distinct from each other and it would have taken them months and months before they could have heard the news of a war that had already culminated. All the forces of humanity and heaven are interspersed today. The whole world has become one place and all the members of humanity have become the members of one family. Consequently, there must be a mighty power to gather these scattered flocks of humanity.

Those who are endowed with the spiritual insight, whose conscience are illumined with the Rays of Truth, are day and night striving for the spread of the lights of love for this is a Cause, under the canopy of which one finds his material and spiritual welfare and prosperity.

# 6

## “The Five Kinds of Spirit”

August 1920—Green Acre, Eliot Maine

The existent phenomena do not depend upon tangible things. Nay, rather, there are two kinds of phenomena: (1) invisible, (2) visible. Sensible things are witnessed and experienced through the powers of expression, like the body and the qualities emanating from the body, like the colors, forms, etc. But the invisible phenomena are not expressed through the tangible sense perceptions, because they are delicate, pure and transcendent. It is not as some materialists assert, that everything that does not come within the grasp of our senses does not exist. Because we have observed that often even the visible senses of man are subject to mistakes and shortcomings, e.g. the power of sight observes the vast stretch of stars as tiny bits of sparks. Again, the power of the eye takes the drop falling from a high position as a continuous stream of water, whereas, it is a few drops disconnected. The power of sight again takes the revolving fire as a continuous stream of flame. The power of sight takes the earth as stationary while the sun and stars are revolving the earth. And it was owing to this very mistake in the perception that for ages man continued to believe in the Ptolemaic system of astronomy; but little by little the intellectual forces discovered the mistakes and it became clearly proved that this earth was really revolving around the sun, while the sun is stationary and in the center. Intellectual and rational proofs set at naught and defied the senses. Therefore if we cannot see certain realities with the power of human senses, we cannot deny their existence. The intellectual power demonstrates the existence of every reality which shows forth certain signs and tokens of life; because always it is fire that comes when we see that effect, then we know there is a cause behind. For example, you might not see the sun because it is invisible behind dark clouds.

Love and hatred are two invisible phenomena. Intelligence and dullness, knowledge and ignorance, again, are intellectual realities which we know only through their traces. From the effects of these realities we draw the conclusion that there must be and are certain ultimate causes behind them. Likewise the five kinds of spirit are not seen or felt and we realize and know them through the effects which appear from them.

The mineral kingdom unquestionably is no other than a composition of many other elements simple in their origin. But through the composition of these various compounds or elements a power and virtue is created, which is no other than the force of adhesion or magnetism which draws these millions of souls together and keeps them from disintegrating. This power brings these infinite molecules together and thus through infinite transference we have consciousness (?)<sup>1</sup> of energy. This is a natural power. It is a child of nature and the forces of nature are not continuous but go through a metamorphosis which has a definite life, and this also works for a definite period and afterwards stops. Once that power which kept these infinite molecules together disappears, they are disintegrated and go back to their original constituents. Nothing is destroyed, it disintegrates, and every element of this infinite number of elements will go back to (form) other forms and other shapes. This power of adhesion which is created through the composition of the mineral elements is no other than the mineral spirit. The effect of this power is no other than the preservation of the definite period of the life of that individual mineral existence. This power, this mineral element, this child of nature, is subject to decomposition and disintegration, and not to permanency.

When we step to a higher kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, we see that through the affiliation of the combined elements we have a more perfect sort of growth. Aside from the power of adhesion and the preservation of life which were the two characteristics of the mineral, there are other signs apparent in the vegetable kingdom. One of the powers of the vegetable kingdom is the power of nourishment and assimilation of food from the mineral into a higher life. Another power is the virtue of growth. Another, the law of procreation. (Above and beyond) these four laws in the vegetable kingdom we have also the power of adhesion which was in the mineral kingdom. Therefore the vegetable kingdom is a life plus the mineral and other virtues. The mineral life is included in the larger life of the vegetable kingdom. Again, this vegetable spirit is the child of nature, and subject to the law of creation. It is submerged in the accidental laws of nature; this also because it has the natural birth; the birth of the natural law is not permanent, and will indeed change. The individual atom after its disintegration will go into the making of other forms of life. This power in the vegetable kingdom, which is the power of growth, of assimilation, of nourishment, of production, is in the world of nature and subject to change and transformation.

Rising into a higher kingdom, the animal kingdom, we see that the animal kingdom comprehends the adhesive power of the plant (?)<sup>2</sup> and the four powers of the vegetable kingdom plus other forces which were not apparent in the other kingdoms. Extraordinary

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<sup>1</sup> Appears as such in the original.

<sup>2</sup> Appears as such in the original.

instincts and forces become manifest in the plane of animal life. The animal kingdom has the power of (sensibility), the power of will, and the power of voluntary motion. It is not only a visible sight, but many animals have the invisible insight. In addition to the five senses, the animals have other ideal senses, such as faith or love, and hatred, and revenge, and envy, and pugnacity; and all these intellectual forces are visible in the plane of animal life. It moves voluntarily wherever it desires. This power which was born in the animal kingdom is no other than animal spirit, the third plane of life. It comprehends the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, plus other forces of the animal life. Again, this animal spirit is the child of nature and is subject to the law of change and transformation. At death it dissolves and goes back to the original constituents. Save the natural life, it has no other. Some of the ancient philosophers of Greece believed in the immortality of the spirits of these animals—e.g. of the elephants and the monkey; but all these were (religious things) that science disproved. For it is clearly shown from physiology that the spirit of the animal is the child of nature and it goes back to nature.

Coming to the kingdom of man, from a physiological standpoint man belongs to the animal kingdom. Only he is the most educated animal. The animal spirit is in man and all his constituent elements are composed from those elements from which the animal kingdom was built, but you may call it a refined element of the animal kingdom, a higher step in the growth of the animal spirit. Because man is endowed with the power of perfectibility, he has drawn to himself a power from on high in order to grow intellectually. Just as you have certain instruments to attract electricity, so man has this power to attract spiritual electricity. That spirit of man which has been magnetized or attracted from the higher kingdom of life and has been caged in this physical temple--it is not a compound element. It is (abstracted) from the conditions of the world of nature and its environments. It is like unto a bird which is born in the cage of the human body. Hence man alone is a composite; has two forces. The first force is the animal power which was in the animal kingdom. It is in the human kingdom in a refined, electrified manner. And the second is the human spirit, the divine spirit you might call it, which has come from on high and found a dwelling in this <sup>3</sup>. That is why man is called a collective center of all the human and animal ideals. The animal has only the animal forces and spirit. But man has two forces: animal power and human spirit. That animal power is the center of darkness and ignorance. This human spirit is the dawning place of light and knowledge. That animal phase is always attracted to the animal propensities of life and is the center of transgression and sin. This human spirit which is captive in the body of man becomes besmeared with the laws of nature which belong to the animal world; like unto a very clear, translucent mirror which is subject to darkness and dust and mist; like unto pure, salutary water

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<sup>3</sup> Appears as such in the original.

which becomes muddy; similar unto a bird whose royal wings are kept prisoner in mud and water, to such an extent that all its feathers droop and it has no power to soar toward heaven. It is a spirit which has been imprisoned in the clutches of darkness.

In order that man deliver this bird from the cage, he is in need of divine confirmation, so that he may cleanse and purify his wings from this mud and be able to (open) his wings toward the height. That divine confirmation, that spiritual health, is no other than the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy spirit like unto a sun dawns from the heart of man and scatters the legions of darkness. Like unto a heavenly rain which falls down on the wings of the bird of human life, and again the bird takes its flight. Then the bird is endowed with such strong wings it can swim through the ocean of the earth. His wings are so strong that he can rise and reach his abode of perfection. Thus the mineral and vegetable and animal spirits are the children of nature and are not subject to immortality. But because the human spirit is abstract, is a simple element and is not a compound, and belongs to the higher realm, it must rise and reach its higher abode. But in order to fly, to rise, it is in need of help and assistance from the Holy Spirit.

The sun and the light of the Holy Spirit are the Manifestations of God. Whenever a Manifestation of God appears in this world a number of souls gather around and connect their human spirits with that Divine Spirit which is no other than the Holy Spirit, and thus immortalize themselves through that realization and connection. Faith means the realization of the Spirit and connection of the human spirit with the Holy Spirit which is in the Manifestation of God. Because the Manifestations of God are the suns of the Holy Spirit and because in them you find all life and civilization, therefore when these partial (particular?) spirits of humanity relate themselves to the Universal Spirit of the Manifestation, they are like unto the bulbs and (glasses) which are connected with the powerhouse, and immediately they are lighted and illumined. When we observe the condition of the apostles of Christ, how loyal they were, we see to what (condition) they attained. Peter and Paul were not the repositories of the Holy Spirit. After they believed in Christ, after they had turned their faces to the powerhouse of the Holy Spirit, they received the power of the Holy Spirit to such an extent that they became devoid of human condition, to such an extent that they became of great service to human life and through them multitudes became sanctified and spiritualized. Whereas formerly they were ignorant, they became wise. Submerged in the animal world, they became released. They were carnal and animalistic, they became divine and heavenly. They attained to such a state of wisdom that they were enabled to prophesy the events of the future. They even sacrificed their lives for the world of humanity.

When we state the parallel conditions in the history of the Bahá'í Movement we find the same conditions realized. Souls who before

becoming believers in this Dispensation were entirely bereft of Divine Knowledge and merciful characteristics and were immersed in the ocean of darkness and ignorance, were in the claws of racial prejudice, national prejudice, religious prejudice and other prejudices, when they became believers in this Dispensation and commenced the study of (the Writings of) His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh they connected their souls with the Mine of Light. They were so intoxicated with the wine of the Love of God, so filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, that they forgot themselves, their very life, their very existence. They were more than willing to give up their property, their lives, in order to promulgate these teachings of universal brotherhood. They were so God-intoxicated, so filled with the power of this Truth, that they danced and sang poems while under persecution and direst suffering. It was as if God had prepared for them a great banquet of gladsomeness and rejoicing. This severance from all human conditions, this entire detachment from all worldly connections, is one of the signs which became manifest in them.

Although we cannot see the Holy Spirit as a cause, we see its effects. The Manifestations of God were the centers of the Holy Spirit. No one could see the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit is not a tangible body, so that we may touch it. Only, e.g., John, the revelator, or some of the prophets have seen their symbolized ideas of the Holy Spirit in their visions, but people cannot see the Holy Spirit through the five senses because it is not a corporeal body; but the traces of the Holy Spirit tell us there is the cause. What are the traces? They are the actions, the deeds, the self-sacrifice that emanate from these divine souls. These traces in the followers of Baha'u'llah became more vividly manifested, more clearly embodied, than in former Manifestations.

This is a short description of the five kinds of spirit upon which we dwelt today.

Question: Concerning the term Holy Ghost in modern terminology--is the effect of the Holy Ghost what might be called the Holy Spirit?

Answer: There is the same terminology in the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says the Holy Spirit, although one in essence, has two different powers: (1) the Holy Spirit; (2) the Spirit of Faith. This Spirit of Faith is what you may call the Holy Spirit which becomes posited in the believers through the Manifestation of God. And He says the Holy Ghost is the power which is centralized in the Manifestation Himself. In "Some Answered Questions" He gives the above description of the five kinds of spirit--the vegetable, animal, human, the spirit of faith, and the Holy Spirit. Because the mineral spirit is so weak in its manifestation it is not concrete and tangible; therefore it is often not counted among these five kinds of spirit. It is so minute that it is hard to find it out.

# 7

## “Evening Speech given at Feast”

Sunday, 1 August 1920—Green Acre, Eliot,  
Maine

These feasts are to bring unity amongst the people. We must glorify these days because in this cycle all the darkness will vanish, all the rancor amongst nations will pass away, religious fanaticism will vanish, all sort of prejudices will pass by, for the soul of international love and fraternity has been created among mankind.

Now let us know why we hold these nineteen day feasts. We hold these nineteen day meetings in commemoration of those nineteen heralds who hearkened to the call of Bahá'u'lláh. Before every manifestation the separate stars illumine the horizon of the world. These heralds and early harbingers of the manifestations of God give the glad tidings for the rising of the sun of reality, and they prepare the people for receiving the manifestation of God. As in the time of His Holiness, Christ, John the Baptist heralded his coming. Before the manifestation of His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh there were many heralds proclaiming the coming of His Holiness. Those first people who heralded Bahá'u'lláh were nineteen in number, and the greatest of those nineteen was His Holiness, the Báb. His Holiness the Báb was likened in the horizon of God as unto the moon, and the other heralds were just like great glowing stars. They all gave the glad tidings that the sun of reality was at hand. They traveled from one place to another and they went all over the world. They underwent all sorts of trouble and persecutions, because the people were submerged in superstition and prejudices. These people went all around the world and called to the people: “Oh ye people of the world! Glad tidings, that the sun of reality will rise, the glorious sun of God will shine, the last day will become manifested, all the darkness will be dispelled. It is the day of God, it is the day of love and universal unity. Oh, ye people of the world come out from your graves of ignorance and superstitions while it is the day of resurrection. It is the resurrection of the spirit. It is a day that all the dead bodies should come but from their graves and receive a new life”. These nineteen people admonished and exhorted the people wherever they went and prepared the souls of the people for

the meeting of God. All these were the most important and eminent people of their time, they have edited numerous books containing the prophecies of God. Everyone of these nineteen people were one after the other martyred in the path of his Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh. They sacrificed their lives for the welfare and good of mankind and for the manifestation of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh. They bestowed talents upon the people, capacity upon the people, because the people were far away from these new teachings, they were far from these teachings and they did not understand them at all. The people were submerged in superstitions, but the teachings of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh are to free the people from prejudices. However, the people were submerged in superstition and religious prejudices.

Another principle of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh is that science should accord with religion. The people were surrounded with superstition, rancor and hatred and malignity, but the teachings of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh is to love everybody and to be sympathetic to everybody. His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh states to the whole world: "Oh ye people of mankind. Ye are the leaves of the same tree. Ye are just like the drops of the same ocean. Ye are all the same kind. What are these national differences? What are these religious differences? These are not from God at all. These are from yourselves. All the prophets of God have come for the sake of love. They came to bring unity, they came to bring peace and amity amongst mankind. Now ye have made so much difference between yourselves, and there is so much bloodshed and confusion that it is time to stop all this. The day has come when you should know that you are created for love and amity. You are created for unity".

Anyway these nineteen people created such power in the people that they received the commands of Bahá'u'lláh and they sacrificed their lives. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh commands Bahá'ís that they should keep the Nineteen-day Feast in commemoration of those nineteen people. His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh commands that each Bahá'í individual should hold a nineteen day feast each month. The wisdom for this His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh says is that God wishes to bring unity amongst us and unify the hearts. These meetings and these associations are for bringing unity and love amongst the people. God wishes to unify our hearts, whether by heavenly means or earthly means. His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh says that there should be such unity among us as there is between members of the same body. That all mankind should be the same body, the same way that our limbs and members are joined together, so the community of man should do the same thing. There is one should ruling our body, and that soul is ruling over the movements of our body, so there should be one soul over the whole of humanity ruling all its movements. We wish that this love of humanity should be so among all the nations of the world, and hope that we will see in our

lifetime that amity has encompassed the whole world, and all the differences of long-standing should be removed and dispelled.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: What are the indications of real steadfastness?

Answer: The first sign and emblem of steadfastness is that we must pass through the tests of God easily, because the tests of God are very intense. In order to separate the good from the bad there will always be tests. Some people can't resist some tests of God and they fail. There are numerous kinds of tests and trials for the people of the world. Some were tested by the sacrifice of their property, some were tested by their knowledge and education, some were tested by the love of their family, even some were tested by the sacrifice of their lives. Those people who resisted all these tests and calamities, remaining like a rock, of course they are the distinguished people.

Those who sacrificed their family were firm and steadfast; those who sacrificed their property were firm in the cause. The hardest test of all is ambition.

Question: Can we have a standard for steadfastness?

Answer: If the people have their own personal desires which are contrary to the Will of God, for instance somebody is my own personal enemy and I have personal animosity against him, I want to criticise him some way or other so I appeal to religion as a pretext, as revenge on my enemy. This is a malicious way of doing and it is because of personal animosity. This is something against the very foundation of God. The man who is characterized with these objectionable attributes is opposing the Cause and he is suffering from some serious diseases, but sometimes they make mistakes, they haven't any personal animosity, his heart is replete with love and he expresses his opinion of his sympathy because of his love, but he is making a mistake. Man makes mistakes. Everybody makes mistakes. Who is the man that can claim that he don't make mistakes? There is only one man who does not make mistakes and that is the manifestation of God, He does not make any mistakes, but all the rest do make mistakes. This making of mistake is not a fault because we are surrounded with the conditions of nature and we are apt to make mistakes. If you get him to understand then he will change his attitude entirely and he will accept your point with great pleasure and he will apologize for all his mistakes and he will say, excuse me I did not understand I am very thankful to you. But those who have personal desires and personal animosities they are just the opposite; and they are opposing the Cause itself. They should be helped by the Divine Power; they are

sick and are suffering from very severe sicknesses which it is very difficult to cure.

Question: Are there not souls that suffer for the edification of others?

Answer: Sufferings are of two kinds. Some we bring on ourselves and others are from God. Those who undergo calamities for the promotion of the Cause of God they are suffering for the Cause of God. For instance all those persecutions that took place in the time of Christ, etc. were all from God, and man should be happy with such calamities because he is suffering from all these calamities because of the Will of God. He is killed but he is happy. He is cast into prison, he is exiled and banished from one country to another but he is joyous. Hunger and thirst are good for they are for the sake of God. But where the cause of our suffering is not this and it has nothing to do with God, for instance is one is indolent and lazy and not willing to work then he is bound to suffer some humility. This has nothing to do with God.

Some people are reborn and they are again corrupted. Some people just enter the world of the kingdom and they keep on going from one world to another like radiation. Then it diminishes the illumination passes away and darkness envelopes them again. But some people retain that illumination all the time. Those who are firm and steadfast in the light of God. They are steadfast.

## “Nineteen-day Feasts”

Sunday Evening, 1 August 1920—Green  
Acre, Eliot, Maine

These feasts are to bring unity amongst the people. We must glorify these days because in this cycle all the darkness will vanish, all the rancor amongst nations will pass away, religious fanaticism will vanish, all sorts of prejudices will pass by, for the soul of international love and fraternity has been created among mankind. Now let us know why we hold these nineteen day feasts. We hold these nineteen day meetings in commemoration of those nineteen heralds who hastened to the call of Bahá'u'lláh. Before every manifestation the separate stars illumine the horizon of the world. These heralds and early harbingers of the manifestations of God give the glad tidings for the rising of the sun of reality, and they prepare the people for receiving the manifestation of God. As in the time of His Holiness, Christ, John the Baptist heralded his coming. Before the manifestation of His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh there were many heralds proclaiming the coming of His Holiness. Those first people who heralded Bahá'u'lláh were nineteen in number, and the greatest of those nineteen was His Holiness, the Báb. His Holiness, the Báb was likened in the horizon of God as unto the moon, and the other heralds were just like great glowing stars. They all gave the glad tidings that the sun of reality was at hand. They traveled from one place to another and they went all over the world. They underwent all sorts of trouble and persecutions, because the people were submerged in superstition and prejudices. These people went all around the world and called out to the people: “Oh ye people of the world, glad tidings, that the sun of reality will rise, the glorious sun of God will shine, the last day will become manifested, all the darkness will be dispelled. It is the day of God, it is the day of love and universal unity. Oh, ye people of the world! Come out from your graves of ignorance and superstitions while it is the day of resurrection. It is the resurrection of the spirit. It is a day that all the dead bodies should come out from their graves and receive a new life”. These nineteen people admonished and exhorted the people wherever they went and prepared the souls of the people for the meeting of God. All these were the most important and eminent people of their time; they have edited numerous books containing the prophecies of God. Every one of these nineteen people were

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# 9

## “Divine Physical and Spiritual Healing”

Sunday, 1 August 1920—Green Acre, Eliot  
Maine

The subject of today's talk is divine physical and spiritual healing. By spiritual healing we mean the healing of the social and economic diseases of the world of humanity. For the life of man the world of the spirit is like the world of the heart for this physical world. All the created phenomena of the world constitute the members, organs and limbs of this physical temple of humanity, but spirit is the heart in the center of this created being. That is why the ancient philosophers and savants have likened the world of humanity to an individual human being. Just as the heart is the center through which the blood is circulated to all the external surfaces of the body through all the members and various parts of the human temple, likewise the spirit of truth is in the world of humanity similar to that. All the created objects in the world of mankind are like infinite numbers of circles the center of which is man because he is the center of all names and all intelligence and all creational faculties. This world will not be a world habitable without man. If you look upon the mineral, the vegetable and animal kingdoms you realize that all growth, unfoldment and development of these kingdoms depends upon the knowledge and perseverance of man over the forces of nature. It is man who changes the wild tree of the forest into the fruit tree of the orchard. It is through the inventive faculty of man that the ferocious beasts of the jungle are domesticated and used as the beasts of labor for humanity even the sterile soil becomes productive under the management of the agricultural expert. Therefore we can easily see that through these premises the conclusion is reached that the progress and development of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms depend entirely upon the power of man rightly directed and guided. In order to achieve these marvelous acts, man is in need of health and preservation, and the health and preservation of man depends upon the unfoldment of the spiritual and intellectual forces latent within man. Man has ever been and will ever be in need of two types of life; the physical, material life which is sustained and upheld through the physical

means and the spiritual life which is energized and fructified through the intellectual powers and spiritual forces invisible yet visible to those who are spiritually minded. So far as the material life of man is concerned he shares it in common with the least of the animals, he is one of them, no more, no less. Outwardly the distinction between him and the animals is because of the outline of his body and the physiognomy of his face.

From time immemorial man has ever striven to reduce the number of diseases and to increase the power of health and perfection. In order to accomplish this great doctors and physicians have studied throughout all the past ages and have accumulated a large amount of experience and knowledge which we are using today. The science of pathology tells us how these diseases have been discovered, how they have been diagnosed and what kind of medicine has been prescribed for their eradication and removal. According to the ancient history the science of medicine dawned from the horizon of Chaldea which was at that time the center of civilization. They had a very interesting system of diagnosing the diseases. In the beginning they had built a large shed where the patients were exposed to the gaze of the passers by and these passers by would look at them, ask a few questions and then write the kind of medicine that they thought was good for them on a black-board, and all day these people would come and give their own thoughts regarding the treatment of these patients, and the superintendent of this building would gather these prescriptions and use them one after another. Many of the sick people would die but in the long run many were helped, and these prescriptions were put together and handed down to generations yet unborn. Through commercial intercourse of the Greeks and Chaldeans the Greeks went to this country and brought what they had learned to Greece and expanded it and added a great deal of information, although one of the great physicians of the day has said that we are still in the childhood of medicine, still in the science of medicine and pathology and surgery has developed so much that we can say it has reached to a high point of evolution, and the new ages will bring to us the new sciences so that people will be healed dietetically.

The advance of medicine in the future is so startling that we cannot conceive it today. In those early ages the medical man and the spiritual man were combined together. There were certain progressive nervous diseases the causes of which were unknown and consequently the people through their superstition thought that they would be healed through spiritual agencies. They believed that these nervous and progressive diseases came to man not through his own shortcomings and mistakes but through the powers of departed souls. They said these departed spirits have two influences, beneficial and harmful, and they came and took possession of man and therefore his diseases must be healed through spiritual agencies. That is why a class grew in the old times

who were spiritual healers, and they said we are going to heal your diseases by prayer and by incantations by all kinds of sorcery and soothsaying. All these phantasmal teachings grew through these agencies. No doubt though through the great confidence and the utter assurance the patients had in these medicine men a few of these nervous diseases would be healed, on the other hand thousands and thousands of people were practically butchered because of these pseudo-doctors. Sometimes the people who had patients would go to the presence of a holy man and ask him to pray for their patients, and many customs grew up out of this. For instance there was a class of people in the east who would write prescriptions for the sick and they would put them in cases and hang them around their necks, and they would take the pellet that the priest had touched. Now in order to make this clear we must know that these practices of the past religions were never encouraged by the prophets, they were the things that the self seeking leaders brought ages afterwards. For example even in the second century of the Christian era this custom had already arisen without the sanction of Christ, that the crumbs from the Lord's Supper would be gathered by men who had patients in their homes and given the sick people to eat. These might have healed a few but credulity carried thousands away. These were some means that mankind used in the past in order to give health which is the most precious object in the world.

But what the Bahá'í insists upon is the health of the intellectual and the spiritual health of the world of man. They say if you can heal these two worlds, these two worlds will lay the foundation of the physical health of mankind. These intellectual and moral and rational diseases are the very foundation of all the outward and social diseases. Now the doctors and physicians of this second type of medicine are the prophets and messengers who are the teachers of divine and spiritual universities. Each one of these divine physicians in their own day and cycle healed and bestowed health on thousands and thousands of men and women. They gave sight to the spiritually blind ones. They gave hearing to those who could not hear intellectually. They gave life to those who were spiritually dead. They gave spiritual life to the spiritually dead while physically they were walking around.

If we look today over the conditions of humanity we realize at a glance that this world of mankind is afflicted with all kinds of intellectual and spiritual diseases. The intellectuals are the captives of ignorance. The hearts are full of envy, cowardice and hatred; the brains are in the claws of superstition and imaginations. The souls are the prisoners of fanaticism of so called nationalism, of racial prejudices and political envy. Misunderstanding is rampant amongst the majority of mankind, the hearts are afflicted with the remoteness from truth, from spirituality. Thus the whole world of mankind is afflicted with these economic, social and spiritual

diseases, the result of which is no other than these wars, strikes, etc. etc. Therefore the nature of the time necessitates and demands the appearance of a great divine physician who will have the authority and the power from on high to diagnose and health these diseases with his supreme understanding and wisdom. The Bahá'ís believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the Buddha of this century, the Zoroaster of this cycle, the Moses of this period, the Mohammad of this time, and that through his universal all-embracing teachings of humanity and good fellowship these diseases will be wiped away from the face of the earth..

Just as these diseases are intellectual and spiritual their healing must be in the same manner. The healing of these diseases is through the power of the Holy Spirit, and the power of the Holy Spirit is the power of love, the power of unity. This power of love this power of unity, like the rays of the sun of reality, shines forth and emanates through the center of Truth, Bahá'u'lláh, at this time. It is hardly a century since the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh, only seventy-five years have elapsed and yet through His diagnosis and spiritual force He has been enabled to heal many of these diseases which had become chronic in the body of mankind. Millions of people in the Orient who have been afflicted with the disease of superstitions, with the illness of hatred and animosity who had hated each other on account of religious beliefs and superstitions have become thoroughly healed and cleansed through these divine prescriptions. Racial, national and political considerations have been thrown away and the people have become the members of one great body of love and unity. These various communities and tribes and nations who were distinct today have become united and molded together with the power of love. The differences amongst the religions are entirely removed. In this short space of time millions of people who were of contradictory opinions and different nations have merged their distinct ideas into one universal element of the power of love. All those men who entered under the universal canopy of Bahá'u'lláh have become the members of one great spiritual family and they look upon each other as brothers and sisters. In the Orient different religions thirsted for the blood of each other. They anathematized each other. They looked upon each other as unclean, as dogs and unworthy to be associated with, and consequently there was such clear cut differences between them that association was looked upon as impossible but through the knowledge of this divine physician, Bahá'u'lláh, in this day they are healed and cleansed and they are ready to sacrifice their own lives for the sake of each other. These different religions of the world were separate and inimical; the cause of Bahá'u'lláh has successfully united them and brought them together. He has formed the nucleus of the spiritual religion of brotherhood. A religion which is the basic principle of the philosophical and social ethics of today. A religion which corresponds with science and with

reason, with the power of intellection, and which is free from all the past rites and doubts and superstitions.

This century is the century of science and arts. This cycle of perfection demands a new religion and by religion I mean the love of the people and the brotherly co-operation of all the departments of life. All the savants and prophets of the past have predicted and talked of this glorious day. They prophesied that a day will come when the wolf and the lamb will graze in the same meadow. All the children of men will become as real brothers and divisions strifes and wars will be looked upon as details of the past. The real divine physician will come, they said and through his teachings and transcendent loving kindness will unite again these sheep which were scattered through the craftiness of wolves. For these differences and strifes were not commanded by God, they were commanded through the impotency and ignorance of man and also through the pride & animosity of these wolves who looked upon themselves as self appointed leaders. The prophets universally came to defuse the spiritual power of love and the rays of amity. However in former ages the means by which they might bring together the scattered members of humanity were not available. But through the marvelous unlocking of the doors of the human mind through the inventions of so many inventions and discoveries, physical means are brought about so that the unity of mankind today is realizable and understandable. This is why it is a century in which the human mind cannot contain the bigotry and fanaticism of former religions. Nay rather this is that glorious age, that millennium predicted by all the savants and bards, in which the tent of the world of reality will be pitched and all the children of man will live under it in the utmost peace and happiness. Under the dome of one temple, the world of humanity the servants of one God the Father. This is not the age that we may take hold of racial and political pretexts and then bring havoc, war and destruction upon the people of the world. This is the age in which these social aggregates must be equally united in one harmonious whole, when the members of this human family who were divided and subdivided may become again one family. This is the age of social and spiritual democracy. The age of monarchy and absolutism and despotism is gone forever. This is not the age when the kings through divine rights will gather armies to fight their fights, to destroy the seeds and uproot the trees, the divine trees planted by the hand of God in the world. This is the century in which we can comprehend the far reaching significance of the court of international justice before which all the nations may bring their disputes and settle them amicably instead of going to war. Misunderstandings have crept in amongst the former ages through the lack of an international auxiliary language and when they spoke of another man they thought of him as barbarian, but this is the age that an international language is to be developed so that all humanity may become one. This is the cycle of love and not the cycle of hate.

The divine physician, His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh, has prescribed these medicines for the healing of the diseases of the nations. Those who have taken these medicines have been cleansed from their diseases and they have become nurses spiritual nurses for the sick ones of the world. They have neither rest nor comfort by day or night. Thousands of people have given up their fortunes and lives so that these ideals of this day may be fully realized in the temple of man. They will not rest, they will fight the spiritual fight and they will go on with their work till the time will come when the unity of mankind is accomplished and the oneness of the world of humanity is an achieved fact. We hope and pray so that these diseases of our age may be healed through the application of the right medicine from the right doctor. This is the divine physician and these are his spiritual prescriptions.

#### PRAYER

We praise Thee, Oh Lord, for Thou hast brought us forth from the world of nonexistence to the world of existence. Thou art inviting us to sit around Thy banquet both material and spiritual. In this great century Thou didst send forth Thy divine physician for the healing of the people Thou didst guide the people of the world to the straight and glorious path of Truth. We beg of Thee to confirm us in the service of the world of humanity. Confirm us to rend asunder the veils of ignorance and superstitions. Give us faculties so that we may fight the forces of darkness and reinforce us with Thy power to assist the armies of Truth. Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Omnipotent.

# 10

## “11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Chapters of Revelations”

Thursday, 5 August 1920—Green Acre, Eliot  
Maine

The lecture today is on the prophesy of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> chapters of Revelations, which refers to the prophet of Arabia, Muhammad. In order to substantiate that the people of Bahá are free from any religious prejudices, the Bahá'í attitude is that of love no matter from what horizon the universal sun of love dawns. They respond to the voice of God no matter from what horizon it may be raised. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh says: “The most beloved object in my sight is justice. Do not turn away from justice if thou hast love and attraction for the truth. Do not neglect justice so that thou mayest become the repository of the rays of the orb of reality.” He says: “Man does not attain to the highest degree of truth seeking and justice adoring except through this condition. And the condition is that man must see everything with his own eyes and listen to every report with his own ears. Then he must comprehend these sayings these reports with the ultimate criteria of justice and truth and then accept that which is right and throw away that which has been wrong.” The sun will always remain the same sun, whether it dawns from the eastern the western horizon. The rose is always fragrant and sweet smelling no matter in which garden it grows.

Now let us take a look into the customs of Arabian tribes living in the Peninsula Arabia. Their history goes back into the unknown time of this world. The Arabian tribes, like other nations of the face of the earth, before the dawn of modern civilization lived in a state of ignorance and savagery and barbarism. They were polytheists—they believed in many gods—and they worshiped innumerable deities which they carved from stones. Because they could not worship the stars all the time they made pictures and what we may call idols of these stars and placed them in their temples in order that they might prostrate themselves before them during the day. Even in this star worship state they had their sectarian attitude and their divisions. One tribe would worship Jupiter, and a second tribe would worship Mercury and a third tribe would worship Venus and so on through all the seven planets, and they were in a state of hatred

and animosity to each other. In worshipping these stars little by little many crude and savage customs developed in consequence whenever they gathered around one of these temples they practiced the most obscene and dreadful actions. One of their barbarian actions of worship was that when a person wanted to be very holy he would choose one of his children to be sacrificed before one of these idols, and this was the highest state of sanctity and holiness that a man could attain to. And after that the feet and the hands of the idol were besmeared with the blood of these innocent victims. Another custom that they practiced for many ages was the interring of their daughters alive. They were so ashamed of having daughters in the family that they thought it would be better for them to be under the ground than walking on the ground. And those persons who took such a step and actually interred their daughters were looked upon as personages of courage, magnanimity and zeal to the deity. Internal wars and strifes were continually being waged among these Arabian tribes because of their differences in worship and their differences in deities. There was no regularity of marriage whatsoever amongst the whole Arabian tribes. A man was able to appropriate as many wives as his heart or his purse dictated and he could dispose of them in as easy a manner as he wanted. In brief there were no civilizing laws, no educational and moral laws amongst them whatever; they lived in a state of complete savagery and ignorance. There was no central government from which they could be ruled with law and justice. Each tribe had its own king, and this state of internal trouble among these tribes kept them in a state of trouble so that they were ruled from time to time by their neighbors such as the Persians, the Egyptians and the Romans. Their greatest temple of worship wherein existed innumerable idols of God was in Mecca. This temple in Mecca was built in ancient times. It was very, very ancient and therein was the gods and goddesses made of precious stones, and the people from all parts of Asia came annually to visit this temple and offer their prayers. The worship at this temple consisted in going around the walls, and while they were going around the walls they would mention the names of these idols, also they had certain incantations, and the man who could jump like the camel was the nearest and the dearest to the deities because the camel was the best animal they had and the slow movement of the camel was pleasing to these gods.

Because God is the father of us all, neither is he the respecter of persons. In the ancient time he had manifested amongst numerous Arabian tribes through many prophets in order to lead and guide them into the path of righteousness. Although the names of these Arabian prophets are not mentioned in the Old Testament yet they are recorded in the ancient histories and they advised and exhorted and inspired these people as much as possible to lead a pure and godly life. However, the intensity of the darkness of ignorance and the prejudices and superstitions were so great that the teachings of

these minor prophets made very little impression on the hearts and minds of these savage tribes of Arabia. Six centuries elapsed from the birth of Christ and the proclamation of his teachings and yet that ancient nation of Arabia was in the cradle of ignorance and superstition. All of you are more or less familiar with church history, that in the fifth and sixth centuries of Christendom there was great war and oppression amongst the Christians themselves so that the lights of the teachings of Christ were hidden from the eyes of the people. In the sixth century of Christ, 622 A.D., Muhammad was born in Arabia. He was born from one of the noble families of Mecca. The ancestry of Muhammad is well known; his undertakings and achievements among the people of Arabia are also well known. His forefathers were really the high priests of the famous temple of Mecca. The appearance of Muhammad amongst the Arabian tribes is very similar to the appearance of Abraham. His parents died when he was an infant and he was left an orphan. One of his uncles took him under his protection and tried to educate him. At that time there were no schools, no educational institutions in Mecca and therefore Muhammad grew in the prison of nature without any material education. Outwardly he did not know how to read or write his own native language.

From the time of his childhood he manifested certain characteristics such as faithfulness, sincerity, steadfastness and righteousness to such an extent that he became known amongst all the people of Arabia as the faithful one. He had a remarkable insight and a brilliant vision and an enlightened conscience. Because he had this attractive ability and this brilliant mind whenever people fell into difficulties or they did not know how to straighten their own affairs they would go to him and receive his knowledge and wisdom. At the age of forty he received the higher conscience of truth and began to guide his own people to the light of revelation. Although the members of his own family who were important people in Arabia worshiped idols, he alone and singly arose to instruct them in the worship of the one single, incomparable God. He led the people step by step from the world of materialism to that invisible, to that incomparable law of eternity which is the origin of all life, and he demonstrated to these Arabian people that these idols were lifeless, that their worship was a real superstition from the past ages, that they must free themselves from these evil habits. He proved to them that all these constellations, that all these zodiacal stars shining in the heavens were nothing but the creations of God and that man is superior to this. That in man is a divine spirit.

Amongst the people of Arabia, however, there was not the names of Abraham, of Moses or Christ. They had not even heard the name of Adam and Eve. They were steeped in complete ignorance and polytheism, but his Holiness, Muhammad taught them that these persons were inspired on the part of God, that they were inspired

and holy beings. Even the Qur'án, or a larger part of the Qur'án is the essence of the teachings of the old and new Testament clothed in the most elaborate Arabian language, cast in the mould of a language which is invincible and most brilliant. In many parts of the Qur'án you will find the most lofty, the most exalted teachings and moral principles, and through this book these principles began to be disseminated amongst the lower classes of the Arabian people. These unlearned savages and blood-thirsty tribes were brought under the benign influences of spirituality and divine life and heavenly characteristics. Amongst other things he addresses the people of Arabia and he says: "A Mussulman is one who believes in God. He is one from whose hand and whose tongue the people of the world are in a state of safety". He says: "A God worshiper is one who, when he receives an insulting word from the tongue of a friend he must not at all listen to it but look upon him with the eye of truth". He says, "If a person comes to you and curses you and talks to you in an evil language you must turn to him and say 'Peace be upon you'". He says, "I have come to perfect the praiseworthy qualities and the divine characteristics. In brief when we read his book, the Qur'án, we will find that there is nothing in it but a universal call..... to purity and divine life.

The first great service that he rendered to the people of Arabia was to make them discontinue the worship of idols. The second was to stop the custom of interring their daughters alive, and the third was to abolish the law of sacrificing of human souls. The law of polygamy was also restricted and removed. Thus he was a great legislator and he established amongst them certain laws and ethics and morals which were in accord with the exigencies of the time in which the Mohammedans lived. Although he was an illiterate person, he embodied in his books certain philosophical and scientific principles which are beginning to be revealed today. One of the great astrological principles is clearly mentioned in his book, that is the revolution of the earth around the sun. And this idea at the time was totally against the established rule of thought. There is another very clear revelation in the Qur'án which gives us the idea that there are other created beings on all these stars and heavenly orbs.

In a short space of time his teachings were promulgated amongst the Arabian tribes with the rapidity of lightening. No religion has been promulgated so rapidly as the Islamic. Hardly twenty years passed and there was not a single temple of idols in all Arabia, they were all transformed into the church of God. All the differences and strifes and disagreements which existed amongst these tribes were changed into fraternity. It was the miracle of the age, it was a divine and spiritual power which accomplished it. One must be just. In the beginning of his cause the people of Arabia arose in opposition against Muhammad. There was a very influential family in Mecca which had an old rivalry with the family of Muhammad, and this rivalry was kept up to his time, and when Muhammad appeared they

continued it with greater zeal. It is called the Umayyad<sup>4</sup> family. For thirteen years they continued their opposition and their hatred against Muhammad and they could not do anything. When they saw that the light of his path could not be extinguished, that the flame of this faith increased and became brighter and brighter, they thought that it would be wiser if they became Mohammedans themselves, but it was rather a policy than a faith with them, and under the guise of believing in Him they continued their oppression. They maltreated him continually to such an extent that we can see that he died through the effects of their opposition. Now this Umayyad family, because they were political intriguers, having accepted the religion of Islam, they gathered people of their same type around them until they took the reins of the government in their own hands, and they started the war of . . . They captured Egypt, they went as far as Spain, and wandered into Europe for some time. Although they increased the number of Mohammedans, they killed the spirit. The chief opposition against Muhammad and his family was continued to such an extent that they established a campaign to extinguish or kill all the members of Muhammad's family, no matter where they were.

One of the grandsons of Muhammad, Husayn, was a holy and pure being, and he did not accept the leadership of these Umayyad usurpers, and he advised the people to turn to God rather than to follow these intriguers, and they killed him in the most tragic way. In brief the history is in detail, we do not need to go into it, but we wanted to explain to you certain problems with which Islam had to struggle and had to conquer. Were it not for the life of Muhammad in Arabia, the Arabian people would have been left to this time in a state of savagery and polytheism. Muhammad destroyed these temples of idols and raised the temples of God. It was through the teachings of his Holiness, Muhammad, that the rays of the prophets from Adam to Christ became well known all through the Arabian Peninsula. In Egypt, in India In Persia, in none of these countries the names of the Israelite prophets and Christ were known. From these instances therefore we can understand the significance of the chapters 11 and 12 in Revelation, where John says that Muhammad and that great Imam, 'Alí, were the two witnesses to Christ because they gave witness to Christ, because through the appearance of Muhammad and 'Alí, who is looked upon as a pure and great branch of Islam, the name of Christ was spread all over the eastern countries, and John has likened the serpent to the Umayyad dynasty and finally he called them the Beast. He prophesied that from the time of Muhammad and 'Alí, who were the two witnessed, will be 126p days at which time the Great Day of the Lord will appear and the kingdom will be established. A flute was given me like unto a reed". In the writings of the ancient prophets that spiritual divine entity is likened unto a reed. Just like the reed of the flute.

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<sup>4</sup> Instead of Umayyad, the word "Ommavide" appears throughout the text of the original.

However, the inside of the reed is empty, and it is the voice of the singer coming out of the reed... itself but belongs to the player. Likewise, the physical or spiritual temple of the Manifestation of God is like unto an empty reed. They have no will of their own. They have negated all things that belong to this material world, and the singer, God, plays through them. This divine spiritual entity is likened unto the reed of the flute in the hand of the player. Just as the reed is a support to man, likewise the spirit of the manifestation of God comes through that supporting life and that spiritual truth which is in them and which is likened unto a reed. "And an angel stood saying rise and measure the temple and those that worship therein. The rising and measuring of the spiritual temple, the holy of holies, which was immediate means the future of Jesus "But the court which is without the temple leave out and measure it not for it is given unto the Gentiles". This phrase "for it is given unto the Gentiles" refers to the conquest of Islam at this time, and as we said twenty years after Muhammad, Jerusalem and the Holy Land fell into the hands of the Arabs, and the people who followed them, the Arabs, are the Gentiles. It is prophesied "The Holy City shall they tread under foot forth and two months". Forty and two months constituted three and one half years, and three and one half years according to days will be 1260 days, and according to the prophetic interpretation each day is one year, and that makes 1260 years. The interpretation of this vision is that the Holy Land, Jerusalem will be in the hands of the Umayyad for forty and two months, or according to prophetic interpretation 1260 years. "And I will give power unto my two witnesses" meaning Muhammad and his follower 'Alí, "and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score years clothed in sackcloth". According to the ancient and sacred writings that means a holy and sanctified person free from velvets, etc. Twelve hundred and three score days is the length of the religion of Muhammad, for these 1260 years the cause of Muhammad and his religion will be established amongst the people who believed in him. These are the two "olive trees". Olive trees are very fruitful and therefore they are symbolized as fruitful human beings. The two candle sticks standing before God of the earth. At that time they did not have electricity so he had to liken them to candle sticks. "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will kill them he must in this manner be killed". This has a spiritual meaning that no one can extinguish the light of their faith, if they try they will extinguish their own light. They will be given power to close heaven, which is the spiritual heaven, for the prophets words are heavenly words. When the words of God do not descend upon the people then it is as though the heaven is shut, the words are not coming down from heaven "that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them into blood". We read in the Old Testament that one of the miracles of Christ was that he turned the milk into blood for the enemies. By

blood, or blood for the enemies or milk for the friends it does not mean material blood or milk' that this river was milk, it was a spiritual milk from a spiritual river of teachings which flower from the teachings of Muhammad, which was like unto milk, sweet and nourishing unto the people of Islam, and like unto blood in the mouths of the enemies. "And when they shall have finished their testimony the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them and shall overcome them and kill them". This person is Abu Jahl, the history of whom I have told you. "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put into graves". These three and a half days are again the length of the religion of Islam which was the length of its reign in the world. "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth". Because in the day of Muhammad there was the law of defense and after three and one half days the spirit of life entered into them. This is the appearance of the Báb, that is after these three and one half days . In other words. After the decline of the religion of Islam the spirit will again come into life. The same spirit of religion which was taken away from amongst the people will return into its own temple. The second woe is past, the first woe was Muhammad, the second woe was the Báb, and behold the third woe comment quickly. This means that there will be few years between the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh because it is the seventh and the last. And there was a great voice in heaven saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, that is Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The twelfth chapter contains the same interpretation. There the prophet again refers to the Umayyad Dynasty. The woman clothed with the sun and the moon and the twelve stars is the religion of Islam. The sun and the moon signify the two kingdoms which were established in the Islamic world. The flag of Persia contains the symbol of the sun and that of Turkey the crescent, and the twelve stars were the twelve Imams or twelve blessed beings. The Beast which appeared with many horns and many tails was no other than that enemy of Islam. When this Beast shook its tails the stars fell from heaven, and these stars were the holy ones in the religion of Islam who were guided by these people, and towards the end of the twelfth chapter again there is a reference to the 1260 and at the end the great day will come.

Every religion in its nascent stage has been purely spiritual and in the utmost simplicity, like pure translucent fountain without any dirt or dust. After many years this pure spring of life becomes soiled and muddy. The soil and mud are the innovations and rituals and creeds brought into these divine foundations by the self seeking leaders and priests. Superstition and imaginations envelop this

divine temple of religion. Divisions of church and state and faith come into being. The leaders engage themselves in the discussion of unimportant problems of religion and forget the essence and the pure element of truth. Little by little religion becomes mosque and church and pagoda and the people take hold of these temples and think that these are religion and they forget and they begin to fight over words since they are not in possession of the spirit. For over three hundred years the Mussulman and Christians were fighting and killing themselves over these temples, the crusades lasted over two hundred years.

The princes of France in order to learn target practice brought Jews and used them as targets and continued to kill them in this nonchalant manner. Likewise against the Zoroastrians there has been this hatred, and against all the other religions. There has been this trail of animosity.

The Cause of Bahá'u'lláh has come to teach them and to bring them back to this elemental purity of religion and to show them that all these wars and battles were fruitless. He has united these contending religions and brought order out of confusion, superstition and ignorance are washed away and the essence of purity and religion is again made visible in the world.

“Speech given on the return  
of Mr. and Mrs. H. F Ober  
from ‘Akká”

Monday, 9 August 1920—Green Acre, Eliot  
Maine

There is an atmosphere of love waving through this place because of the arrival of our friends. They have brought the fragrances of ‘Akká, more particularly when they talk of the conditions in ‘Akká and the friends and conditions there. It seems such a long time since we left the Master. By seeing our new friends it reminds us of the fleeting days when we were in ‘Akká, those days came right before the face. Unless you go and see these conditions literally by your own observation you cannot realize conditions there. Some things cannot be very well explained by words. Those spiritual affairs cannot be explained. Unless we taste sweet we cannot realize it, by looking at it and hearing about it. This cannot be understood by hearing and description, neither demonstration nor proof will suffice. It doesn't matter how elegant an orator is, how well he speaks, unless you go and see them with your own eyes you cannot realize them: The walking of the Master in the streets of Haifa, the elegant talks of the Master, and the charm and beauty of His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh, and the vibrations which are emanating from the soul of His Holiness, ‘Abdu'l-Bahá. The heavenly and spiritual beauty of His Holiness, ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, it just brings before your eyes the promised paradise. In plain words you see yourself in the presence of God. One in the presence of the Master is severed from everything. He entirely forgets his own personality; he forgets his own thoughts and desires. People have ever so many questions in their heads, and they say, “When we go into the presence of the Master we will ask our questions”, but when there they forget their questions, not one of the words of their thoughts enter into their heads. Sometimes you find yourself as a drunk and intoxicated man when in the presence of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá. One night we were in the presence of the Master in the room where he holds His meetings. The room was full of people, there was such a crowd that the people sat on the floor. That night when the Master spoke He attracted

everyone like a magnet and for a moment everyone became like drunk, and when the meeting was ended the Master went out and all the people went out after Him. One of the believers became bewildered and went into Mírzá Musá's<sup>5</sup> room. Mírzá Musá said "Where are you going", and the man replied "I am going outside". Then Mírzá Musá led him to the door so he could get out. If we preserve that state of spirituality and that state of severance, then we are in the Paradise of God all the time and there is no place better or more sanctified than that world. We are surrounded by the Holy Spirit when we are in the presence of the Master, no thought descends upon us and our hearts become the dawning place of the spirit of God, rather the dawning place of the descent of God. Because God possesses two temples, one is the world of the spirit and the other is the temple that we are going to build. But the most important temple is the temple of the heart, that is very important, and the aim of all the prophets which have appeared in different cycles was to build a spiritual temple in everybody's heart, nobody else should be in the heart except God. We must break the idols which are in our hearts and drive them out. What are the idols that are in our hearts? The idols of vice and passion, the idols of superstitions and the idols of the love other than God. Rancor, differences, all the objectionable qualities which now and then come to us, these are the idols in the temples of our souls. We should no doubt break all of these idols and drive every one of them out, and to make the heart the dawning place of the reality of God. The other temple is the physical temple. As the sign of the spiritual temple we must build a physical temple in which we can go and commemorate the name of God but this physical temple is under the shadow of the spiritual temple.

After the command of His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh, we have to build Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs. It is an explicit command in the Book of Aqdas. We must build in every town a place for the commemoration of God, the most elevated places, the most magnificent buildings because they are built in the name of God. Of course the building which is built in the name of God should be more magnificent than other buildings. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh says that the building should be in the utmost simplicity, no images, no statues; it should be adorned with spirituality. The Bahá'ís should gather in the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár every morning and engage themselves in the commemoration of God, and should chant the supplications and prayers, because chanting and singing are more effective than ordinary reading. His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh, commands us that spiritual melodies and physical melodies should be blended together in such a way that they should cause the soul to flutter, and when we leave the temple

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<sup>5</sup> The original records "Mirza Mousain's" with a "(?)" after it, indicating uncertainty. Further reference to the figure is merely as "Mirza M". For the sake of editing consistency, the figure Mírzá Musá was identified as a possible and likely candidate for the reference, and has been used instead.

the soul of God permeates the hearts. That is why in every town and village we should have more or less of Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs.

The conditions and exigencies did not allow the Persians to build magnificent temples because they had no freedom, and the people were so fanatical, so His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh says, there must be special places for the commemoration of God, they should have a building in the name of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, if it is not possible to build a magnificent building they should have a building in the name of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár so that is why they have one in every town. Because the people of Ishkabad Russia, had freedom and liberty they built a most magnificent Mashriqu'l-Adhkár there. It is so grand and so magnificent that the tower and the minaret can be seen from a long distance, the other religions have not the peer of such a magnificent temple, it shows the greatness of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, because the spiritual power of the people are in their eyes. When they see the physical Mashriqu'l-Adhkár with their physical eyes then they will be attracted. Many people became believers on merely seeing the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. They spent a lot of money on that Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. The Bahá'ís in Ishkabad at that time were very limited and they never thought that they would be able to build that grand Mashriqu'l-Adhkár., so His Holiness 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent a general tablet to all the Bahá'ís of Persia and ordered them that everyone should assist the people of Ishkabad. In that tablet 'Abdu'l-Bahá states "Man is living because of the existence and the cooperation of each other, and the foundation of the world is built on cooperation. It is the power of affinity and cooperation in the vegetable and animal world, even between the planets and starts there is the power of affinity and attraction. In the world of humanity that power of cooperation and affinity should be in a state of perfection All the Manifestations of God have appeared to perfect that, so it is necessary and incumbent upon every Bahá'í in Persia to help the Bahá'ís in Ishkabad, Russia". When this was revealed the Bahá'ís of Persia helped the people of Ishkabad as much as they could. Much of the assistance came from the poor Bahá'ís. From the time of His Holiness Christ, we have the story of the widow's mite. Christ said she paid more than all the others. The others gave because they had too much, but she gave of the money she was living on. This same thing was realized in Persia. They work hard in the small towns of Persia. They ate less and saved their money for the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. These things will not be found in the history of the world.

Now we desire to build Mr. Bourgeois's temple, and a new request for money<sup>6</sup> has been received. Now it is up to us to work hard and build it. Now it is up to us to take steps and collect as much money as possible and build this Mashriqu'l-Adhkár as soon as possible, making it as grand as possible so as to show the people of the world

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<sup>6</sup> "request for money" is not in the original, and is inserted to attempt to provide clarity.

what a universal temple means, and we may build the temple of universal fraternity and universal love, that the people may witness it with their eyes, therefore it must be as grand and magnificent as possible. So it is time for sacrifice. That is my idea. A time has come when it deem it advisable that the Bahá'ís at Green Acre should start and take steps for collecting subscriptions. This will be a great center for Bahá'ís, the Bahá'ís have not got the peer of such a place and it will have a brilliant future. How good it would be if the Bahá'ís here would start and collect money right from this spot, that the other people may follow the example of Green Acre, this is my idea about it.

# 12

## Brief Introduction to the Bahá'í Movement

Saturday, 14 August 1920—East Aurora,  
New York

The sight of this place and the memory of the beloved founder make me very happy. Such institutions will never be forgotten. These souls that have rendered definite services will be forever immortal. Reciprocity and cooperation obtained under the law of union and agreement are made possible through love and mutual understanding. Were there not the law of attraction between the scattered elements there would be no life whatsoever. No sooner comes the note of differentiation than the elements are scattered. The body of man is nothing else than an aggregation of millions of cells which work together through love, all work unitedly for the life of man. Each organ works in its own limited but useful environment, such as the eye, the ear. Hence the laws of reciprocity and cooperation are found here.

When we enlarge our vision we see each man and woman constitute a limb of the body of humanity. Therefore one can truly say these 1,600,000 inhabitants are undivided members of the body of humanity, all working together. All are the members of one commonwealth which must work and reciprocate. For the last six thousand years there have been many divisions and strifes. Many parties have been formed in the name of religion, having different names for the same ideal. Then they began to quarrel and exterminate one another. Likewise politically and governmentally similar misunderstandings occurred, differences of language had crept in. Aristocracy and kings did their share to place on the backs of people the load of tyranny.

This age gives us the rays of science to illumine men. The world has become prepared for a new life, a new set of principles—a new civilization. We are living in the dawn of a new age, no other than the millennium. The family of nations has established wireless between the hearts of the people.

That is why everywhere we see gleamings of the lights of this new day. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh appeared from Persia and instituted

certain instructions. The result of the promotion of these Teachings is the establishment of a divine civilization. Just as there is one spirit, one power in the body of man, so there is one ideal of brotherhood coursing through the body of humanity.

Religious fanaticism owes its origin to the misunderstandings and dogmas that have crept in. These innovations may be likened to heavy clouds that cause the disappearance of the sun for a time, or the dust over the mirrors, Bahá'u'lláh has given us a spiritual polish, so that we may cleanse our hearts, in order that the Sun of Reality may shine thereon. His Aim is to remove all these divisions and have one Universal Temple, because God is One and His Temple is One.

Some of the Principles He taught are that there should be a universal auxiliary language, and equality between men and women. Under the old regime many classes lived on the income of others. Many lazy and poor people had to toil and give the fruits of their labor to the church and state. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh, said that the greatest enemy of mankind was the one who would not work but sit down and beg. He established a perfect, equalized system of economics.

The Bahá'í Movement is not a church, neither is it a new religion in rivalry with other systems of religion. It is a new civilization for this age. It has harmonized the spirit of religion with science and true philosophy.

The Bahá'í Movement is an eclectic movement, the Essence of the Teachings of former religions. The wine of unity has intoxicated the minds and souls of humanity. The age under which poor humanity has toiled is terminated. The age of harmony has dawned. For the last sixty years Baha'is have been spreading these principles. The two despotic governments, Persia and Turkey, arose and combined their efforts to exterminate this cause but its momentum has increased. This Tree watered by the blood of martyrs has sent forth its branches to the East and the West the North and the South, and the children of men have built their nests in this great tree of humanity.

# 13

## “Immortality”

Sunday, 15 August 1920—Lily Dale

In the beginning I wish to say I am most pleased and grateful for the courtesies extended to us by the President of this society, Dr. George B. Warne. Certainly I am exceedingly rejoiced with this gathering the members of which are investigators of the Light. The vibrations of spirit, the spirit-atmosphere is witnessed in this assemblage.

Your auditorium is decorated with the flags of many nations. It is a symbol of the oneness of mankind, for which all pray and supplicate God that it may come quickly.

The excellence of the world of man depends upon Spirit. So far as the body is concerned, man shares in common all the qualities of the animal kingdom. All the dark and gloomy powers of the animal kingdom are incarnated in the world of man. This is so, because the body of man is an aggregate of millions of cells, material elements, subject to decomposition.

But the spirit of man is not subject to the law of nature. The spirit of man comes down from the world of God. It has journeyed innumerable worlds until it reached the terrestrial world. When it leaves this world it journeys again through infinite worlds of God.

“Were it not for the principle of the immortality of the soul we would be like groveling animals in the mud, there would be no excuse for man on this earth. What joy and hope would be drawn from the limited days of this life! Belief in God, belief in existence without the immortality of the soul, is incomprehensible. Then we would have limited God’s sovereignty.

All the Prophets of God who have been, according to the testimony of great men, the wisest leaders of mankind, have acknowledged and taught the immortality of the soul. The Prophets in order to lead the people to the Light of Truth sacrificed everything to establish the principle of the immortality of the soul.

What is spirit? What is Divine Reality? What is Spirit-Effulgence, which is incarnated in this physical world? Spirit is like a divine bird imprisoned in this physical cage. The day will come when the cage will be broken and the bird soars heavenward. Spirit is like a great

world-illuminating light which is hidden under a cover (lid). Spirit is the river of life which is flowing through the desert of this world. The world in which spirit lives now is the phenomenal world. The spirit travels through seven planes of existence: physical, psychical, astral, ethereal, spiritual, celestial, and empyrean.

From the spiritual world the spirit enters the celestial kingdom. In that world spirit has still a body, but not this physical body. It is in a state of delicacy and perfectibility. The spirit of the celestial kingdom is like a robe, the texture of utmost perfection, a texture of finest silk, over which is thrown a tattered garment, the physical body. The empyrean body is so pure and clear that light is transmitted through it.

A Persian poet, mystic and spiritualist likens this empyrean spirit to a most intoxicating old wine, and the celestial body to translucent crystal glass. This glass is very clear. The wine which is spirit is very exhilarating. They are so mixed; one cannot make any difference between them. One mistakes them for each other. When he looks at this strange phenomenon, he thinks only of wine without glass or glass without wine, so intermixed are they.

“Physical eyes accustomed to look upon gross matter cannot see the celestial body. They must be brightened by the collyrium of the spirit. Once the spirit enters into that celestial kingdom, he sees still there are other worlds to travel.

“The spirit ever rises into a purer world; progression is unlimited. It does not remain in any of these ideal worlds but ever progresses. Once it has finished its experiences, it throws away the celestial body and takes the higher one.

“The next is called the empyrean world where spirit and body become one. In that empyrean world it has some attachment, remotely speaking, with the celestial body. It flies again into a world of pure spirit. As the Persian mystic said: “How happy shall I be when I leave this ruined abode! How fortunate! Joyously in order to kiss the lips of my beloved, I will dance until I reach the very center of the sun! Like a drop it is joined to the great ocean of divinity.”

The spirit which is divine reality while in this physical life is subject to many kinds of darkness, like a beautiful bird, it becomes a prisoner in water and clay, its plumage becoming soiled and the spirit in this body is mixed with animalistic powers.

What are these dark powers? Ignorance, superstition, enmity, animosity, self-interest, prejudices, racial, religious, national, immorality and impurity of life. These are the mud and clay with which the beautiful wings of the bird of spirit are soiled. There is need of a Deliverer to come and free this bird, so that it may cleanse its wings and rise to the psychical, spiritual, celestial, empyrean and on into other infinite worlds of God.

Who are the Deliverers of these birds of spirit? They are the Manifestations of God. The purpose of these Manifestations has been no other than to change these earthly birds into divine birds. Christ was the Teacher of these great birds who flew to the highest Realms of Divinity. Those spiritual beings who lived in accord with His Teaching, those who followed Him to Heavenly Realms, attained to the station of divine felicity.

To the disciples of Christ, because of their severance and detachment, this world of phenomena had no value in their estimation. In order to free people from the quagmire of ignorance they gave up their life. Let us look over the conditions in the world today. Let us see whether the people of Christ are still following His Instructions, whether that freedom has been made possible for them in this age. We see darkness has enveloped the world of humanity submerged in materialism. How many contending sects within every religion. How many different churches and denominations! Are they not darkened with many superstitions and creeds? Do you not realize how many religions are turned into shops and stores! How these divine institutes of heavenly Teachings have become the cause of animosity! In the world of economics how much injustice! The governments and kings are fighting one another. All of us know the causes and effects of these differences. This age is the cycle in which we must pray for the realization of universal religion. We must pray for the great universal temple in which all mankind can worship God without any priests and clergy.

This is the Day in which the Highway of the Kingdom is made straight. This is the Day in which there will be one international, auxiliary language. This is the Day in which there will be one international tribunal created. This is the Day in which there will be one supreme just government. God is one, His Highway is one, mankind is one.

These are the principles through which come unity. The institutions of the universal religion were made by Bahá'u'lláh in Persia, sixty years ago. These Teachings are the tree in the branches of which the birds of humanity will build their nests. Its branches will be outstretched to the east and the west. This is the tree of universal love and universal fellowship!

## “Questions asked at Forest Temple Service”

Sunday, 15 August 1920—Lily Dale, N.Y.

What is the difference between this Bahá'í Teaching and Spiritualism?

Jináb-i-Fáḍil's answer was: “The teachings of spirituality are in accord with the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. For the teaching of spirituality is based upon the immortality of the soul. Bahá'u'lláh has revealed the principles of immortality in many volumes. Bahá'u'lláh says the Reality of Divinity is infinite and cannot be grasped by the limitations of man. We find all the teachings of spiritualism in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. One of the great principles of Bahá'u'lláh is the unification of religions. All the seven great religions must throw away their superstitions. Another principle is an auxiliary, universal language, another the equality of men and women, the oneness of humanity, independent investigation of truth, the foundation of all religions is one, religion must be the cause of unity, religion must be in accord with science and reason, prejudices of all kinds must be forgotten, there must be universal peace, and an international tribunal.

Fáḍil Mazindarání also said in answer to questions: “Before the appearance of the Báb, many saintly souls prophesied and gave the Glad Tidings of this New Day. Likewise in Persia brilliant souls appeared and caused the souls to be prepared. This can be found in the books of Persia. Bahá'u'lláh is the Founder, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His son, is the interpreter, explainer of the Teachings. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was in this country in 1912 and spoke before spiritualist societies.”

Taken down by Martha L.  
Root

## Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh Sunday, 22 August 1920—Location Unknown

This great Manifestation has given us very many teachings; has given us such wonderful lessons that we did not know before. Mankind are still in their stage of infancy; they are not developed enough to know these wonderful lessons. One of the new and specific teachings of this Cause is the oneness of religion, the oneness of the Manifestations of God. These teachings are specific and peculiar to the teachings of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh. We cannot say this of previous Manifestations in former times because every religion in the world think themselves praiseworthy in the sight of God and all the other religions as condemned. For instance, the Jews believe strongly in His Holiness Moses but they reject all the other Manifestations and all the other Prophets. In reality they see the rays shining upon their own houses, but they do not see the rays of the sun enveloping the whole world. In other words, they believe only in their own prophets and reject all the other prophets. His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh has taught us that the reality of all the prophets has been identical, and the essence of their teachings has been also identical. All the Messengers of God, all the prophets of God, all the founders of religion have had the same identical teachings, and all the prophets of the world have appeared in this world to promulgate brotherhood, fraternity and to promulgate love among mankind. Even the first prophet which appeared in the world had the same aim, that is to say to promulgate love and amity among mankind. The aim and purpose of all the prophets have been to bring concord and fraternity and love among mankind. All the other commands were changeable according to the exigencies of the time. For instance the secondary commands of the Old Testament were written according to the spirit of that age. All their aims and purposes were to bring love and amity among mankind. The first prophet who appeared in the world sowed the seed of love. He was the one who dropped the seed of love into the heart of the people. The other prophets who appeared later on irrigated and took care of this seed of love. They irrigated it and took care of it every day until the tree developed. The time of His Holiness Moses, His Holiness Jesus, and all the other prophets, Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohammed, were the irrigators of this plant. In this cycle, this heavenly tree of

God, which had been irrigated for years and years by the former prophets, has become matured and developed. And now in this cycle these great and magnificent trees will yield fruits. Now it is time for us to seek that fruit and use it. In former periods and in former cycles their love and amity and unity did not become universal. That is to say: this tree of God has not developed enough and had not become matured yet. But this time, this period, and this age is the age to pick the wonderful fruits from the tree of God. What are the fruits of this tree? International love, international unity, international peace, perfect and real unity among humanity. Now in this age, in the age of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which are identical, this tree yields its fruits to the people of the world. In all the former and previous Manifestations of God, in the Garden of God, this tree was planted and taken care of. Now the people of the world should rest under the shade of these branches and enjoy the fruits of this tree. The Bahá'ís are the only people who enjoy the fruits of this tree more than anybody else. The fruit of this tree is very vivid in the Oriental communities and in the Oriental meetings—in the Bahá'í meetings. There are always large meetings of Bahá'ís who come together in large groups, and you will find all nationalities in these meetings. There are Bahá'ís from all classes, from all religions—Zoroastrians, Mohammedans, Jews, Christians—all in the utmost fragrance and sociability. There is one soul of concord and love and amity among them that is beyond imagination, as if they had been brothers from their very birthday. In our journey we talked among the Spiritualists about unity, that this great Cause, this Blessed Perfection have established unity among mankind; that the nations who have been rejecting some of the Manifestations of God now are believing in all the Manifestations of God. For instance we told them that through the instrumentality of this Cause many Jews now believed in His Holiness Christ. A Jew who was present in this gathering did not know what it meant. He did not believe it. He said it was impossible. He was so mad and so confounded that he said "What do these liars say?" and he left the meeting; and of course he has all the right in the world to be confounded and amazed because the Jews are the most fanatical people in the world. None of these Jews have believed in His Holiness Christ since the declaration of the Manifestation of His Holiness Christ. That is to say, nobody made them understand the reality of His Holiness Christ. If people understand anything conscientiously they will not reject it. All those who reject reality do so because of their lack of understanding. But if this man was in the east he would not be surprised at all at our statement, because in the east there are many meetings for the Jewish Bahá'ís only. They arrange large conferences and great meetings and invite all the leaders from the congregations and give them the message of this Blessed Perfection. They invite the Mohammedan personages in their community and give them the Message; likewise the Christians are invited to receive this Message. My aim is to show that the fruit

of the trees of God has become manifested in this age; that is to say, the fruit of love. This tree of love has been irrigated and watered by the former Manifestations, has been taken care of for the last six thousand years. If all the difficult disagreements and discords were not dispelled from the face of the earth, the doings and exhortations of all the previous prophets would have been useless. The aim of all the previous Manifestations was to bring about love and amity. If the prophets do not reach their objective, then what would have been the use of all their activities and sacrifices? It is a well-known fact that the prophets of God did not appear in the world to bring discord, disunion, and disharmony. This great period has manifested the result of the works of the former prophets, namely international unity international love, equality between classes, unity of language. These are the fruits of the doings of the prophets for the last six thousand years, which have appeared in the period of His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This is the period. This is the age of picking the fruits. The previous centuries have been the centuries of trees, that is to say, of the cultivation of the tress and the irrigating of the trees Now in this age the fruit has appeared.

# 16

## A visit with 'Abdu'l-Bahá Sunday, 22 August 1920—Unspecified Location

You are all familiar with the Persian flag and the lion on it. One of the Persian poets says: "We are all lions but we are lions on the flag, we are moved by the breeze otherwise we would be motionless." The lion of the flag has no life of itself, it is powerless; the existence of the flag depends on the wind. Our attainment is through the wind but the wind is invisible. May our lives be a sacrifice to that wind—that life which is invisible. Although we feel this condition of evanescence and non-existence most of the time, but when we take steps and enter into the arena of service we feel it all the more. The spiritual effect that we observe in our life, the divine and sanctified deeds which we express in our daily lives and the power and grandeur which manifest themselves through our beings all owe their origin to the holy bounty of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Our existence is exactly like that lion on the flag, as long as the wind blows the lion is animated, but when the wind stops and the flag is motionless there is no sign of life whatever. You have read repeatedly in the Words of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá that the confirmations and assistance of God will ever uninterruptedly descend upon you. While I was in Haifa visiting the Master there was one of the Oriental Bahá'ís who came and he was invoking and supplicating 'Abdu'l-Bahá to give him confirmation and assistance. 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked him: what is your mental picture, what is your conception regarding the confirmations of God? Do you think that the confirmations and assistance are objects which would be placed in a case or in a bag and sent down from heaven? This air, the infinite atmosphere with which we are surrounded is filled with invisible, innumerable hosts of confirmation. This expanse of the universe is overflowing with the spirit of God. These invisible armies of God are waiting file after file, rank after rank to see which soul will come into the arena of service, so that they may rush forward and reinforce him. No sooner a man arises, whether he lives in the east or the west or north or south, if he arises with sincerity, and steadfast attention and hope to spread the Cause of love to promote principles which are for the betterment of humanity, then those armies will descend upon his head. This man that you see serving, although outwardly he is alone and single, yet behind him there are invisible hosts of the Kingdom. You

observe that a teacher, a Bahá'í, arises to teach, and apparently all the doors are closed before him, but suddenly the master key will be put into his hand and by these hosts all the doors will be opened. Outwardly he is ignorant but these invisible armies inspire him. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has often encouraged and invited souls that apparently were not learned and intellectual, telling them to arise and teach, telling them that they are not ignorant and alone, that the invisible armies of the Kingdom will come and serve them. The signs and effects which appeared from the short trip of eleven days never crossed before the retina of our eye. How could we ever think that the Words of God will affect the hearts of these people? These spiritualists, many of which are narrow and bound with in their own ideas. We could never really think that the Cause would have such a tremendous effect on those souls, so that the president would arise and say "these teachings are universal, we must arise and teach them." Another would say "these are 100 years ahead of our teachings." We never thought that the Chautauqua directors, which is a very strong Methodist organization, would allow us to speak about the Bahá'í Cause before these people. But His Holiness 'Abdu'l-Bahá opened the doors and these people came forward and invited us to their gathering and made us make speeches about the Bahá'í Cause. They were made happy, we were made happy and God was made happy. In the writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá you find a very interesting expression "the heavenly and earthly appearances, the heavenly and earthly means." So that God has both means. His heavenly means are the spiritual powers and forces, but His earthly means are these who proclaim the Bahá'í Cause amongst the people of the world. That is those means and those affairs through which the Cause is heralded and effective in contingent beings. And one of those earthly means, also heavenly means that affected this trip and facilitated many things was Miss Martha Root. We must mention the services of those who have arisen whole heartedly to serve the Cause, because that will encourage them and encourage others. During the few days that she was with us she was restless, she was always thinking "I will go to this one or that one and open a door". All the time she was in motion. We wouldn't like to embarrass Mr. Randall, he would be embarrassed if we said something about him. Again the same poet says: "all these songs and melodies which you hear are from the throat of the singer, of the artist, although this visible artist is singing and filling the air with melody, the supreme artist is higher, and all these songs and melodies are from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, although we hear the people speaking and singing."

In fact you do not find any sincere ones who will conscientiously deny the validity and universality of this Cause. To what could they object? Could they say we want hatred? Or could they say, no, what is the use of having peace, let us have war and bloodshed, or, no, it is better for us to have bloodshed and warfare instead of peace. But the teachings are such that no man can deny. If we

arise with pure intention in the promotion of the Cause of God such confirmations will descend that we will be amazed and wonderstruck.

# 17

## “Martyrdom”

Monday Evening, 23 August 1920—Green  
Acre, Eliot Maine

*‘Mírzá Fáḍil spoke first about the three types of martyrdom. He spoke of those who give their lives, of those who sacrificed their time and money and position in the Cause of God, etc. etc.’*

There are thousands of martyrs in this Cause. One of the events in the early Babi movement is the martyrdom of hundreds of Bábís in the Fortress of Ṭarbarsí. A second important event where the Bábís displayed great fortitude and courage and again several hundreds of them were martyred was in the city of Zanján. The third great spiritual sacrifice and martyrdom happened in the city of Nayríz. These general martyrdoms were brought to an end with the martyrdom of the Báb in 1850. In 1852 the Sháh of Persia issued an edict in which he said that all the Bábís and Bahá’ís must be put to the sword and none of them must be spared<sup>7</sup>. In every city of Persia many Bahá’ís were thrown into prison and martyred, but the most important of these was in Ṭihrán where thirty-eight of these Bahá’ís were thrown into prison. The story of the martyrdom of these thirty-eight holy souls runs into volumes. From amongst these thirty-eight souls a number of them shine and scintillate in the heaven of martyrdom like clear stars. Although there are thousands of martyrs in this Cause yet here and there you will find a number of most wonderful martyrs who dispel the darkness of night like unto the sun. From amongst the very renowned and great martyrs is Badí’. He was the messenger who carried the Epistle from Bahá’u’lláh to the then Sháh of Persia, Násiri’-d-Dín Sháh. Násiri’-d-Dín was one of the rulers of Persia who ascended the throne at the age of seventeen. The pride of youth and egotism of self-glorification caused the Sháh of Persia to be so enveloped in the cloud of haughtiness that he ordered the slaughter of thousands of Bahá’ís during his reign, because the enemies of the Báb have so impressed on his mind that this great cause had come to displace the government of Persia and bring in a different system of state and rule. For this reason he was living always in a state of consternation and fear that probably these Bahá’ís are plotting against the government and no sooner would he hear that a soul

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<sup>7</sup> All sections which are underlined appeared so in the original.

was remotely connected with the Bahá'ís than he would be done away with.

In the early years of the arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in the fortress city of `Akká he revealed a long and detailed epistle to the Sháh of Persia. Those who have studied and read this Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh realize that it is not a tablet but it is a heavenly book containing all the sciences and divine teachings. The aim of Bahá'u'lláh, however, was to send this tablet with a messenger so that the Sháh of Persia might receive it with his own hands. It was a well-known fact that the courtiers around the Sháh did their utmost so that the words of Bahá'u'lláh did not reach his ear. They said his words had a power of witchery and sorcery, that no sooner will the Sháh listen to these than his heart will be changed and he might become a Bahá'í. Therefore, Bahá'u'lláh proposed that this tablet must be directly with a messenger to the Sháh, but it was at the same time a well-understood fact that the messenger would be martyred or killed on the spot. The Sháh was so bigoted that no sooner he would have heard that this man in a messenger from Bahá'u'lláh than he would be ordered killed. When Bahá'u'lláh revealed this tablet He wrote on the back of it that the bearer of this message must fulfill certain conditions. The first condition was that before he will accept this message he must realize that he will be killed in the most severe way and he must show the utmost steadfastness and assurance. The second condition was that on his way to Persia and in Persia he must not associate with any Bahá'ís because when the king would apprehend him they will undoubtedly try to find out who are the Bahá'ís with whom he was associated in order to take them and kill them also. And should he meet these Bahá'ís and in his interrogation tell the judges that he has not met them, then he will tell something that is not the truth, therefore he should not from the very beginning, meet any Bahá'ís, so he can state the truth that he does not know any of them. The third condition was that he had to deliver this epistle with his own hand into the hand of the Sháh. Badí' was a youth of seventeen years at the time he was in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, and one day in meeting His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh took out the tablet and while He held it in His hand He said "Who is the one who will carry this to the Sháh of Persia?" This youth like a flame of fire sprang from his seat and bowed down before Bahá'u'lláh and said "I am going to carry this tablet". Bahá'u'lláh went on with his call and repeated the same call the second time and the youth repeated his supplication, and Bahá'u'lláh called the third time and again this youth invoked Bahá'u'lláh to carry this tablet.

Before the arrival of this youth in `Akká, one day, His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh had told His followers who were with him that the messenger who was to carry this tablet to the Sháh would ere long arrive, so Bahá'u'lláh gave him this wonderful message and he took it and started on his great work. Haydar-`Alí, the angel of `Akká

whose name you have most of you heard, related the following story in connection with this. He said that a certain man by the name of Hájí Amín, when Bahá'u'lláh gave this tablet to Badí' was in `Akká. Bahá'u'lláh was at the time in `Akká and Haifa is about ten miles distant so Hájí Amín was one day in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and He gave him two boxes and said, take these two boxes to Mount Carmel where Badí' lives and deliver them to him. When the carrier of these two boxes arrived on Mount Carmel he saw Badí' dressed in a long white garment as though waiting for something. He had faced `Akká and was standing in a position of humility and prayerfulness as though he was communing with Bahá'u'lláh on the other side of the Bay. He was like a thirsty man waiting for cool salubrious water. Hájí Amín delivered these two boxes to the youth, he took the two boxes and as a sign of reverence he pressed them to his forehead, touched them with his eyes and kissed them with his mouth and put them in his breast. Hájí Amín knew something about it and he had heard that this is the great tablet and he asked would it be possible for Badí' to let him see and read it, but he said I have not time now, and from that time he continued his journey on foot toward Persia. He did not wait or rest on the way at all, but with patience and with the utmost perseverance he followed the injunctions of Bahá'u'lláh. One of the believers who is still alive and lives in Egypt met this young man on his way and for a few miles he was his companion, but of course he did not know anything about his mission or why this man was hurrying towards Persia. This man told me that now and then Badí' would run away in a corner and disappear. Once I followed him to find out what he was doing there and I found that he had prostrated himself on the ground and was praying with the utmost reverence toward `Akká. He said that after we heard the story of his martyrdom we realized that he was offering prayers of thanksgiving.

At the time of the arrival of Badí' beside the gate of Tīhrán, the capital of Persia, the Sháh was on a hunting trip outside the city. Badí' goes on a hill in this plain and stands with his white garment with the tablet of Bahá'u'lláh in his hand. Standing in this attitude for three days and three nights Badí' continued to stand on this hill without any change. The Sháh of Persia from his position, having a field glass in his hand often witnessed this man standing immovable and he sent some of his men to bring this youth to him and to find out what is the petition of this man. They inquired of him what he had and he told them that he had a very important message for the Sháh of Persia. And if they would allow him he must deliver this message with his own hand. They tried their utmost to get this message from him but he would not give it up so they went to the Sháh and the Sháh said to bring Badí' to him. Then he at last attained to his highest object and that was to deliver the tablet of Bahá'u'lláh into the hands of the Sháh. The Sháh received the Tablet and no sooner he received it than he realized that it was from His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh. The officer began to beat Badí'. The king

became enraged, and then insisted that Badí' must reveal the names of the Bahá'ís with whom he was associated. While these people were beating him and persecuting he began to thank the Lord because he said at last I have attained the station of martyrdom that Bahá'u'lláh has predicted on the back of this tablet. The Sháh was so fanatical and bigoted that he said "Now that you say that Bahá'u'lláh has said that you will be martyred I will not martyr you, but I will keep you in prison and inflict all kinds of punishment on you as long as you live." He ordered the officers to take this youth away and they took him and branded him with hot irons. These men who had charge of branding him with hot irons were so stupefied on account of his happiness and rejoicing because he would say "You have branded only this side would you like to brand this other side also so that I may have this fire of suffering all through my body". They were so struck by this that they reported it to the king, saying "This is no human being. No matter how much we brand him he does not divulge the names of any of the Bahá'ís. On the other hand he shows a greater amount of beatitude." The king said "Take his photograph and bring it to me". So while this youth was being branded they took his photograph which exists today amongst us.

Although this monarch was a great enemy of the cause he was not an intellectual so he forgot his first word that he would not kill Badí', and he said now go ahead and kill this boy immediately and do not let anyone see this photograph because that will make them Bahá'í. His fanaticism and rage made him forget entirely his first word and so the word of Bahá'u'lláh was fulfilled. Then they dug a well and threw the body of Badí' into it. Later on this great epistle was read by the Sháh of Persia. Having read this great epistle there appeared a change in him, he understood that this cause is for no other purpose than for universal peace, universal brotherhood and universal conciliation. That it is a cause which has appeared so that all mankind may enter under the shadow of spiritual oneness and brotherhood. He understood that this cause has no thought for politics. For this reason from that time on he never interfered personally nor persecuted the Bahá'ís in a direct manner himself. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh in that Tablet addresses the Sháh and says, "Will you not invite all the mullás and learned men and let me come also? I will present myself there and let these mullás ask me anything that they know has appeared from the former prophets and if these things become manifest from me well and good, if not you may do whatever you like with me. The treasury which appeared from Moses and Christ and Mohammed which lead the people to belief, if I cause the appearance of these treasuries then you may believe in me, if not then you may issue an order to place me in prison and do whatever you like." The Sháh of Persia sent the Tablet to two of the most learned men of Tíhrán, and the told them, "Now here is something that you must do, Bahá'u'lláh has issued a challenge for you to gather together and ask from the ancient

prophets anything you desire.” They said, “No. Bahá’u’lláh is a magician and he might perform anything that we ask from him and if he does this thing think, we have to believe in him?” The Sháh realized then that these people were all animated by prejudice and from that time on he did not give any importance to their sayings. Therefore, Badí’ was only one of the many martyrs of this Cause who demonstrated his love for with such fortitude and steadfastness.

Another event of martyrdom which is really unique to this revelation is the martyrdom of Vargá the poet, and his twelve year old son. During the life of Bahá’u’lláh he asked the meaning of one of the verses of the Book of Aqdas, that verse refers to the appointment of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the Center of the Covenant where Bahá’u’lláh says “After the Ocean of my meeting is set then you must turn your faces toward him who is branched from the Most Ancient Root”. Vargá requested Bahá’u’lláh to explain the meaning to him of who is desired by God. Bahá’u’lláh answered him that the meaning of this verse is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the Mystery of God. Therefore from that time Vargá became the lover of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, he had extreme love for the Master. He supplicated Bahá’u’lláh to attain to the station of martyrdom and finally his constant supplication of Bahá’u’lláh to promise him that he would attain to this station. This, however was not fulfilled during the life of Bahá’u’lláh and later on when Bahá’u’lláh departed from this life he continued his request from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He was a well know teacher, an illumined speaker and orator and an unexampled poet. His poems deal with love. They have such a spirit and atmosphere that puts the reader into a state of exaltation and tumult; and sometimes he predicted his own martyrdom. His son, Rouholláh, twelve years old, was a genius; he was a speaker and a teacher of great magnetism and attraction. At that early age he wrote wonderful poems, he was a brilliant child. Because he was a young man and so full of vivacity and happiness when he came to see Bahá’u’lláh, sometimes Bahá’u’lláh would joke with him and ask him questions. Now and then he would call him by the name of “the teacher”. One day Bahá’u’lláh told him, you have such power in teaching the people this cause, suppose that promised one of the Mohammedans, who according to their expectations is like an eagle who will guide the people and force the people to come into the Kingdom, if he appears what will you do. “Through the confirmations of Bahá’u’lláh I will teach him and make a Bahá’í of him”. He had this wonderful repartee. Vargá with his young son started on a teaching campaign. They reached one of the cities of Persia, and this city had a very ferocious governor. Hard-hearted. The people immediately reported to this governor that the traveler was a brilliant teacher and carries with him a great deal of wealth. His wealth, however, consisted of 50 volumes of the writings of Bahá’u’lláh, very precious indeed. Aside from the spiritual value of these great books they had a material value because they were

written on the best paper and embellished and bound. The governor sent his officer and Vargá with his son was captured. When they opened his possessions the governor realized that he had no money or wealth except for these few volumes, but Vargá was anxious to give him the message of the Kingdom and began to teach him. He begged the governor to invite all the Ulamá and learned men of the city so that he might speak with them. He followed his demand by saying that he would prove the validity of the Cause with all the heavenly scriptures and writings.

The governor invited all the learned men and Vargá with his twelve year old son began to speak. This twelve year old boy spoke with such eloquence and fluency that the governor was attracted and many people were magnetized. The Sháh sent a telegram that they must immediately forward these two Bahá'ís to the capital. At the time the Sháh was not so anxious to kill the Bahá'ís, rather the Prime Minister was anxious to do away with them, so they imprisoned them in a big mansion. Although all the Bahá'ís could not frequent this mansion, yet clandestinely some of them did. At that time Vargá wrote a letter to the spiritual assembly of Tīhrán in which he says, "According to the promise of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá all the appearances have indicated that the time is drawing near when I must attain the station of martyrdom, but from the way the king and the prime ministers are treating me, with such love and reverence, and they have placed me in this mansion, I do not see any sign that this will happen soon. Apparently this is owing to my inability to attain to this high station. Therefore, I beg of you to pray and supplicate Bahá'u'lláh so that I may not look upon my inability but shower His Mercy on me according to His own bounty". After a while the head of the soldiers who was a very despotic man told the king something and got an order to place them in the prison. Vargá from his prison wrote a letter to the Sháh and asked him to invite all the learned men that he might meet with them. The Sháh invited this very man to go to Vargá and find out how Vargá wanted this meeting brought about.

This despotic man entered the prison. Immediately Vargá tells him that he desires such a meeting to be held the man became very angry and took his stick and began to beat Vargá saying "do you want to propagate the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh through the world?" And during these days Násiri'd-Dín Sháh was killed. He had reigned for fifty years and he desired to celebrate the fiftieth year of his reign by parades and feasting. They were going to have a great time of feasting and parades and proclamations of happiness, and the event was during the last days of the Feast of Ridván in April. The Sháh in order to celebrate this anniversary set out to visit one of the Holy Shrines which is outside of the capital, and one of the republicans who had just appeared in Persia hid himself and shot the Sháh and he died. Vargá and his son were still in prison at this time. The head of the soldiers hearing the news goes into the prison

and begins to upbraid them. While he was talking with Vargá and Vargá was speaking with him about the Cause he draws his sword and cuts his Holy being into pieces in the presence of his young son. Then he tells the son “Now you saw how thy father met this martyrdom. If you will recant I will give you the highest station in the Kingdom and you will attain to every high position”. The boy says “I have no other hope save martyrdom, my father has trained me all these years so that I may reach to this great station of martyrdom.” Then he was also killed. Hence the tree of the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh was watered with the blood of these divine souls and under this tree all the children of men will find rest and composure. We have a number of poems of Vargá in praise of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.. Glad Tidings for the King has appeared. He has come with a world-illuminating sun. With two kingdoms of manifestation has he appeared. The most important branch of the tree has appeared like unto the tree of life. With the cohorts of glory and beauty and imperial heavenly the temple of might and power has come. In order to glorify at the gate of His Father the Son of the Almighty is born in servitude of the Blessed Perfection the humble servant has come. He has come to teach us the reason of servitude and for this we must follow in His footsteps.

The lover of the face of the Beloved, what does he want to do with life, with honor, with wealth, with property? The man who desires to enter into the arena of the Beloved what does one want to do with this worldly honors and titles? That soul who finds his abode in the Kingdom of his Beloved—he is not in need of Paradise at all. The fruit of the Tree appears from its branches, therefore those who desire to attain to the fruit they must recognize the branch. I realize that when Thou appearest Thou hast manifested Thyself and Thou has attracted me to Thyself.

## “Incidents in the life of Mírzá Fáḍil”

Tuesday, 24 August 1920—Green Acre,  
Eliot, Maine

Tonight I am going to relate to you some of the experiences of my trips in the Cause in different parts of the world. The travels that I have undertaken for the promotion of the law of love and amity and good fellowship amongst the children of men. Traveling in the Orient is fraught with many difficulties and inconveniences which you do not meet in the West. First we have no convenient means of transportation, the eastern countries lack still a great deal of railroads and consequently we must travel on camels, mules and other animals. Second the people of the Orient, no matter to what religion they may belong still exercise the privilege of showing a great deal of animosity and hatred toward other religions. Third they have not yet entered into the consciousness of life nor are their minds or intellects illumined with the sun of reality. Consequently it is very difficult for them to understand these world-wide teachings. One of the trips which I undertook in order to diffuse the fragrances of the rose garden of love and amity was the trip to Najaf and Karbala, two of the most important religious centers in the Mohammedan world. Najaf is a city in the province of An Najaf<sup>8</sup> and it belongs to the province of Baghdad in Mesopotamia. Although it is a small city yet as it is the head community of the Shiite<sup>9</sup> world it has assumed extraordinary importance in the world of the Mohammedans. It is built in the middle of a sandy desert and all around you find nothing but wilderness. There are no trees, no foliage, no green or verdant pastures, except in the far off horizon you will find a small stream branched from the Euphrates coming down the side of a hill. It contains the shrine of one of the first Imams of Islam. The dome of this shrine is gilded. It is the religious seminary of the Islamic world and all the students carry on their theological studies in that center. Consequently the heads and leaders of the Shiite school live in that small yet important quarter.

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<sup>8</sup> Missing in the original.

<sup>9</sup> Every instance of the word “Shiite” in this document was not recorded by the stenographer, but inserted by the editor. It would appear in the text as “S       ”.

In 1909 a very detailed and wonderful Tablet was sent by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Persia. A portion of that tablet belongs to an account of my trip to Arabia. In that tablet 'Abdu'l-Bahá commands me to go to Arabia and convey the message of this Cause to the Imams of all the Mohammedan world. Having received the Tablet and command I started on this eventful trip. From Tīhrán to Najaf in every city that I entered I raised the call of the Kingdom. Meetings were held and the people were summoned to this Cause. On the way I stopped a few days in the city of Káshán where we have numerous Bahá'ís. They insisted that I stay there longer in their midst, but as I told them 'Abdu'l-Bahá has commanded me to go immediately to the city of Najaf. I wrote a letter to the spiritual assembly in Tīhrán telling them the case. The spiritual assembly of Tīhrán wrote back, inasmuch as you have received a direct command from 'Abdu'l-Bahá to go and fulfill this mission it is better for you to start as soon as possible. Traveling in the Orient is slow and it took me a long time before I reached my destination, the result of which was the cause of my departure for Najaf reached the Ulamá long before my arrival. They had telegraphed that such a person is on his way to teach you about this important cause. The mind of a westerner cannot comprehend the degree of animosity displayed by the people of the Orient toward this brilliant cause, for the leaders of the Islamic religion from the appearance of the Báb in 1844 have gathered their forces together to extirpate the tree of this cause. Hence before my arrival they had their plans so that no sooner I entered the city they may take me<sup>10</sup>, throw me into prison and do whatever they please. Even they had appointed a number of spies on the way so that all the events of my trip were reported to them. About 100 miles before my arrival in the city of Najaf lo and behold a person, incognito arrives on the scene and expressed the warmest desire to accompany me and assist me on the way, and later it was found that he was one of the spies. After meeting many important personages and talking in many cities and meetings I arrived in the city of Najaf. As I intended to remain in that city for some time in order to associate in a friendly manner with these leaders of religion, for three days I went around to find a house and other means of livelihood. During those three days however I met many of my former students in the University of the Shiite and they recognized me and they came to see me and so the number of friends increased day by day. I began to speak with each one of them about the message of the Cause.

The third day, having left my home I entered into the large class hall of these thinkers and intellectuals and no sooner I entered the hall than I saw the wrath and anger in their faces, in the same way that a wolf would look upon a sheep. A few of them told me that a large number of the Ulamá are anxious to meet you at your own home, therefore it is better for you to meet them in your own home, you had better return there for they are on their way. We were not

<sup>10</sup> Underlined in the original.

informed, they said, about the arrival of your honor, otherwise we would have called upon you sooner, it was your duty to inform us. And when I reached the gate of my home I found an increasing number of these ulamá. I took them into my reception room and I began to speak with them about the spiritual principles of this Cause. I was entirely ignorant of the plans that they had made in order to persecute me. Nay rather they had larger plans to incriminate the name of the Cause. It was the time when the government of Persia and the Government of Turkey after must struggle had obtained their freedom<sup>11</sup> and they had established the constitutional form of government. One of the elemental laws of a constitution is religious freedom and the Turkish government had nominally granted this law and consequently they could not persecute me in the name of religion.

The Shiite and the Sunnite university convened meetings and concocted certain plans by which they could persecute me not in the name of religion but in the name of politics and we were entirely misinformed regarding their doings. When I finished my talk with these men one of them got up and said we have come on the part of the Ulamá to investigate and find out what you have. They started to search my few belongings. I said, I have not many things but here they are come look at them. All that we had were the Bahá'í books and literature. They seized a number of Bahá'í books written by Bahá'u'lláh and other spiritual literature of this cause and many other tablets and separate letters and with these books they left the house and went to their leaders. Thinking that probably we were going to escape they left a number of their men to act as guards around the house. After a half hour a large crowd of people were rushing towards the house. With them was a representative from the Government of Persia, the Counsel. It was an unruly mob and in their faces you could read the signs of hatred and animosity and from their lips issued all kinds of unseemly words. The Persian representative did not let them go beyond the world of words, as soon as they started to attack me and injure me he prevented<sup>12</sup>, so they took me with all my baggage and carried me to the house of the Persian representative. The rest of our property was pillaged by these people and from the house of the representative I was taken into the prison and they put fetters on my feet. In that gloomy narrow cell I began to commune and pray to Bahá'u'lláh. I was accompanied with another Bahá'í. I was not alone. We supplicated to 'Abdu'l-Bahá: "O 'Abdu'l-Bahá! Thou hast ordered us to come here and teach the Shiite Ulamá of the Islamic world, but with this difficulty and being thrown into prison how can we accomplish this purpose?"

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<sup>11</sup> Underlined in the original.

<sup>12</sup> Underlined in the original.

However, we were neglectful of the fact that this very imprisonment brought the name of the Cause to the attention of thousands and thousands of people. This event transpired in the morning and lo and behold only a few hours passed before we saw a seething crowd attacking the prison. They rushed into the cell and unlocked the fetters from my feet and carried me almost on their shoulders to the great hall of the leaders of Islam. When I entered this big hall I saw that the cream of the theological world of Islam was present. Although 'Abdu'l-Bahá had mentioned the name of some of them the rest of them were all seated around this hall. The tablets and books which were seized in the morning were divided amongst this large crowd of theologians and I supposed that every one of them had a few sheets in his hand. A volley of questions were thrown upon me and another volley of answers they received. You probably all know that His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh lived for twelve years in Baghdad. Najaf is a city very near Baghdad and all the people of that province are familiar with the grandeur and majesty of Bahá'u'lláh no one can deny his wisdom. The problem which seems to the theological clergy of the Mohammedan world as anathema is that Bahá'u'lláh has changed the laws of Islam. First the Mohammedan clergy believe in the uncleanness of all other religions and nations except their own. Bahá'u'lláh has come addressing the world of humanity saying, "Ye are all the leaves of one tree and the fruits of one branch", and in my answers to them I made it quite clear that this universality of religion of God<sup>13</sup> is not something very extraordinary because they will find the same principle in their own Qur'án and I began to quote verses from their own Bible. The meeting lasted four hours and when they got tired they sent me again back to my cell, they placed the irons around my feet and everything became quiet and still. They organized a larger meeting the next day and when they were all ready with their questions they came back for me to take away the fetters and introduce me to their august body.

For seven days these wonderful meetings continued and every day an inquiring and interested curious crowd came, listened to the proofs regarding the message of the Kingdom. Many of them accepted the Cause while others repudiated and contradicted it. During the seven days the only time that my feet enjoyed the freedom of exercise was when we had these meetings. Among the Mohammedans they have many legends and extraordinary tales about the Bahá'ís. One of them is that the Bahá'ís are so powerful that even when they are in jail they grow wings and whenever they want they fly out of the jail and enjoy the snap and cozy corner of the air<sup>14</sup>. The fact was, however, that often the Bahá'ís were imprisoned but through their wonderful lives the prisoner became a Bahá'í and the jailor gave them the freedom of leaving the jail

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<sup>13</sup> Underlined in the original.

<sup>14</sup> Underlined in the original.

whenever they wanted. This time the jailor was rather unresponsive to the call of the kingdom and every day he would increase the size of the fetters for the fear that I might fly out of the prison. The seventh day I saw through an opening a number of people are cutting wood in the court and they were speaking about me, but I did not understand all they said. When they came to the jail and took me out of it I realized that they had reached the decision to exile me from the town and put wooden locks on my hands. They had cut two locks and made just a hole for the two hands in order to put the hands through and carry me away. The mayor of the city had made it a holiday however for everyone to come out and see us in our gala appearance and we enjoyed very greatly their visit because we heard from their lips the words and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh which they had memorized during the last few days by passing this literature from hand to hand.

They exiled us from Najaf to Baghdad and the Turkish guards accompanied us . On the way there is another city called Karbala and in order to refresh and rest themselves they put me in the prison of this city. In the prison I found a number of important Arabian prisoners and as their hearts were warm and kind I began to speak with them and immediately they accepted the Cause. They became so touched with the events which had transpired during the last few days that when they heard the full account they began to weep. There I wrote a letter to the Governor of Karbala begging him to give me permission to meet him. He was a very liberal minded man and when we got to him and talked with him about the Cause he caught the spirit and was transformed. He told me, although I am powerless to do anything for you yet I will strive to bring about your freedom in the city of Baghdad. He told me that although the Mohammedan clergy could not persecute him on account of religion yet they had attributed to him certain political plots, that is he was a man who upheld the Sultan Hamid, the former despotic ruler of Turkey. It took us four days to cover the distance from Karbala to Baghdad and during these four days I was riding a donkey with my hands in these locks. It was during the summer and the heat was unendurable. The donkeys were so tired that often they would not walk any longer but would become unruly and throw me down on the ground. My hands were tied and I did not know what to do. The muleteer was rather fanatical and whenever I fell down from the donkey he would come and kick me with his foot and say, "Oh you ignorant man why don't you get up and ride on your donkey?" It happened that sometimes sixteen or seventeen times I fell down from the donkey and they had to come and put me again on its back. The confirmation and assistance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was so great that whenever we reached a town and rested for the day or night we were enabled to teach one or two souls. For three days I was imprisoned in Baghdad. In the jail of Baghdad I was favored to teach many souls.

The enemies later planned that they would take us from here to Persia and here there were many wild tribes ready to attack us and kill us in an instant. The Ulamá of Najaf had written already to the heads of these tribes that inasmuch as we are unable to kill this man according to law, no sooner he arrived<sup>15</sup> at the frontier of Persia than you are to attack him and kill him. But they were entirely unaware of the power of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

'Abdu'l-Bahá here showed an extraordinary power in the fact that the counsel that was appointed to take me to the frontier of Persia had the love of this Cause in his heart, and the Turkish governor did not fetter my hands at the time of my departure from the city. No one knew how or why they forgot this very important rule exercised on all their prisoners. When we reached the frontier of Persia these guards delivered us into the hands of the Persian authorities. Here the Persian officers and their men instead of delivering us into the hands of the wild tribes showered upon us so much loving kindness that we were amazed. All the way the various unruly tribes and fanatical men were all in waiting to attack and kill us but they could not because we had these men with us. As we were traveling along the road suddenly we came upon a number of well-armed Kurds, they came to the carriage driver and asked him, do you know about two Bahá'ís who have been captured in Karbala and Najaf and who are being brought back to Persia. The carriage driver who had already become fond of me and my companion said, "No, I have not heard about them. What do you want to know about these two men so that we may get them and according to the message from the authorities do away with their lives?" They had even spread circulars and published these circulars throughout this city. Throughout all these difficulties Bahá'u'lláh protected us until we reached the city of Ṭīhrán. When we reached Ṭīhrán many of the authorities in the Persian Government are Bahá'í and therefore in order to quell this insurrection they told their confreres<sup>16</sup> that the best way to do away with this affair was to keep these two men secured and keep them quiet for some time until the fire of revolution becomes extinct. I remained in Ṭīhrán for one month without associating with the people and then I started on my journey toward the Holy Land to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá. When I reached the presence of the Master He went on to relate all the details of this trip of mine so that I marveled, it was as though He had been there and witnessed every detail which went along during this journey. The plans and strategies and trickery which were brought together by these Ulamá years ago and the events which took place, 'Abdu'l-Bahá went on to describe. He said, my object in sending you to that center of the Ulamá was to promote the cause and to scatter the leaves of the teachings and books of this movement, and the result is already achieved and a great number of men and women are

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<sup>15</sup> Underlined in the original.

<sup>16</sup> Colleagues.

already informed of this movement. Later on a number of these Ulamá who had become Bahá'ís came to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá and now they are engaged in that very city in the spread of the message. These people thought that they were able to extinguish the lamp of God, but God through His own invisible and mighty power scattered the rays of the sun of reality to the four corners of the earth. This was just one of the instances of my trips.

It is very hard to be truly religious and spiritual in the Orient. No sooner than a person accepts this movement than he must realize that at any moment his life is in jeopardy. Many of the Bahá'ís were done away with secretly since the enemies would attack the Bahá'ís in the heart of the night and kill the people and run away and the murders were never discovered. They don't have any police system, and even in some cities where they do have police they are in league with these men. In larger cities these murders are past but in the smaller towns and villages any day they may have them. Six years ago the enemies attacked the house of a Bahá'í and killed seven members of one family. He was a very deeply spiritual and perfect soul. He was a lover of martyrdom and he had begged 'Abdu'l-Bahá to give him this blessing. Two of his sons were students in the school. These two sons had such charming characteristics and attractive personalities that even the teachers were attracted to them. One day the principle and the teachers at the school realized that the time had passed and these two students had not arrived, they sent a man from the school to find out the reason of their absence. This man knocked at the door for a long time, no answer, finally he pushed the door and it opened, he entered the house and to his horror he finds one of the sons decapitated at the threshold another at the other corner of the house. He raised a cry and the people gathered from the neighborhood. When they came into another room they found the mother in the same state, the little brother likewise, the suckling babe was likewise butchered the father was located in another room with a dagger in his heart. The governor did his utmost to find out the murders but without success, no one would divulge their names. The people have this fanatical spirit and if a teacher journeys from one city to another city they know that at any moment the end may come.

I became Bahá'í after I entered the college. My relatives were Bahá'í and from my childhood they talked with me and after I entered the class of the university and was studying Mohammedan theology they always were very careful what they said to me because the clergy are very fanatical and bigoted. It is impossible to conceive of a Mohammedan without fanaticism, even in my childhood I do not think that I was fanatical but being a Mohammedan I believed a great deal in the ceremonies, etc. of the church and the religion of Islam is engulfed with ceremonies. For example, they have to fast one whole month from sunrise to sunset

each day. A person should not drink, should not eat, should not smoke, nothing should touch his lips in the way of eatables. The month of Ramadan or fasting comes in the heat of the summer. Think of the condition of the laborer, of the toiler who must work and not drink a drop of water for fourteen hours. A man must rise before sunrise and offer a certain prayer at that time. Some of them who are very religious must begin their prayer before twilight. But strange to say religion sweetens all these hardships. They go through all these religious ceremonies with the utmost ease and tranquility, and then they become Bahá'ís they naturally bring that state of sincerity and steadfastness into the Bahá'í Cause.

# 19

## “Address given in the Arts and Crafts Barn at Willow Cotte”

Friday , 27 August 1920—Green Acre, Eliot,  
Maine

Truly I say this is a joy-bringing gathering. When a person looks upon children who are like young growing plants his heart is made glad.

There is no doubt that creationally and originally there is a difference between the various capacities and faculties from the beginning of their birth. For example they inherit the strength and weaknesses of their parents and so their minds carry these tracts all their lives. Even they may bring into this world the weaknesses and the strengths of physical sensations and mature perceptions. Again there may be different degrees of capacity so far as the expression of the affections and the sympathies are concerned. Likewise some children from the time of their birth may show certain signs of the keenness of intelligence and the ability to assimilate knowledge and the power of memory. Other children may not show these signs to a high degree, they may be dull and slow, unresponsive. The power of memory is marvelous in human beings, there are children that from the age of childhood remember the details, the stories, the events and incidents of their lives and thus they store these things in the treasuries of memory, or that part of the brain where the power of memory is stored for their later experiences. On the other hand the memory of other children is rather desultory, like the sand on the shore. No impression will be left for a long time. No sooner they memorize something than after two or three days they have forgotten it, they need continual repetition of the details. Likewise the child demonstrates from the early stage certain objective qualities of knowledge; kindness and sympathy toward animals and its emotions which are necessary for the up-building of the higher and inner life. They also show a greater amount of hatred animosity, as the case may be. Education and enlightenment is a controlling factor to inhibit those forces or bring them forward on the

plane of visibility. Even the children in the same family under the direction of the same parents, being taught by the same teachers in the same school, when they are graduated show various degrees of attainment.

No one is created perfect in this world except the Holy Manifestations of God. The question of inheritance of characteristics as well as certain physical ailments will be referred to other and scientific authorities. Gerdosa, the great poet of Persia who lived many years ago said: "A tree, the root of which is from the beginning bitter, if you plant it in the paradise of God, and when you desire to irrigate it you may water it with the spring of life and the sweetest honey but when the time of fruitage is at hand it will bring forth the bitter fruits which were in the seed." Of course this poet lived many years ago and he had no hope in the controlling factor of education. There are a number of stories in Persia regarding the different capacities of children. One of the great men of Persia whose name appears many times in the story of the Arabian Nights lived many years ago and he ruled about one-quarter of the globe of that time. He had two sons and the mother of one of these sons was very anxious that her child might inherit the throne and become his heir. She was very affectionate to this son she loved him beyond any measure. The eastern law was that only the eldest son succeeded the throne and it so happened that this son was the eldest. He had special tutors and they tried their utmost to give him a very thorough and comprehensive training so that he might be able to assume the authority of his father after his death. The caliph, however, realized that his younger son had a greater intelligence a more perceptive eye and a deeper understanding and a keener mind, although he had not received even tenth of the education that they had showered on the elder son. The caliph would say to his first wife that this question of original capacity of the mind had nothing to do with education. That certain children are born with these characteristics. Therefore, he appointed one day to try the intelligence and the keen observation of these two boys. The caliph every morning received his two sons in his private apartment where his wives gathered around so one day he ordered his chamberlain to place a piece of thick carton under the rug upon which the son sat so that the rug was raised one inch above its original height. The elder son entered the room and bowed down before his parent and sat on the rug and did not feel any change whatsoever. The second son came and no sooner he looked at the rug than he also turned his eyes to the ceiling and to the platform and he began to look on the faces of the people questioningly. They asked him why he looked at them in such a questioning manner and he said "I don't know whether the ceiling of this room has come a little lower or the floor has lifted a little higher". Then the caliph said to the mother, this is the natural, un-acquired intelligence and he is worthy to become my heir. Likewise there are certain legendary stories and what they call "knowledges" in the Orient that still continue among

certain classes. There were certain people who used to tell you what you had in your hand without opening it. So in the legendary stories of this caliph it is written that he had appointed for the education of his sons a wise and learned doctor. Finally after many years of study and training, the son being a graduate of this school the time of examinations arrived. The teacher said "I have done my best I have expended many years on the education of this son of yours. The caliph began to examine him in the various courses that he had taken under the tutelage of this doctor. Finally they reached the science of telling the people what a man had in his hand. The caliph held in his hand a ring which had a very precious stone. The son began at first to feel his way by saying "it is a circle and it is hollow inside and it contains a very precious stone" Finally the father said "Tell me the name of the stone" The son said "This stone of the water-mill" The father said: "Is it possible that the big stone of the water-mill can be within my hand?" and the teacher said "Well I gave him all the sciences that I could but he is not worthy he has not been able to assimilate them".

In Persia I met a young Bahá'í child who had a great depth of intelligence and knowledge. He was nine years old and he spoke and wrote in four languages very fluently: Persian, Turkish, Arabic and French. He had a remarkable memory. He often retained in his memory the entire talk of a person he had once heard and he would repeat it like a drama. There were some meetings and his father often attended these meetings but his mother did not. The child used to present himself in all these Bahá'í meetings and while the leader was giving his talk he would concentrate all his attention and all his mind upon what the speaker was saying and he could many times reproduce every phase and sentence of the whole address he was like the gramophone plate. Then he would go and repeat the whole address to his mother and in this manner he was able to teach his mother and confirm her in the Bahá'í cause. All these illustrations show that children are different from birth so far as the ideal characteristics are concerned and the only means through which the child can be trained and developed is education. The children at the time of childhood are like unto tender plants. If a sapling is growing crooked, by the knowledge of the gardener it can be straightened, consequently education and instruction, even though it does not change the inherent characteristics of the child it causes him to enter into a higher realm of adaptability. From the beginning of childhood we must impress on the sensitive plates of the memory and mind of the child the knowledge of unity of good fellowship, equality and love; the acquiring of knowledge and science and cultivate an eagerness to know every law of nature. In other words inquisitiveness. It is written by an eastern sage that knowledge and sciences acquired by the child during the early period of childhood are like the impress made upon the stones, like engraving on the rock. You cannot ease them. When we enter into the knowledge of the prophets of God and study their methods we

find out that all the children of humanity are the children of God. The prophets and Manifestations are the spiritual educators who have come to train and develop the moral and ethical side of life. The religions are the spiritual colleges founded by God for the training of man. When the children of humanity enter into this university their very natures and characteristics undergo a thorough change.

When we study the Mosaic Dispensation we see that the Israelites were nothing but a shepherd people and they were trained and acquainted with the law of self defense and war. They were a pastoral people, they had no great attainment and they had a great deal of internal warfare amongst themselves. When the spiritual university was founded by Moses and he began to instruct these people students came from all parts of Palestine to that university and were trained and educated, then little by little they were so developed that they attained to such a high degree of real education that their high station was known through out the world. Even today the Mosaic laws and books are read by millions of Jewish people in all parts of the world and every Sunday they are made the texts for numerous sermons. The Proverbs of Solomon are so deep and said so simply, so vividly graphic that no matter how much a man in the twentieth century may study in the colleges and universities he will be unable to write a book like that or even aspire to write it. Likewise other books and epistles written by the Israelite prophets hold the same law. Now all these extraordinary advancements acquired by the Israelite people have been due to the instructions of Moses.

Finally, the appearance of Christ and those who succeeded him became so filled with the Holy Spirit that they were enabled to build civilization on a wide and deep and universal foundation. These dispensations of Christ and Moses and many thousands who followed Him were earthly they became heavenly whereas they were ignorant before they became illumined, whereas before they were cowardly they became courageous. Their righteousness, their holiness, their sanctification and their purity of thought and ideals became the inheritance for many succeeding generations. But alas that the people in the past could not distinguish religion from the traditions and superstitions which gathered around the temples of religion and could not make the distinction between the kernel and the husk. They were not enabled to divide the spirit from the body. For all these imitations and rites in the world of religion are like unto the husks and the real spirit of religion is the kernel and the core in the heart. The beginning of each religion brings to us spirit the -----<sup>17</sup> of spirit and the holiness of life in the utmost simplicity like unto the kernel. Little by little it gathers around itself, or the people grow around the kernel or the core of the religion of God the shell and the husk to the extent that the kernel is completely covered by

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<sup>17</sup> Unclear in Original.

the hard shell and sometimes it is very hard to break through. It is like a live charcoal which is covered by many strata of ashes and these collections prevent the live charcoal from emitting its light and heat, or it is similar to a mirror which is covered with rust and dust and it is unable to reflect anything. Or like unto a spring the fount of which will be covered with mud, with various kinds of refuse and then finally it becomes so muddy that you cannot distinguish the water from the mud. These traditions, these rituals, act exactly upon the spirit of religion as the mud reacts upon the water or the rust upon the mirror or the ashes upon the fire.

The original reality of all the religions of God is one. The desires of all the Manifestations of God have been one. What is that reality? That reality spells the spiritual holiness and foundation of life in the world of humanity. It is necessary to throw the outpourings of the Holy Spirit upon man. It makes possible detachment from animalistic conditions and materialistic environment. It brings to us the significance of love and universal fellowship amongst all humanity. For the promotion of this reality all the heavenly books have been revealed and all the manifestations of God have appeared in this world for the promotion of this principle. That which keeps the religions apart from each other is no other than traditions and creeds, and these creeds are different. The people of the world are holding fast to these creeds. Should you ask a Jew what is his religion he will not tell you that my religion means spiritual life, or turning ones attention toward God, or severance from bestial conditions and worldly affairs, or love and universal fellowship amongst all the people. No, he will tell you that he must not touch fire or work on Saturday. He will tell you that every morning you must fasten to your forehead a piece of skin within which is -----<sup>18</sup> and on the day of the festival of life they must blow a bugle or horn over the synagogue and on that festival of life you must fast 26 hours. If a Mohammedan or Christian touch the jar of wine it ill become unclean and it must be thrown away This is his religion.

If you ask an orthodox Christian he would not relate to you the spiritual self sacrifice of kindness and love for all mankind. These primary laws and principles for which Christ gave up his life will not be the theme of the Christians answer to your question, but he will recite to you the 39 articles of the church, baptism the seven sacraments, etc. etc. All these rites these creeds, these traditions have created disharmony and disunion amongst people they have acted as thick veils over the countenance of religion. The cause of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh has come to rend asunder these veils, to dispel these dark and gloomy clouds which have prevented the sun from shining. He has revealed and revived the original illumination of religion He has revived and quickened the primary spirit of religion. He has polished the mirror of religion and again it

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<sup>18</sup> Unclear in Original, obviously a reference to a Phylactery.

has become clear and translucent. That is why he has been able to bring that unity and brotherhood amongst all the religions of the world he has extracted the essence of reality and thrown away the husk of the creeds and traditions. This was the aim of God and the object of all the prophets of God.

## “Immortality”

Wednesday, 25 August 1920—Unspecified  
Location

We are going to talk today about the immortality of the soul. All the contingent phenomena are endowed with one universal reality while man is the possessor of two realities. The world of phenomena has only the material, physical life or reality but man is the possessor of that material, physical reality plus another ideal and super sensual reality.

The physical, material reality partakes of all the laws of nature. Man is the most comely creation, he is the most perfect, the most clear and translucent body, this is the natural and physical aspect of life, and God has made it the temple for the ideal and transcendental aspect of reality.

When we look over all the various kingdoms of creation we realize that none of the known kingdoms have been composed and perfected so beautifully and so sensitively as the body of man. God the wise creator has fashioned this temple of man in the minutest detail of perfect beauty and symmetry so that it may become the throne on which the ideal reality may establish itself. This material, physical body is like a room beautifully decorated, well established. All the furniture in accord with the latest desire and fashion, while the spirit is the guest, beautiful, perfect, handsome, living in this room. In other words the body is like a swift charger upon which the spirit rides with the utmost lightness and airiness. Again the body is similar unto a steamer and the spirit is the captain. In brief the spirit is like unto the kernel and the body is like the shell. Hence the reality of the world of humanity consists of the spirit and not the body. Now this universal, all-comprehensive spirit in the body of man has many powers which constitute its faculties and who obey the slightest command of its ruler, the spirit. These workers, or these members and powers of the spirit are seven, which are interpreted in some of the Holy Books as the seven heavens.

First is the power of voluntary motion. Second is the power of sensation. Third is the power of perception; perceiving the invisible realities of life, such as love and hatred are two intellectual realities and they are perceived through the intelligence. Fourth is the

intellectual power through which the essences of the reality of nature are understood. Fifth is the power of memory which is one of the most marvelous powers in the human intellect, keeping the facts of life and transmuting them into the activities of human nature. Sixth is the power of comprehension which is a power that comprehends the facts and divides them and again brings them together in new forms. Seventh is the power of invention in man, discovery, which brings into the world of visibility the invisible realities of life. For example man has discovered the rotation of the earth through this discovering power in him, for he has found out through mathematical laws that the earth revolves around the sun. These spiritual discoveries are through this seventh power in the mind of man. These seven powers, psychologically speaking are the seven factors, the seven workers which obey the commands of the spirit. All the intellectual, the various organs and members of the body are the instruments and agencies through which the commands of the spirit are carried out. For example the power of sight comes to us through the power of sensation which was the first power of the spirit and it is like a sentinel sitting behind the retina of the eye and discovering the visible phenomenon either at long or short range. It is like the telescope: Now the telescope in itself cannot see but the seer behind the telescope sees the things. The seven strata of the eye one over the other so marvelously constructed by the power of God are the instruments and the agencies of that power of the spirit working through them. Likewise the tympanum of the ear is another instrument which is used by the power of perception, by the power of hearing. Let us suppose the aim of the scientists who have been theorizing on the possibility of creating a man in the image and likeness of this living man, to have ears and eyes and hands and walk like him, even the building of the chemical flesh without the brilliant spirit that created man is like a lump of shapeless flesh.

When you say this is my hand, this is my eye and this is my head, my foot, who is this "I", this "me" within you to whom you give all these promises. The "I", the "me" is that intellectual, that spiritual essence which is within you and to which all these agencies belong. And because the spirit is a supreme sovereign in the kingdom of the body we attribute all these lower instruments to him. The essence of the spirit which is the eternal reality is everlasting and enduring and it is like unto the kernel while the body of man may be likened unto the shell, dry and disintegrated into its ingredients.

First the meaning of life and death is understood through the organization and disorganization; integration and disintegration of materials and atoms. All phenomena are the result of composition of atoms and electrons, and this is life, while death spells the decomposition of these molecules. But the spirit is not a compound substance, it is a simple substance. Because it is simple, you cannot decompose it, for you cannot decompose a simple element,

it is already in its original simplicity. Just as in chemistry you cannot decompose a simple element, you can put two together but you cannot separate a simple element.

The above was the first proof in regard to the immortality of the soul. Spirit is an intellectual reality and not a physical reality. Every intellectual reality is an effulgence from the part of God. Every intellectual reality is an atom is a scintilla from the Sun of Truth. Every transcendent reality is like unto a drop branched from the most great Ocean of Truth, and the reality of divinity is eternal and everlasting. Now if the reality of divinity is everlasting and eternal how much more its effulgences are everlasting and eternal also.

The third proof for the immortality of the soul is that this physical body of man from the time of its creation in the womb of the mother to the time of its death and its disintegration is subject to change, transformation and transmutation. The physical temple of man is like unto a seed which is planted in the garden. The seed grows and develops until it reaches to the stage of its maturity and it yields fruit for many years and finally through the necessary laws of nature it starts on the path of decay and decomposition. Likewise when the child is born, through the tender care of the mother it grows up and little by little gains knowledge and information and finally at the age of 35 or 40 it reaches the highest stage of maturity and bodily development and from that time on there is a course of retrogression. The body starts its course of retrogression and decay and finally it dies. It is like a lamp which is filled with oil. Having much oil the lamp gives a great deal of brilliancy and illumination, but when the oil becomes less and less the brightness of the flame becomes less and less until all the oil is used and the light goes out and the room is steeped in darkness. There is this distinction to be made that when the body of man starts its career of decay after the age of 40 or 50 the spirit continues its progress and development; nay rather, the opposite case is true, because in many people as they grow older the flame of the spirit becomes higher, the intelligence of the spirit becomes clearer and the activities of the spirit take a wider and more universal range. The body, it is true is weakened, but the spirit is continually strengthened and reinforced. The body is subjected to sickness but the spirit enjoys eternal health. Therefore it is proven to us that the spirit is independent of the body; it is not in need of the body, but it is eternal and age abiding.

The fourth proof of the immortality of the soul is the dreams and the visions that many people see. The body of man might be resting in a certain definite locality, all its physical sensations at rest, not hearing not listening, but the spirit travels through the immensity of space, it journeys through many cities and speaks with many people. It holds conversation with its intimate friends and it brings within its range many invisible objects. It also happens that sometimes as a person writes down all the dreams and visions that

he has had in the world of sleep he will be astonished at the variety and magnificent range of subjects which he was able to see and speak about which he could not even conceive during his waking hours. I had a friend in Persia who is a poet. Very successful. He had the habit of speaking aloud while he was asleep and the people who happened to be sleeping in the same room would be bothered because he spoke so loudly and rapidly. He had requested the members of his family to sit beside him while he slept and take down the poems which he composed at that time. They have made quite a collection of these poems which he has composed during his sleep, while in his waking hours he cannot write a line like them. In short, many spiritual dreams that the people have are real spiritual journeys and the clear demonstration of the immortality of the soul.

Another proof of the immortality of the soul is the inspirations, the discoveries of the spirit that come to almost every human being now and then during his or her lifetime. It has happened that sometimes to many of you, a problem has been quite puzzling, you could not solve it, you have been worried about its solution, you think so deeply and so earnestly about the solution of that problem that it is as though you are not living in this world, you have absented yourself far above and beyond this life. Let us say that while you are in that state you are as in a dark room and submerged in a sea of thought, when suddenly lightning flashes forth and you see through that problem and you solve your difficulty. Now if the man who is in that state thinks properly he will realize that at that moment when this spiritual lightning flashed, that was the moment in which he had connected his mind and spirit with the source of all life and the solution came from there, and that is the world of the immortality of all spirit.

The sixth proof regarding the immortality of the soul is the visitations of a number of glorious souls who had departed from this life. As it is recorded in the Holy Books. You have read in the New Testament how the apostles saw Christ after His crucifixion. Now they did not see Christ in the physical body, the temple of Jesus which was crucified but they saw Him in the Heavenly and spiritual body of the Christ which was immortal and everlasting. There is another story in the New Testament which rather substantiates this the story of the transfiguration when Peter saw Elias and Moses and Christ on the mount. Peter was so attracted, so impressed with the personality of Moses and Elias that he wanted to build a tabernacle there for them. Now we know very well that Moses had not lived in this world with his body for several thousand years. Now how did Peter see Moses and Elias, with what bodies did these two prophets manifest themselves to Peter. With the same body Christ manifested in himself to his disciples after his crucifixion. In the Old Testament there are many such spiritual revelations with which you are all familiar.

The seventh proof of the immortality of the soul is the statements of the prophets and the manifestations of God regarding this matter and their self-sacrifice and complete evanescence in the path of God, because all the Holy Divine Manifestations during the last many thousand years unanimously have proclaimed this glorious state after death, none of them have cancelled or abrogated this universal law in the human nature. If life consisted only of this physical material life on this globe, then it is evident that none of these past prophets and spiritual manifestations would have sacrificed everything they had in order to lead mankind to this high altitude of spiritual vision.

The eighth proof of the immortality of the soul is; were there no other life beyond this world the people would not have received the rewards of their actions here. During each manifestation of God many of the people believed in him, some of them rejected him, and some were the points of affirmation others were points of negation, some heaped persecution upon them. Now was there no spiritual life how could these souls receive their respective rewards after death. The harvest of each life is gathered in the future life. Just as in the law of embryology a child will receive the heritage of attention and hygiene of the mother; after it is born you cannot change it. If the mother has not been intelligent and has not lived in accord with the proper laws of hygiene the child may be born defective. Likewise this world of nature is similar unto the womb for the children of men in which they train themselves, develop themselves so that they may be born into another divine immortal world, and if we do not live in this world in accord with the laws of spiritual hygiene then we will be born into the other kingdom defective and with certain defective faculties that cannot be remolded. What are the laws of spiritual hygiene? They consist of the teachings and instructions revealed by the Manifestations of God in their age and cycle.

The ninth proof of the immortality of the soul is that if we did not have the eternal kingdom for the progress of the spirit then this whole world of creation would have been nothing but a fortuitous creation of atoms. God has created this world of phenomena and it contains infinite degrees of phenomena. Even the mineral and vegetable and the animal kingdoms which are not the highest creation of the creator are infinite and unknown in degrees. Likewise the human kingdom has reached to a very high stage of development so far as this world is concerned. Now if the life of man which is physical consists of only this animalistic side of life, of eating and sleeping and walking then that does not amount to much, does it? Then we come to the conclusion that God has not gone to all this trouble and creation, He has not created man, who is the highest example in the laboratory of nature just for himself to eat and sleep and walk around and die and return to the physical kingdom just like the animals. The wise, the far-seeing, the divine

creator would never make such a mistake. If this physical body is torn down there are numerous and infinite realms of God through which we can travel. And all these souls have the possibilities of this divine growth and development and final perfection, but at the same time there are differences of degrees. For example, in this world of phenomena, the charcoal exists and the diamond exists but there is a vast distance between the two, although originally they are the same, we have on the one side light, on the other side darkness. The souls who have become illumined under the instructions of the Manifestation of God in this day will continue their illumination and their enlightenment in the world of immortality; they are ever happy and rejoiced, living in an ecstatic and blissful state. But those souls who have not been illumined with the light of knowledge and divine wisdom they are in a state of deprivation. The story of heaven and hell are symbolic of the delicacies, the beauties and the spirituality of the world of immortality. Otherwise in the world of the kingdom they don't have a place a well a pit full of fire where they throw the wicked souls.

The world of immortality is not composed of body and physical elements so that the people may enjoy eating and drinking. Nay rather the preserves of the spiritual world are spiritual and the persons likewise are spiritual.

This was just a short synopsis on this subject.

SUNDAY NIGHT, 29 AUGUST 1920 MIRZA SHIERZY TRANSLATING.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL. SPEAKING ABOUT  
THE VEILS OF THIS WORLD ETC, ETC,

If the veils are removed we will know about heaven. The veils are the body but when these veils are removed then you will know what station you are in. As long as that condition exists you cannot see what is behind it. All those who are sincere feel it and acknowledge it. All those that are enlightened with the light of God feel it and realize it. Thus you see the people who have severed all relations with God don't feel it or realize it or even know it. All the objects in the world don't feel that, the vegetable does not feel it, the mineral kingdom does not know anything about the spiritual world, so with the animal. Even among human beings part of them don't feel it, it is those who are sleeping in the physical world, it is all those who are more or less unconscious of God. It is only those that know how to eat and sleep—nothing else. Man was not created to eat, sleep and drink only; the creation of man was for a higher aim. A person can never see the next world the way he sees it after he departs from this body. As long as a person is in the physical body that soul cannot realize it as he does have he is released. To know a certain

thing it has three qualities. Here is an example. You see the smoke of a fire from the distance, but you don't see the fire, you see only the smoke. From the smoke you realize that the smoke could not have existed without the fire. That is one stage of knowledge. That is a very low and mean knowledge. Then suppose you proceed towards the smoke until you see the fire. Now your knowledge of the fire has become greater, you see the smoke as well as the fire, the fire is clearer to you than before for in the first stage you saw only the smoke but now you see the fire and the smoke but in the other stage you can go a little nearer to the fire until you come absolutely next to it and you feel its warmth and you experience all three stages. This is a higher degree than the proceeding two knowledges which you had. Now those people who realize the spiritual world are in the third stage. There are some that only like those that saw the smoke, he only knows that there is a soul within him and there is a next world. It is like unto the person that saw the fire from a distance but there is still another stage where you can actually feel the soul and the next world. This stage is a real spiritual stage. A person feels the spirit through and through his physical body. His physical body is submerged in the spiritual, from such a person you realize only spiritual attributes. The main point is that the most important thing in a person is the soul, and not the body, the physical body passes away some day and it isn't a very clean thing. If you go into a laboratory and cut up the human body and see what lies in it everybody will feel disgusted with it. The real essence of man is the soul and it is through the soul that a person can develop and the soul can never develop except under the teachings of God. Unless the soul gets into the instructions of God it will never progress. The manifestations of God have appeared to educate souls. The soul develops into good manners and good character through the knowledge of God, and to get nearer to God and realize God it is cut away from self, from worldly affairs. Whosoever gets a strong soul proceeds more; whosoever gets weaker so far as the spiritual world is concerned his spirit gets weaker.

# 21

## “The Parliament of Man”

Thursday, 26 August 1920—Green Acre,  
Eliot, Maine

The subject for today is regarding the parliament of man and the confederation of the world. The parliament of man, or the international legislative congress, is one of the fundamental principles of His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'u'lláh over fifty years ago in numerous epistles and many tablets emphasizes the organization, the establishment of the parliament of man for the safeguarding of the nations. He called all the kings, emperors and presidents of the world to this high station of universal fellowship and asked them to bring together a parliament of man which would vouchsafe the rights of humanity. This heavenly gardener of the world of humanity planted this seed fifty years ago in the hearts of people. The seed pushed forth its head from the dark chamber of the soil and little by little it grew and developed until today it has grown up into a great tree. Its twigs and branches are extending into the hearts of many thousands of people in all parts of the world. The spiritually minded people, the forward looking men and women realize that although we have achieved great results in the past fifty years, that the results of the future will be far greater, nay rather, in a short time we will be able to herald in the dawn of Universal Peace. That great gathering of international peace, the parliament of man, which even from a physical standpoint will be the most perfect, the most artistic, the most perfect expression of universal ideals on the face of the earth. It will be built in a spot of the earth which geographically and spiritually will be most favorable to the interrelations and intercommunications of all the races of the world. That assemblage will be composed of the wisest, of the most far sighted and the most perfect and sagacious statesmen and great leaders of the world. It will become an asylum and court of last appeal for all the children of men. It will be the objective center towards which the eyes of all the people of the world will be turned. In other words it will be the brain, not only the physical brain but the international and spiritual brain of the world of humanity which will exist for the betterment of the world of man. The representatives of all the nations whether great powers or small powers will gather together in that great assemblage to discuss ways and means for bringing together the international solutions of all problems and

they will constitute in fact the brain of the wisest men of all the countries. Laws will be legislated in the international tribunal which will vouchsafe the happiness and prosperity of the world of man, and those laws which have done their work will be repealed by that tribunal. Those laws and those principles which will create better understanding between the people will be issued forth from that parliament of man, just as the clear and limpid water issues forth from the spring. The brightest intellects and the most luminous thoughts which will upraise and create a world of good for humanity will be emanated from that parliament, just as the electric energy runs through the various wires to light the house, thus laws will be spread all over the world exactly like that electric energy.

The world of humanity is like the individual body of man, and the individual body of man at the same time is composed of many members, organs, and every limb and organ has a function, and these functions work together orderly for the life of man. A man desires to accomplish certain things. He first of all will begin to organize in a way a parliament, a legislative parliament in his own mind and the functions of the brain begin to consult about the work that the man wants to do. In this consultative assembly in the brain the members sit together and begin to talk whether this work should be done or not, and this discussion takes place in the cerebrum, the seat of thought, and these ideals begin gathering together their forces in the cerebrum and cerebellum, and they begin to discuss and talk of ways and means and to see if it is advisable to carry it out or not. These evil or good powers, such as the power of love, of hate, the power of absolutism, of co-operation, the power of light, of ignorance, gather their forces in the brain and they begin to debate, and in the long run one of these two elements will gain the victory over the other. The president of that consultative assembly in the brain is the faculty of reason. This imaginative faculty whenever it is assisted by the power of the Holy Spirit, the result of consultation will be wonderful and conducive to a great deal of good. The final opinion will be in accord with happiness and prosperity and welfare of the man himself. No sooner the president of this consultative assembly puts his seal of approval to this action than all the other agencies of the organization in the body start to put it into action, these agencies being the executive department of that legislative assembly in the brain.

Now to carry this simile a little further and apply it to the social organization. It has likewise a consultative assembly in the brain of all the individual members of the system, and that will be the international court of arbitration which will be composed of the brightest and the most sagacious members of social politics. That international parliament of man will be similar unto the brain and the mind. Just as the mind is the ruler in this temple of man, that larger mind will be a ruler in the temple of humanity. And you must then know that when these great minds come together, and they

think in no other way than the welfare of humanity, the laws and statutes issued from that great universal brain will be obeyed by all the members of the system without hesitation. These representative members of the parliament of man having negated themselves entirely, they will be under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit and all that they will consider and all their deliberations and laws will be inspired by that great power, for they will think of nothing else but to upraise and spiritualize humanity. That is why His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh, in many of His writings says that when the parliament of man is established and all these spiritual and wise representatives have come together they will be under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit and all their laws are in accord with the happiness of humankind.

Unquestionably there are certain conditions for the members of the parliament of man. The first condition for the acceptance of the members is that these members must be entirely free from religious prejudices. Second: they must be entirely free from national bias and patriotic prejudices. Second: they must be entirely free from national bias and patriotic prejudices. In fact they must be free and void of all kinds of prejudices. They must extricate themselves from all the passions and desires of the material world which brings man into the snares of struggle for existence. They must be turned at all times toward the immortal kingdom of the world of truth. For if they are not free from all these prejudices and if they are not turning their attention at all times toward the kingdom of God, and if they are not wholly devoted to the well being of humanity then they will not be able to reflect the truth and legislate those laws for all the children of men. On the other hand there is this point that this material civilization and its laws have day by day advanced in the world and eliminated wholly the unexplored parts of the world. The more civilization becomes complicated the greater will be the number of human wants and the greater will be the contiguity of the different parts of the world and the neighborliness of the world of mankind. Even today the world has reached to such a stage that the five continents of the world are like five neighbors. The only thing that has kept these national rivalries and strife is the idea of conquest. Consequently the establishment of the parliament of man is an indisputable fact before the wise men of the day and all the statesmen recognize the necessity of such a national assembly in order to equalize the rights and establish justice amongst mankind. We feel assured that one of the great nations of the earth which is in fact civilized and illumined will put for a step and call all the nations to the necessity of the formation of such a parliament of man. This great nation will invite the kings and presidents and rulers of all the other countries and they will come together and discuss dispassionately their economic and other problems and that nation will win forever that great name for all posterity. His Holiness, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in His utterances and speeches has referred to America as the nation that will carry away this palm of victory. I will

read to you some of the utterances of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh written about fifty years ago concerning the establishment of the parliament of man. (From Tablet to the Son of the Wolf) "We have mentioned the high word. If the world of the spirit could be changed entirely to the power of hearing then it can be said that it will become worthy to listen to this great utterance. These ears which are soiled with contradictory stories are not worthy to listen to this high word. Blessed are those who listen and woe unto those who are unaware. We beg from God, the Most Glorious, and hope that the dawning places of utterances and power, and the horizons of glory and dominion, that is the kings of the earth, may God assist them, may God confirm them in the establishment of universal peace which is the greatest means for the composure and happiness of the world. The kings of the earth, may God assist them, must arise and must hold fast to this Cause, that is universal peace, which will be the greatest means for the happiness and protection of the world. It is hoped that they may arise to do that which will be conducive to the happiness of the people. They must organize a great assembly where the kings or their ministers or counsellors present themselves and issue forth the command of conciliation and confederation and they must turn their thoughts from armament to disarmament, and if in the future one of the kings from amongst the kings may arise in rebellion all the kings and all the rulers must arise in rebellion all the kings and all the rulers must arise to quell that rebellion. Under such a condition there would be no need of large armies and armaments and the means of warfare, except that there should be enough for the protection of the internal affairs of the state. Should they attain to this great good the inhabitants of the countries will be living in the cradle of peace and happiness, and will be engaged in their own affairs and the lamentations and moaning of the majority of mankind will come to an end. It is more praiseworthy and it is much better if in that great assembly the kings and rulers themselves may be present. In the estimation of God that king which will arise from amongst the kings and rulers to issue forth this command, he will be the envy of all of them."

Of course after the announcement of this great command of Bahá'u'lláh we have had a number of imitations of this great command. We had two gatherings of the Hague, and another conference was the conference of (Assiz) after the armistice. However, all these have done their best and they have only been introductions to the great assembly that Bahá'u'lláh speaks about. We hope that this great assembly of kings and rulers will come together very soon.

(CONTINUATION OF THE TRANSLATION OF ABOVE TABLET THE DAY FOLLOWING.  
MIRZA MANUCHER TRANS.)

“If a country wishes to increase its armies it is not necessary to increase the army at all. One hundred thousand will be sufficient for the protection and security of the country. We hope that they would add to the organization of justice. Justice is a powerful host. He is the first one who is victorious and conquers the hearts of the people and manifests the mysteries of existence and uplifts the banner of love and generosity. There is a science explained in the treasuries of God that if we practice that knowledge of God our cowardliness will be removed. We must live up to it from very childhood. It will vanquish our fear and it will add to our bravery. When God wills a long Tablet will be revealed regarding this matter, and will reveal such sciences and arts that are conducive to the prosperity of mankind. Also some utterances have been revealed in the Red Tablet from the exalted pen and that utterance will manifest latent power in mankind, it will render aid to man’s power. We beg God that He will assist His people in what He desires.

Oh ye denizens of the earth. Our aim is to remove all that which has been conducive to the discord of mankind, that all the people may be separated from those controversies and engage themselves in their own development and progress. Our longing is this, that the friends should not smear their laps with different superstitions, and should not trespass from the straight path of purity. Today is a day when all the wise people of the world should ask the opinion of this Oppressed one, and ask God for that which is the cause of direction and prosperity of mankind. But contrary to my expectations the people are trying to eradicate this illumination. Everyone is trying and engaged in bringing a new objection and condemn me. One of the Bahá’ís has narrated that one of the chiefs of Constantinople mentioned to him that every year the sum of fifty thousand Tumans is sent from Persia to Akká, nobody knows who is the auditor of this money and who is the bookkeeper. The will of God is, that through the power of God all the wars shall be eradicated, and in all countries we should appeal to patience and leave their objections, slanders and libels of God”.

The Red Tablet from the knowledge of Bahá’u’lláh has not appeared in the world of existence. All the Cause is described as red—the red ark—the red earth—etc. etc. Because this Cause has been irrigated with the blood of the martyrs. Also there are many other meanings beside this.

## “Speech before the Canadian Club”

Wednesday, 13 October 1920—Location  
Unrecorded

I am highly honored and feel the greatest privilege to stand in the presence of the members of the Canadian Club and the honorable chairman to convey to you the message of love and peace from Persia. Although it is nearly seventeen months since I left my Native land, conditions have not changed much. In order to understand the present situation in Persia , it is better to bring before our vision the great changes which have been brought in that country during the last few years. Praise be to God that you are well informed in regard to these matters. The national religion of Persia is Mohammedan although certain minorities such as Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians are found the majority of the people are followers of the Arabian prophet.

The religious prejudices and fanaticisms as practiced by the Mohammedans against the Christians you are well aware of. Not only a this prejudice<sup>19</sup> is directed against the Christians but all other religions because the Mohammedans look upon themselves as the chosen race. In the east because there are no strong legal laws prevent people from extreme religious fanaticism people actions are turned into savage attacks. Repeatedly they fight one another . Kill and carry into captivity the women and children. No law has been powerful enough to prevent the perpetration of these practices. The people were submerged in the sea of superstitions and dogmatism.

The ancient Persia was the cradle of civilization and refinement It is written in authoritative history that in the middle ages as astronomy medicine, and algebra were introduced into Europe from Persia through the civilization established by the Arabs in Spain.

However, in the last two or three centuries many causes <sup>20</sup> to bring the decadence and degeneration of the Persian people. Religious prejudices were so strong the Persian people were not

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<sup>19</sup> This confusing sentence appears like this in the original.

<sup>20</sup> As in original.

ready to accept the modern ideas of civilization because the promotion of these scientific principles would destroy the root of their tree of prejudices. For example the old astrological ideas were based on the Ptolemaic system ; the heavens were divided into seven cycles each cycle being fashioned of gold, silver up to the diamond. The introduction of Copernican system would have blown up those antiquated ideas. The earth was likewise divided into seven stratas and according to their teaching in each strata a peculiar race lived. Now geology would have destroyed these superstitions. Such beliefs were part of their religious ideals and it was most difficult to change them.

A hundred years ago there was hardly any modern educational system in Persia, the women were looked upon as inferior beings having no special privileges of culture and development. Polygamy and divorce were rife. These conditions were like black clouds that befogged the horizon of the minds.

Under these disheartening conditions Bahá'u'lláh appeared from the horizon of Persia like unto a glorious sun and flooded the regions of that land with the rays of new teachings. This was about seventy years ago. Through the influence of his new teaching the realm of thought underwent a great change. He wrote many books and treatises inculcating the universal principles of spiritual civilization. He called on the Persian people to display great effort in education for this is the most important problem of life. He advocated the standardization of a universal system of education for all humanity so that the children of the world may receive equal share of knowledge and sciences, no matter where they live.

Immediately after the spread of these ideals new schools for the education of the girls were founded for he said the education of the girls is by far more important than the boys. For the boys would get some kind of education in the school of hard knocks but the girl becomes the potential mother of the race and consequently her education must be of paramount importance. Bahá'u'lláh abrogated polygamy and repealed the law of divorce. He cemented the hearts of contradictory religions and made them united. He made the Mohammedans , Zoroastrians and the Jews to understand and believe in the divinity of Christ. Today of all these various religions accept His Teachings and become real Christians. Should one of you go to Persia today, you will see gatherings composed of the Jews, Mohammedans, Christians and Zoroastrians cemented together and more loving to each other than brothers.

The Persian Government being autocratic and the Mohammedan clergy oligarchic more than twenty thousand of Bahá'ís were martyred and their leaders banished. Even the Turkish and Imperial Governments of Persia united together to exterminate his cause. Of course they did not like Bahá'u'lláh because the promotion of His teachings would not have allowed them to practice polygamy and

set aside their wives whenever they pleased. These things caused them to arise against Him.

Bahá'u'lláh taught the Bahá'ís to become devoid of all prejudices, serve the world of humanity and render every effort to promulgate the cause of universal peace.

During the great world war the Persian Government fell into great difficulties. Persia is situated between the countries of Russia, England and Turkey. Because the large number of government officials were Bahá'ís and because Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá had praised the justice of the British Empire the Persian people did not like to go on the side of the Central Powers. Many years ago Bahá'u'lláh wrote an epistle to Queen Victoria in which He praised very highly the constitutional monarchy of that country, because sovereignty is combined with democracy. That is one of the reasons why from the beginning the Persian people were friendly to the British Empire because they hope through her a greater measure of justice, progress and enlightenment would be vouchsafed to her. But the mass of the people because they were ignorant were swayed by demagogues who were sympathetic to the Central Powers. They desired to go over to Turkey and Germany because the Emperor had announced himself as the protector of the Mohammedans throughout the world. Although they held great mass meetings to arouse the suspicions of the mob the Bahá'ís kept away from all alliances with the Central Powers. Although Persia removed theoretically neutral yet her land became the contending ground of the various armies. The Turks and the Russians in turn invaded the country with large hordes, pillaged property, large towns and villages were destroyed and the inhabitants put to sword. Pestilence and famine came afterwards and swept many parts of Persia from every vestige of life. But after a while through different channels 'Abdu'l-Bahá was able to write to the authorities in Persia to keep with the allies.

Through the enumeration of the statistics he proved that Egypt before the English occupation was sunk in poverty, misery and ignorance, but since the British Dominion that country has become very prosperous and will have continued prestige under the British Empire. For this reason when I left my native land negotiations were under way to make a new treaty with Britain which would bring the two countries nearer to each other and establish, peace, tranquility and composure in that land.

Bahá'u'lláh predicted the events of this great world war nearly sixty years ago. The book containing these predictions was published forty years ago in Bombay, India and is in the possession of many people. He clearly writes that the end of this war will bring the downfall of Germany and the dismemberment of Turkey. When the war broke I was living in Persia. Some of the people who were sympathetic with Turkey took this book and carried it to the Turkish and German ministers, showing them that Bahá'u'lláh has

prophesized their downfall. Their aim was to excite these two governments against the Bahá'ís. The Bahá'ís and Mohammedans during the war made great wagers in regard to the fulfillment of these prophecies. The Mohammedans went so far as to say if these prophecies came to pass they would become Bahá'ís. This movement desires to establish justice among the people of Persia; to remove all signs of misunderstanding to bring an end all wars and rumors of wars, for wars are not in accord with the good pleasure of the Lord. All humanity are the children of God. We are one flock and the real shepherd is the Creator. These differences owe their origins to misunderstandings. If you could polish the mirror of the heart from the rust of misunderstandings, the sun of good fellowship would arise shine upon the surfaces of those hearts. Bahá'u'lláh renewed the spirituality of religion. He desired that our faith may become in accord with science and reason and demonstrated the unity of all truth. Praise be to God that we are in the century of light, in the age of discoveries. All the books of various religions have been translated into different languages of the earth. Truly I say, the world has become one home, the children of mankind are one family. Unity is the watchword of all the people, the lights of truth are being permeated to all parts. We from the Orient are looking toward the day when the Kingdom of God will be established upon the earth, the consciousness of man become universalized and ideals of unity, harmony and concord take their abode in the hearts of the people.

## “A New Vision of Immortality”

Sunday, 7 November 1920—York Theatre,  
812 Yonge St., New York, New York,

*This meeting was the occasion of a visit from The Honorable Jináb-i-Fádil Mazindarání with his interpreters, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Mirza Manouoche Khan. Jináb-i-Fádil was, for some time, Professor of Philosophy in the University of the Shah, Teheran. The meeting opened with Dr. A.D. Watson as Chairman, introducing the guests from Persia and calling on Mr. Albert Vail of Chicago. Unfortunately, owing to its fact that Mr. Vail is an exceptionally rapid and fluent speaker, there was no one on hand who could accurately report his address, which should have been preserved.*

I am highly pleased and honored to be in this gathering, from the faces who pour the lights of Love, Unity, and Sympathy for all the nations of the World.

I have traveled for thousands of miles, over Seas and Lands, so that I might arrive in this free and democratic country and to be able to give to you a message of Divine Unity and spiritual brotherhood so that the Eastern and Western Nations may shake the hand of Love and Unity and innovate the era of universal spirituality and conciliation.

The immortality and the reality of the Spirit is so manifest and evident that the perceiving mind and soul does not ask any proof. For the reality and the consciousness of man is not his corporeal flesh, his body, but is that Divine spark, that Divine spirit which glows and manifests within him. So far as the material body is concerned, so far as the composition of this body which is the result of the aggregate of millions of atoms and cells, so far as that is concerned, there is no difference whatsoever between man and the animal and in these human and material faculties, man and the animal share alike. All the signs of human productiveness, all the inventions and discoveries which man has been enabled to achieve, all these great accomplishments and endeavors that man has been

inspired to render for the facilitation of life on this globe, are the result of the spirit.

If man cogitates and ponders over his life, as it is said by the ancient Philosophers “Think thyself of thyself”, then he will realize that there is a higher reality, a deeper essence in him than the body. When you are in a state of contemplation, you will see and behold in yourselves a reality to which you contribute not only all your physical limbs and organs, but also all your intellectual faculties. You say, “This is my hand” “This is my eye”, “This is my head”, “This is my intellectual power”. Now, what is this “I”; this “Me”, within you that accepts all; to which you attribute these things? It is nothing but that invisible spirit that inhabits the body and under the control of which are these organs and faculties. Again, when you desire to consult about something for the decision of which you are not quite sure, you go within yourself and begin to argue with that invisible consciousness which is there. “May I do this?” “May I do that?” “Is this right?” “Is this wrong?” And invariably you get a deep judgment, a right decision from that power which is enveloped within you and again, that power, that reasoning or spiritual faculty within you which says “*Cognito ergo sum*” (Reporter?) that is the spirit. This reality which is within man, this spiritual power which is within you, is the power which abides within. The body is like unto the garment and the spirit is like the one which the garment clothes. The body is like unto the shell and the spirit is like unto the kernel.

The body, being composed of material, cellular elements, is subject to decomposition and disintegration, but the spirit, being imponderable, Divine, a simple essence, is not subject to division or annihilation. In as much as the spirit is a drop from the ocean of the Great Spirit and inasmuch as, again, the spirit is a spark or ray from the most Divine Sun of Reality. As long as the Essence of Divinity, while the spirit is a part of it, is immortal and everlasting, this human spirit is likewise immortal and everlasting.

Again, this spiritual body is subject to growth and development and from the time of childhood, it reaches to the age of adolescence and maturity and, later on, it declines, through the period of old age and decrepitude and senility, but the spirit which lives within and dominates through this body, has the same eternal face. When the body grows weak, the spirit is still strong, nay, rather, we always go to the older people to gain some knowledge and experience, for, although their bodies are weak, their spirits are young and eternal. Another proof of immortality, of a new vision of immortality is those experiences, those dreams and visions that you see while you are in a state of sleep. When you are in that state, all the members of your body are inactive but still there is something within you that projects itself into the infinitude of space; it finds new experiences and realizes new phases of life—and then, after six months, the experiences the spirit has known in dreams are realized in life.

Likewise, sometimes, you are puzzled over the solution of a problem; with your intellectual brain you strive to your utmost to solve that problem and you cannot do it; but you go within yourself and, as though out of the infinite space the lightning flows and it illumines your mind and that problem is easily solved; all the darkness is turned into light. Now that flash of lightning, which comes to illumine the space and arena of your mind, comes from that world of space which is invisible and immortal.

When we read the sacred books of the religions of the world, again we are impressed with the unanimous opinion of all the Prophets, that the spirit is a reality; that they went through dire persecution and sufferings in order to demonstrate to mankind that this spiritual reality is Divine and Eternal and urgent. Likewise, we read in these spiritual books of the visions and revelations that the Prophets of God had in the past. In the New Testament we read of the vision that Peter had on the Mount of Transfiguration, in regard to the speaking of Moses and Elias with Christ. In turning to the spiritual history of the Old Testament, it is said that Elias ascended to Heaven in a chariot of fire but Moses died a natural death; therefore the vision Peter had of these two great prophets, speaking with Christ, was a spiritual vision of these two great prophets manifesting themselves to Christ.

Why should we prove here the immortality of the spirit? We have but to prove the immortality of matter; the indestructibility of the atom; the conservation of energy, which is manifest and evident to all physicists and scientists. These atoms, subject to change and transformation, are composed of cells which are never destroyed. Now, if these material atoms are indestructible, how much more is the spirit of man indestructible? The original atoms of this life are always in a process, in a journey and moving through the circles of existence. For example, the atoms of the mineral kingdom disintegrate and go into the makeup of the vegetable kingdom, the plants. The animal eats these vegetable atoms and they go into the makeup of his life. His life becomes a larger circle, a greater display of those instincts and faculties, and when man eats the animal, these very atoms of the animal kingdom, merge into the man's capabilities of Divine attainment. How much more the spirit essence, from this life, the essential atoms, will go into the future life, helping the spiritual life of the world and advancing civilization marvelously.

The aforesaid analogy will demonstrate to you that we are evolving through smaller circles into larger and larger circles, constantly gaining virtues and perfections and characterizing ourselves with greater potentialities of progress and development.

A Persian Mystic of the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> centuries, illustrates this point in the following verse, He says: "I died from the Mineral and became a Plant; I died in the Plant and became an Animal; I died from the animal and became a man; wherefore then should I fear from dying?"

When did I grow less by dying. Next time I shall die from the man and shall grow the wings of the angels; from the Angels, also I shall seek advancement." Hence, from the philosophical standpoint, look over the Universe and realize that the electrons and atoms of life are never destroyed by constantly evolving through the planes of perfection until they reach the very presence of the Creator. If a person had the privilege or the possibility of sleeping for two thousand years and then suddenly woke up today in the midst of this interlocking civilization, he would have realized that the world has so far advanced that the very atoms of existence have evolved through the various stages of progress, that all these inventions and discoveries have changed the material shape of this globe, that the prophecy "we shall have a new Heaven and a new earth" is actually and materially fulfilled.

The railroads and the telephones through which we talk with our friends across the continents and the worlds, have actually united the five continents of the earth. Those scientific laws and discoveries were invisible and unknown in the past. We might say that they were in a state of childhood and they were slowly growing in the womb of the Universe, and today, they have been born into the arena of existence. They have stepped out of the world of invisibility into the world of visibility and they have reached the state, we might almost say, of maturity. Hence, when we look upon this cosmos, when we see the great revelations and changes which have transformed the material and intellectual life of man, we come to the realization that there must come, in this Age, a great spiritual power; a great Divine Teacher, who will spiritually unite the scattered fragments of religions, nations, tribes and languages. All the Seers and Mystics and Prophets of the past, have foretold and predicted in their books that, after the consummation of the ages, when material civilization shall attain to a very high pitch of perfection, there shall be attained, simultaneously, a spiritual civilization; with the combined forces of the two there will come a new and Divine life on the face of the earth.

Seventy years ago, this great ocean of Love was set in motion. The wonderful Sun of universal fellowship arose from the horizon of the East. The Garden of Love flung wide its doors to all the nations so that they might enter therein and gather the bouquets and flowers of wisdom and knowledge. The Bahá'í Movement is not a new religion which is come into the world. It is a new vision of the same Truth which has ever been invaluable and unchangeable in all the past cycles. It is a new robe for the body of humanity so that it has appeared in the utmost beauty and delicacy for man. It is a garment fit for the stature of this age; a light necessary for the illumination of the consciousness of mankind; a truth wide enough and universal enough to include all the religions of the earth; that reality for the establishment of which all the prophets worked and

suffered imprisonment and martyrdom, I say, that Reality has come to be universalized in this Age.

Apart from these moral, ethical and spiritual precepts and principles which were identical and alike in past generations, Bahá'u'lláh has brought a set of principles and teachings which are necessary for the saving of our modern civilization. They are the dynamic and humanizing forces of this age. The spirit of this Age cries aloud as though forced with the pangs and agonies of despair, for the unity of religions. This age desires the unification of all faith, of all creeds, of all sects. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh, 70 years ago, in Persia, pitched a Tabernacle of Unity and Peace spreading wide in all parts of the earth so that under the wings of it the Mohammedans, the Jews, the Christians, the Zoroastrians, the Buddhists, the Confucians, the Brahmins may enter and be the spirit of Love, and demonstrate to each other the utmost fellowship and kindness. There were many misunderstandings amongst these religions but, through the influence of Bahá'u'lláh, these misunderstandings are removed so that today, all of them have become one flock, one Divine Shepherd ruling over them all. Bahá'u'lláh, likewise, in the Orient, has instituted the oneness of the world of humanity. Addressing mankind he says- "Ye are all the leaves of one tree; the fruits of one branch; the drops of one ocean; the leaves of one book; the stars of one heaven; the rooms of one assemblage." Similarly, he teaches us that this globe, although vast in our estimation, is smaller than the wings of a mosquito in the estimation of the Creator. Do not divide this little home of ours. These limitations and frontiers are man-made and not God-made. These peoples are one family—let it be in peace and unity.

Other principles which are the very spirit of this age; the establishment of the Parliament of Man, the High Court of International Justice, the full display of the equality of men and woman in all parts of the world, the universal peace, the oneness of the world of humanity. These principles are, indeed, the very spirit of this age and, for the last 70 years they have been promulgated throughout the Orient and the Occident with a force which is Divine in origin and spiritual in depth and height. This century is the Century of Union. This age is the Age of Love. This epoch is the Epoch of Reconciliation. This time is the time of spirituality. It is the age in which the Kingdom of God must be established upon the earth and in the hearts of God's children. Praise be to God that in this country the minds are enlightened; the spirits are refreshed by the breath of the Holy Spirit and all the people have gained a new receptivity for the wonders of the Kingdom of God to be revealed to mankind before long.

I have been traveling for many years, throughout the East and West, until I arrived in Toronto, and here it was my greatest privilege and joy to meet Dr. Watson and Mr. Benjamin who are rare souls in the Kingdom of God, whose minds and hearts are like unto clear

mirrors, reflecting the rays of the Sun of Reality. The effulgences and the splendors of the Kingdom of the Spirits of the Higher Planes of consciousness are being constantly reflected upon the mirrors of their hearts and they are in constant communication with that Source of Spirit which is immortal and everlasting. Their teaching and ideals, which come directly from the Planes of the Spirit, are in accord with the spirit and with the requirements of this age.

Tomorrow, I shall leave this city but I am very happy to state that you have, in your midst, two such splendid, Divine, spiritual beings, who are capable of being acted upon by that Divine Plane of Life which is the source of all joy, of all Happiness and from whom you are receiving Guidance, Illumination and Truth. They are the channels through which you can inform yourselves, fully, regarding those principles, mystic and practical for the requirements of this age, for the development of human spirits and for the unfoldment of those inmates esoteric powers and temperaments which are within us but which must be developed in order that the life may be full and magnificently beautiful.

#### CLOSING REMARKS BY MR. LOUIS BENJAMIN

Brothers and Sisters, you have heard today an intimation that God's Plan, at last has come to the momentous point where we are in a position to announce to you that the World Savior, for whom all the suffering of time, down through the centuries was employed, for whom those noble and brilliant youths died on the battlefields of the last terrible war, for whom sons have prayed and mothers have wept, for whom all the age has prayed that He might come, has come.

My Brother and my Sister, the great question of your age is this; the World Savior, when he comes, who will He be and what will be His method of uniting together all the nations of the earth, all the religions of the earth and bringing about, on terra firma, the spirit of brotherhood, amid concord, harmony and love. My brothers and my sisters, the World Savior is living upon your Earth. He dwells now in 'Akká, in Palestine. He is a Persian: his name is 'Abdu'l-Bahá. His teaching, His philosophy, because He is the World Savior, is the sufficient nigh unto the day and the problem of uniting together in concord and harmony that which statesmanship could never achieve, because, great as is the League of Nations, or an association of nations, political parties in themselves and of themselves, cannot knit together, into a woven tapestry of glorious beauty, the elements of the world in which you live so that one can say, "Verily the kingdom of God has come upon earth." A spiritual principle, expressed through a philosophic teaching so deep, so [all-encompassing OR comprehensive] that the philosophers and the professors, these in the academic field, the layman, the laboring

man, each man and woman in every path of life, can realize and find focused at this point that which will bring peace upon earth. That is the purpose, that is the teaching of the birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the great Persian teacher and mystic whose lovely influence will bring about peace and concord.

And now I know that I am speaking to pragmatic minds; minds that necessarily, for the time being are intellectual, and you will ask me for concrete proof of the greatness of this man whom we, the communicating intelligences of the 20<sup>th</sup> century plane, Bahá'u'lláh, tells you, "He is a great Savior living in a physical body but functioning in a spiritual universe."

You love the British Government and that is good. You love the British Empire and how so, on the 1000th Plane, adore the British Institutions, for in England there resides the mother of Parliaments; in the British Empire we recognize a true democracy, as compared with the democracies of the past of Rome and Greece, the republics of the present, and this Government, with its sublime intuition, has knighted 'Abdu'l-Bahá because of his noble work in the cause of peace on earth, and today, when one goes from the British Empire, when one goes from the United States or any part of Europe to 'Akká and meets 'Abdu'l-Bahá, call Him Sir Abdul, knighted by that Government which protects you and which you love.

But let us go deeper into a consideration of the great question: "Is this verily the World Savior?" and "Will he save our civilization and for the first time in the history of the knowledge of man, give us that which is truly a civilizing influence and pour his divine thought on our civilization?" The question you ask is this. "Is he Jesus? Is he a Christ? Is his teaching the teaching of Christianity?" My Brother and My Sister, he is neither of these. He is an instrument. That is all he claims for himself. The World Teacher is an instrument. In a deep, esoteric sense, it seems to me, if you study the Scriptures deeply and in an intellectual way, that that is what Jesus claimed for himself, Moses claimed for himself, Muhammad, Confucius claimed for themselves. They were instruments through which the Divine carried out His Divine promises for the uplift of humanity

So, in 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the World Savior, you find one in whom the great Christ principle will be expressed. You find one who is a representative of the Seers and Prophets and Mystics of all the ages because, is it not true, humanity today must not depend upon political conditions, power and the scepter as sufficient to bring peace and concord upon earth. No. The great things of your history have all been accomplished through the personality of some great, inspired prophet. So, through the personality of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the spirit of Jesus, the spirit of all the Prophets and Mystics is being poured and he is "*en rapport*" with the spiritual spirit of the age in which you live. He is not Jesus the man, because Jesus, the man is the influence of the age in which you live; as it were, the atmosphere you breathe. We can truly say that 'Abdu'l-Bahá is a

Divine representative of all the Prophets and Seers of all the ages that man, thus far, has known.

Now then, what of his teaching? What of his Philosophy? How will that unite and knit together the nations into a magnificent tapestry of sublime beauty? In this way. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says, "I come to teach the people of the earth plane, through a new vision, not this time of immortality, but through a new profession, not really a new, but an enlarged and visioned interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments. Study all the religions of all time. Their basis, their foundation is all included in the Ten Commandments and in the Sermon on the Mount." And what are these simple, beautiful principles, the philosophy of 'Abdu'l-Bahá which is coming to America and which will prove to be a common field of endeavor upon which all the religions and all the nations of the earth can unite for the forwarding of the Kingdom of God. These are a few of the principles.

"Love one another," says 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Be gentle, be calm, be composed. Never argue with a brother nor engage in controversy with him. Act your life, forever and ever, sometimes as a student, oft-times as a teacher, expressing that inspiration which comes to you, which in this peculiar spiritual and psychological way is manifested; namely when you meet a brother, a great current of divine magnetism is set up that forms divine contact with the reservoir of divine knowledge and when that touches the heart of a brother, you are inspired—you are a teacher—he is a student he is a teacher and vice-versa, forever, this great, divine principle goes on."

My brothers and my sisters, you are all missionaries in the great Cause of uniting all the nations, but my announcement to you today is: Study deeply the spirit of the age in which you live. Realize that 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in Persia, has been ordained by God to come and unite the Oriental and Occidental worlds, upon the basis, not of religion, not of philosophy, but his interpretation of all the religions of the past in a new and enlarged field of vision.

Brothers and sisters, God is with us in this hour. Let us realize that when Moses came to His Age He believed that He could save all the world in which He lived. The people would not hear. Confucius thought He could save His civilization but did not succeed. Buddha thought He could unite all the religions of the world together but He, likewise, failed. Are we forever going to fail in spite of the genius, the God-like nature of a Jesus, the Divine grandeur of a Moses? Is the age forever going to fail? No. God has called a halt. Those phases of evolution were necessary. But, in this hour, we have the philosophy, we have the Teacher, we have the World Savior. No longer will all the great Seers and Prophets of the past find that they cannot succeed in uniting all the nations, all the peoples in a harmonious concord so that God may be known on earth as he is in Heaven. So realize the memorable quality, the spiritual nature of the message you have heard today. In as much as you become a

disciple, a spiritual warrior, living the strenuous life of a Divine religion inasmuch as you are active, rather than latent—employing all your faculties, all the Divine qualities of your soul, shedding divine light in every direction. To that extent will you be a soldier of the Cross, a follower of all the Saviors and Prophets- one who can interpret to those whom he has influenced, the great spirit of the age, which tells you, beyond the most fragmentary shadow of a doubt, that the World Savior is here. He is 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Not a philosophy, not a religion, but an interpretation of the teaching of all time, is sufficient unto the day to make it possible for all that is good in every religion to at last meet in a great parliament of man so that one can say now, "A little child is in a changed world and God, at last, can love everything in this world in which I dwell." Amen.

Director—Dr. A.D.Watson, 10 Euclid Avenue.

Instrument—Mr. Louis Benjamin, 322 Clinton St.

Treasurer—Miss E.M.Brook, 26 Hampton Ave.

Secretary—Mr. B.S.Jackes, 8 Oaklands Avenue.

Reports of previous meetings available on application to the Secretary.

# 24

## “Address to the Young Hebrew: Progress of the Jews in Persia”

Monday, 15 November 1920, Unspecified  
Location

I am very highly pleased and most grateful for the speech of your honorable President and the workers and organizers of this movement, and again I am very happy to find myself amidst the members of a society who are composed of the children of Israel. It is a peculiar pleasure for me to present to you tonight the news of the progress and achievement of our brothers in the Orient.

The beginning of the progressive movement amongst the Jews in Persia dates to seventy years ago. Before that date the political and social environment of Persia was of such a nature that the Jews had no opportunity or privilege to advance and develop along cultural and educational lines. For this reason it might interest you if I dwell for a few minutes on the conditions previous to the progress of the Jews in that country. It is a well known fact that the Jewish people are the most celebrated and the most spiritual nation on the face of the globe—a nation who from the beginning of their history have been striving and advancing along the road of divine knowledge and spiritual ethics. The first man who instituted the knowledge of the oneness of God was the father of all prophets—was Abraham. Divine men, seers, sages and prophets who issued from his loins have continued to illumine his house, and to lay the foundation of his knowledge deeper and deeper in the consciousness of humanity. For this reason this respected community is referred to in the Old Testament as the “first-born”. One of the oldest and most trustworthy religious books which is read today by more people on the face of the earth than any other is the Bible. Apart from its treasury of divine knowledge and spiritual wisdom, that book has served civilization and mankind to a marked degree. A part of the most important history in Persia is recorded in the bible in the book

of Ezra in connection with Cyrus and the return of the Jews from their captivity to the promised land. After the captivity of the Jewish people and the destruction of the temple, Nebuchadnezzar carried not only thousands of the Jews but a number of the most illumined prophets, such as Daniel and others to Babylon. When the Jews were in captivity for a number of years, Cyrus the Great came and conquered that city, gave the Jews permission to return and build the Temple. He gave them money and authority, and all the vases of the temple, which were stolen by the Babylonian king. This is the duty of every just and subject-loving king. For 200 years Palestine continued to thrive and prosper under the rule of the Persian king and the prophets prophesied with the utmost freedom, joy and happiness. Then Alexander the Great arose, the Persian sovereignty was changed, and the kingdom of Palestine fell into their hands. The prophetic words of Jeremiah and Isaiah are the greatest proofs of the vision and the penetration of the mind and the heart of these great spiritual seers. Out of this great nation a law giver arose like unto Moses. He instituted such laws and statutes that he caused the ascension of the Jewish people to the highest summit of glory, prosperity and happiness. Such wise kings and great statesmen appeared amongst the Jews like unto David and Solomon. The psalms of the first are chanted in the temples by millions of the people, while the proverbs of the latter inspire wisdom and understanding in the hearts of millions of others. The knowledge the philosophy, the wisdom of the Israelite people became so wide spread and so well known in the ancient world, that the philosophers and wise men of Greece traveled to Palestine and sat at the feet of these prophets to learn divine wisdom and spiritual understanding. It is recorded in Oriental histories that Socrates, the greatest philosopher of Greece, traveled to Palestine and learned the idea of monotheism and immortality of the soul from the Israelite prophets, returned to his home and began to teach these two cardinal principles of truth. Christ and Muḥammad were likewise born from the children of Israel, whose teachings widened the circle of monotheism and brought into the fold of the oneness of God those barbarous and savage tribes which lived in the confines of Europe and in the Sinaitic and Arabian Peninsulas. The same holy principles of justice and righteousness and truth were promulgated by these two later prophets amongst those nations who were polytheists and pagans. Later on certain creeds, traditions, ideas and notions sprang up between these three great religions, which divided them and brought about division and strife, which divisions ended in war and strife and finally created prejudice and the destruction of civilization and enlightenment. In our country, Persia, these prejudices created such opposition amongst these three religions that they could not advance along the path of amity. You are aware of the fact that the national religion of Persia is Islam or Mohammedanism. The state religion being in the majority, compelled and persecuted the minority, such as the Jews and

Christians in many instances and these persecutions brought about an ill-feeling between these various religionists which did not allow them to associate with each other with the utmost peace and amity. Aside from this, superstitions, ignorance and fanaticism were the greatest barriers before these people for their advancement. Seventy years ago the religious and spiritual atmosphere of Persia underwent a great radical change, and, as though the people were asleep, they were suddenly awakened, and started on the road of progress. The minds began to be illumined and certain mystic, divine relationships were established between the hearts of these antagonistic religionists. The clouds of prejudices vanished from the horizon of the human intellect. From that time on, the Israelite people commenced their achievement and advancement. Before that, such fanaticism existed amongst them that the Mohammedans looked upon the Jews as unclean. The Jews thought the Mohammedans were “tarif”—not “Kosher”. Thus these ill-feelings and hatred continued to wane<sup>21</sup> from amongst these two races. They would not meet each other on a rainy day because the Mohammedans thought if their clothes would touch the clothes of a Jew which were wet, they would become unclean, and they had to take off all their clothes and put them away. If a Mohammedan somehow or other entered the home of a Jew and touched the back of a jar of wine which belonged to the Jewish gentleman, that jar had to be emptied and then broken. When they set aside these foolish prejudices they began to open their eyes and advance.

Now, the Persian Jews have reached to a very high summit of culture. Firstly, from the standpoint of commerce and secondly from the standpoint of wealth, they are at the head of the list in Persia. They have founded many commercial companies in all parts of Persia that serve as the links of a great chain which connect the various scattered communities in that empire. If you travel through Persia today, of course you will not be surprised, but many people will be surprised to see that the most important “agent commercial” belongs to the Jews, that the most up-to-date pharmacists are Jews. For example, the homes of the Jews before 70 years ago, were exactly like any other Oriental home. They were very low, narrow and dingy. But now, when the people of a city want to have a little recreation they go to the Jewish quarter, because their buildings are all in the European fashion, their streets are clean and they have built very tall buildings, up-to-date and clean.

As regards the fine arts, such as painting, sculpture, music, the Jews have many artists in Persia. Educationally they are also advancing most wonderfully, because they have laid the foundation of the most modern school system and they have introduced the most modern curriculum of education. There are a number of cities in Persia, the majority of the inhabitants of which are Jews. Like the ancient city of Ekbatana which is known today by the name of

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<sup>21</sup> Wax is intended

Hamadán, where you find the tomb of Esther Mordecai. It is a sacred shrine, and the Jews from many parts of Persia come as pilgrims to visit it. Now, in this city of Hamadán, the Jews have several educational schools. Similarly, in other cities of Persia they have built common schools and high schools. At first they used to bring their teachers from Europe, but now they have been able to have native teachers because they have trained the young men under the old teachers to teach in these new schools. One of the most wonderful points of these Jewish schools is that their doors are open to all nationalities and religions in Persia and they have teachers, Jews, Christians and Mohammedans. Many of the graduates of these schools have entered into the official life of the Persian Government, and they have attained to very high positions. Seventy years ago it was an impossibility for a Jew, no matter how educated was he, to enter into the service of the Government on account of the religious prejudices which existed at that time. But today there are many hundreds of these educated Jews who have taken the most important services in the Government of Persia. To give you one instance, the secretary of the Post of Persia is a Jew and the postmasters of many cities are likewise Jews. We find there many Jewish doctors, oculists and surgeons. They have also built the most modern hospitals

The foregoing instances are enough to show you how the people of Israel have changed their national, cultural and political life in that country and how much they have advanced along the pathway of progress.

Now, all these changes, most miraculous in character, have been obtained as a result of the disappearance of religious prejudices in that country, and the disappearance of religious prejudice has come as a direct result of the manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh amongst the Persian people. When Bahá'u'lláh appeared, one of his first principles was to impress upon the minds of the Persians that the Jewish prophets were the most wonderful, the most illumined seers of all the religions, and he made them realize that they must respect the followers of these enlightened and inspired souls. The prejudices and fanaticism which the Mohammedan exercises automatically towards the Jew, like the twinkling of an eye changed into love and amity, concord and friendship. Seventeen months ago, when I started from Persia towards the Holy Land, as my companions of voyage, I had a number of Mohammedan and Jewish Bahá'ís. When I arrived in Haifa to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá, I found there representatives of many nations and many religions, Zoroastrians, Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists—all of them intend on one great aim, and that was how to learn the lesson of spiritual brotherhood, friendliness and the removal of the prejudices and superstitions from amongst the nations of the earth. Now, when these people arrived in the Presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the lessons that they received from him are the lesson of the oneness of the

world of humanity, the lesson of the removal of all prejudice, the lesson of fraternity and the lesson that the founders of all the religions of the world have been divine and inspired from the presence of one Lord and one Father. When I was there I met the editor of the Jewish paper of Jerusalem, who had come specially to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and gain his knowledge and his advice in regard to the Zionist movement. Having asked all his questions and received most illuminating answers, he returned to Jerusalem and published a long detailed article giving one by one the opinions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in regard to the future progress of the Jews and the future establishment of their national home. He writes in his article that "When I arrived in Haifa and met the representatives of so many contradictory and antagonistic religions associating with each other with the utmost love and harmony and friendliness, I was amazed. I thought 'I am living in a new world' and the words of the prophet Isaiah rang through my ears. These words were the following—'In that day the mountain of the Lord will be on the highest summit, and it will be raised on the tops above the other mountains. And the nations of the earth will be walking toward that mountain. And they say to each other "Let us go to the mount of Zion; let us learn the law from the Lord of Jacob and Abraham and let us walk in his path. Because he teaches his pathway and He admonishes the far off nations so that they may change their swords into pruning hooks and their spears into ploughshares, that they may learn war no more, that peace and amity may be established in the world"'. Then this editor continues to enumerate the principles of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He says one of the principles of 'Abdu'l-Bahá is the oneness of the world of humanity. The second principle is the international auxiliary language. The third principle is international peace amongst the nations of the world and the foundation of the High Court of International justice. The fourth principle is the equality of man and woman. The fifth principle is the universal education of all mankind. The sixth is universal peace to be declared amongst all the religions of the world so that all of them may enter under the divine canopy, worship one God, walk in one highway and be protected by one Shepherd. From the day in which these universal principles were declared in Persia the Jewish people were protected from the hands of other nations. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains in his writings that the return of the Jews to Palestine can be understood from the prophecy in the book of Daniel. In the twelfth chapter of Daniel he sees a vision or a dream where three persons are standing on the side of the river of Kebom, one of them clothed in white linen, and he asks from that one "How long will these tribulations and desolations continue?" There are three dates mentioned in that chapter. One is 1260 days; the second is 1290 days; the third is 1335 days. He said "Blessed are those who will live in the day 1335". 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that by day it is meant one year according to Biblical terminology. The beginning of the date of 1260 is the appearance of Islám. In the year 1260 and the

year 1290 the appearance of two great personages was fulfilled. Now through the appearance of these two great spiritual seers, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, with the fulfillment of these two dates the house of prejudice and fanaticism was destroyed and the palace of unity and brotherhood raised. And the year of 1335 for the fulfillment of which we have still a few years, will be the final consummation of the glory and progress of the Jews in Palestine and their return to that land.

To recapitulate for a few minutes our talk. All these divisions amongst the people of the earth owe their origin to prejudice. When we read the history of the world we realize that it is filled with bloodshed and with discord. Sometimes the tribes fought each other, at other times the communities waged war, and later the nations arose with huge armaments to kill and shed the blood of their brothers. This century is a century which requires the banishment of these differences, for this is the cycle of science and art. All the nations of the earth generally speaking are coming more and more under the cultural influence of science and knowledge. The minds are illumined. Consequently all of us most strive so that the canopy of international peace, love and amity may be pitched on the top of the earth. And these hearts which are filled with sorrows and grief may be filled with the rays of joy and beatitude. So that these wars which have brought destruction of the homes, the annihilation of the highest ideals and the bereavement of families may never recur. We all pray that the parliament of man may be established in the world and may become the guardian of peace and all these nations who have not accepted it may enter within the fold of the Ideal League of Nations and co-operate with each other to safeguard the future prosperity and happiness of mankind, so that great age which has been prophesied by all the prophets and messengers be revealed in our midst with the utmost glory, splendor and brilliance.

These are the aims of the Bahá'ís, for which they are striving and working in the world today.

## “The Fulfillment of the Prophecies of the Old and New Testament in this Age”

Sunday, 28 November 1920—First Spiritualist Church, St. Paul, Minnesota

It gives me great pleasure tonight to stand before an audience whose aim and purpose is to seek the truth, live the truth and impress the truth. It is an evident fact that the position to which we have attained today has been made possible through the toil and effort and the sacrifice of the thinkers, scholars, seers and prophets of the past ages. Whether intellectual or industrial achievement of spiritual or moral attainment, we are indebted to all those past workers and toilers for the welfare and progress of humanity.

The holy, divine manifestations who have appeared in the world of humanity from time immemorial, have had no other aim but to educate and train men so that they may see more clearly, they may attune their ears to the music of the spheres and that they may realize that life is infinite and material. The world of humanity is likened unto a great school. God is the founder of this school. The prophets are the teachers and professors of the school and mankind are the pupils, who come and sit at the feet of these teachers to learn those vital lessons for the development of the body, the mind, and the spirit. These divine teachers have had the same ideal aim and purpose, although they speak in different languages, lived in various countries, and addressed different races and nations, but their primal aim was to lift these souls to the higher plain of human consciousness. Just as in the material schools of this world, the teacher going through the various classes gives the different lessons to the pupils. Now these various teachers of God had the same lessons progressively giving them to the children of men. A teacher who has received his diploma goes into the Kindergarten or into the Primary grades and gives the simplest lessons to the children. He brings himself down to the level of understanding of those children. Now is this a defect of the teacher that He teaches them those simple lessons, or a perfection, an excellence of the teacher?

Therefore, these many divine teachers have appeared from time immemorial; They have been training and educating the children of men so that They may become prepared for the final consummation of a spiritual perfection. Along the line of the teaching they gave to these children, They likewise looking into the future predicted that at the consummation of the ages there shall appear a day after which there will be no darkness; a past which will not be followed by any sorrow, and a life which will win victory over death. They predicted that time will come when this little child of humanity will attain to a stage of maturity when the world of mankind will be transformed into paradise; when Heaven will be brought down upon the Earth; when the hearts will be illuminated and the eyes brightened with the light of the infinite intelligence of God. These radiant glad tidings and foreshadowings of the future, are not restricted to the Old and New Testaments, but even the Zoroastrians, the Hindus, and the books of Buddha contain these wonderful predictions of the day of wonderful peace and joy. This prediction has been given in different terminologies and wordings. One of the prophets says that in that day the "Lord of Lords and the King of Kings will be established upon the throne" and another says that the "Resurrection will be" said "the dead will come out of their tombs and all those manifestations will come to pass" and a third has said that "Heaven and Paradise will be established upon the earth." All these different terminologies meant but one thing and that was a new life will be surged throughout the world. A new Revelation will be given to Mankind. A new vision will \*\*\*\*\*text cut off at bottom of page 1\*\*\*\*\* will be conquered, and a new heaven will be opened, from which will descend outpourings of the Merciful. These prophets have likewise prophesied that in that day when these spiritual visions will be given to mankind, material civilization will advance by leaps and bounds, because both of them must bring into the conscience of man, that reality of the unity of the spirit, the unity of thought, and the unity of conscience. They predict even the small things employed in their utterances suggested that the day will come when these wonders and miracles will transpire. In one of the books of the prophets it is written that in that day, "The clouds will be running so fast throughout the earth." By this they mean no other than the steamships and the railroads, out of which will appear this concrete form of the running of the clouds. And in the books of Eastern sages, it is written in that day "The Cities will be drawn nearer to each other." Naturally this does not mean a physical drawing together. It means the railroad will come and almost annihilate space and bring the far cities near to each other. Again in the books of one of these prophets, Isaiah, it is said in that day "The threads will be established from Palestine to all parts of the earth" and "people come to Palestine through those threads and cords." This is another implication to the invention of the railroad through which men today can reach the whole land with the utmost facility and

ease. We find even certain prophecies in these Holy Books regarding the invention of the automobiles, when it is said the "Carriage will be jostling in the broad ways in the utmost rapidity." In brief, all these things mean that in that day the Earth will be renewed. Indeed, if we had the capacity or the power to have lived 2,000 years ago and continue to sleep all these centuries and suddenly awakened today in the midst of one of these great cities teeming with industrial life and modern inventions, we would have realized that indeed the earth is completely transformed. Therefore, all these prophecies of the Holy Books, and even from a material standpoint, have become fulfilled. Now, in the face of these material prophecies, there are certain spiritual and ideal prophecies which are given in the sacred books of the past. One of the prophecies of the Old Testament is that in that day God will be the God of all nations; that He will be the Jehovah of all the people of the Earth; saying that all these ways and these methods of worship in that day will be set aside, and the highway of the Lord will be so plain that even the fool will walk through it and know that it is the way of God. Other prophecies are regarding the establishment of Universal Peace, the removal of differences from amongst the nations, and the races, and the complete confederation of the people of the earth. It is clearly written that in that day God will judge amongst all the nations; that he will rebuke the nations afar off; that they will change their swords into plow shares, and that they shall hear war no more. From amongst these significant prophecies are those about the removal of all hatred, all prejudices, and all ill feeling, and narrowness from amongst the people and the realization of a broader and more universal consciousness and love for Humanity; stating that the wolf and the lamb will be very friendly to each other. The leopard and the kid will be grazing in the same meadow. The child will put his hand in the hold of the adder and the adder, or the serpent, will not bite him. There are so many similar prophecies that we do not like to go into the details, but from a physical standpoint, it is impossible for the wolf and the lamb to be on friendly terms unless the lamb will be within the belly of the wolf. Then they will be very friendly, but the only thing that can be interpreted here is that a time will come when injustices and oppressions will be removed from the face of the earth and the wolf-like people and the lamb-like soul will be friendly and reconciled so far as material and spiritual things are concerned. It is said that in that day God will gather all the nations into one flock. He will gather all the religions into one faith, meaning that there will be one universal religion, and one universal tongue. Consequently all the prophets of the past who were the educators of the races, have foretold the conditions of this spiritual civilization at the dawn...  
 \*\*\*\*\*text cut off at bottom of pg 2\*\*\*\*\* They have referred to Mount Carmel, in Palestine, or Mount of Zion from which the law will be issued forth, and these universal principals will be instituted. For this reason, during the last 70 years, a great spiritual

movement has started in Palestine, the aims and the principals of which, are to bring about these very identical conditions for which the prophets had worked and grieved and wrote in their books. This spiritual movement is no other than the Bahá'í Movement, the principals and the institutes of which are the fulfillment of the sacred books of the past. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh in the beginning had brought to us the idea of the Universality of God. That He is the Father and the Educator, of all humanity; that he is a spirit living within the bodies of the world and that His laws and His institutions are for the elevation of all men. He has explained that all the prophets of the past have come on the part of the same one God. That Their aim has been for the development of the souls and the spirits. All the prophets of God, all the sacred scriptures of the world, were divine and heavenly, and they had no other purpose but the elevation and the unfoldment of the inner possibilities deposited in the soul of man from the beginning of creation. The seven great religions of the world who denied each other's prophets and did not think that there were divine and heavenly, Bahá'u'lláh demonstrated to each one of them that these prophets were inspired; that their moral and ethical principals were identical; that we must set aside these creeds and these rituals which have brought an alienation and separation and hold to the fundamental principals which are identical and that are the reality, which we have to find. These religions in the Orient were very antagonistic. They hated one another. They engaged in warfare and bloodshed, and they did not associate with one another on the basis of friendship and fellowship. After the principals of Bahá'u'lláh and his universal explanation and interpretation, these religions realized, thousands and thousands of them, Jews and Mohammedans and Buddhists and Zoroastrians, all of them came to this final conclusions that they are at the dawn of this new day of divine brotherhood; that they must unify all their constructive forces for the betterment of the world. He, Bahá'u'lláh stated to each and all of them, religion must be a combining force, a power of love, but what have we done with it in the past? More men have been killed in the name of religion than anything else. We have used religion for a pretext of warfare and bloodshed, but any religion which separates people is not religion at all, but is a man-made idea. But in this day, religion must cement the souls and weld them together. If you have any other kind of a religion it is better to be an out-spoken atheist than to be a hypocrite. Another thing that Bahá'u'lláh did in this era of comparative study of comparative religion was to interpret the contradictory sayings of these books, the illogical, unreasonable things that we find in the Sacred books of the world, so that today all of these people realize the real meanings of their books, have come to love each other and to be able to sacrifice everything they have for the service of each other. He said religion is reality. We are living in an age of reality, in a century of science and inventions. In this age, religious ideas must correspond with reason and science.

God is reality; religion is reality; and now how can God, who is the center of reality, teach humanity superstition and creeds? Now we have to bring religion and science into harmony so that they many work together for the benefit of the world. Then he said science and religion are like unto two wings for the bird of the soul. The soul of man, the spirit of man, cannot fly with one wing. Inasmuch as the exact sciences have almost conquered the world and as a result of it, we must have a curriculum of education adaptable to all parts of the world we must have a relative scientific humanitarian so that all the religions of the earth many accept it without injury to their personal or national conscience. As long as we are going to have one Universal religion, one universal system of education, then what executive power are we going to get to put in practice these two great international factions? The League of Nations, or the Parliament of Men, which will be the guaranty of the rights of humanity. The representatives in the Parliament of Man, or the League of Nations, (not those who are today) but those who will come \*\*\*\*\*bottom of pg 3 cut off\*\*\*\*\*

1. The Fathers of Humanity
2. They must have international consciousness.
3. They must be devoid of all racial, national, patriotic, or religious prejudices, serving the world of humanity alike without any idea of gaining a larger share for their own people. They must work for the advancement of all the people of the world. Then and not until then the Parliament of Man will be the Heart of the world, or Humanity, just as the heart in man is the cause of life. That heart in the body of humanity will be the force of infinite progress and universal advancement.

Another Bahá'í principal was, or is, the perfect equality between men and women. This was a principal which the East needed very much. The women were always looked down upon as inferior, but through the prestige and influence of this new teaching, they were encouraged to come forward and were given greater privileges of education and culture.

Supposing we were to have all these things; universal religion, Parliament of Man, Universal Consciousness, Universal Education? If we don't have with them an international auxiliary language through which we may express our innermost thoughts, and ideas to each other, we have not completed our program of spiritual civilization. The differences of religion have been the cause of much misunderstanding and division amongst the people and this in itself is one of the greatest remedies that must come to the world in order that it may be able to heal the chronic diseases of mankind. And just think of the time that the children spend in the schools to study different languages. How many years are wasted, and then if you knew ten languages, or fifteen, and traveled through Europe and Asia, you would still be in need of many more languages in order to

get along. Now in the Eastern countries, they don't have only a large number of languages, but each one of those languages are divided into so many dialects, each one different from the other. People who should be friendly, not knowing each other's language, think differently about each other. Little by little they think that they are barbarians and savages simply because they speak a different language. It is said that once upon a time a Persian, a Greek and an Arab traveled together and did not know each other's language. They found a piece of coin. The Persian said I want to buy with this coin (foreign word), and Greek said, "I want to buy (Foreign word) and the Arab said, "NO I don't understand what you want to buy, I want (foreign word), and the Persian coming at the top of all of them, said "No you are wrong, I wan to buy (foreign word). They fought and quarreled, and suddenly a linguist arriving on the scne and knowing the language of all, said "Give me the coin and I will try to satisfy each one of you, and he went into the garden and bought a basket of grapes, and no sooner had they looked at the basket of grapes, but each one exclaimed with joy and happiness, that that was just what he wanted. The religions of the world, all of them, we can categorically assert that they are seeking God. No one is seeking Satan. Each exclaims at the top of his voice that he is running away from Satan. They want God and don't know the languages of each other, and consequently these misunderstandings come to pass. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh, therefore has raised the banner of Universal peace, amongst the religions of the world, amongst the nations of the world, and amongst the nativity of the world. This is the age in which material civilization has almost attained to the apex of maturity. In the same manner, spiritual civilization, which is the religion of God, must ascend to the same summit of illumination and become the cause of the inspiration of scientific men. We must consciously realize although we have been teaching in the past this idea, but this must become part of our consciousness that we are all one tree, we are one kind. We are the branches, the leaves, the blossoms, and the \*\*\*\*\*bottom of pg 4 cut off\*\*\*\*\* of one book, and the stars of one heaven. Let us come together and reason and find out what were those things that kept the Orient and the Occident apart from each other. What were those problems that brought war and rumors of war, and carnage amongst us, and find the causes, let us strike at the very root of those causes so that they may not grow again. What were those pretexts which humanity has been using in the past to make millions of women without sons, bringing havoc and destruction to the cities, razed to the ground the towns and villages, destroying the very fabric of civilization; all those pretexts which we have been using in the past must be thrown into the corner of oblivion, and take hold of those principals which were advanced to humanize the world. Religious prejudice, patriotic prejudice, national and racial prejudices destroy the very foundation of human happiness, fellowship, and they were nothing but the

figment of human imagination. They were the illusions and hallucinations which we have created ourselves and run after and constantly chasing away from us. God has created this world as one globe, one home. Men came and separate it, divided it into so many divisions, established suppositional geographical divisions, and said” this part is mine, and that part yours, and if you come this way I will fight and kill you”, and they have no right whatsoever to go this way. Again we take the racial buyers and made it as a cause of warfare and strife. The very religion that the prophet intended to be the cause of fellowship, we changed it and made it the cause of hate, the cause of war, and the cause of estranging the hearts from one another. The religion of today must be the religion of love, the religion of unity, the religion of divine fellowship. This century is the century of light. This era is the era of human brotherhood. This epoch is the epoch of spiritual illumination. This, indeed, is the time when we must set aside all of the differences and divisions and bring within our consciousness, our hearts, that Kingdom for which we have been praying for so many centuries. The Kingdom of Love, the Realm of Beauty, the Spiritual susceptibilities of God to be diffused through all parts of the earth equally and without restriction.

Notes and transcription  
By Fay Swain, Mpls. Minn.

## Address in Minnesota

Thursday, 2 December 1920—Minneapolis,  
Minnesota

Praise be to God, that we are gathered in the temple of God, where I find the people of God, and in which we are going to discuss about the religion of God; to speak about the oneness of the world of humanity, a subject which is fascinating and refreshing.

Although all the prophets and the messengers from time immemorial have come to unite the hearts of men and to teach men the oneness of the world of humanity, yet in this day, the world of humanity, yet in this day, the world is very far off from the realization of this great principle of truth. It is an absolute fact that God has created man from the same soil. He has given to all the same spiritual and intellectual faculties and He has caused them to live and have their beings on the same soil. They are walking on the same globe, breathing the same air, are lighted by the same sun, and enjoying the same atmosphere. He has created all humanity with the same emotions and sentiment. Without any exception whatsoever, He supports all, feeds and sustains all, and guards all with no consideration for race, color, or nationality.

Our ancestors, primitive ancestors, were Adam and Eve, and consequently we belong to the same family, no matter whether we live in this part of the world, or in another. In as much as we are all descended from the same father and mother, consequently we are one kind and one race. All these different so-called races are pure imaginations. God has caused the manifestations of His prophets so that They may unite the hearts and establish fellowship and affinity between the people. The sacred books speak in no other language, but the language of love and the teachings of the sages and seers contain no other idea except the idea of the oneness of the world of humanity. All the prophets have come to this world to promulgate the law of Love. Moses was the spreader of the law of Truth. Isaiah was the teacher of Truth. Christ was the speaker and the word of Truth. All the messengers had no other aim but to universalize the law of Truth and make the people worship and adore the Truth. Christ epitomized a world of meaning in those two words when He said, "God is love". Now what greater thing and what greater thing is in this world except love, and we see Love is God, therefore they are synonymous. When we have Love, we have God, and when we have God, we have Love. If you read the sacred scriptures from the beginning to the end and put aside all the historical, and all the inconsequential parts of those books, you will find the law of Love; shining like a golden thread from beginning to the end, binding the hearts and uniting the minds and spiritualizing the consciences of men and women. Let us remind ourselves of that wonderful significant saying of Christ in the latter part of His life when He said. "Verily, I say

unto you, I shall leave you very soon and will leave amongst you my commandments. What are commandments Love. Love one another. Just as I was ready to sacrifice my life for your sake, you must ever be ready to sacrifice your lives for the sake of each other. “Verily, I say unto you, a heart that has no love, is like a branch cut from the tree, and that branch will be good for no other purpose but to be burned with fire”.

Consequently, it is perfectly plain that the Crucifixion of Christ was for no other purpose but to make the people love each other and be ready to sacrifice one another’s opinions and likes and dislikes for the sake of God and makes this whole world one family. Hence, we have three propositions: (1) God is love. (2) He created this whole world with the thought of Love, and (3) He sent His prophets from the beginning of the world to promulgate the law of Love and make the people love one another. But alas, that the world of humanity, ignorant and superstitious, took their will above the will of God and withstood the progress of the law by bringing before it those obstacles which retarded the advancement of the spiritual and intellectual growth of humanity. They take the Holy Bible... (illegible text)... kiss it with their lips; they read it with their tongues; and then they place it on the shelf never thinking that these Books are for the purpose of living and not for the purpose of studying. Each principle must be brought within the range of our activity and dealing with each other.

If a patient entered a medical library seeing all the books on medicine on the shelf, and he would take one by one and read them and admire the life of the author, or time they had given to the writings of such books, or, if he would enter in a drugstore and look at all the medicines placed on the shelves and never think to take the medicine which is given to him by the doctor, you know what will be his end. So today, the seven great religions of the world are like seven great libraries of medical books, or seven great hospitals wherein the authorities on these subjects read them, but they do not practice them. Still the same hatred, the same animosity, are going on as though these Books were never written, these Prophets had never come, and these Teachings had never been given to the world. It is said that once a man was sick, and his family became very much disturbed over his condition so they sent and brought a doctor. The doctor was in a hurry, wrote his prescriptions and went out of the town. Then the family came together and began to consult how should they give this medicine to the patient? Whether they should give it to him while he is standing, or whether he should take it when he is lying down in bed? Whether he should have it in the morning, or afternoon, or evening, before or after his meals, and they discussed so long and they talked about it so much, that when they came to a conclusion and they returned to the bed of the patient, he had already passed away.

The patient is the world, the prescriptions are the Holy Books, and we are sitting around this patient, the sick body of the world, and instead of going directly and using medicine that has been given us by the Prophets, we discuss whether He was human, whether this creed was right, or that creed is wrong. Whether He had three natures, and by the time we have decided on these subjects, we come to realize that the operation was very successful, but the patient died. These differences and divisions, strifes and wars, which have come amongst the children of men, all of them without an exception, are based upon superstitions and imaginations, hallucinations and illusions. One of the great illusions which have gripped the minds of men is the question of race. God created mankind as one race, man through his ignorance and superstition came and began to divide this one race into so many races as though they belonged to different kinds. This is the Mongolian, this is the black race, this is the white race, this is the superior race, this is the inferior race. Such lines of democratic

(demarcation?) are so ridiculous that often the animals who are devoid of intelligence, laugh at men. We pride ourselves over our intelligence and we call ourselves sons of God, elected ones of God. We think that we are just next to God, if not some of the people claim that they are God themselves, but look at the animals, the cows or the lambs, the sheep and the birds of heaven, the black, the white, the yellow, the various colors, purple, all of them flock together; the black sheep will never say to the white sheep, or the white sheep will never say to the white sheep, or the white sheep will never say to the black sheep, "You are inferior. I will have nothing to do with you," but you will see them grazing in the same meadow in the utmost happiness. The same is true of the doves of Germany, France, America, England, they will come together in the utmost harmony, but we, who are the greatest beings on Earth, we make these racial differences the causes of strife and division, and these considerations are so inadequate, are so below the station of man, that it is really woeful, really dreadful, that man has given himself the cause of lowering his station to such a depth of degradation, which the animals do not practice.

The second hallucination that has been practiced by humanity, is the division of the globe. God has created it as the home of humanity. We can go wherever we desire, live wherever we wish. It is one home, but through our own ignorance, we have divided and subdivided this globe: this part belongs to Persia: another part belongs to Turkey, and a third part belongs to France, and a fourth part to England, and so on, all the nations have parceled this globe as though it belonged to them from eternity, as though God had given that as their inheritance. They never got this land except through force, and then another question; this globe, this Earth, is the principal cemetery of man. We live over the surface of the Earth for a few days, and then we live under it eternally, for all the ages; the lower part of the Earth will be the home of this physical body of man. Now is it not ridiculous, and the cause of unhappiness, that man fights over his parcel of ground and kills the people, creates engines of war, destroys these trees that God planted with his own hand in this world?

The third illusion, which is the greatest of all, is the religious difference. Now the first and the second illusions, race and land, have some outward and phenomenal, outward reasons to fight over, but the religion to divide them, but man has used that religion as a pretext for strife and blood-shed. Religion was intended to bring love, whereas we have used it as a means of hatred. Religion was created in order to bring unity, but we have made it the cause of division. Religion was brought about so that the hearts of the people may be harmonized, but his has been the greatest instrument of keeping them apart from each other. Through hallucinations man, therefore, used the religion of peace for the propagation of war, the faith of life for the distribution of death, and the means of Divine Sanctity and Holiness and Spirituality as the means of division and animosity and inequality amongst men.

This is the day in which all these imaginations must be swept away from the minds of men. This century is the "century of light"; it is the era of human brotherhood; it is the epoch of affiliation and reconciliation amongst men. For a thousand years we have fought, we have disagreed, and we have shed the blood of our fellow men. Now is time to come together to become united and upraise the standard of union and fellowship. These three illusions were very strong in the Orient and they were made the instrument of much carnage and blood-shed amongst the different religions, different nations, and different races, but seventy years ago, a glorious sun dawned from the horizon of Persia, Bahá'u'lláh, the glorious Teacher and Spirit of God, the Spirit of Love, the Spirit of Unity, and scattered them abroad to such an extent that all

these people gathered around His standard and unfurled the banner of Truth. This luminous Sun diffused throughout the Heaven of Human minds and hearts, such soft, lambent (?) lights of the spirit, that the darkness and gloom of superstitions and imaginations were entirely dispelled. Through His Teachings which were Divine and Heavenly in origin, He removed all the racial areas which the people had invented in the past many ages, and caused the different races to associate with one another like the birds of Heaven; like the multi colors of many hues in the garden, and each one contributing to the charm and attraction of the other, helping one another in the cause of human uplift and progress. He addressed the world of humanity as one garden. Now if we just had one kind of flower in the garden, say white, there would be such monotony that there would be no one like to look at it except once, but if we had many kinds of flowers, red, yellow, black, white, purple, all these different kinds of colors would enhance the panorama, the scene, and make it perfect and beautiful. Again, He made the people to understand that this globe is one home and we must be one family. He said these ideas of patriotism which have been taught by politicians, the statesmen, have been in the past the breeders of war and dissension amongst the people. This globe is one home. Let it be in unity. Similarly, He hoisted in the center of the world, a great universal Tabernacle under the shadow of which He invited the adherents of the seven great religions to gather and associate with one another with the utmost joy and fragrance, forget their differences and look only at those points which would construct, rather than destroy. Millions of Zoroastrians, Jews, Confucians, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Christians, which have been antagonistic to each other, today find themselves living with the utmost unity and affinity, and forgetting the old hatred, and antipathy, and realizing that God is the Universal Shepherd, and that He has only one flock and they belong to Him. Therefore, humankind is one race, this globe is one home, God is the universal Father of all humanity, and He desires His children practice the law of Love, the law of Association, the law of Fellowship, so that we may realize these three great principles of the Age; one race, one globe, one religion.

Those who have accepted the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh have arisen with the utmost power, have followed the line of endeavor and are working for the realization of these principles; east, west, north and south they are heralding day and night and promulgating the principles of the Dawn of Peace, the millennium, the Kingdom of God. We must all of us pray and not only pray, but work, so that God through His mercy, may remove from this world these illusions and hallucinations which we have uplifted for all the past ages; that gloom and darkneses may be entirely dispelled; that the hearts of the children of men may be cemented together, so that the quintessence of the teachings of all the Prophets, the essence of the teachings of Christ which was the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth, may be witnessed with our inner and outer sights.

[Questions and Answer]

*Question:* What is the leading cause of racial division?

*Answer:* The main cause of the racial division is in the hand of the few people who are the leaders and have kept up this question, constantly agitated it so that through its repetition they may gain its own ends, because we know that the mother of all human vices is ignorance; if we desire to bring about ideal condition is obtainable, is to spread education amongst our people. There was a time when

people lived in the caves and their vision was bounded to that cave. They fought over the possession of that cave but today through education and enlightenment that idea of home is widened from the cave into the tribe, from the tribe into the community, from the community into the combination of many tribes, until today we have the national conscience. But Bahá'u'lláh in this Day brings us the higher consciousness by saying "Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country, let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind." "Let not a man pride himself that he loves his race, or his people, but let him pride himself that he loves the whole world." "Oh, people of the world, you are of one kind, ye are all the children of one God. Whether you are from the East, or the West, whether you belong to this country or the other country, ye are all brothers and sisters in spite of yourselves, because you are from the same Father and Mother." The domestic animals do not tear their own species to pieces. If the wolf tears to pieces the lamb, it is because the lamb is its food. That is through this it sustains itself. The wolf is a carnivorous animal. It has no teeth with which it may eat the plants, so it is forced to tear the lambs to pieces. Now if the animals do not cut or destroy their own species, how much man is ignorant in killing his own kind in the name of race, in the name of religion, or in the name of land? This globe is a very narrow confined world in comparison with all the Heavenly globes that rotate in the universe. How is it that man has lost his mind to such an extent as to satisfy himself with this dark room, and fight over the various corners of the same room? So the aim is to bring Unity and establish fraternity and create Love.

Notes and transcription by Fay Swain, Minneapolis, Minn.

## “The Bahá’í Movement and Its Universal Principals”

Sunday, 5 December 1920—723 Andres  
Building Minneapolis, Minnesota

During the last few days it has been our pleasure to welcome many meetings and talk with them on the broad principles of humanity, and today again it is our pleasure to be welcomed by you and welcome you in turn, and speak on the Bahá’í Movement and its principles.

In this Golden Age, the age of the brotherhood of religions, all those means which would bring unity and happiness to mankind, must be welcomed with great joy and beatitude. Similarly, we must welcome any movement which would enlighten the minds, broaden the horizon of human intellect, illumine the souls and the hearts. In other words, bring into our consciences the higher realization of the unity of mankind, and a deeper consciousness of the truth of the fraternity of the nations. God has been, is and will ever be kind to His children. He has never closed, nor will he ever shut the doors of this mercies and bounties to the people of the world. Nay, rather continually and uninterruptedly will He cause the descent of His favors and bestowals upon all mankind. From the beginning of creation, He has never forgotten His children, because from age to age, He has sent His messengers to guide and inspire humanity. How is it, how will it ever be, that He will forget them in the future?

Our trust is in the Lord, and our hope is in the future of humanity, so that through these universal principles of the Bahá’í Movement, we may gain that millennium, we may establish that Golden Age of truth and unity amongst the people of the earth. The beginning of this new movement started in the middle of the nineteenth century in Persia. The founder of this spiritual, dynamic movement of the twentieth century was His Holiness, Bahá’u’lláh. Before the principles of Bahá’u’lláh, there came into being another Movement which aimed to prepare the minds and the hearts of the people for the reception of this great truth. That early Movement began in 1844 by a young man called the Báb, who fills the same position in the Bahá’í Movement, that John the Baptist filled in regard to Christ,

and the Baptism of the spirit of those days, so that they might be readier to receive the lights and the teachings of Christ. The sacredness, the beauty and the simplicity of the life of the Báb, is so well-known that even His enemies gave a clear and most wonderful record of His life. His beauty, His eloquence, the purity of His life, the magnetism of His presence were so great that whosoever came into contact with Him was drawn to Him; that even if a soul did not like Him in his heart, he could not help but be drawn to Him involuntarily. One of the extraordinary events of His life which seemed to be almost a miracle was this. In the beginning of His claim, He issued forth this statement, that "Although I have not entered any school, or educational institution, I am every ready to answer the questions of the thinkers and the scholars and the theologians, no matter who they are; without volition, instantaneously, without meditation, I will take-up the pen and write those questions with such rapidity that everyone will be astonished." These questions and answers are today compiled in many volumes and they are the students of this marvelous Movement. His spirituality, His concentration and attention were so great, that even when He would enter into the great religious temples where hundreds and hundreds of people were engaged in prayer, and worship, His very attitude attracted the eyes of the people to Him, on account of His complete abstraction, that reverence that He had in turning His eyes and heart toward the Kingdom of God, and praying with such humility and evanescence that no one could help but admire and imitate. At the age of twenty-four He started His mission with the zest and enthusiasm which was contagious and He began to reform the religions of the world and give the glad-tidings that the day was approaching when the great universal master and teacher would come to bring or to usher in an era of universal peace and universal brotherhood. When He proclaimed His mission, thousands and thousands of men and women who had been tired, who had been fatigued with the creeds and rituals of the past, gathered around His dispensation of reform and freedom and began to travel to every part of the earth to teach this glad news that the day of the emancipation of human conscience was here.

The autocracy of the Persian Government, the religious fanaticism of the Mohammedan Priests, were so great and so intense that the two combined their governmental and clerical forces to quell this fire of the Love of God and as a result of this, through the length and breadth of Persia, there appeared a great era of persecution and oppression. Thousands of people were killed and martyred and at last the Cause was proclaimed from one end to the other end of the East. \*\*\*\*\*bottom of pg 2 cut off\*\*\*\*\* that Christ and His disciples and His followers went through, were meted out to the followers of the Báb, and at last from 1844 to 1850, the fire of persecution raged until the Báb Himself was martyred and put to death.

The first period of the Bahá'í movement having come to a close, Bahá'u'lláh, the founder and the revelatory of the Movement, appeared and He commenced to reveal His universal laws and to promulgate them throughout the Oriental countries. He manifested such tremendous power of unifying the different religions and bringing together the antagonistic races and communities, that the Jews, Mohammedans, the Christians, the Zoroastrians, the Buddhists, the Confucians, and various other sects and denominations, having set aside all their hatred and animosity, came to realize that they were the children of one God and the followers of one Universal Father. Finally the Turkish Empire and the Persian Government getting alarmed at the rapid progress of the Bahá'í Movement, and its principles of peace and love, in their respective countries, they came together and agreed that Bahá'u'lláh must be put in prison. He was imprisoned several times and each time was set free because they could not find anything against His character, or His personality. Having done this they at last felt that they must exile Him from one place to another and the life of Bahá'u'lláh was chiefly spent in several exiles from city to city, country to country.

Nearly twenty years Bahá'u'lláh spent in Baghdad, Constantinople, Adrianople, where He was exiled by the two governments, but strange to state, that although He was a prisoner and exile, wherever He entered people would attract to Him, the scholars, the theologians and thinkers would come to Him and ask questions and receive the most illumination and satisfactory answers. This period again came to a close and He was at last banished to the Fortress City of 'Akká in Palestine, where He passed the rest of His life, twenty-four years in prison, and from behind prison walls He issued forth His Tablets and Writings containing His principles and instructions, by thousands upon thousands.

Europeans and Orientals during those twenty-four years of imprisonment visited Him in his cell and they were struck with the optimism, with the joyousness, with the wisdom and knowledge that flowed from His tongue. They could not imagine that there could live on the face of this Earth, where under difficult environment He kept up His hope and His buoyancy and His optimism under those severe circumstances. In reality Bahá'u'lláh pitched the tent of the unity of religions and the unity of nations...\*\*\*\*\*bottom of pg 3 cut off\*\*\*\*\* .From every corner of the Earth [people] would go to visit Him and receive His teachings and be filled with His spirit, so that that blessed land which was prophesied in the Old and New Testaments, that will be the place where the Lord will descend from Heaven and the nations will go that Mountain to learn the Law, became literally fulfilled.

In 1892 Bahá'u'lláh, having accomplished His work, ascended from the earthly life to the Heavenly life, and left behind Him His son, the Center of His Covenant, so that He might be the interpreter

and the explainer of His teachings and books, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá unfolded the flag of unity and love and up to 1908 He was still a prisoner of the Turkish rule. During the year 1908, the Turkish revolution was proclaimed. The Committee of Progress in Turkey declared a constitution and consequently all the religious and political prisoners were set free. Amongst those prisoners was 'Abdu'l-Bahá. When He entered that prison He was a young man, but when He came out He was old with white hair. Notwithstanding this, age did not count, but immediately He started on a long and arduous journey throughout Egypt, France, England and the United States and Canada, traveling for nearly four years and lecturing before churches and synagogues and clubs, proclaiming the principles of a new civilization, the Dawn of Universal Peace and Brotherhood and having accomplished this service, He returned to the Holy Land at the foot of Mount Carmel where He is still living, directing the affairs of this great universal Movement and where the adherents of the seven great religions visit Him and receive His wonderful teachings.

This was simply a brief account of a history which is filled with many tragic and dramatic events, and covers a space of seventy-five years. Bahá'u'lláh has explained the reality of divinity, which is infinite and boundless. He said that Universal essence or intelligence, called God, is eminent in the world of nature. Its effulgence and its emanation is in all phenomena and that He reveals Himself in every atom of existence. The reality of Divinity is the Universal Father to all humanity; that His favor is unrestricted and boundless and He pours His bounties upon all phenomena irrespective of whether those phenomena can receive them or not. Secondly, Bahá'u'lláh taught the immortality of the soul with such logical proofs that everyone may be convinced as regards the validity and the certainty of the mortality of the spirit. Thirdly, He said, "As you sow, you reap. If you sow the wheat you should not expect to reap at the harvest time the barley, and if you sow the barley, you...."\*\*\*\*\*bottom of pg 4 cut off\*\*\*\*\* certain that we will reap the result and the consequence of those actions whether they are good or bad. Fourthly, the salvation of man is dependent upon his deeds and actions, his life according to the teachings of God, his purity of purpose and his characterizing himself with the Divine Attributes. Fifthly, all the Founders of the seven great religions of the world have been Divine and inspired. Their moral and ethical teachings are identical, and consequently the same and they have been the spiritual guides and teachers of humanity, and still in the past these religious hated each other, and considered the founders of one another as imposters. The Báb taught that the founders were all divine and heavenly and consequently we must go back to the original teachings of these Prophets. He stated that the quintessence of the teachings of these Books is exactly alike, because they are being today translated into all the languages of the world and when we study them we realize

fully that they have all contained the same principles of the elevation of the human spirit, of the refinement of character, of the spiritualization of humanity, of the expansion of the soul in the higher and higher spheres of consciousness.

The jewels and the gems of the teachings of these Prophets that were hidden under the dark rituals and theories and philosophies, Bahá'u'lláh threw aside all these impediments and revealed to making those brilliant truths, those spiritual principles of knowledge and made them the basis of universal agreement amongst all of them. The example of the religions of today is like the man who was sick and the relations brought him a doctor. He took the pulse and gave a prescription and left the city. The patient was becoming more sick every minute and those relatives began to discuss whether they should give this medicine to him while he was standing, or whether they should give it in the morning or in the evening, and whether that doctor was a graduate or not, and what his present condition and where did he go and how are we going to get him again if we don't succeed, and by the time they had gone through all these consultations the poor patient had died. The Prophets were the doctor. They came and prescribed a certain medicine and the people instead of taking that began to occupy themselves with the stations and lives and natures of these Prophets, which had nothing whatsoever to do with these teachings. They not only did not give the medicine to the patient, but they began to quarrel amongst themselves over these conditions that appeared amongst them as a result of their speculation, and they were divided and subdivided until they forget the Teacher and the Manifestation and they were simply occupied with their own thoughts.

If the founders of these religions happened to come back today and look at the condition that existed amongst their religions, they would not only not recognize them, but they would wonder whether those people are their followers. The Mohammedan religion is divided into four main sects, although they have many subdivisions, but they have four great sects. Hundreds of years ago there was a king living in the East who had a very wise minister and philosopher. This minister often argued with the king that these sects were the results of the contentions amongst followers of Mohammed, but that Mohammed brought only one religion. The king said, "No indeed, I can't accept that. Mohammed brought more than one religion otherwise these people would not exist". The Minister said, "I will prove it to you. Have a big meeting and invite all the leaders of these four sects." The king assented to this and invited all the leaders of his empire, especially the leaders of these four sects and made them sit at the head of the table, while hundreds and hundreds were sitting around. After half an hour this, the philosopher entered the hall, but according to an Oriental custom in the East, everybody takes off his shoes near the threshold. This

man had taken his shoes and placed them under his arms and came before the king. The king became angry and said, "Is this not an insult to your master, because we have so many men at the door who will take care of the shoes, and how is it that you have taken them with you"? He said, "I beg you pardon Sir, but if you will allow me to sit, I will give you the cause of it." He said, "Yesterday, I was reading a book and in that book I came across the passage in which it is written that once Mohammed was invited to a meeting and when He went there, He left his shoes at the door and the meeting having come to an end, He went to leave the house, and lo, and behold, the shoes had disappeared. After a thorough investigation they found that the first leader of the sect had stolen them". That man got up from his seat and said, "You claim to be a philosopher, and a learned man, have not you read enough that our sect came into being one-hundred years after Mohammed lived? We didn't exist in His day, so that we could not steal His shoes, so that is your ignorance". "Oh, I beg your pardon," "It was the leader of the second sect that had stolen them." And this man rejoined with anger, and said, "This is a worse mistake, because our sect came into being two-hundred years after Muhammad". So the philosopher went through the third and the fourth and each one acknowledged that they were founded three and four hundred years after Mohammad and at last he turned to the king and said, "Now, did you see? What right have they to be here, for they have not been in the day of Muhammad?"

Of course you can apply this story to any of the religions of the world and will receive the same result, because the Founders of these religions have no knowledge whatsoever of these denominations and sects which were founded in their names by self-seeking leaders. He brought one highway of the Kingdom, but the followers began to go through the paths and byways, and divided that one road into a thousand alleys. Even if we universalize our mind a little more, we realize that the seven great religions of the world have been walking in one road, in one highway, but the misunderstandings and differences which crept in later on became the cause of these divisions. So the great spiritual service of Bahá'u'lláh has rendered to the world of humanity is this very fact that pointing-out to all these religions that they have been one originally, but that they were divided later on and now is the time to begin walking together with perfect peace and amity in the same highway of the Lord.

Sixthly, Bahá'u'lláh said, religion means a bond through which the hearts are united together. Religion must be the cause of Love and Amity. If it is the means of hatred and animosity, it is better to have not religion whatsoever, but to have love and amity because religion is a medicine and the aim of medicine is to remove the disease. Now if the medicine aggravates the disease, it is better not to take

it. He said also, if two people quarrel over some religious subjects, both of them are wrong.

Seventhly, He said, all religious beliefs must correspond with science and reason. If religious ideas do not agree with reasonable deductions of science it is a bundle of superstitions, is creeds, it is theories. Religion is reality and God is reality. Now God, who is the fountainhead of Reality, would He lead men into the creeds and superstitions as has been done? No.

Eighthly, He said, religion and science are like unto two wings for the bird of the soul. In the past these two were constantly conflicting with each other. They did not help one another, but in this Age they must cooperate, they must assist one another. Religious ideals must inspire scientific discoveries, and scientific thought must help the expungence<sup>22</sup> of religious thought, so that the two may bring religion and felicity into the world so that with the wedlock of science and religion, we shall have the children of a new divine immortality, which will save men from destruction and narrow-mindedness and pettiness, and religion must polish the mirror of the heart from prejudice, fanaticism and bigotry.

Ninthly, He taught perfect equality between the rights of men and women. He said men \*\*\*\*\*bottom of pg 7 cut off\*\*\*\*\* civilization. In the past ignorance of man kept one of these great hands in a state of partial paralysis, but today the blood of civic and political equality must flow through this family hand so that both may be strong and powerful enough to carry the load of this complex civilization.

Tenthly, He said that work is worship. We have been looking down upon the worker and the toiler and the laborer in every age, but today, the toiler is the king of the world of humanity and that through toil and work, the world is kept up. If a man does not work he cannot eat and work is the life of the social body. If a person is lazy and does not like to occupy himself in some productive way, he is a burden on the body of society; he is a paralyzed organ; he is a cut and dried branch, and a cut and dried branch is good only for the furnace.

Eleventhly, He said these religious prejudices which exist amongst humanity are all the figments of imagination. They have no weight or value in the sight of God. These racial and national prejudices are likewise the same. If you go into a pasture you will see the cows and the sheep, white and black and red, and different colors, all grazing in the same meadow without lording it over each other; that this one is black and this one is white, that this one is brunette and that one is another color, but they are all on the same plane with the utmost association, but man had degraded himself below the station of the animal kingdom by thinking that someone is more superior to another because he is a different color.

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<sup>22</sup> As in Original

Twelfthly He said, these topographical boundaries that the nations have made are suppositional and have no reality in the sight of God.

Thirteenth, is the establishment of the Parliament of Man, so that all the disputes between nations may be adjudicated between High Court of National Justice. That that court of International Justice may not be partial, but universal and impartial.

And last are the creation and the practice of an international auxiliary knowledge through which we may communicate with one another with understanding and intelligence. In brief, these were simply a few of the teachings of the Bahá'í Movement.

We have already fatigued you, but the aim is that the Bahá'í Movement is for peace and for brotherhood and the universality of conscience, and the broad vision of the Commonwealth of Man. He has commanded us to hail and welcome all those movements which desire to build and construct the intellectual, the moral and the physical life of man and also the industrial life of the nations, and discourage and dispel all those movements which tend to disorganize, to agitate conditions and the disturbance of the inner and outer life of humanity. In the Bahá'í Movement, therefore, you will find a nucleus around which these ideals and these men and women are revolving and working, day and night, so that the Kingdom of God may be established in the world, and in the hearts of men and women alike.

Notes and transcription by Fay Swain

## “Professor Jináb-i-Fáḍil of Persia Before Members of Kiwanis Club”

Wednesday, 8 December 1920—Duluth, Minnesota

It gives me great pleasure to be with you a few minutes and speak about the country of Persia. I have been traveling during the last seven months, throughout the United States and Canada, and in many cities I have had the pleasure of talking to the Kiwanians. I have always found them to be very optimistic, joyful, and appreciative. For as you may know, the Club works in union and happiness, and wherever we find these qualities combined, we see a great deal of mirth and brightness.

I have been given the impression that for fifteen minutes, I am going to be a member of your club.

Those who are informed with the ancient history, realize that Persia played a great part in those days. The traces and relics of the ancient civilization of Persia are still to a large extent. The architecture of Persia in its old days is found in the mountains and among the cities, and many European historians speak of the greatness of the mansions and palaces, that were erected in all parts of Persia.

One of the ancient palaces of Persia is built near Baghdad, and it was built several centuries ago. One of the Kings in that part of the country intended to erect a mansion for himself, but he had no idea where he could procure the necessary materials for it, so he said he would destroy this great palace, and with the materials he would immediately build his own mansion. He was told that he could not destroy that building, because it was so well constructed, but he said, “I am going to do my very best to destroy it.” Anyhow, he sent laborers and they worked very hard, but they only destroyed one wall, and they came back much disappointed at their failure to accomplish their work. The same man then came and told the King, “did I not tell you, you cannot destroy this building?”

Another building is near Isfahan, the ancient capitol of Persia. Many travelers have gone to see it, and have not found out the great mystery of this strange building. This building is constructed of bricks and it has two large pillars. When a person goes on one pillar and shakes it, the other one shakes also and the whole building trembles continuously for a long time. Many of these people who have gone to see this building have been trying to find out the cause of the trembling of the building and have not succeeded.

The clock was first invented in Persia. When the first one was made, it was sent to Charlemagne, the Great, and it was said when it was brought to his court the priests were so doubtful as to the working of this clock that they thought it imprisoned the devil, and they were so superstitious that they destroyed it, in order to find the evil spirit in it.

These few instances show you how the Persians were very remarkable in many walks of life, but for the last few centuries a degeneration and decadence was set in the national existence. The cause of this decadence was warfare and religious superstition, which brought a great darkness over the horizon of all minds. They had become so ignorant that they had forgotten all the ancient glory, knowledge, and wisdom, and were walking in the land of doubts and hesitations.

Another art that the ancient Persians cultivated was the art of painting. Mani was a marvelous painter of that time and he became well known as a master artist who painted 400 miniatures on a piece of paper. On this he claimed prophethood and a large number of people followed him. But in later centuries the people forgot this noble art of painting through their superstitious belief and they came to believe that if anyone painted a picture, on the day of resurrection God would bring it to him and say, "Breathe into it the breath of life." If he would not be able to do this then God would say, "What right did you have to paint a picture, if you could not put life into it?"

These were the conditions in Persia. Seventy years ago a new spiritual movement appeared in that country which is called the Bahá'í Movement. The founder of it was Bahá'u'lláh. Through this new educational and spiritual truth, new activities appeared in the life of that nation. Education became the passionate object of the Bahá'ís, and they began to spread it right and left; so that during a short time many public schools were founded and to-day boys and girls are pursuing their studies in those institutions. The American schools also have been help in banishing the armies of darkness and ignorance, and fitting young men to enter into various positions and help their country.

Another far-reaching result of this new movement is the great change which has come over the life of the Persian women. They

have advanced along the lines of education and have achieved great success. In the Orient generally, and in Persia especially the women had not rights, and there were looked upon as inferior beings. The Bahá'í Movement taught the equality of men and women and raised their station in the estimation of the public. Bahá'u'lláh said; "The world of humanity is like unto a bird. The bird has two wings, one wing, the male, the other wing the female." In the past women were not given advantages of education and consequently they could not win the equality with men; but in this age both wings of the bird of humanity must be strengthened, so that it may soar to the highest summit of perfection and virtue.

Another change brought about through the Bahá'í Movement is the removal of religious prejudices and fanaticism which were universal all through Persia. In that country the different religions were so against each other that they often fought against one another and shed each others blood. But when Bahá'u'lláh appeared he taught that religion must teach and practice love and kindness, and not become the cause of enmity and hatred. He said, "Religion is like unto medicine. If medicine increases illness, it is better not to take it." A sincere atheist is more beloved than a religious hypocrite. Thus Bahá'u'lláh removed all the differences and misunderstandings which were amongst the different religions and made them more appreciative of each others teachings.

Another principal of Bahá'u'lláh was the ideal of the establishment of the parliament of man, before the impartial members of which all international disputes may be settled. Seventy years ago Bahá'u'lláh laid down the conditions of the League of Nations in his tablets and writings and thus became the first originator of this great Divine plan.

Another principle of Bahá'u'lláh is the international auxiliary language. It must be taught in all the schools and be made part of the compulsory education in all the five continents of the world; so that when in the future people travel from one country to another they may be able to communicate with each other their ideas. At present we waste so much of our time in the study of languages but in the future this energy will be directed to constructive and inventive channels.

It is said that once a Persian, a Greek, an Arab and a Turk were traveling along the dusty highway. They found a piece of coin. The Persian cried out, "I want to buy with this money "angour"; the Arab said, "I want to buy "enab"; the Greek cried, "I desire to buy "estafool". and the Turk said, "I want to buy "ozoum"; As they were not able to understand each others languages, they started to fight and dispute. Just at that time a Linguist arrived on the scene and listening to the quarrels of these men was amused at their earnestness. He went forward and asked them to give him the money and he would try to satisfy each one. Getting the money, he went into a garden across the road and returned with a basket of

grapes. No sooner had they looked at the basket than each one exclaimed joyously, "I wanted this." Thus once they saw the reality they were all satisfied, but they were fighting over words which they could not comprehend.

We the Bahá'ís in the Orient, and you the Kiwanians in the Occident are working for the same ideals of fraternity, reconciliation, universal peace and brotherhood. We hope that the day may come, that all the differences amongst the nations of the world be eradicated and the principle of self-sacrifice, optimism, happiness, reciprocity and cooperation be established all over the world.

## “Persian Mysticism”

Thursday, 30 December 1920—House of  
Representatives, Denver, Colorado

LECTURE BY PROFESSOR JINÁB-I-FÁDIL MAZINDARÁNÍ OF TEHRAN, PERSIA  
BEFORE THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF COLORADO

It is indeed significant, that in this Hall of the Representatives of the State, a place where the legislators come together to discuss the welfare of the people, we from the East, from the Orient, come to voice the message from that country, thus bringing the East and the West together in a closer bond of friendship and unity.

Unquestionably, those who are familiar with Persian literature in a general way, and especially with the development of human ideas in that country under the mystic thought, are likewise familiar with the names of the greatest poets of Persia such as Hafiz, **Sadi Nezami** and others.

Professor Edward Brown of Cambridge University of England, who is one of the greatest **Orientalists** of the West, and has written many works on Persian literature, says in his books that the mystic literature of Persia is the **richest**, the most abounding with **similes**, metaphors and wealth of thought and beauty unparallel in the literature of the world.

The mystics of Persia were indeed the leaders of thought, the inspirers of ideals and workers for the betterment of the community. They wrote under certain conditions, which stimulated though, advanced human knowledge and brought within the ken of man's power that knowledge of the Divine, that power of the infinite, which is, after all, the basic foundation of the prosperity and wellbeing of every community.

Unquestionably those who serve the literary life of a nation are the greatest benefactors of humanity and because they are the gatherers of knowledge, the cultivators of useful information. They bequeath to posterity that knowledge, which they have received from their ancestors, added to the spark of genius, and, consequently, they are immortals in the hall of memory.

One of those great poets of Persia—Sadi—says: “Those who have left behind a good name are not dead, they are alive, they are immortal, they are living in the thought of humanity and their very example is the greatest help to those who hear about them and learn their writings.”

The mystics of Persia are an old institution; they have had their secret organizations you may say, from time immemorial. But the greatest of the mystics influenced the lives of the people lived between the seventh and tenth centuries, A.D. These mystics had certain principles and theories, which they taught, in their schools in regard to Divinity, to the growth of the soul and to the expansion of conscience.

The mystics of Persia were poets and they were called mystics because, according to their scholastic methods, they had reached to the highest summit of attainment, they became leaders amongst the people and they were called R.F. that is, they were dressed in woolen clothes. That was the mark of their school.

One of their most recondite principles was the principle of pantheism. They looked upon the world as a body and the spirit of Divinity dominating and moving through this body expressing itself in various degrees and stages according to the development of that body which, for the time being, represented Divinity.

They taught there is one universal sun which shines upon the world and energizes all phenomena. In order to illustrate this principle of pantheism, they said that the number one is the mother and 2, 3, 4, 5 ad infinitum. Likewise, God, who is the infinite number, is the single one, is the origin of all creation, out of Him issues all these phantasmal appearances which have no reality but reality is within the Number one—God.

Again they said: there is one Ocean of Divinity, which is constantly in a state of motion, and its waves rise heavenward. The waves are the creatures, the phenomena which are thrown out of this Sea of Divinity, they belong to the Sea and when the Sea is calmed down the waves go back to its bosom.

One of these mystics says: “we are all non-entities appearing as entities. We are in the process of becoming entities, and thou art the Being out of Thee issues all of these appearances but they are non-egos. The Eternal Ego is in Thee. We are the shadows and Thou art the sun, which stretches earthward across the pathway that shadow. We are the words. But Thou art the significance thereof.”

When the Sea of Creation, or the Sea of Divinity is calm there is no creation and that was when it was not in motion in the early dawn of history, but when it was set in motion it threw out all these waves and they are in the world everywhere, but in the long run,

these waves these waves will go back to the ocean and they will be part of that illimitable Sea of Divinity.

The man who is enjoined with the eye of oneness will see no plurality in the world of existence. But the material man, the agnostic, the atheist will see only these pluralities, these confusions, these turmoils, and consequently, draw his conclusions that the world is based upon chance or necessity.

The world of phenomena is like unto myriads of mirrors. When these myriads of mirrors turn their surfaces toward the Sun, the Sun reflects itself on all of them without any respect to their size, or form of shape. Each one is a reflector of the Sun of Reality or mirrors for the time being brought before the Sun of Divinity. And they manifest according to their capabilities and abilities some of these rays.

In brief, their theory was that God is self-subsistent, the self-existent One, while we are all immaterial shadows thrown upon to obtain ? and we will again pass away.

Their second mystic idea was, although these phenomena are mirrors, each one in its own respective state reflect back the rays of the Sun of Truth. Man stands on the top. The summit of evolution, is the sum total of all these lower kingdoms of life.

Man, therefore, they taught is the collective center of all virtues and attributes. God has deposited in the nature of man the seed of infinite progress and development. If that seed is watered and taken care of, then it will bloom, it will offer up its head, it will send forth branches and leaves and blossoms and ring forth such fruit that will be for the healing of all the nations of the Earth.

The condition through which man, in attaining to that realm of knowledge and wisdom was that he must travel, he must journey through this infinite kingdom of the soul, which has neither beginning nor ending, and pass through many stages of development and discipline and practice before he is entitled to enter through the doors of the Holy of Holies and look into the face of the Divine Beloved One.

In order to attain to that great goal, they said there were many precipices that very few men can pass through. One of these precipices is the precipice of selfishness, another is that of greed, the third is the gratification of one's own desires and ambitions, and the fourth is covetousness, and so on, explaining many stages which are very dangerous to the soul who desires to travel. If a soul does not safely pass through these various trials he will not be able to climb the mount of vision and attain to the summit of the mount of transfiguration.

Hafiz, one of these mystics, says:

“O thou who art a wanderer, strive thou that thou mayest become mindful. If Thou dost not start today on thy journey so that thou mayest gain the necessary experience, how canst thou ever ? mysteries of love. Strive and make thou an effort, o thou son of mine, that some say thou mayest become a father.

“This selfishness, this concentration on worldly things—eating, sleeping and drinking—these things have kept thee away from the ideal. As long as thou art attached to these things thou will not be able to soar toward the infinite atmosphere of truth.”

These mystical schools in Persia had certain methods and practices that were given to the initiates and those who desired to enter into their circle. At first every initiate had to sit forty days in a cell without speaking with any soul, thinking, retrospectively, cogitating on the being or selfless self. They had many practices during these forty days. They were silent, they reduced their food, and they reduced their sleep, they awoke in the middle of the night and contemplated, and then they had certain prayers, certain incantations that they repeated over and over again in certain stated hours. They said that without this outward physical self-mortification and discipline the material man cannot ascend to the Divine. They taught that all the Prophets, all the seers had to go through these practices before they became fit to come before the public and claim their mission.

They pointed to Christ that for forty days lived in the wilderness or in the mountain. What was He doing? He went over these very things so that He might get rid of the self and become the embodiment the incarnation of the selfless Divine. Similarly, on the fortieth day kingdoms of the Earth but He could not. Who was this, Satan? It was the self within Him who tried to turn Him away from His divine mission, but He turned His back on Satan.

In some of their legends and stories they say that Moses, Himself, lived twice forty days on the summit of the Sinaitic mount. Again, Buddha and other Prophets have like events in their lives, each strengthening the theory with the mystics that a person initiated must go through these preliminary processes.

Hafiz again says that in the middle of the night a guide was telling this lesson to another person: “O thou mystic, the wine in the bottle will become clear and pure after forty days.” This is a mystical expression that the wine, the soul which is in man, will attain to this stage of perfection after forty days of these practices, the dregs of self will settle at the bottom and the pure, limpid wine of Truth will rise to the surface.

Now these initiates, who went through these forty days of experiences, claimed that they received these dreams and visions; they wrote them in the most perfect poetry which to-day is looked upon as the masterpiece in the literature of the mystics.

The third mystery of their school was that this soul of man is a reality, which has no connection with material things. It is a bird, which has come down from the rose garden of God and has taken its abode in this earthly cage. In regard to this phase of their teachings, another poet says: "Say, at night my thought and my contemplation and my idea revolves around this. Why is it that I have become unaware of that ideal reality. Where do I go from here? Why doest Thou not show me some of my heavenly abode? I am the bird of the rose garden bird of the rose garden of the Kingdom of God—I do not belong to this terrestrial abode—his world has built cage for the bird of the kingdom out of these material things. I was an angel and the paradise of the Kingdom was my home but Adam, through eating the apple, brought me to this ruined home."

A fourth mystic idea was that when the soul dies this spirit which was immortal, having left the body will reach the Sun of Light as a ray, goes back to the Sun, as an atom which returns to its original constituents. Again, it is said: "How happy will I be on that day when I shall leave this place, seeking the atmosphere of the spirit and hastening after the Beloved. In order that I may kiss the lips of my Divine Beloved One, like unto the scintillating rays of the sun, I shall dance and travel on and on until I shall reach the very center of the world illuminated."

Another very interesting idea of these mystics was that although humanity has different physiognomies, each different from the face of the other, yet in reality each soul has two faces, one is power within him and the other without. Now the interior face of that real face, that real man within, sometimes is like the outer man, but sometimes it is not. According to the mental and physical attributes that a man displays, he may be outwardly a man but inwardly a wolf. He may be inwardly a hyena, or an elephant, or a dog, according to those characteristics he manifests, so they said though outwardly he has the face of a man, inwardly he is one of those animals. They said the mystics are those who can see the real man within. They will not let themselves be guided by the outward appearance, they will see the inner man.

To tell you one of their stories, the Mohammedans have Mecca where annually every Mohammedan called upon, if he is financially profitable, goes just as the Jews go to Jerusalem to visit the holy ground. Every year at least 100,000 or 200,000 Mohammedans from all parts of Asia go to visit this place. So it is related that in one year one of these mystics who could see, who had the inner eye, riding on a camel went to Mecca. Then his disciple looked over the vast stretch of the dessert filled with thousands and thousands of tents, he turned to his master and said: "My lord is it not wonderful that so many pilgrims have come, is it not a great power of the Prophet to bring all of these men here? The mystic laughed, and it is said he put his hands over the eyes of the disciple and to

his amazement, he looked around and he saw that the desert was filled with jackals, with hyenas, with dogs and cats howling and screaming in that wilderness, and he was alarmed and agitated." Through these illustrations the mystics tried to demonstrate that man is not man unless he is characterized by those inner qualities of manhood, of truth, of righteousness, of unselfishness, otherwise he is just like one of these beasts of prey.

These mystics were the reformers of Persia because when they lived in that country the Mohammedan mullahs had taken hold of creeds and rituals—the religion of the Mohammedans had become filled with ritualistic ceremonies—but these mystics were the light bringing the people into the light of truth and reality. They showed the hypocrisy, the double-facedness, the simulations of these mullahs who held to the literal letter of the law but forgot the spirit of it. The Mohammedans called these mystics heretics. The heretics called the Mohammedans fools and insane men because the mystics spiritually interpreted the soul while the theologians took the material interpretation.

For instance, Hafiz, again referring to these so-called theologians, says: "These doctors of law and religion when they come into the pulpits and begin to speak they speak very elegant words, but when they go to their homes they do some other things which are not mentionable." I have difficulty here. Cannot you ask the leader of faith to solve this problem? These people who give repentance to the common man why do they not repent themselves? It is as though they do not believe in the Day of Judgment or Resurrection, because all their actions are based on hypocrisy and double-facedness and greed and envy.

Addressing one of these theologians, the mystic again says: "O thou mullah, why dost thou deceive me all the time with these promises of Paradise and Hell? Am I a child? How long dost thou think that I shall remain in the state of childhood? I am that bird of Paradise and every morning and evening I hear the heavenly choirs coming to my ears, in sweet and melodious melodies."

It was for this reason that these mystics have to suffer a great deal of persecution from the theologians of the time. Once Hafiz wrote a line, which brought upon him the terrible persecution of the mullahs, he said: "If to be a Muslim is to believe there is any power in Resurrection in any of these things that they inculcate in their seasons." When they heard this, they said: "This man denies Resurrection. This man denies tomorrow, and consequently, he is a heretic." Then, in order to free himself from these words, he wrote another line and said: "O, I heard this verse was related by a Christian early in the morning at the door of a bar. I had nothing to do with it."

The college of Baghdad once killed one of the leaders of these mystics called Husayn. This mystic had written a book in which he

drew a plan of Mecca and he wrote that those who expended so much money and time to travel thousands of miles to visit Mecca they could look on this plan and do away with all those inconveniences and troubles, and when this book was published the leaders of the theology said: "This is terrible, this man must be crucified." This mystic said: "God will accept with greater pleasure if these monies that these people expend in going to visit Mecca will be spent for the alleviation of poor and unfortunate and just have this plan of Mecca in their homes and that will do."

Their books are filled with highest moral and ethical problems, which are in accord with the very spirit of this Age. Although these books were written six, seven, or eight hundred years ago, yet when you read them it is as though they were written yesterday; they are fresh and new, and filled with the highest maxims and problems.

Sadi says: "Humanity are the limbs and organs of one body, because, creatively, they are fashioned with the same matter. When one suffers through certain inconveniences in the world, then all the other limbs are suffering at the same time." Again, he says: "From the Chapter of Faithfulness and the Book of Truth I draw this lesson: be thou not less than the tree that when a passerby passes and strikes at it a stone it gives back fruit and shade. Whenever a person talks against thee or breaks thy heart, be thou like a mine that when the surface of it is disclosed jewels and gems are given back. The happiness of the world is dependent upon these two principles. With friends be thou honest, with enemies be thou just. I give thee, O thou apple of mine eye, a lesson from the Book of Mysteries, that peace and love are superior to war and hate. Do not harm any soul and do whatever thou pleases, because in our religion here is no other Sun than this, in our Faith we must not harm any soul, we must not let any man be offended because this is the essential of truth, the highest manifestation of light."

The wars, which are being waged between seventy-two sects of religions, are waged because they have not seen the truth and they have taken a pretext so that they may divide themselves. In the latter part of the nineteenth century a great and glorious Being appeared in Persia, who developed and initiated these problems into a worldwide unity, whose name was Bahá'u'lláh. He wrote many books and many treatises and many poems in regard to these ideals and mystical stages of life, the practices of which have developed the greatest man of spirituality in the Orient.

He teaches that the progress of the future world is dependent upon religious freedom, and religious freedom cannot be attained unless we study the fundamental principles of all the religions of the world, set them side by side and they are all identical and one. In His books He says that this is the century of the unity of mankind, this is the era for the development of divine life amongst man. Addressing the world of humanity, He says: "O ye people of the

world, ye are all the lights of one heaven, the stars of one sky, the leaves of one tree and the leaves of one book.”

Teaching His followers, He says: “Ye must arise and characterize yourselves with the highest attributes of humanity so that the world through your example, through your works, through your teachings may feel that we are living at the dawn of the millennium.” He declares that this is the cycle in which we must live, all the children of men, in universal love and brotherhood, which must be placed above all physical and material considerations. This is the Day, in which the East that is the Orient must learn industrialism, practical science and practical knowledge from the West, and the West gain that poise, that tranquility, that spirituality which has been the inheritance of the Orient.

Thus we must put aside competition and characterize ourselves with cooperation so that through the Law of Cooperation and Reciprocity we may establish on the Earth the civilization which is free from all the sordidness and greed and political secretiveness of the past.

Dynasties and kingdoms have filled the world with miseries and suffering. Modern civilization, with all its appliances and methods has indeed made the world one neighborhood. We are no more isolated. We can never be isolated for this reason, that we must take hold of these universal principles, these divine studies which will make us one home and one family.

The statement of the mystics, the writers, the editors of the papers is that we must forget human ambition and worldly desires and cooperate with one another to spread the ideals of truth, the ideals of humanity, the ideals of oneness in order to prevent the sowing of the seeds of sedition, greed and suspicion. These poets, some of whose verses were recited to the Prophets of God, have written wonderful books. And, whether it is from the Orient or the Occident, or the books of the poets and Prophets, just collecting them and putting them on the shelves so that the dust may cover them, what is their use?

So, the message of the mystics of Persia tonight is that these sublime statements, these wonderful epigrams, these spiritual words that they have written and rewritten, repeated and reiterated in the books by the poets, by the Prophets, this is the Age in which we must put them into practice, in which we must put our lives and make them a part and parcel of our lives so that the thoughts of the Orient and the Occident may be made as one universal body, with one heart beating through it.

Reported by Mabel Violet Creel

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## SECOND PART

LECTURE BY PROFESSOR JINÁB-I-FÁDIL OF SHAH'S UNIVERSITY IN TIHRÁN,  
PERSIA. IN THE HOME OF MRS. CRAIG.

Firstly, I desire to express my thanks and gratitude to Mrs. Craig who invited us to her home and made it possible so that I may come and talk with you. I have been traveling many thousands of miles to teach this part of the United States, and indeed it is a source of great satisfaction to meet those who are interested in these higher ideas of life. In former ages it would have been impossible for man from the orient to travel through the world and come to the end of the Occident and exchange their thoughts. All the inventions and discoveries of the past have made this possible and the twentieth century is the most wonderful and serviceable Age to man.

All the past Prophets and seers have foretold the coming of this great Age, in fact we have a prayer when in time of spiritual and material menace would be forthcoming from the life of mankind, and this century is above all former centuries because both the material laws and the spiritual laws will be discovered and the reality of life man manifests in the former epochs the scientific and the spiritual power and might of man have become the greatest of the age and greater than in all the former cycles put together. Such great power has become manifest in man that he has invented the submarine that can swim under the water like unto the fish, walk and run over the expanse of the oceans and fly through the atmosphere like unto a bird and achieve such wonders that have never been dreamed of before by the minds of man. Through the laws of telegraphy man brought under his ruling the invisible laws of nature by flashing the news of the distant countries in five minutes. By impressing the police of man who is immaterial in a box they can enjoy it whenever they like and by using the force of electricity man can run his factory and machines by it.

All these wonderful appliances have come out of the realm of the mind so that this future of humanity is forestalling such wonderful things that we cannot even grasp the perfections and the virtues that will become manifest in the long distant future. Now all these miracles all these sciences and dogmas, which have appeared from man do not belong to the physical part of man but they belong to the spirit in man. Otherwise if this material body, this flesh and blood was capable to produce these wonders then the dead corpse could do the same thing. There is a mysteriously far-reaching power in man that is called by the scientists as the inner force in man—it is something above and beyond incomprehension and at the same time they associate it with all these accomplishments. That mysterious force is omnipresent and can bring within its grasp the moral laws of the future generations all the scientific laws of

humanity, and in fact demonstrate all that is tangible and intangible, showing that this body is weak while the spirit is all powerful. The body may be asleep while the spirit is awake. It is this power against that science with the events in the East and of the West. You may be living in the western hemisphere but organize affairs which are a thousand miles away from you. The independence and individuality of this force aside from might is well demonstrated because it shows the deficiency and perfection of the five senses, which are the basis of all human knowledge.

In the dark night when the great heavens your highest ? bound the millions of stars twinkling. You see small globes while in reality each one of these globes is a universe in itself, showing that the sight of man which is the scientists define as a measure of knowledge makes a mistake by taking these stars of vast magnitude as small and limited globes. But the intellectual power and energy which is in man has described these globes not stationary as they were taken by the old astronomers, but as great worlds in themselves and if we read in the Scriptures when the Second Coming of Christ approaches the stars will fall down from heavens.

In the early morning, when the sun draws from the eastern horizon with all its glory, the eye detects it as rising higher and higher toward the summit of the heavens while the spirit of man tells him that it is not the sun that is moving but the Earth is revolving. This shows that the sight makes mistakes while the spiritual power in man clears them up. These few instances demonstrate as near as they can how the sight makes mistakes and commits errors while the spirit in man rectifies and corrects those errors showing that the body is not the spirit, neither is the spirit the body, they both are distinct forces.

When you are hesitant about undertaking a certain work you are not sure whether you would like to do that thing or undertake that work, that good spirit within you generally leads you to do what is best. If one follows the guidance of this inner spirit he is more apt to strike the best than if he follows human nature, that is why the ancient philosophers have stated, "I think, therefore I am." The power of thought is the greatest proof of the spirit within man. In occupying one's own self with the material problems of life with the increasing wants and desires of humanity, man has forgotten the of his spirit and the of the inner life within him.

Man is composed of two worlds, the material of the physical world and the spiritual of ideal world. The material world is limited while the spiritual world is unlimited. Now and then that spiritual world which is ideal becomes so powerful in man that he overcomes material limitations, and gains the insight into that divine realm and divinity. The world of dreams is a world which often is that divine realm which is in the brain and in the heart of ma. For instance, you are lying on the couch, you are in rest, neither your hands of feet are working, but the spirit being omnipresent overcomes those

mysterious laws and... that laws from the spiritual vision of the world. The dreams are not imagination, all of the dreams are not the results of human conditions because sometime while you are asleep you are entering a city and you meet a man and talk with him and go over certain parts of the country and cover certain space and when you wake up you find you have not traveled at all and have never had those experiences in your life. But say three of four months pass and you enter that city and you meet that same man and talk to him the same as you did in your dream..... had power to come into the near life and conditions and there are few souls who have not had these experiences during their lifetime. Even in state of wakefulness now and then man thinks of a puzzle of the solution of mathematical or scientific problem, he cannot solve it and suddenly as though a lightning flash from the unknown realm through the kingdom of his brain and the brain becomes illuminated and the problem is solved.

What is death? Death is the decomposition of the solar element of the body. Or in poetic language it means to put aside one garment and be clothed in another. Often this question is asked, "when a man dies and the soul leaves the body, where does it go?" This is the answer: the soul leaves the body becomes dead and returns to its constituting element the material world, and the Spiritual world and the material world are not like a two story house and when the spirit leaves the first story goes to the second or the higher story. The spiritual worlds are within us and when the body dies the spirit continues to live. Consequently all the theories which have been built up in the past about Heaven or Paradise or the ideal world so far remote from the mind of man were simply human inability in trying to find out where that spiritual world was. But, today we know that the spiritual world is within us.

On the other hand, the Maker of the Universe has [created?] all the millions of globes that are... laws, which are,...and without the shadow of turning. Now just as the law of attraction between the various globes keep them together and they are in constant communication with each other, likewise the spirits of men, whether they are in the human body or disincarnate have material communication with each other. By the communication with the spirit I do not like to convey the idea that for example a living spirit and a dependent spirit communicate with each other. It does not leave its message to those just to come down but it sends forth into space its message to those developed forces in the souls. The greatest proof of the mortality of the soul is the proof that man, from the beginning of creation, has been growing and developing spiritually, and adding to the form of his thought ....

The lights of the spiritual world are continually shining upon the material world and that here the law of progress and growth come in because by constant attention the spirit of man revives greater assistance. So that today in looking at an architect we can in reality

see the spirit of all the past architects like reading the poems of a poet. The law of growth works in accordance with the ascents of man, when man dies his material elements return to the soil. They are deposited into the soil and making-up the plant life that animals eat which in turn man eats and consequently man passes through these ascents and descents and in time they come into higher and higher realm of manifestation.

If man had a seeing eye or a hearing ear he would have asked of what is his body composed and what has it been doing and where it has been traveling during the millions of years and they would hear a marvelous story—it would have told us that in every circle of life through which I have traveled I have gained a definite virtue and then into the higher and higher place I would go and into all these spheres of life I have brought with myself all those material and ideal qualities which were necessity for the character of man, who is the highest creation in this factory of God.

Suppose that we could imagine in our minds all these material elements of the body which are decomposed and our natural elements which will be scattered in different parts and that within a million years again these individual elements with which the person's body was composed would be brought back together and forming a body similar to this and far fashioned indeed. When the Prophets speak of Resurrection that the spirits within these bodily tombs become engaged with material things they become dead and when a new life comes into the world He blows over them the power of the Holy Spirit and arise and become new creations, for example in the Day of Christ they were many dead people, dead spiritually who became alive through the power of the Holy Spirit. Both Christ and the other prophets predicated that there would come a time when there would be a Universal Resurrection that all the dead souls in the tombs of other people would be quickened and then we would have a paradise on the face of the Earth. And this Resurrection would bring into the world new conditions, people would be ruled by Love and Love would be the motive behind every action, and all the heavenly qualities will be revealed through the temple of man. In other words, the Kingdom of God will be established on the face of the Earth and the moral world will become a [part?]of the higher. Now, this is the interesting part: we are living at the dawn of that day. Far and beyond the dim and noise of humanity there rises the sweet and interesting melody of peace and brotherhood and joy, that out of this confusion will rise all the spiritual condition of this Glorious Age. The dawn of this cycle of human power was brought upon the sleepy world of humanity seventy years ago when Bahá'u'lláh gave His mission of brotherhood and universal peace. He did this in Persia and immediately all the dead souls who were awakened began to spread this Heavenly Message to thousands of people all over the world.

When I reached this country a few months ago I found that even here the people had reached this Message and that this great moment is working in the hearts of humanity. That this work has been working in the hearts of man from the beginning of creation because man as man is a searching and investigating animal; he has desired to know the mysteries of creation, or, in other words, he wants to find God. In the early stage of humanity and civilization, man was looking at the wonderful manifestations of nature and began to look for the great force that was behind these outer manifestations and consequently he began to pass within his mind that explanation. Now and then he took the mountains or the sea or the rivers and called these Gods—these were the explanation of the primitive man regarding the Deity.

They thought that God was in the thunder and lightning represented Him and all the other material forces of nature. These ideas existed throughout many centuries and the animalistic belief began to develop in those early days, which was prevalent in the time of the Jews, and they called their God Jehovah, which means “the thundered”, and He lived in the highest heaven, and was a great and powerful man sitting on a throne and [singing Hallelujah]. The great Mystic Man had created the world thousands of years ago and now He had nothing to do but listen to the angels and once in a while He would leave His mansion and go upon Sinai and have long and confidential talks with Moses and then God would go back to His home and Moses would bring the Message that He had received down to the people. Even after Christ, in many early readings we find pictures of God sitting on a throne and the son of God sitting at His right. But just as the spirit intimates the body, the world of humanity is animated by the spirit of God. God is not a physical body so that He has hands, and feet; it is a pure Universal Intelligence and Infinite Truth and penetrates the very soul of the Earth. It is everywhere.

Now what did the Prophets mean when they said that Christ would appear at the end of Ages? What is this appearance of God? If He is not in a body, then how can we see Him? Christ did try to convey a clear glimpse when He said, “God is love.” Therefore, by the appearance of this thought in the world of humanity we understand that all those heavenly virtues and perfections of the Divinity, universal love, peace and understanding and brotherhood all those spiritual truths which belong to all humanity and they will become so prevalent so universal that God who is universal love will appear in the a semblance of humanity. When spiritual love, international justice, and universality become so expressed through every act and deed in men and women, then we have God in our midst, and Christ and the Spirits of all the Prophets past, present, and future, for we are the lovers of the Spirit and not of the body. This has been a very lengthy talk and you have become fatigued.

## “The Bahá’í Movement”

Date Unspecified 1921—Seattle, Washington

LECTURE DELIVERED BY MÍRZÁ JINÁB-I-FÁDIL [TO THE] NEW THOUGHT  
CONGREGATION

The subject to be discussed tonight is “The Bahá’í Movement.” As an axiomatic fact, you will know that all the spiritual revelations and divine religions have sprung out of the mysterious heart of the East and from there have promulgated throughout the expanse of the Earth. The seven great religions which have directed, uplifted, and elevated the hearts and the minds of millions and millions of people toward God throughout the centuries have come out of the Orient.

What has been the primal aim and object of these spiritual outpourings? Unquestionably, their primal aim has been to promulgate the laws of morality and ethics and we cannot conceive of the practice of the laws of morality and ethics in this world without their first being centered in the heart of love and unity. As we study deeply and thoroughly the writings of these Spiritual Founders, we realize more and more that the principles upon which They founded Their religious systems were Universal Love and the Unity of Mankind. Notwithstanding the presence of these religions, as we observe impartially the practices of the children of men, we see that there are conflicts, turmoil, strife, differences, and all kinds of creeds and superstitions. These religionists read their sacred books, and kissing those spiritual volumes, they put them on their heads as the sign of respect and honor, after which they are placed on the shelf and they go out forgetting entirely that they have even read these great spiritual precepts. To illustrate, if the patients in a sanitarium or hospital go into the medical library, read the medical books, praising and glorifying the names and writings of the authors, always exclaiming, “How wonderful are these laws that these great men have discovered! They have been the benefactors and guardians of the human race,” but never thinking to take the medicine that these great physicians have prescribed for their illness, (instead of using those very books as weapons to wound each other), and so they will never be benefited by this wonderful knowledge. Nothing is accomplished by discussing the differences of these great masters, or making the titles a subject of dissension.

The ages have rolled on while the people of the Earth have been more engaged in praising and glorifying their Prophets than living in accord with the teachings of these divine beings. Not only have we had to fight against religious differences, but racial, national and patriotic differences have engulfed the world of humanity in an ocean of difficulties, strife, and traditions.

The Bahá'í Movement comes, therefore with a clarion call to unity. The Bahá'í Movement was founded in Persia seventy years ago. Its watchword is the spread of universal love, the removal of these racial, religious and patriotic prejudices, and the unfurling of the flag of divine brotherhood in the world of business and religion. The Bahá'í Movement is not a new religion, but a spiritual interpretation of the laws of justice and equity and fraternity, springing out of the conscience and the hearts of mankind, revealing those inner mystic connections which have been overlooked and hidden under the heaps of creeds and imitations. The Bahá'í Movement has introduced into the intellectual arena that element of universality that unites all mankind, and from the brain it has sent those wireless messages of unity, those spiritual vibrations into the chambers of the hearts; thus by connecting the world of the mind with the world of consciousness; by directing the intellectual and emotional forces, uniting them into one, and causing them to serve the world of mankind in a practical way.

This Movement was inaugurated in Persia in 1844 by a young man twenty-four years old whom we know as the Báb. From childhood He demonstrated extraordinary signs of intelligence. When at the age of twenty-four He started His spiritual mission, He proclaimed before the face of His countrymen that whatever abstruse or subtle questions they might have they could bring to Him and although He was illiterate from the human standpoint, His heart and mind were the sanctuaries of Divine wisdom; (vision revealed.)(!?) He would write or answer all questions asked Him in the most marvelous and eloquent language. No sooner did He put forward this claim than the government authorities and the clerical order prepared great conclaves and gatherings of every kind in which the Báb presented Himself. To Him they propounded great philosophical and scientific questions. No sooner had these questions come from the tongues of the questioners than the Báb took -p the pen , and without any thought or meditation, His hand would fly over the paper writing thousands upon thousands of verses. Later on these writings were put into volumes, and have been the source of great inspiration to His followers. He was the Harbinger of a new Divine Springtime; the Herald of a new Spiritual Era. In all His teachings and writings He repeatedly said, "I have come to prepare the way for a great and glorious universal teacher whose name will be: HE WHOM GOD WILL MANIFEST". Thus He introduced into the religious life of the East a new simplicity. He reformed their creeds and elevated them to a higher plane of spirituality, and for six years His principles acted like

a conflagration, like a prairie fire that burns away all the thorns and thistles of human imagination and superstition. At the end of the sixth year of His ministry, He was martyred with thousands of his followers. Hence, Persia to the outside has become one of the most interesting arenas for the study of this marvelous Movement. That country has produced great spiritual heroes and heroines who have given-up their lives as a conviction that they were living at the dawn of a new Day for which they were only too glad to shed their life-blood.

However, the martyrdom of the Báb did not bring to a close this Divine Chapter; rather it opened it to the attention and the study of the whole world, for Bahá'u'lláh, the great divine spiritual Teacher of the Age appeared from that land. From the period of His infancy, Bahá'u'lláh manifested extraordinary power of wisdom and knowledge to such an extent that men of greater age came to Him to enquire about their affairs and ask for His opinion and judgment regarding their business. No sooner would they go out from His presence they would proclaim that this Youth is surely going to become the center of the most significant Movement of the Ages. Bahá'u'lláh immediately began to proclaim those principles, those ideals which are the very life of this Age, the very Spirit of this Cycle, the very light of this dark gloomy world. This Youth, Bahá'u'lláh, belonged to the noble family of that land. All His ancestors had served in the ministry and the government. Therefore, when He came forward and stood for these universal principles of brotherhood, the government being autocratic, though at the same time not being able to do anything with Him, put Him in prison three times. At last they exiled Him from the country of Persia into Baghdad. There He lived for twelve years and the fire of His teachings burned higher and higher. As the Movement became better known, He was again banished from this city to Constantinople, then to Adrianople for five years, and finally to the penal colony in Palestine on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. For twenty-four long years Bahá'u'lláh and His family were confined within the prison walls of this town, but from behind the walls of this prison He sent into the world His Teachings. His Tablets and Epistles were sent to all the leaders of mankind. His advice to His followers in the Orient was: "You must steadfastly, convincingly and persuasively arise in the promotion of these principles of divine brotherhood, and even if you are killed, you must not raise your hand, but know that God will make your cause victorious and triumphant in all the world to come". In His book He stated, "Religion is the essential part of the world of humanity. Man has always been religious and will be religious in the future. Religion is the spiritual food for the constitution of man. Religion protects man from passion and lust. Religion brings to the mind of man light, peace and poise. Religion gives to man that character, that nobility, that self-sacrifice, that self-emulation that nothing else in this world will ever give."

But what is religion? Religion is turning one's heart toward the Kingdom of God. Religion is to empty one's mind from all blame-worthy notions and fill it with all praise-worthy ideals. Religion is service to all the world of humanity. Religion is being imbued with heavenly characteristics. Anything other than these is theology, philosophy, creeds, metaphysics and wrangling discussions over this and that—all of which has brought nothing more than wars, carnage, and bloodshed into the commonwealth of the world.

Bahá'u'lláh stated that all religious ideas must be in accord with reasonable and logical precepts. Any ideas that do not agree with reasonable deductions of science are ancestral traditions; opinions coming to us from our forefathers. These we must forget as quickly as possible. Religion must establish love and amity, concord and harmony among the people of the world. If it brings hatred, war, antipathy, and discord, it is superstition. Such ideas are man-made.

Bahá'u'lláh likewise taught that universality of the Absolute Being, thus going away with all the limited misconceptions of men in regard to that divined spiritual Intelligence. Another principle that He inculcated in His religious system was the immortality of the soul; that the soul of man is everlasting and immortal; that once leaving this body; the soul ascends toward the shining light. Another law was the law of compensation; "As you sow so shall you reap" (?) Again He taught that [Heaven] and Hell are enveloped within man himself. Through his own deeds, man can make himself a spacious heaven studded with luminous stars, or a dark and gloomy hell filled with all kinds of poisonous animals and reptiles. Similarly He said salvation is gained through the character of man and not through any other source. If a man's character is not pure, he is not holy—no amount of water, even the waters of the Pacific, will cleanse or purify him. He taught that principles of oneness of the moral and ethical phases of the religions of the world; saying that they were fundamentally and essentially the same.

Hence, through His spiritual power Bahá'u'lláh was able to unite these contending religions of the East. These religions were so inimical, one against the other, that if one was thirsty and one of another religion offered a cup of water he would not drink because he looked upon him as an infidel. With this divine and spiritual love, He brushed aside all their dogmas and traditions which in past ages had kept them apart, establishing in their stead the law of association and love which are the vital principles of life. Likewise He inculcated, in His System, an education which must be universal—that is there must be an international formula and standard so that all the children of the world no matter where they live, in Asia, Africa or in Europe may receive the same vocational and industrial education. Similarly he taught the principle of universal equality between men and women, which was most bitterly fought in the Orient because the Eastern people had not the same regard for those of the female sex as for the male. This one Bahá'í principle

brought that enfranchisement, that enlargement of opportunity for the other sex which will hasten the true freedom of humanity. He stated that inasmuch as the girls must become the future mothers of the race and must be the true carriers of civilization, they must receive amore thorough education than even the boys, and that equality must go to such an extent between the two—male and female—that the women may finally enter into the Parliament of Man as members and active workers.

He likewise taught the establishment of the Higher Court of International Justice – The Parliament of Man – seventy years ago from behind prison walls. While in prison He wrote many letters and tablets to the monarchs and sovereigns of the Earth urging them to come together and discuss the question of disarmament, making an eternal compact between them, so that in the future there will be no necessity of resorting to the bitter use of the sword for the solution of their disputes. He taught that mankind, no matter where they may live, have the same inalienable rights as regards to those principles of life and happiness and the enjoyment of the fruits of their labor, and, that no matter to what race, to what religion or to what nation they belong, they must be treated as the children of God and not as inferior races.

He also instituted the teaching of an international auxiliary language. Thus, all the children in schools of various countries may study, in addition to their mother tongue, this international language. In this way, when they have grown-up and traveled in different parts of the Earth, they may be able to be the citizens of the world. Difference between the languages has been the weightiest stumbling block in the path of unity and brotherhood; so when we shall have an international language the individuals of the world will be looked upon as the members of one family.

Once upon a time two men, an Arab and a Turk, were involved in a fight. The Turk was beating the Arab because he thought he had called him “a bear”. A man chanced to be passing who understood their languages and religions. He came forward and said, “What is the cause of this warfare?” The Turk replied in angry tones, “This man called me a bear. Look at me! Am I a bear?” The Arab said apologetically, “By God! I did not call him a bear; I called him the Apple of Mine Eye. It seemed the Bear and the Apple of Mine Eye meant the same thing so far as the pronunciations of languages were concerned, but the meanings signified by these similar expressions were vastly different—simply an unavoidable misunderstanding due to differences in language. Another time, four persons: An Arab, a Turk, a Persian and a Greek were traveling together along a dusty plain. They did not know the language one of the other. While walking along they found a piece of coin. The Persian cried out, “I want to buy with this \_\_\_\_\_.” The Arab called to the others, “No, I want to purchase \_\_\_\_\_.” The Turk said, “It is mine. [I] shall buy \_\_\_\_\_.” The Greek said, “No, we shall

buy \_\_\_\_.” Not knowing each others language they fought over the coin. Suddenly, an English gentleman arrived on the scene and listening to the argument said, “Will you give me the money; I will bring the thing all of you want.” They looked at him with expressions of strangeness as if he were from another world. The Englishman disappeared and soon returned carrying a bunch of grapes which he presented to the puzzled brothers and went on his way. Looking at each other, these men exclaimed, “This is just the thing I wanted.”

Reality disperses all doubts and differences; names bring division and strife. Mankind has always been trying to find the one reality under different names, and, as a result, for these many past ages, they have been fighting over these various names rather than over the reality. All of you who are in this hall, all the people who are in this city, in this country, or in the world, are seeking God. Not a single soul, if you asked him, would tell you that he is looking for Satan. All are trying to gain the confirmation of the Holy Spirit: but these names and these differences have stepped in and kept them far away from each other.

If the racial bias could be swept away from amongst the different races; if these religious barriers that we have artificially raised between ourselves could be demolished; if these national greeds and envies could be removed, then we would find ourselves in one assemblage, thinking along universal lines, practicing the Golden Rule and walking in the Highway of Rectitude and Righteousness. Reality is one and indivisible; imaginations are many and multiple. Imaginations and superstitions come through ancestral traditions and teachings. There are likewise many people who are interested in keeping up these superstition and creeds, because if they are swept away they will have to close their shops and go to work. Having never been accustomed to work it is a hard thing for them to yield to this abolition.

This is, however, the age of science. This is the cycle of light. This is the period of human enlightenment, and in this epoch we are to do two things – first to remove all these veils, and then to polish the surface of the hearts from the dust and rust which have heretofore deprived them from the shining rays of the Sun of Reality. This is the time in which mankind as a whole must take the quintessence of the teaching of all the past Prophets, bringing them together like the scattered gems of jewels, and make of these precious gems a divine necklace so that the neck of mankind may be adorned with the Teachings of all the Prophets of the past. This is the era in which, although there may be many races, Mongolian, African, the Oriental and the European, we must look upon all as the various flowers of one rose garden. If, in one garden there were only white flowers, it would seem very monotonous—would it not?

The Bahá'ís are those people who have been banded together from all the religions and all the nationalities of the world, putting

aside all their religious and racial and national prejudices, working along these common universal principles for the salvation and for the betterment of humanity in order that there may be one light, one God, one family, and, of them, the members and organs of one body. For six thousand years, so far as the recorded history gives us any light, humanity has been divided and subdivided through these three optical illusions: the religious, the patriotic and racial prejudice—all of the three being imaginations having no reality behind them. From the consciousness of men and women, forward-looking men and women everywhere, a great liberalizing, energizing sun has sprung, and it is shining with the greatest radiation [radiation or erudition] upon the conscience of their fellow men.

This sun is dispelling the darkness, the clouds and the gloom of these traditions; and making the world one home, and the people one family in spite of all the obsessions and all the seeming turmoil which we have in our minds. This is the era, of which all the bards, poets and Prophets of the past have been singing, the Golden Age about which they have dreamed. We are living in the beginning of this glorious Age and we know that these teachings have come to liberalize [liberate?] the consciousness of men. This is the Age of Internationalism. Any movement which is not international in scope and breadth is doomed to failure.

#### THE BAHÁ'Í MOVEMENT—QUESTION AND ANSWERS

1. In what field other than that of metaphysics is man going to pursue his quests for self, thus contacting these springs of universal love?

Metaphysics in the highest and true sense not something separate from this world. It is the knowledge of the inner reality of the self within and the world without. The physics is similar unto the glass, and the metaphysics is similar unto the light within the glass. The world of nature-perceived has no other distinctive power behind it save the power of God, and the recognition of the world of metaphysics is impossible without the channel and the instrumentality of physics. All our knowledge, even of the metaphysical, must come through the world of nature, through perception and conception. Consequentl, if we recognize and find out the inner reality of nature we have attained to the knowledge of metaphysics – the knowledge of self, and the knowledge of God. The greater the expansion of real divine knowledge of metaphysics, the greater will be the knowledge of physics. The two must go hand in hand, and when we study, ponder and observe the laws of nature we realize that these laws are governed by a supernatural, supraphysical law, and this is again the meaning of that cryptic saying of the Greek philosophers “Know thyself, because the knowledge of self comes through the investigations of the outer

laws of nature, the outer law leading us to the higher and super law.”

2. What is the cause of the different languages?

The languages of the world, according to psychologists, have been derived from three branches. First, the ; second, the Semitic; and third, the Mongolian. All the languages of today are derived from these three parent stocks.

3. Is there a supernatural power other than that of which man is a part?

There is one universal supernatural power in the world of nature and in the world of man. The greater our effort to reveal that “I am” man force, the greater will be our knowledge and attainment. There are no two distinct powers, one below and one above. There is one universal power and all the rest are the branches of that universal potency.

4. It seems that the ideals of the Bahá'ís are the same as ours (Christians). In view of this fact have the Bahá'ís devised any method of realizing those ideals, and how can we accomplish the task of bringing to mankind the realization that their interests in life are identical?

There are enumerable souls in the world today who have the same ideals as the Bahá'ís. The Bahá'ís are striving and making an effort day and night so that through education and through the diffusion of these principles there [will be] understanding between the nations of the Earth. There is no other way to promote these principles other than by work, through training and slow education. Now the Bahá'ís are doing that. It will take time for these seeds to germinate in the soil of the hearts and the minds, but they are being germinated and they are pushing their heads through here and there all over the world. They are verdant and green and probably the next generation they will yield fruit. On the other hand, there are many movements which have as their principles one, two or three of the principles of the Bahá'í Movement; for instance, language by the Esperantists. They have the one Bahá'í principle and they are trying to promote it everywhere and, strange to say, they are working with the Bahá'ís. Those advocating universal peace is another class. The Bahá'ís work with them. Also universal religion, so that in the Bahá'í Movement you have a symposium of all these principles.

5. What is the difference between spiritual power and psychic power as explained by the Báb?

When we Bahá'ís say “spiritual power” we mean that ideal power the functioning of which is in accord with the reason of man, with the intelligence of man, and not that part of it which may have certain unintelligent, unreasonable deductions of certain psychic phenomena which can not be demonstrated. Spiritual power is a

higher power than the psychic power, because its manifestation is universal and it works through the consciousness and through the mind in a practical, serviceable way.

6. What will be the universal result of all these harmonizing forces when finally they are fulfilled?

We shall have two grand results: the first, universal prosperity; the banishment of fear, of poverty, of pauperism and misery; the second, we shall have more time to give to the cultivation of those higher functions of the spirit and the mind, the ecstatic, the artistic and the spiritual sides of life, so that the world will naturally become like a Paradise.

7. How soon do you expect these things to take place?

It depends wholly upon the degree of our effort, or laziness, which we demonstrate. We have around us many whining pessimists with whom we shall never get anywhere, but if we had workers, optimists, full of desire and earnestly putting forth extraordinary effort, we shall get them very quickly.

8. How can we expect to attain universal brotherhood so long as there are certain existent conditions? For instance, today there are certain natural resources from which we shall have to secure our subsistence which are accompanied by certain discordant conditions; can we have universal brotherhood so long as this lasts?

Of course you are right. As long as there are a few shortsighted gentlemen who get under their control, by various hooks and crooks, the resources that have to be shared by all humanity, we shall never have universal peace and brotherhood; but this great sun which has arisen from the consciousness of mankind is going to force those gentlemen to share what they have with the rest of their brothers.

## Address to the Spiritualists Date Unspecified 1921—Spiritualist's Hall

PROFESSOR JINÁB-I-FÁDIL OF TIHRÁN, PERSIA [ADDRESSES] THE  
SPIRITUALISTS

The meeting of the spiritualists belongs to ourselves, because here we find the identical thing that we are teaching and those things of the spirit which are ever pleasing to the mind and also to the heart. You are well aware of the fact that from the start of civilization there have been two kinds of teachings—the intercourse in the world of humanity and the intercourse of the mind and the intercourse of the spirits. Both of them help fit this descriptive world toward its goal of idealism and brotherhood. Just as the child is trained by the mother, and the mother goes through all these kinds of inconveniences in order to bring-up that child until he reaches the age of maturity, likewise the teachings of humanity have been teaching the members of mankind until they have reached the age of maturity. All the inventions descriptive and the various miracles of the mind, which have transformed this world, tell us that they are at the beginning of the Golden Age. When the laws of spirituality and sympathy must wholly be the destiny of man.

The Prophets and ministers and poets of the people, each in his own respective languages, has predicted the coming of this Day, but the only difference in the prophecy is that the Prophet is still alive and living in the Orient. There appeared in Persia a young man of twenty-four years of age who called himself the Báb, He meant by this [title] that He was “the door” through which humanity could usher in, “the door” of the golden past, and the brain of the conscience of man—that higher brain of life and truth. No sooner had He proclaimed His mission when He started to unionize the laws and the creeds of mankind. From infancy the Báb demonstrated his marvelous power of insight and knowledge and His wonderful personality so that when He was a child of a few years those who came in contact with Him realized that His future was to be a most brilliant one, and they later heard that He was the teacher of a great Doctrine, which upheld the truth.

His attractive personality and His loving-kindness and sincerity and devotion were so great that the people voluntarily came to Him to hear His Teachings. Although He had not studied, the name school He had heard of and educational institutions, but no sooner had He put forward His claim then His heart became thoroughly inspired, like a fountain which gushed forth His knowledge. The people could ask Him any question they wished and He would answer or write the answer on paper. When His hand was writing it was the spirit what was doing or inspiring Him. He wrote so rapidly that the people were astonished at His superior knowledge and intelligence. He was like a brilliant torch, which lighted in the kingdom of Persia and like a world-consuming fire, which burning all the thorns and paving the way for broadening human intelligence. The Persian government was much against Him, and they persecuted Him and forbade Him to spread His doctrine. All the peoples were ready to stand-up for Him and suffer all these things and go on.

Within the short space of six years, from 1844 to 1850, although He had to suffer prosecution and undergo the punishment of government authorities, He still opened the minds of the people, and He cried-out that the period of the brotherhood of man is in our midst and we must all prepare our hearts and minds so that we will be able to receive this glorious light. The Báb continued to teach until He was thrown into prison in 1858. The Mohammedans made a big meeting at which the Báb was to be put to death. Thousands of men, women, and children were there to watch this terrible deed, and a great army of men were brought to fire upon Him as He was hanging. They hung him up on a wall and then the men were ordered to fire; after the smoke cleared-off they were astonished to find that there was no one on the wall. He had disappeared, and they ordered men to find Him and bring Him back. They went into His cell, and to their utter amazement they found Him quietly writing. Then they took Him to the wall again and ordered the men to fire on Him and they riddled his body with bullets until He was dead.

Christ's life was like that of the Báb and they crucified Him and they did the same with the Báb. Bahá'u'lláh is the present leader of this new Movement, and He had instituted all the laws for divine civilization for the world of humanity. His books and writings are the same as the Teachings of all the other religions of the past. If you read them, you will recognize that Bahá'u'lláh had help from spiritual inspiration. No sooner had the teachings begun to spread, the men and women of every clime and age came to hear Him, and, when they did, they immediately grasped the depth and beauty of His Teachings and gathered around Him and began to promote the same principles. Bahá'u'lláh had to meet the opinions of the divided oppositions of the monarch of Asia, the Shah of Persia and the Sultan of Turkey. They did their best to persecute Him, they

martyred thousands of souls, and Bahá'u'lláh and His family fled and later were banished out of the country, and He was exiled to [Baghdad in the Ottoman Empire] and there began to spread His Cause and they sent Him to [Constantinople and Adrianopl] and the people of this part of the country began to follow Him, and then He was exiled in Palestine which was the [prison city] of 'Akká . For twenty-four years Bahá'u'lláh lived in the prison of 'Akká , which was a long time, but His faith in God was not shattered, but day by day, from the dark prison, He sent forth the hope and sunshine.

The Sultan of Turkey, the Shah of Persia, the Pope of Rome, and the King of England, and the President of the United States all received a letter from Bahá'u'lláh to plead with them to establish peace, universal brotherhood, an auxiliary language, and do away with this hatred of race and have one universal religion and brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. He lived in prison so long, but in 1892 He passed away, but there was an increasing number of men and women who have been inspired by this Universal Truth and who have gone into the world to spread it and to end this divided [world so that the ] army of light may be established on the face of the Earth.

Immediately after His death, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who also was in prison for forty years, came out and spread this Movement [to the West]. It was said that He was a young man with black hair when he entered the prison, but when He came out His hair was all white. In 1908 the Turks established a constitution and they freed all the religious [prisoners], and then 'Abdu'l-Bahá traveled all over the world: the United States, Canada, Europe and many other countries to spread universal peace and brotherhood, and if you ever came in contact with Him, you will find that the wonderful person (Lines cut off)....

On the slope of Mount Carmel, the history of the Bahá'í Movement is so tragic and dramatic and is filled with the heroic deeds. Nearly twenty thousand men and women during the last seventy years have joined this Movement. The people have watered the soil with the blood of humanity and have increased death, and they did these things to spread a new religion. Just think of the power of the force that gave these men of the twentieth century so much hope that they never gave-up when they had the whole world against them. They had millions of armies against them, but with that Holy Spirit, which was within them, the same Holy Spirit that carried the old Prophets to their goal, inspired the hearts of those heroes of modern times.

When you read the Writings and Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, you will be swimming in an ocean of knowledge; you will be diving in the depth of the very wisdom and power to such an extent that the Teachings of the old Prophets—the Sermon of the Mount and other spiritual beatitudes—will be included in this vase of Truth. Bahá'u'lláh taught the universality of the spirit of God, and

He said that formerly nations had made a grievous mistake in making God national and belonging to themselves to the exclusion of others. But God is the universal Father of mankind, bodiless and spaceless in age and body, and putting God above the limited thought of space.

If we collected all the writings that dealt with the teachings of divinity and universality of the spirit, they will be extra large as they are in the Old and the New Testament. There is a great down-pour of stories about the Spirits communicating with the inhabitants of this Earth like there are rays of the sun. It says in the Bible that, "as we sow, so shall we will reap." We are the free agents, we are the architects of our own fortune; if we sow the barley, we cannot expect to reap wheat. Further on, He said, "earth and paradise, angel and the devil, evil and good, both of them are in man." Through one's own effort one become good, and through one's own enterprise he may become a very successful devil. Likewise, He said all the Prophets, who have come from time to time, are inspired by God. The Teachings also were God-like, but the differences which exist between [Them] have originated by man and man is God man. He said that religion must become the thoughts of love and harmony, and if two souls disagree on some religious idea, no matter how disinterested they may be, both are wrong— that is, disagreement is an enemy to the religion, and they have been banished from the spirit of love and they are unreligious.

This Movement has been spread to establish the equality of man and women, universal peace and brotherhood, a parliament for the universe, and the introduction of an auxiliary language through which the children of humanity may communicate with each other. The Bahá'í Movement, let it be understood, is not a new religion for now we have altogether too many religions in the world and they are fighting with each other over mere trifles. It is the spirit of love and sympathy that we are trying to establish, and it will not help if you join us just to be called a Bahá'í and do not help in establishing firmly our principals which have been the aims of all the former Prophets.

## An Untitled Talk

Date Unspecified, 1921—Duluth Heights  
Fire Hall

We have visited the heights to-day and we found the climate very much similar to that of our country Persia. When I landed in New York, I found that those great big sky scrapers are so very different from the kind of buildings we have in our country that and we did not enjoy them very much. The life of the eastern people in comparison with that of the west is very similar and also have Railroads and electric lights. Inventions, factories, and industrial institutions have not yet been fully introduced in the Orient and consequently the people live the simple and unaffected life.

In the East not having a dense population they can build their houses far away from each other and they are only one or two stories high the utmost. You seldom find a building which is three or four stories high. The western industrial life began to be introduced in the Orient in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and its success immediately appeared in the life of the eastern people. When I left Persia I had to traverse many wildernesses and many countries and cross many Oceans before I arrived in the United States. In many of the cities that I passed through I witnessed the terrific wrecks and the ruin of the worlds.

If we crossed the various seas, here and there one could observe the masts of the great ocean liners that have been sunk by the German submarines; and as you travel through the world in the warring countries you could see various villages and towns and churches and cathedrals and many other structures all in utter ruin. Near the city of Constantinople, and G--? where the English and allies fought in the beginning of the war. For many miles you will see towns and cities completely ruined and in the seas many allied steamers sunk and a few of the masts out of the water.

When I was in France I saw very few young men who possessed all their organs and limbs untouched. By the way I saw thousands and thousands of young men who had lost some of their limbs, and others who had lost their foot, another his jaw, and another his ear, and it was easily seen that the French nation was composed of mostly all crippled men and this was a terrific sight.

Many of the allied nations to-day in Europe are in reality the nations of cripples and when one thinks over the terrible effects of this war, one cannot help but be amazed at the sorrow of man and how the results of the civilization of centuries have been destroyed in a few years.

I went into a place where I was invited into a large meeting where I met quite a large number of groups of these soldiers who had lost their limbs and the General who had not lost anything were representing their stations, but you can hardly believe this because you have been so far away from the scene of war far off in Europe, miles and miles and miles of territory turned into cemeteries, and under the soil the bodies of these young men would have been the fathers and the mothers of the civilization to-day if they had not been killed, as the consequence of it.

There many children to-day all over Europe who are a state of starvation, the Americans have come with food and clothing so that quite a large portion of them may be saved. It is rather a strange sight when we read in the books and papers that the other nations called themselves civilized while they let these terrible deeds go by unheeded, and they call the ancient nations cannibals and barbarians and savages, but they have never committed in the history of the world any such similar acts. If a person steals one dollar according to the old Mohammedan law, they would have cut his hand off; but when to-day they would do this thing they would be imprisoned or fined as a punishment. But take war for instance when a General has ordered the killing of hundreds of thousands of men and destroyed towns and cities and we praise them and tell them how wonderful they are and heroic. And if a man killed one of his fellow men they would bring upon him capital punishment or give him life sentence; but if a Hinderburgh would order the cannons to fire on a whole army of men and destroy them and kill thousands of men he would receive a decoration of some kind from the leader for honorable service. Likewise the ministers of the contending armies of this world are the priests and the religious leaders in their respectable churches which call upon the same Lord to give the Christians generals their wants, and of course it is so difficult to come to a conclusion as to which side the famous Lord has to listen. If Christ had listened to the prayers of all these contending armies now a single soul would be left on the face of the earth. Not with standing all these terrible events the slaughtering and blood shed have been going on the last few years, and still the people call themselves civilized and religious people and they think they are living in accord with the principals of the founder of their religion.

It is an established fact that the prophets of the people have come to teach love, harmony and mutual helpfulness and all these wars have been dreary to the good will of God. There are many people who think that this League of Nations, the members of which are fighting in Geneva and are going to establish eternal and

universal peace, but the rut of war is not in the League of Nations it is in hearts of men, and a thousand Leagues of Nations would do no good what so ever.

During the last six years there has been wars and strife and whenever these wars come temporary truths are established and the simple minded people think it is the dawn of a golden age and there will be no more war, but the roots are still in the ground and they grew luxuriously again and we had another and even more terrible war. Therefore as long as this root of difference and contention is hidden in the hearts of men, the statesmen and the politicians can only fool the simple minds of the people, but they themselves know that those were not at an end and they will continue to water these roots and history will repeat itself.

What are the roots of war? They are several religious prejudices racial, commercial, and superior prejudices which exist here and are really one and consequently as long as we have these conditions among us, we cannot expect to have universal peace. Neither the power of government, politics or economics can destroy these roots. You are all aware of the two Hague conferences in 1898 and 1907 the one who sent out the message to call on the nations of the world to set around the banquet of peace was the Czar of Russia and he was the one who issued the first war against Japan after the Hague Conference. In an illustration to point out the condition of these monarchs and these statesmen who talk so much about peace and they then have a war, it is the same as if supposing a number of wine sellers come together in a conference and each give the most wonderful talk on prohibition and after the meeting they then go and open up their bars and start to sell wine again. Therefore in order to do away with all these prejudices, with all these roots of war there must needs be a divine power the power of the love of God the power of the Holy Spirit which like unto a torrent of pure limpid water that rushes forth from the mountain to wash the hearts of all humanity puts happiness love, fellowship and unity.

There are people who are always looking for miracles to happen as proofs of the prophets of God, what more miracles do we need than this power unite the warring hearts of men and to cement together the contended nations of those countries and establish law and unity where there was formerly war and other alien conditions. If we want to prove the sacred scriptures and sayings of Christ by fighting the facts that He ?????? y are sight to the blind, or raised the dead to life or cast out swine, those people who were there then are now here to prove these statements but the great spiritual life that appears gave to these people the working in the life of man and is shown the greatest shadow of doubt and that is the greatest proof of the workings of Christ and all other portions are weakened and sickened by it. The larger part of the cases are the people who have lost that great regenerative power or force that all transforming

power of the love and unity of God and are holding to certain creeds which are dead and lifeless.

It is said that once a man was very sick almost at the point of death and the family sent for a doctor. The doctor came and prescribed a medicine for the sick man and then he immediately went away. No sooner had he gone when the members of the family gathered together and began to discuss different things about the medicine. One said we ought to give it to him in a glass, another in a spoon, another in bed lying down, the other said it would be better for the sick man to take it setting up and they said the doctor was a quack doctor and so on and so forth they went on discussing all these important events then one of the members of the family went into the sick room to see how the patient was and to his utter horror and astonishment he found him dead. Now that is exactly the same as we are doing to-day. Christ prescribed a medicine so that the patient of humanity could take it, and we are fooling around and discussing facts that do not change the services hardly at all, we discuss the titles certain men should be called and where to build the church and etc.,

We have been trying to establish peace and having Leagues of Nations to do it for us but we cannot, but if we would take the medicine which was prescribed for us by Christ we would be able to do so, and establish universal peace and brotherhood. We are in need of a new power and a new outpouring of the divine life of the people through their hearts and through the hearts of men is the only way this can be accomplished.

During the last two centuries through the spreading of education and culture, this religious warfare is banished away from the western land.

It is now fully seventy years that a new spiritual movement has appeared in Persia. This movement is called the Bahá'í Movement and its founder Bahá'u'lláh, its birth place is Palestine. It is a dynamic spiritual power which has been able to unite all races, nationalities and people. This movement has aimed to unite all nations, no matter what religions, races, colors they belong to and to have one auxiliary language to use.

Most of you have read in your textbooks about a stone which was called a philosopher's stone and this stone had the power of changing all the basic metals into precious metals as for instance changing iron into gold or silver. This was attributed to many philosophers. The meaning of this stone was that the prophets had the power that when the hearts of humanity were attacked with it the prejudices and hatred and terrible fanaticism were immediately thrown away and immediately there appeared love, harmony, accord and sincerity. The Christians and followers of other religions have read in the books that this great power appeared in Christ and the prophets but today when you go and meet the

founder of this spiritual movement you will see the same power of transforming energy in this spiritual teacher. This great teacher Bahá'u'lláh during the last seventy years has raised a great large tent on the mount Carmel where the followers of all religions of Buddha, the Jews, Christians, Mohammedans, and the members of all races and associations and nations have come, you see under this tent Arabs, Turks, and practically all people from all over the world all talking together and appear to be very contented and happy.

Whenever you go to the Bahá'í meeting you will be struck with astonishment when you see northerners, southerners, easterners, and westerners all of them have become like the children of one family, the stars of one Heaven and they are going about with the same divine spirit that existed in the days of Christ and we feel sure that we are living in the golden age, in the beginning of a new age where all people are the same and we are like angels in a great paradise.

The Professor is very pleased and gratified that you have taken the trouble to come to this meeting to-night and he bids you all good by, as this is going to be the end of his talk.

## “The Solution of the Economic Problem”

Wednesday, 26 January 1921—New Thought Congregation Seattle, Washington

The social and civic life of Persia is still very much along the pastoral and agricultural state. We are aware of the fact that the life of the ancient races and peoples was more or less along simple primitive lines accompanied by few needs and wants, but, as civilization advanced, the needs and wishes of humanity multiplied until human desires have increased to such an extent that today a man is in need of a thousand and one things to make his life tolerably comfortable and peaceful. The life of the ancient people was very similar to the teaching of Christ when he said, “Live like the lilies of the valley or like the birds of the air. If you have food for today, do not think of the food for tomorrow.” However, very few people under the stressing conditions of present day could actually live in accord with the literal meaning of that statement.

In the Orient, if we wanted to build a house, we brought a few planks of wood or a few branches of the trees, put them together and lived under its shade very happily and peacefully; but here in New York you have these immense skyscrapers sixty stories high. Think how much scientific knowledge, how much technical manipulation of various departments of industry is necessary for the building of these great mammoth structures. Stop and think for just one moment how many thousands of people today must toil under the ground in the mines in order to dig the iron ore, the thousands that are engaged in throwing this ore into the smelters to be melted and put through many other processes that we may have iron for the building of railroads. All this toiling is for our convenience and comfort. Thus in the morning or the evening we may start on our journey and the next day or within a few hours we have arrived several hundred miles distant. This we do off times without seeing practically anything of interest along the way because we move so rapidly enroute. On the contrary in the orient we traveled leisurely on the back of a donkey, a horse or a mule off times taking months and months to reach our destination. In those days they had time to study every kind of plant on the plains over which they travel and by

the time they reached their goal their minds were filled with all kinds of interesting experiences. When coming from New York to the pacific Coast one has scarcely seen any part of the country.

There is no question that the wave of this industrial civilization has come to engulf the world. There is no way of escape. The very tendency of the time is toward complication of events outwardly, but if we gain that inner calmness and poise, that inner simplification, then we can easily bring readjustment in our industrial and social conditions. That ideal being or simple life of the early ages cannot be duplicated today because humanity is not willing to go back. We must go forward with an expansive consciousness developing the material laws of the universe. Hence the greatest problem of this age is the ennoblement of the all work; to look upon work not as drudgery and degrading, but as elevating and as the spiritualizing essence. Just as the blood circulates through the various parts of the body, so work must keep the body of humanity in a wholesome condition. Work to the body should be like the steam for the steamer; it is the energizing and propelling force. In the Orient we have many parasites social and religious. Thousands upon thousands of people formed themselves into a kind of class. One of the unwritten or unconscious laws of these various classes is the constant sucking of the blood from the workers of the land. This they deliberately do without doing anything whatsoever in return, relying wholly on the residue or the income of the workers in the community for their comforts and luxuries.

When Bahá'u'lláh appeared in Persia his first principle in the matter of Economics was the ennoblement of labor, saying that in this age work is worship. Work is prayer. He stated in his writings that the most despicable man in the estimation of God is that man who sits and begs for his daily bread, and the noblest man in the presence of God is that man who works and sustains himself and those who are dependent upon him. He says a lazy man is similar to a paralyzed member of the body or a dried branch of a tree that is good only to be amputated or thrown into the fire. The workers and the toilers of the earth, therefore, are the kings and the sovereigns of this world, because through them there is that constant process of production and distribution making possible the exchange of labor and produce for the sustenance, comfort and happiness of mankind. Similarly, in the realm of scientific investigation, philosophies and theories of any school of thought bring certain concrete and definite results. That school is like a fruitful tree. But if any school of philosophy begins with words and ends with words, producing no concrete or practical demonstration of its efficiency, it is like a wild tree of the jungles which is nonproductive. It benefits man nothing; merely a shade for the indolent. Hence, the very life of this world of humanity is kept up by work, and the workers are like the pulsating organ in the body.

Formerly the matter of the medium of exchange was based upon barter. If one man had a dozen of eggs and his neighbor had a bushel of wheat, according to a certain arrangement they would, or upon a certain specified \*\*\*\*\* exchange these products.

The history of Economics tells us that the Phoenicians, which were one of the first seafaring nations, were the ones who introduced money as the medium of exchange, as a result of which gold, silver, copper and the various other things came into the market of the world. The original idea was to \*\*\*\* work the basis of exchange and when they brought money into the market \*\*\*\* idea of those who made this original idea current was to facilitate this matter. For example; I work eight hours and gain a certain sum of money then I go to the restaurant and give that money for the work that the cook uses in preparing the food, then the cook who has also somebody working for him in keeping up a house in turn transfers his money to that person, thus a circle of exchange is made based entirely upon the thought of work and not the thought of worth of the money. Therefore, that which causes the affairs of the world to move is labor. Thus, you see, money is, in a sense of speaking, crystallized labor and the aim is not to allow too much of this crystallized labor to be accumulated in the hands of a few people, but that it may circulate through the organs and members of the body politic. That which ennobles or gives to capital or gold its worth is labor. Were it not for the sake of labor in the center of this earth there are bushels and bushels of precious stones worth millions and millions of dollars that would be worth nothing. The mistake of many people can be attributed to their interpretation of the Golden Age or the Golden Rule. They want to transmute it into a Rule of Gold. The Golden Rule must be applied in our relations of life from an entirely unselfish and spiritual standpoint. The Rule of Gold transforms this glorious law to one of selfishness, greed and envy. The wealth of the world belongs to the whole world and if we find here and there a few people who have monopolized either the natural or the productive resources into their own hands, they are like those who went into the country and being the first ones to reach the caravans they despoiled them of all that they had. Leaving the members of the caravans in the state of destitution, they went on their way to live in orgies of luxuries and thoughtless extravagances. So it is with the world at large. These colossal sums that are hoarded in this manner are misused instead of using in those channels which would bring the greatest happiness and prosperity to the largest number of people in a community. This state of affairs has reached such a stage that it can scarcely be borne longer.

The laborers and the toilers are already giving at least, either through direct or indirect taxation, one third of their income for the upkeep of destructive means which bring upon the heads of humanity only disaster and misery. The selfish and self-centered capitalists are like that man who while two persons were working

whole-heartedly and with the greatest desire to help themselves, suddenly, either through intrigue or through sheer physical force and brutal strength, came between them and took away what they have earned, leaving them in utter poverty.

The greatest economic waste is war. It has always been so and will ever be. As long as the people are giving up the produce of their labor to those selfish men at the head of their governments to build vast dreadnoughts, super-dreadnoughts and super-super-dreadnoughts. For each one of these they give forty or fifty millions of dollars and after a few years they must be thrown into the junk shop yielding no productive result whatsoever. When I arrived in France and traveled through that country, I saw all along the streets young men who were crippled and maimed. Now what has been the result of this world-war? Who brought it about except a few munitions factory magnates, a few statesmen or politicians whose one aim and desire in setting the world to burning with the fire of hatred was that of the selfish furtherance of their own aggrandizement and other interests, which were far below the consideration of God and humanity. When the war was accomplished, each of these warring nations and governments proclaimed to their fellow nations that they were defending their own rights and vital interests, their own honor and flag. Of course, there has never been an impartial tribunal to pass upon the validity of this statement; to say just which of these great nations have been truly defending their own right, because all of them in their blue books, their red books and all other kinds of books have been crying out to all other of their sister nations. "We have been attacked; our interests were at jeopardy, and for this reason we arose to arms.

There is a story in Constantinople about a fat priest; and generally they are fat, especially their necks. This was a Mohammedan Priest and he was praying in the mosque. No sooner had he begun his prayers than into the mosque came a man who took his place at the door just to watch him. While watching the priest he was suddenly moved by the usual spirit of mischief which made him wish he might find somebody who would be willing to slap the neck of this sanctimonious priest. He looked around and sure enough there was a man standing at a short distance. The first man called to the second, saying "Will you slap that man on the back of the neck?" The man replied "No, I could not do that." The first man took from his pocket a dollar and no sooner did the man see this dollar than he said, "I'll do it. Just give me the dollar." He took the money advancing toward the priest who was praying. When praying it is the custom of the Mohammedans to bow and then rise up. Just when he was arising the man gave him a severe slap. The priest turned saying, "What is the meaning of this?" The man innocently said, "I beg your pardon; I had a friend with whom I often joked. He had just such a neck as yours, so when I came here I mistook you for the friend and thought what fun to just give him a kindly slap, so

you will excuse me. It was, I assure you a mistake.” The priest continued his prayers. The mischief-maker was still there and showed this man another dollar and said “Do it again.” When he had slapped him the second time, the priest almost lost his patience, but being a genial priest and having certain admonitions in mind, he forgave the man and continued his prayers. Still bent on mischief, the first man showed the second a dollar a third time and urged him to continue this impoliteness. The third offense was too much for the priest. He arose and angrily said, “I am not going to stand this kind of treatment continuously.” The man who had been administering the kindly punishment said. “I will be frank with you. Just as long as thy neck is so fat and shiny and so long as there are dollars in that man’s pocket there, you will have to endure this friendly greeting.” Now, this is only a story, but it well illustrates our case; that just as long as there is selfishness in the politicians of the world and there is this quiescent willingness on the part of the toilers of the earth to be taxed and sur-taxed, the world will have to go through with these processes of wars and rumors of wars.

Before this great world war took place, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the present leader of the Bahá’í movement made a tour throughout Europe and America giving forth wonderful economic teachings. In all his talks he repeatedly said that there shall arise in the future great strikes and deadlocks, struggles and turmoils between and capitalists and the laborers, and if they do not come together in a peaceful and amicable way, thus trying to understand one another, the world will be facing a most tremendous danger. He also stated that the foundation of all economic justice is love and mutual understanding. If the capitalist has not that love in his heart and does not care to understand the side of his laborers, the struggle will continue indefinitely. He stated that there must be a few laws brought into the industrial world; that just as the ancients tried to overthrow their monarchies and establish democracies; just so there is a thought going on now in the religious world to establish democracy of religion. Also there is a process of evolution going on in the industrial world. When these have been accomplished the world will have been relieved of many of its troubles. Capital and labor can have a great congress and their representatives through joint management, though the idea of profit sharing may easily arrange their difficulties. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said the laborers or the employees must have a vital interest in the plant of industry. Higher wages will not solve their problems, but if, above and beyond their annual expenses, they are given a certain percentage of the gross interest of the industry then the laborers will put all their interest and all their desire into the efficient organization of the factory. He has written detailed laws and you can have them in books. When these laws, starting from the agricultural state and the industrial state, are put into practice much of the stress and storm before the two wings of society will be removed. Capital is like the blood that must circulate throughout all the organs and limbs and muscles and

capillaries of the body. If all the blood goes to the head or the heart and not to the hands, there is something wrong with the economic system. As long as this blood is equally and happily distributed through all the organs of the body, then each organ will perform its distinct function. The eyes cannot become the feet nor the ears become the hands, but each one has a peculiar service to render, which is valuable in its own department. The change that must come in our economic system must come by evolution, not by force and violence, because only these changes which come slowly are permanent and valuable and we learn by our mistakes as we go along and walk in the pathway of development.

In this world, in brief, we are in need of two things. First, adjustment of our economic relations so that each individual of humanity may have bread to eat and the comforts of life to enjoy according to the standard of civilization of the country in which he lives. Second, the application of the Sermon on the Mount or the divine love which is the solving of all human problems. The equalization of the rights of men from an economic standpoint is like the body of man. The spirit that quickens and vivifies this body, no matter how perfect it is, is that love of God and that love of humanity without which all our economic measures will be fruitless. All our disturbances, deadlocks and strikes that come on the part of the laborers, in the last analysis is not so much for higher wages so much as the assertion of manhood and womanhood; that this is a product of commodity to be sold according to supply and demand. In other words, economics is like the glass and this spirit of new manhood and womanhood is like until the light in the glass. The power of the Holy Spirit is flooding the world with a new Water of Truth which is capable of washing away all the sins and temptation of humanity. All we have to do in this day is to take this wonderful Water of Truth according to our capacity to receive. Drink deeply of the divine spirit, bringing it into our lives and make it a part of our social and economic relations with humanity, so that from a material standpoint and a spiritual standpoint the world may receive this balm and this healing spirit, thus standing on its own feet, causing its life to be filled with vibrations of love and a dynamic energy of life.

## Talk at Home of Mrs. Collins Saturday, 26 February 1921—Home of Mrs. Collins

The greatest and most profitable gathering in the world is that gathering in which high philosophical and moral principles are discussed in the light of appreciation. Naturally, there are many clubs and societies in the world that have definite plans and ideas to carry through, whether social, civic, commercial or economic. But the meeting which is brought about for the sake of the spiritual advancement of the hearts and spirit is very profitable indeed. For we believe that the real life of man is not purely physical or material, but it is based on the development of conscience and unfoldment of the possibilities of the spirit.

The Bahá'í movement is not a new spiritual movement. It is a continuation or expansion of the ever-growing longing of the heart of men and women for the greater light and the greater beauty of the mind and the soul.

No matter how far back in the natural history of mankind we go and study the writings and records of various nations, tribes and peoples, we always find that there have been, here and there, groups of men who have been banded together for the sake of spiritual unfoldment and the bringing into their midst of that higher mystic light of truth.

As we go back to the time of Christ, we see that before him there were Israelite prophets; before those minor prophets there was Abraham, and before Abraham, other prophets.

Nay and before them hundreds of other prophets whose names are not recorded in history; in short, prophetic cycles. In other words, the yearning of the heart for the beauties of the spirit is nothing new. Its doors are never closed and its gates never shut.

What was the object and the purpose of the coming of these successive prophets from age to age? What did they mean, and accomplish? They were the doors that were opened before the faces of men so that they may enter into the paradise of the good-pleasure of the Lord and gather the flowers and hyacinths of fellowship and amity.

Another reason for the coming of these divine messengers is this: God is the universal Father, and all mankind are his children. Inasmuch as the Father is kind and loving to his children, he would like to see them surround with his bounteous favors and protection.

Amongst every nation and every tribe God has been sending from time immemorial prophets and guides, so that they might be leading wandering men towards the goal of spiritual vision.

The theological beliefs of the orthodox religions of the past were centered around the idea of a divinity that is personally living up in the heavens on a golden throne, surrounded by many angels, and from time to time he will either come down himself to speak with these prophets, or he will send his angels to take up these messengers so that they may speak with Him. And then these different nations thought that this God belonged to them; that they were in the realm of light and all the rest of mankind were in the darkness and the outer gates of that unpleasant world about which they write so much.

Just as the Israelite people thought that Jehovah was their own Lord of Lords and King of Kings, that he had nothing to do with the neighboring polytheistic nations; similarly other religions held the same opinions in regard to their creator.

Those souls whose eyes are illumined and whose hearts enlightened with the light of knowledge realize that God is a universal lover of all mankind; that his relation is not specially to one to the exclusion of the other; that he loves all his children alike

The favors and the bounties of the creator descend upon all without any consideration of their capability, but if there is any difference in the plan of humanity, this difference arises from the variety of capacity of men, their ability to get and assimilate these bounties; and from this arises the different degrees of the ignorant and the wise, high and low, poor and rich.

That people who in praying raise their hands toward heaven or look heavenward, does not specially signify that God is living in the upper sphere. It is a symbol of the sublimity of the expansive form of the space before them which is filled with the omnipresence of the spirit.

If a person prays aloud, or whispers the words, or simply prays in his own heart, God, being the all hearing one, will hear the call of the worshipper in whatever way he may summon him, or in whatever language he may speak, because he knows all the languages, and more than anyone else the language of the heart. God is nearer to man than to man himself. Unless a man feels remoteness, or himself is remote from God – otherwise God is with him at all times.

One of the Persian mystics says “the Friend” (meaning God) “is nearer to him than himself; but the strange part of it is that I am far

away from Him. What can I do? To whom may I reveal this secret that the Friend is sitting by my side and I am far away from Him, I am deprived of his Society?"

The prophets of God have come into the world so that they may bring the hearts of the people near to the creator; so that they may make them feel and realize that this creator is with them and surrounds them and lives with them, and is in the very depths of his consciousness.

They were the spiritual polishers; they had come to polish the mirrors of the hearts of men so that these mirrors becoming clear and translucent may reflect the rays of the Sun of Reality. Hence if a soul becomes capable to clean and to purify the mirror of his heart from all the dust of selfishness and personal desire and aggrandizement of one's own ends, he will become the custodian of the mysteries of the kingdom, and the rays of the sun of truth will be revealed unto him. But if the heart is not purified, no matter how many thousands of times he may read the same books; no matter on what name he may call morning and evening; he is not saved, nor has he taken a portion of the bounties of the infinite Lord.

What are these mists and dusts which cover the surface of the mirror of the heart of men? They are prejudice, passion, greed, revelries, pride, hatefulness. All these things deprive men of the knowledge of themselves and of God.

Superstitions, imaginations, act as clouds, dark and impenetrable, before the shining of the Sun of reality. They are similar to veils, one after another, which will not allow the mirror to receive the reflection of the sun.

His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh has appeared in this age for this supreme act – to rend asunder the veils of prejudice, racial, national and religious, from before the mirrors of the hearts of men; so that these mirrors, once revealing themselves to the light of the orb of day may become able to reflect all that is beautiful, sublime and creative.

In fact all the prophets of the past have come to render the same service. The difficulty in those olden ages was on account of the ignorance and the gross darkness that covered the face of the earth. Few people were able to consecrate their lives to this glorious service of human emancipation.

But in this wonderful age in which we live God has prepared many materials and physical means, and he has made available these rapid means of transportation which are really the greatest means of uniting and cementing the different parts of the earth together.

During the last seventy-five years Bahá'u'lláh, inspired with spiritual power, uplifted with the vision splendid, has been able to

rend asunder these superstitious veils from before the surface of the mirrors of the hearts of many millions of people; so that today they are all in a state of preparation (of oversoul) and ready to serve their fellowmen and love one another with the utmost self-abnegation and self sacrifice.

One of the greatest achievements of Bahá'u'lláh in this age was the unification of the religions of the world.

It is not necessary to state that today there are so many religions in the world, divided into so many sects and other denominations, and each of these religions and denominations think that the followers of that religion, or that sect, are walking in the highway of salvation and guidance, and all the rest of the world is damned to destruction and annihilation.

This schismatic and destructive spirit, keeping mankind in different warring camps, has divided and sub-divided the people into so many factions, warlike, thirsting for the blood of one another, and brought into their consciousness all those elements of hate and animosity which they ought to dispel and throw into the current of oblivion.

Through the promotion of public education, the democratization of the government and laws, and the general diffusion of knowledge and science, religious prejudice is waning in these United States and other parts of the western world. And yet there is such ill-feeling and aloofness on the part of the different sects toward one another.

It is not necessary to go far even in the history of Europe to find instances of religious wars, such as the Thirty Years War, the Seven Years War, and other wars, the motives of which were more or less theological; and even in oriental countries, the religious fanaticism was so strong, and is still so insistent that the people are ever ready to engage in a war against one another owing to a certain differences in their point of view.

When Bahá'u'lláh dawned over the horizon of Persia, like unto a glorious luminary, he scattered the clouds of these differences and separateness from among the various religions and united them into one harmonious element.

We might state that Bahá'u'lláh discovered the fourth spiritual dimension in spiritual mathematics, which is no other than the unity of the moral and ethical teachings of the seven religions, of the past.

If today in the light of the comparative state of religions we read the books of Abraham, Buddha of Confucius, Zoroaster, Mohammed, Moses and Christ, we will find so many startling parallelisms in their spiritual and ethical teachings, that the only conclusion that we can arrive at is that they were all inspired through the same source, and that source is no other than the universal Creator and God of the universe.

Then why is it in the light of this new discovery that these new religions have been so antagonistic against one another, forming so many parties opposing each other? Simply because of limitations and, traditions, and these traditions and limitations being different in different nations naturally the people were likewise divided, basing their divisions on these dogmas, rites and ceremonies.

Bahá'u'lláh taking the quintessence of the religious books of the past and bringing them into one universal whole, presented them to the devotees of different faiths in order that they might feel the throb of this universal harmony; and today, those who have entered this great community of unity, if you ask them to what prophet do you belong, they will answer; we belong to all the prophets and if you ask them who is your God, they will reply, the universal Creator is our God.

Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists and Zoroastrians, have all left far behind their contending problems and theological discussions. They have washed the surface of their pages from all the scrawling of the past ages and are united harmoniously.

Bahá'u'lláh declared with a clarion voice that these differences of the opinions of mankind, and the varieties of the religions of the world; all these spring from ignorance and limitations. There is one God; there is one humanity; and there is one religion.

The Bahá'ís strive to particularize three principles, three ideals: -First, the universal consciousness of man, this consciousness which was always fettered with mystical ideas of the past; to internationalize the minds of men, these minds which were ever tyrannized over by the limited minds of other thinkers and by story tellers of the past ages; and once the heart and the mind are freed from these chains and thoughts turned into practical human channels of reciprocity the doors of the nations of the earth will be opened.

Today there are Bahá'ís in Egypt, in Syria, in Persia, in Japan, China, United States and Europe. And although they speak various languages, they are dressed according to national custom yet they are molded by the same universal force of love and are thrilled by the same breezes wafted from the garden of truth. They look upon the world as their country. They take the teachings of all the religions as their Bible. They affiliate with all the nations and races of the world from the standpoint of God. That is universal love.

Day and night they are striving to exert themselves so that the surface of this globe may be transformed into the paradise of the kingdom; the children may become the angels of heaven; the ignorant become wise; the blind and the deaf become hearing and seeing; and that there may be one universal God; one universal shepherd; and one flag, with the greatest joy and prosperity.

The appearance of these idealistic conditions will be no other than the fulfillment of the prayer given by Christ to all Christians -They kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

And likewise, in the Old Testament, there is prophecy in regard to the coming of God. Is God a person that he may come down from heaven? He is not a human being in the way that we understand it.

By God it is meant that a day will come when universal love, universal kindness, spiritual attraction, divine association, the symposium of all the heavenly characteristics, focused in a human temple, will be the manifestation of God.

Similarly, what we read about resurrection -it is a spiritual resurrection. That is, the souls of men lying before in different bodies, fleshy and material receptacles, will become awakened, resurrected and spiritualized.

The aim is that at the consummation of the ages such spiritual evolvment will come to pass that the limited man will become unlimited, the finite the infinite. The dark qualities will be transformed into heavenly attributes, and the world of humanity will be transformed into heavenly attributes and into a celestial paradise of light and beauty and harmony and static refinement.

This is the principal aim of the Bahá'í movement for which the three founders, The Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá suffered persecution, imprisonment and many punishments on the part of the autocratic governments of Persia and Turkey; and at last today their principles are widely spread over the distant parts of the earth.

About one year ago I was in Akká. I went there to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the present leader of the Bahá'í movement.

When a person enters Haifa, one realizes fully why the temple or the tent of universal peace is pitched up. The prophecies of the prophets are in process of fulfillment and a great spiritual movement is in activity.

Haifa is built on the slope of Mt. Carmel in front of the Mediterranean sea – the most sublime view that you can ever imagine from the natural standpoint. Here 'Abdu'l-Bahá has his home. He has pitched his tent of universal peace, and every month one, two or three hundred men and women from every part of the earth come to visit him and receive his universal instruction and teachings.

A picturesque sight is their appearance, in their national costumes, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Persians and the Americans, the Syrians and the Egyptians, all sitting around his table, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in his patriarchal costume, addressing them in the mystic and poetic language of Persia, telling them: -

“O people of the earth, ye are drops of one ocean, the leaves of one tree, the fruits of one branch, the fingers of one hand, and the

limbs and organs of one body. Ye are all the children of one God, the members of one human family. These differences which have crept in were man-made, and not God made.”

“Let not man glory this – that he loves his country. Let him rather glory in this – that he loves his kind.”

“Excellency does not belong to him who serves himself and those who are dependent upon him; but excellency belongs to him who serves all his fellowmen with the greatest impartiality and loving kindness.”

“Beware, beware lest ye offend any heart! Beware; beware lest ye injure, wittingly or unwittingly, any soul! Do ye not rest for one moment! Do ye not sit tranquilly for one hour until the time may come when these scattered sheep of humanity may be again gathered together into one flock!”

“The East and the West may shake each other’s hand on one universal platform; the various religions like unto so many streams and tributaries, join the great ocean of unity,”

With these and similar utterances ‘Abdu’l-Bahá instructs his followers; and once their hearts are ignited with this great devoted fire of service to humanity, they go out consecrating their lives to the service of the loving father.

They hold high in their hands the torch of divine illumination to the brotherhood of man.

Having traveled a great deal for the last fifty years, I have witnessed such fires ignited in different parts of the world lighting conflagrations – one here, one there, one in Asia, one in Europe, one in America, one in Australia; and the winds of the Almighty are blowing from all directions carrying away the sparks. From these lighted fires, the flames will join each other, and there will be one universal conflagration of the fire of human brotherhood, setting into flames of service and mutual helpfulness.

Will you tell us something of the Bahá’í thought of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is an invisible divine reality. It is an emanation from the sun of divinity coming down and revealing itself unto the pure hearts.

The Holy Spirit is a river, limpid and pure, flowing from the mountains of truth and washing away all the thorns and thistles of human opinions and ideas, causing in its wake the growth of the flowers of reality.

The Holy Spirit is not corporeal or physical. It is an essence, the effects of which are manifest and evident in those souls who already possess it. When ever these signs become manifest in a human temple, it is evident and clear that that human temple is the tabernacle for the shining forth of the Holy Spirit.

Question: What are the signs and effects of the Holy Spirit?

Answer:

1. Holiness of life
2. Moral courage, spiritual steadfastness, reliance on God, and his confirmation.
3. The inspirational quality of the knowledge and wisdom that will appear from that source.
4. Service and self-sacrifice for our fellowmen
5. An international mind, universal consciousness and the love of all humanity; so that the soul will look upon himself as the father for every human being on the face of the earth.

As regards the trinity – it is in all religions of the past, and it is a truth, because in the prophetic appearances there are always three things:-

God, the unknowable on one pole of existence.

On the other pole, the manifestation or the prophet

And then the Holy Spirit, or the teachings and the instructions that come from God and reveal themselves to the heart of the manifestation like unto the sun.

There is the sun in the heavens which is in the position of the father; and we have the mirror on the face of the earth, which is the manifestation; and we have the rays and the heat of the sun, which are the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is interpreted in various books according to different terminologies.

In one place Christ refers to the Holy Spirit as Fire: - “I shall baptize you with fire”

In the Old Testament, it is always referred to as fire: - when Moses saw it in the burning bush – probably some people take that biblical statement as literal – when Moses saw a fire in the burning bush, that it was really a tree and fire. The fire cannot become God. It is simply a creature of God. It can be extinguished, and God is inextinguishable.

So the real interpretation is that the burning bush was Moses himself, and the fire was the light of divinity shining within him.

When the Holy Spirit appears in a human soul it is like the ignition of fire; immediately there is light, and that soul will arise in the guidance of the rest of his fellowmen.

Question: When the perfection of this cycle is reached, will there be a spiritual decline?

Answer: No. Because in this cycle all religious postulates must agree with science and reason, and therefore there is a period of progressive expansion.

The cause of the religious decline of the former dispensations has been the dogmas, the rituals, which are all unreasonable and unscientific. The religions did not try to put themselves into contact with the scientific discoveries of the earth; they stood stationary, and consequently they were far behind; they declined and retrogression began.

Consequently, the spirit of this age being strictly scientific and reasonable, all the religious ideals must likewise correspond with the reasonable deductions of science. For this reason there will be no decline in the religious spirit of this cycle.

Question: Will the world have another manifestation after it reaches perfection?

Answer: Sure. Because the sovereignty of God is endless. We are not perfect, but we are in process of perfectibility; in a process of becoming; because the world is constantly advancing, and God being the creator of this world he will send his prophets and his messengers for the development and continual unfoldment of the consciousness of man .

This is one of the distinctive teachings of Bahá'u'lláh - that the sovereignty of God had no beginning and will have no end; while former religions believed, and still believe, that the door of prophecy, or the appearance of the manifestation of God, was closed with their own special prophets, and there will never come another one. For example, the Israelite people came to believe that out of the Kingdom of God there will appear no other prophet than Moses. For this reason they denied Christ. But we believe the doors of the Kingdom of God are open at all times, and his manifestations will appear to the end of time for the education and enlightenment of the people of the world.

Question: What is the teaching in regard to future life?

Answer: The teaching is that while man is alive in this physical, life he has infinite planes of the immortal life enveloped within him; that this fleshy temple is like a garment; that when it becomes old, the spirit casts it off and enters into the higher plane of the immortal life. When this mortal coil is shuffled off, then the soul will enter into those spiritual planes and those planes are infinite in number, and the progress of the spirit is boundless and limitless.

Question: Then we always existed, and shall always exist?

Answer: The spirit is indestructible, and has been, and will be indestructible. It is immortal, but it exists. It is self-existent.

Question: Do you teach an ultimate absorption in the divinity?

Answer: The persistence of individuality of the spirit is the foundation of the immortality of the soul. Otherwise, there would be no immortality. So that is one of the teachings - that the soul will retain its individuality for ever and grow all the time.

Question: Did we have individuality before coming into this World?

Answer: Of course. The spirit has always had its individual consciousness, but according to various planes. It is developing all the time, but that individual consciousness has been inherent and when it was born into this world it became manifest. It was in a state of potentiality.

Question: Do you believe in re-incarnation on this plane? or, merely one incarnation on this plane?

Answer: One incarnation. We come into this world, we gain our experience and our developments, and we leave this prison house, this cage, and when we ascend to the higher plane, looking back over the sufferings and the difficulties and the skirmishes that we have had on the physical plane, the prison and cage, we would not like to come back very much. We would say once is enough.

Question: Were the spirits all created at the same time?

Answer: You see we can't say that the spirits were created at any time. They were as everlasting as God is everlasting, and they will be so; so there was no beginning for them. They were there in a world of expectancy, of potential progress; and when the soul is tabernacled in the human temple on this plane it enters into the world of manifestation.

Question: How do you account for the different stages of evolution manifested on this plane?

Answer: The rays of the sun of spiritual evolution shining upon the world are alike, but the souls are in different stages of capacity; some of them are like a thimble, others like a glass and some are like a jar. So each one will receive as much of the rays of progress as he is capable of and will use them for his spiritual evolution.

Question: You used the term "fourth dimension"; is that to be apprehended spiritually or intellectually.

Answer: Spiritually.

Question: May it not be apprehended intellectually?

Answer: Possibly.

Question: Is all the suffering and agony of this last war, and the world in general, necessary in the process of evolution of souls?

Answer: From the divine or philosophical standpoint 1 everything that happens in this world is based upon spiritual wisdom of which we are entirely or partially unaware.

Whenever there has been a war in the past, the wise man has projected his soul into the future and has seen the enlargement of the circle of peace; that out of this war, this narrow selfish circle of greed, aggrandizement and conquest will enter or merge into a larger circle of selflessness and human service and expansion in the interest of peace. This is from a universal standpoint the universal law of God, which is invariable and without a shadow of turning.

Question: Do you admit the existence of evil? if so, explain it. What is the origin of evil?

Answer: Evil is non-existent. Evil is the absence of good. Ignorance, we say is evil. What do we mean by it? We mean simply the lack of knowledge. Darkness similarly, what is it? It is absence of light. Once the light comes you cannot locate it, anywhere; it is gone. Therefore, evil is non-being; non-existent. On the other hand, as regards the origin of evil. There is in man a power which is neither moral nor immoral; it is unmoral. The origin of evil springs from the abuse of this un-moral power toward those channels for which it was not intended. For example, God has given man riches, wealth. Wealth is neither moral, nor immoral. But it is capital. Man has the free will to use this wealth either for extravagance, for luxury, for the gratification of his own passions and desires; or to expend it in building a sanitarium a hospital, or literature or a school.

Again, we go to school and study several years, receive a diploma. We are perfectly free to use this knowledge in inventing poison gas or some other destructive method of killing thousands or millions of people, or to teach our fellowmen those constructive and spiritual methods which would elevate and uplift them.

So, evil is the absence of good; or, in other words, the misuse of the power that God has given to us.

Question: What is sin?

Answer: Sin, again, is the misapplication of those God given powers which were given to us for constructive purposes. We use them for destructive purposes. This impulse to misuse springs, from the nature of man. In man there are two forces: one, the natural, physical, elementary force, and the other, divine, spiritual, moral and intellectual force -whatever you may call it. So there are two wills in man; one is that will based on natural desires, impulses and propensities; and the other based upon the divine attributes and qualities. Many have had this experience - that when we want to do something this inner savior or inner prophet, or this divine impulse tells us that is bad, not to do it.

This is the conscience, the sixth sense, intuition. If we yield to the natural impulse, then sin comes in. It is in the nature of man himself. He has the power to curb this natural impulse and live according to the divine quality. This is really the distinguishing feature between the animal and the human, because the animal is endowed with this natural impulse or instinct, while man has been granted, has been given, this higher impulse and moral responsibility.

## “Persian Mysticism”

Tuesday, 1 March 1921—Santa Barbara,  
California

It is our greatest joy and happiness to come from the far off East and travel through the United States coming in contact with various societies and such gatherings as this afternoon and deliver to you the message from the East. During the last nine months I have been journeying throughout the various cities of this country having addressed ever so many societies on different subjects but the subject assigned this afternoon is the “Mysticism of Persia”.

Our aim by this traveling is to make the West acquainted with the ideals of the East and then carry back the ideals of the West to the East, thus through the interchange of the two hemispheres a heart unity and a deeper consciousness may be born. You are aware of this psychological fact that in reality there is neither East nor West, it is simply a matter of the rotation of the earth that some parts are East while other parts are West and in turn they will change from time to time. Thinking over the many inventions, discoveries and the means of transportation which have brought the distant parts of the earth together one realizes that we are living in a new age and all these practical means are for higher unity.

Our present civilization is so interlocked and complex that if there are indeed certain humanitarian ideals in the West the Eastern people without any prejudices must avail themselves and use them and if there are any great constructive ideals coming out of the East, in turn the Western people must be universally minded and open heartedly welcome them in such way that this wonderful combination may fully born.

Service is not only the practical kind. There are many ideal services rendered to the world—those who have written inspiring poems or have printed a masterpiece, or a book, they likewise have served their fellowmen and we must praise and honor them. In the eighth and ninth centuries of the Christian era, there appeared in Persia a number of poets who went deep into the very foundation of the problems of life. They wrote so many excellent poems and books and they become known as the Mystics, they were called Hafez, he is the greatest lyric poet of Persia; Massanev, the most inspirational,

spiritual poet, likewise Sadi the didactic philosophical poet, and unquestionably most of you are familiar with the happy go lucky poet, Omar Khayam, whose peculiar mysticism has attracted many of the Persian people to his quatrain. One cannot realize the importance of the contribution of thought that these Mystics rendered to Persia unless he knows the religious life of that period, and that was Mohammedan. At that time the Mohammedan religion had become so narrow minded, so fanatical and so ritualistic that these poets not having the freedom of expression, began to express their thoughts and their ideals mystically, symbolically and those who were anxious understood them, while the Mohammedans thought they were heretics and otherwise.

Let it be understood that the mysticism of these poets was not a sentimental, emotional or evaporating nature, as has been the most of some countries like the Indian ..., but their mysticism was scientific, logical for the training of the intellect and the soul. They were so far in advance of their time, their teachings were so radical and against established ecclesiastical order that many of them were killed by those leaders of the religion of the time. These men belonging to the mystical order were called Sufis, and Sufism is a word meaning "woolen garment". They were detached and away from the people and they clothed themselves with long woolen robes and for this reason they became known as Sufis or wearers of the woolen garment. Their teachings were more or less Pantheistic ideas of creation in regard to the divinity, immortality of the soul, the refinement of the spirit and the culture of consciousness so that one may become imbued with that spirit of renunciation and self sacrifice which are the highest qualities of life.

The problem of Divinity or GOD<sup>23</sup> has always taken a large portion of human speculation. In every age and cycle people have tried to find out what is GOD? And who is GOD? Now in that age when these Mystics lived in Persia, the Mohammedan conception of GOD was very limited and anthropomorphic – that is, that GOD was a human being, an old gentlemen with a long beard sitting far off upon a throne and millions of angels singing hymns of hallelujah on lyres. This was their conception of Divinity. One of their religious stories was to the effect that this great and glorious gentlemen, GOD, wanted to have some conversation with the Prophet Mohammad so he sent down from the heavenly abode a horse made of light, he was – (...) who is light. He came down and took Mohammad on his back traveling through the immensity of the space on his back with the mighty Creator and when he returned this long distance was covered in such a short space of time that the chain of the door of his room was still moving.

So these poets began to criticize such theories, knowing that GOD is infinite, is boundless and infinite intelligence and not a limited

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<sup>23</sup> Preserved as it was in the original, as the Christian method of referring to God in all capitals is relevant to how these notes could have been interpreted.

personality. In poetical and mystical phrases these Mystics went on to say that the emanation of Divinity is present in every atom of existence, that the soul and the spirit of this universe is the Divinity. They said Divinity is Truth and Truth is a great boundless, depthless sea, the waves thereof are human beings. They said that the boundless ocean of Truth is unchangeable and everlasting while the waves which appear and disappear on the surface of the earth are the phenomena of the human beings, which just like the shadows they come and go but ocean is ever-existent.

In order to illustrate this spiritual principle they stated "Suppose there is a palace built of crystal of rubies and glass the floor and the walls, the ceiling and the roof are of crystal, a mirror in the center of this hall a divine being standing. To whatever part that divine being looks so will she herself reflect. In the same manner, Divinity standing in the center of the universe and his reflection is in all phenomena."

One of the poets stated this in his lines:

"Whenever I look at the ocean, I see Thee. Whenever I observe the plain, I behold Thee. When I study the mountains and the seas, the meadow, the hills and the valley, I see Thee standing within them beautiful, mighty and supreme."

Another one stated:

"If thou split the core of an atom thou shalt find therein a glorious Sun shining."

"The green leaves of the tree in the estimation of the wise man is like unto a volume teeming with the knowledge of the Almighty."

They said if Divinity was enclosed within a body then he would be a creature and a creature is always in need of a Creator and thereof that concept of Divinity will be lower than the Divinity himself.

Another principle of these Mystics was this, that the human soul is the collective center of all phenomena. They taught the Spirit of man is a great mine which is introspected, when the Great Prospector comes he will find in the depth of the mine of the Spirit untold gems of idealism and unselfish principles. In the past this human mine of Spirit has been covered by the rubbish, with the slugs of human imaginations, of fanaticism and narrow mindedness and our duty is to try to clean the surface of the mine from all this rubbish so that the jewels may appear. How can we prospect this inner mine? How can we exhibit and display these spiritual jewels within us set? We must travel in the Kingdom of the soul, there must be inner journeying.

They had many disciples and various schools of hardship through which they went and when they came out they thought that they had gained strength, perception and a vision. One of their systems of self discipline was to seclude themselves either for forty days or

twice forty days from the association of their fellow beings and then during that period they would lessen the amount of sleep and food, they did not speak with anyone but always concentrated and thought within themselves. Through this process of introspection they gained that equipoise, that equilibrium and that illumination after which they were able to write the most lofty poems and express themselves in the most spiritual language. Today as we read their spiritual ideals we are thrilled with such a joy and happiness and they are so attuned with the modern consciousness that they lived several hundred years ago it seems as if they had been contemporaneous with us.

One of these great Mystics, embodying the ideas of Brotherhood says:

“Humanity are all the limbs and organs of one body because they were created originally from the same substance, if one limb becomes afflicted with sorrow or suffering, all the other limbs of the body will automatically suffer.”

Another poet says:

“O thou who art not aware of the suffering of thy fellowmen, it is not worthy to call thyself a man.”

Another one says:

“I shall read thee from the volume of life a few lessons which shall carry thee through the conflicts of life.”

“Be thou not less the fruitful tree, for whosoever stones it it will give back fruits.”

“Just as to scratch or to dig the surface of the mine and the mine gives back the jewels, likewise if they harm thee thou must give back kindness and happiness.”

So these few instances will give you an idea of the teachings and the principles of these Mystics of generations gone by. Naturally the teachings of these Mystics were not simply confined to Persia; there were many poets and many writers, prophets and Messengers in different parts of the world who taught the identical lessons Christ Himself was the greatest Mystic and spiritual Teacher, because he came to embody in the life of men that practical mysticism, that spirituality and love which is the corner stone of our life and without which our life is a shallow agnosticism.

On the other hand, while these poets and prophets have written so many excellent volumes and have given so many spiritual lessons, there have been likewise men who taught slaughter, warfare, cynicism and materialism so that the age had to fight against these things. Reading the history of various periods, we realize that at the very time when these prophets were teaching the lessons of love and sympathy, there were going on wars, struggle and slaughter. As the civilization advanced the science of human

slaughter became more perfect. When we compare the condition of modern civilization with that of the ancient aside from the various means of slaughtering which have been brought about, the keen competition which exists between the nations of the earth, the great conflict waging between the various classes, the spirit of brotherliness and co-operation and reciprocity is lacking. If in former ages the combatants killed each other with javelins, spears, slings and primitive methods of warfare, today we kill each other with bombs and mines with great cannons, which gasses and with various other improved machinery, destroying the lives of millions of people. Although the greatest suffering that were brought upon the world through the world of war were tremendous, America, considering the size of the population and the wealth, suffered less materially than the rest of the world because she was so far from the scene of actual struggle, but Persia, being a neutral country, suffered as much if not more than the Belgian people because at the end of the war at least one-tenth of population had died through famine, sickness and various other causes.

The persecutions which were heaped upon humanity were not simply through the war but came after with its ill effect, for example when we think of the millions of children starving in Europe and Asia, of the great famine raging everywhere in different parts of the world, we must not forget that these are the direct outcome of the world war. Had we not engaged in that colossal conflict today those countries would have been in the cradle of peace and prosperity. An example of the people of today is like a number of sick people who go into a library of medical books, they study these excellent prescriptions, they praise the authors and they sing to them songs of glorification but they never think that they should take the medicine and heal their diseases. There is a story of a man in Persia who became very sick and brought a physician, but when the prescription was given and physician left the nurses came together and began to discuss the advisability of this medicine – whether they should give it to him sitting up or lying down, waking or sleeping, whether the Doctor was an allopath, a homeopathic or a chiropractor, or osteopath, or what kind of path, but by the time they came to the conclusion one said, 'let me see how the poor patient is,' and when they went in the room the patient had already died. Of course we can sit or stand up and talk to the end of the world about the beauty of the ideals, the genuineness of the sentiments, the wondrous conceptions of these poets or the prophets but as long as we do not try to live by them there will be the same bitterness amongst the people, the same lack of confidence, the same suspicion.

When we take the history of the vanished races and nations of three, four or five thousands years ago with the history of the nations that live today, from the standpoint of peace and brotherliness and spirituality, we have hardly made any progress,

we have changed the names and not the reality. It is not so much how we may modulate our voices, how we may express our thoughts in the most eloquent language but how we achieve to put into practice these principles and truths that these poets and prophets have given us. Although we may not know the names of these leaders of thought, we may not become acquainted in detail with the system of their schools of ideals but we know the way and that is through love, unity, practical humanity and our problem in this age is how to unify, how to codify and how to co-relate these sentiments and ideas into one harmonious whole for the better relationship of mankind. The thinkers, the jurists and philosophers have discussed this matter deeply. What instrumentality in this age can we take hold of that may obviate these difficulties? Some have said the League of Nations would do so, others have said the Court of International Justice, others have said the Association of Nations will bring about this universal well being, but no matter how many of these panaceas are offered, how they are practiced, as long as the root of war, the root of misunderstanding and suspicion is in the hearts of the people, we cannot avail ourselves of these outer agencies. What are the roots of war-race, national, personal and religious prejudices? Suppose we have a League of Nations, or we have an Association of Nations and we send numbers of statesmen to these gatherings of mankind, who are still tainted with this various dyes of conquer, who think how they could take advantage of the weaker representatives so when they return to their country they may be applauded and carried on the shoulders of their fellow countrymen, unmindful of the good of the whole, such a League will be simply called a debating society.

There is a story which happened in Constantinople, in the mosque of St. Sofia there was a Mohammedan high priest standing in the corner of the mosque praying. Naturally the priests are very fat they live on the fat of the land and have very shiny necks, so lo and behold a rich man entered and saw the priest praying, he called in a poor man at the other end and said "Can you go and slap on the neck of this priest." The man said "I cannot do it he is a high honorable gentleman, he is a leader of the church, he is revered by all the people." So the rich man took out a shiny dollar, and said "This is your reward if you do it." When the man saw the dollar he agreed and while the priest was concentrating on his prayers went and gave one hard slap. He looked up, whereupon the poor man said "I beg your pardon I thought you were a good friend of mine, you look so very like him." The rich man asked him to do the deed a second time but received the reply "I cannot." He showed him another dollar and then tried again. The priest angered and was going to take care of him. "I don't know what I was doing I thought still you were the same old friend so I am going to leave this mosque and you will not be bothered any longer." On leaving the mosque the rich man said "Can you go and pat him a third time," "But he will have me in jail" the poor man replied. "One pound this time will be

your reward." "All right I will go" He went and gave him the third slap, this time the priest took hold of his collar, "Now there is must be something behind this, what is it?" "That man standing there is the cause and as long as he has money in his pocket and as you are sitting here with your shiny neck you have to submit to this, there is no other way."

So as long as humanity are willing to submit to these various mental and spiritual taxations of the people, whether it is the church or the thinkers of the narrow minded doctrines, the prejudices of race, color, creed we have to have these wars and rumors of wars, no matter if we are to have a Leagues of Nations it would not help the matter at all. And then the very fact that we have had all these books, we have had all these excellent precepts given to us by a long line of prophets and teachers, and we have not lived up to them, therefore what proof have we that we will be more spiritual in the future and will live by them accordingly.

Seventy years ago there appeared in Persia a Glorious Teacher Bahá'u'lláh, who laid down certain educational rules and forms, the practice of which have convinced us that for the first time in the history of mankind we have something educational and information that can remedy these errors. It is perfectly clear that the greatest service in this age to render is to unite the hearts of men. We are in the intellectual or the spiritual or the economic world to take away chaos and insure order and love and we have after long study in psychology and educational schemes found out that the children are the plastic materials, on the minds of which these constructive and universal ideals must be imprinted. Pedagogies likewise proves to us that when the children are born they are like white pages, they are similar to clear mirrors on the surfaces of which one may write anything and cause the reflection of any image. The parents are dyers, just as we have dyers of cloth, the parents and teachers are the intellectual and spiritual dyers. They dye the mind and spirit with fantastic hues, with various kinds of dyes, therefore from this modern standpoint of the system of Bahá'í education they start their training from that tender age and give them the right concept of life up to the age when they leave the school.

Those who have been trained under the tutorship of Bahá'ís wrote a series of books containing the quintessence of the ideas and ideals of the past poets, of the great prophets, paralleling them and showing their similarity and that humanity is one, and when they studied these books and after leaving these schools they are the lovers of the world of humanity and the lovers of their own kind. When these students come out of their schools if someone asks them "to what country do you belong?" they will answer "The world." "To what nationality do you belong?" they will say "Many." "What is your religion?" they will say "The religion of love, the religion of universal Brotherhood." So when these Bahá'í students come out of their colleges or educational institutes they are imbued

with world citizenship, they look upon this whole world as one home and the inhabitants as one big family. Even during their course of study, the colleges being undenominational, they come in close contact with other's religions and come to know a great deal of each other's ideas, thus forgetting their prejudices and live together peacefully and amicably.

In short, as we are living in a glorious age, in a radiant age, this is the century in which the quintessence of the teachings of these past prophets must be practiced and the unity of human kind be fulfilled. It is the cycle in which the East and the West must be looked upon as the two hands of the body of the common wealth of man, each hand filled with the blood of health of knowledge and spirituality so that they may be able to carry the load of another civilization. So that the world may become one home, the people as one family, as the fingers of one hands, as the flowers of one rose-garden, the stars of one heaven, the leaves of one tree and the birds of one meadow.

Having traveled a good deal in different parts of the world, I have witnessed that it seems we are not tired of war and through with sowing the seeds of misconception and the superiority of one nation against another, we are still teaching to our children ideals which are based upon past exploded glories, exploded theories teaching them racial and national and spiritual prejudices and when they grow up they carry with them these seeds and some day again they will reap the bitter fruit of disappointment and unhappiness.

The ideal of this age is education and education rightly conducted, given in accord with the principles of humanity and not nationality, we are assured that in one century the rising generation will be so imbued with the ideals of love, of brotherhood, of international mind and universal heart, that all wars will be done away with; mankind will live in the cradle of prosperity and happiness and the war will be transformed into a very rose garden where the nightingales of truth and poetry and art and refinement will sweetly sing their songs.

## “Old and New Life in Persia”

Tuesday, 1 March 1921—Santa Barbara,  
California

It gives us the greatest joy and happiness to have come here from far off Persia and to find ourselves quite at home in this far away land in the West. Not a little of this joy has been brought about by the privilege of staying in the beautiful Samarkand, in which we find much to remind us of our native land.

Probably you may know that Samarkand was one of the greatest and the most beautiful city of central Asia in ancient times, and was then the capital of Persia where the high ---? ruled, whose tomb may still be found there. This hotel reminds one a great deal of the Arabian Nights, with its magical lights, its beautiful coloring and its architectural lines so like many of the palaces of those times.

The country of Persia, according to history, may be regarded as the cradle of ancient civilization. The old Persia is well represented in the history of Greece and Rome. In the wars which later took place between these countries, ancient Persia gave to the world many warriors and conquerors, such as Gambia? Cyrus the Great, Camlys and others. At the same time it gave also many poets, writers, scholars and philosophers. While the warriors and the conquerors were engaged in fighting to extend their dominion through their influence, the poets, romanticists and various others of scholarly minds sung the praises of peace, love, joy and comfort.

We may read a great deal of the history of Persia in the old Testament, where we are told of the captivity of the Jews, -how Cyrus the Great took possession of Babylonia and sent the Jews back into Palestine to build their homes; and for three hundred years, under the Persian dynasty, the Jews enjoyed freedom and happiness. Herodotus and Xenophen, the two fathers of ancient history of Greece, give a detailed account of their experiences amongst the Persians, of the conquest of the Persians by Egypt, and their reverses in Greece.

In ancient Persia there were a few sciences and arts which attained unusual development. For example, the art of painting; and even today, the miniature paintings of Persia are well known to all artists. Music was another art which received considerable

development. Much attention was given to the study of architecture and to the sciences, including medicine.

M-----? whose name is well known in the history of Christianity, was one of the most skillful painters. Often he would reproduce on small pieces of paper as many as 400 different figures of men, animals and scenes of nature. These were clearly outlined and most symmetrical. He was regarded as a prophet, and indeed, as long as he lived, there was never any other person who could produce a similar painting.

In the domain of music, the Persians likewise played a great part. There was a most wonderful musician called ---? who had invented a small musical instrument, and the King invited him to bring it to his palace and to play before his court. All the nobles and courtiers arrived, and when the artist came on the platform, all eyes were turned upon him. He first played music of such joyous and sparking nature that every one rose from their seats and began to laugh and dance in harmony with the sentiment aroused by the music. Then he suddenly changed the air, and the tones that followed were sad and weird; at once his audience changed from laughter to tears. Again he changed to tones that were soft, sweet and soothing; these he continued till his audience fell into a quiet, dreamy mood. Softer and softer the music grew, then stopped. The guests raised their drooping heads and lo! the artist had left the platform.

In the realm of architecture, there are still extant many ancient relics of beautiful buildings and palaces formerly occupied by the monarchs of the land. One piece of architecture of Grecian type is found near --- in the central part of Persia. It has come down from no one knows what age, but has been standing for many generations. It is a very plain building having two wonderful pillars on each end. When one ascends the pillar at one end, the other pillar begins to tremble, and soon the whole building shakes back and forth. It is a strange and peculiar motion which no one has ever been able to explain. People for ages past have visited this building, have walking around it, but none have been able to explain the mystery of this temple.

The first clock was invented by a Persian in the eighth century of the Christian era. It was sent to Charlemagne as a present. When it was brought before him, there were many people present, and it excited great interest. They did not know what could be inside the clock that caused the motion; so finally they decided that it must be Satan, and that the clock must be opened. But when they opened the clock and found no evil spirit, they concluded that Satan had escaped.

The records of the middle ages show that Cyrus the Great and other prominent men of that time were sent to Spain to become familiar with the methods of European civilization which existed between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. As a result of this movement,

there was the production of the Persian textbooks on literature, medicine and architecture, which were so popularly accepted that the Arab was able to build the Alhambra, the most beautiful and artistic piece of architecture in the world. So widespread became these textbooks that the French came to Spain to study philosophy from the Arabs.

A few instances will show how wide was the interest of the ancient Persians in various kinds of sciences, in industrial accomplishment, in art and in poetry. You may be surprised to know that the very word "astronomy" is of Persian origin, being a combination of two Persian words meaning "book" and "star". Again Persia gave to the world many poets, who wrote verses about the scent and color of the rose, and the song of the nightingale. Among these was Omar Khayyam? whose translation by Fitzgerald is quite well known in the Western world. Prof. Brown, of Cambridge University, London, who has given years of his life to the study of Persian literature, writes that he has searched through the literature of the old world, studying its arts, its architecture and its poetry, and has studied the same subjects as found in Europe, but nowhere has he found any language so filled with poetic imagery, so rich in emotion and in fantastic expression, so full of light and joy and gladness, as he finds in the study of the Persian literature.

Similarly, from a chronological standpoint, we know that the oriental language was the root of all the Germanic tongues, and the Persian was that oriental language; therefore, it must still be the root of all the languages, such as the Latin, Greek, French, and others.

The followers of the ancient Persian religion were commonly called fire worshippers. They looked upon fire as a symbol of light and heat, and just as the sun gives out its energetic rays of light and heat to the world, so the inner divine energy or power gives its light and warmth to the mind and heart. Zoroaster, that ancient prophet of Persia, was one of the great teachers of the world. He was the cause of the progress of the Persian nation in the various developments of its life, and the principles of the Zoroastrian religion have formed the mainspring of the social and economic life of Persia. We believe that the formation of the many organizations and societies for the uplift of humanity here in the West may be said to have their origin or their impetus in the Zoroastrian movement which took place thousands of years ago. Zoroaster taught that we must not only be kind and sympathetic toward our fellow beings, but toward animals as well, and indeed, toward every living being. A man must not overload his beast of burden, or treat him with cruelty. He said, "Do not harm even the ant, for the ant has life, and life is sweet and precious."

Such were the conditions of Persia from the point of view of art, of architecture, of science, government, poetry and literature, up to 1300 years ago, when the Islamic movement was introduced into

the land. We can state that although the religion of the Slav was all right, the Arabs were a nomadic race; they were uncivilized; they were not accustomed to that high degree of literary and mental achievement which the Persians had already developed. So, in order that they should be made to realize any benefit from the cultural development, it was necessary to deprive them of some of their freedom, and this was not in accord with their nomadic instincts.

The conquest of Persia by the Arabs was not carried on by persuasion, but by violence. They forced their religion upon the Persians, and when the element of force is used, the people will accept the change in order to save their lives. In this way Persia underwent at this time a very great change.

The first change that became manifest in Persia through the introduction of the Islamic customs and manners was that of the language. The Arabs imposed their language upon the Persians to such an extent that the two became so intermingled that books written at that time contained many, many Arabian words and expressions, even though they were written by Persian authors.

Certainly among the Arabs no art can be found. They looked down upon all arts with suspicion and disgust, and were prone to discourage all artistic development. In this connection, the story is commonly told that the Arabs believed that no man had a right to paint a picture of a living being, because on the resurrection day, GOD would ask him to breathe into his picture life; and being unable to do so, God would say to him, "Why do you paint this picture? You are not a creator; you are an imitator; therefore you will go to hell." It was this attitude on the part of the Arabs that brought about a great deterioration in artistic development at that time.

Similarly music, the greatest of all arts, exercising a power that is little short of the divine, speaking to the world in the language of the angels,- this too, was set aside and neglected, because they believed it would produce immortality.

The greatest destructive change that came to Persia was due to the introduction of the Mohammedan religion and laws into the country. Before these laws were established Persian women enjoyed great freedom and were permitted to mingle with men and women of their own class. This freedom prevailed to the extent that Persia had many queens who administered their power with great skill and success. But the Mohammedan religion taught the inferiority of women. The leaders of any great religious movement have always been wrong to demand that the statements made by the founders of a religion under certain given conditions should be permanent and everlasting. For example, we have in the Book of St. Paul certain references to the station of women, saying that women must not raise their voices in church; that they must obey their husbands as men obey GOD: They state that women have not the brain power of

men, therefore it is not necessary for them to do any work requiring thought; this must be done by men only.

In this complete reversal of thought, belief, teaching, custom and government, we are reminded of a story told of a Persian who had a greatly beloved son, the only one in his family, and he was a bright and wonderful boy. One evening returning from his day's work to his home, he saw his boy standing on the edge of the roof of his home. Fearing that he would fall, he motioned him to move back, saying, "Back, my boy, back." The boy, in his eagerness to obey his father, went back, - but so far back that he reached the opposite edge of the roof, causing as much or more anxiety on the part of the father as he had at first experienced.

During this period, the condition of women across the seas was very pitiable indeed, for they were practically prisoners in the four walls of their abodes. No one could ever look into their faces. Whenever they left their homes, they wore black robes and covered their faces with thick veils. They were not allowed to read, write or study. They were merely paralyzed, asphyxiated members of human society. They were accustomed to say, "What right have girls to study? Their position and place in the world is to take care of the house, scrub the floors, cook, wash, and wait upon their lords and masters."

At the same time there were many religious prejudices which were being agitated among the people of Persia. These religious prejudices brought about suspicion, warfare, carnage and slaughter. In the middle of the nineteenth century there appeared in the life of Persia a new Renaissance and conditions began to improve. In bringing about this change, there were two movements in particular which provided most interest and encouragement to the people. The first movement was civic in character, while the second dealt with spiritual and religious life. The first movement, which was political in character, was composed of a nucleus of young men, bright and wide awake. They felt that something was wrong with the government and with the aristocracy of the land, and so they persuaded the Shah of Persia to travel through Europe that he might have an opportunity to observe conditions there and they made him promise that he would change the fundamental laws of Persia so that they might conform with those laws in Europe which seemed productive of progress and development. For the time being the Shah not only gave his promise but carried it out; and on his return he laid the foundation for universities and colleges throughout the land and the civil and political laws of the western world were likewise introduced and adopted after certain slight changes. Schools were founded and churches established, and a new life sprung up everywhere. But it was not long till the Shah began to realize that his power was slipping, and he endeavored to recall some of the privileges that had been granted to the people under

the modern regime. This resulted in much discord and many conflicts. Nevertheless, Persia advanced and forged steadily ahead.

Of course, the Persians had many political difficulties to overcome, and have yet. Among these was the rivalry existing on the part of the three neighboring powers. They endeavored to take undue advantage of Persia – to gain control of her mines, of her railroads, of her finances, and of various other things, forcing the country into such an unfortunate position that it was difficult to determine just what was best to do. For years Persia has played a game of “hide-and-go-seek” with these rival powers, until finally the great world war put an end to the power of its greatest rival, leaving Persia clear to do some of the things she wanted to do.

The result of the last fifty years national struggle are as follows: first, - the establishment of a parliament; and the complete routing of the forces of despotism. For several thousand years the Persian system of government was despotic. Second, the changing of the laws governing the courts of Persia. Formerly all cases were tried and judged by religious judges. Under the new regime, judges were appointed in accordance with civic laws. Third, the establishment of many schools. Persia has made great advancement along these various lines. Not only has Persia adopted many mannerisms, customs and laws of its western neighbors, but they have learned to imitate them in dress as well, and many of the fashions of Paris may now be seen on the streets and cities. Indeed, Persia is today an odd mixture of the oriental and the occidental, and both kinds of life may be plentifully found.

As regards the spiritual movement which started some 75 years ago, it entirely changed the mental vision and the spiritual knowledge of the Persians. This movement, called the Bahá'í Revelation, was founded by Bahá'u'lláh, a Persian noble, and when he declared his principles he found that he had naturally to meet the extremes of the clerical and governmental rules, as the aims and ideals of the Bahá'í Movement were not national in any sense, but were international. He wanted to learn about the religions of the world, in order to establish better understanding between the East and the West, and to declare the universal emancipation of all women, not only in Persia, but in all parts of Asia. The greatest advantage accrued to the women who availed themselves of the revolutionary movement of Bahá'u'lláh in order to secure their freedom. Many women were awakened out of the slumber of three centuries. They saw the dawn of a new life through the Bahá'í principles, and they came out from their prisons to enter schools, to study, to write, to paint, to adorn themselves with beautiful clothing. The enthusiasm and the eagerness displayed by these new women of Persia were something to marvel at, for they were breaking up conventions that had governed them for centuries. They had to meet the criticisms of all classes. Notwithstanding this, they did all

they could to bring about the liberty of their sisters, although many of them suffered hardships in bringing about his spiritual change.

Among these women was one who was wondrously beautiful, called Qurratu'l-'Ayn. She became very famous throughout Persia for her efforts put forth on behalf of her sex, and was looked upon as an example and a central figure among all the women of the East. This woman was a poetess as well as an eloquent speaker; in fact she was generally regarded as a prodigy and a miracle in the life of that land. The powers that emanated from her in the course of her work were so exemplary and so compelling that even European historians have expressed the opinion that up to that time, the world had never known another such a woman,- one who, in spite of her early life of darkness and suppression, now fearlessly came forth and declared for her sex. A very peculiar, striking and unusual feature of her life lies in the fact that her family was prominent in the Mohammedan political life, and were greatly opposed to the new teachings concerning the freedom of women. The first thing she did upon hearing about this new movement was to go to her family and tell them about it. Of course they thought she was crazy; that she had lost all her faith and her shame. So bitter was their feeling toward her that they shut the door in her face and refused to give her any thin to eat. Nevertheless her faith remained unshaken, and her manner was radiant with hope and joy. Soon after she became separated from her former life and took on freedom, she began to travel and would gather together numbers of other women and proclaim to them the new hope and faith and joy that had come into her life. This happened in the last century between the years of 1844 and 1853. There were no railroads in those days, and to travel from city to city and town to town involved great hardship and consumed much time.

Of course, it does not mean anything to you when I tell you that in all this work she traveled without her veil. Your women can scarcely understand just the courage required to drop a veil that has hidden the faces of women in Persia for thousands of years. Persian women who were so bold and indiscreet as to show their faces were looked upon as most shameless.

In every city she entered, she gathered large assemblies of women together and addressed them in language that was eloquent with power and deep feeling. In many instances her hearers were moved to tears, and many were convinced that they were standing in the presence of one who possessed supernatural power.

At last she decided to go to that city which is the stronghold of the Mohammedan power ----? In this city there were many colleges, and there were at that time nearly 14000 theological students in the city. She fearlessly approached them and told them as she had elsewhere of her views on the equality of men and women. She went into their classes and into their convocations, and without any fear she addressed them with such wonderful power and delicacy of

speech that many were convinced that there was some wonderful mystery about this woman, and fearing her influence might be evil, some of them left the meeting, for they had never before seen a woman stand before an audience without a veil. Those who were opposed to her felt that her influence would have a harmful effect upon the women of their city, and that her teaching would soon tend to lessen the power which they exercised over them; so they gathered together and had her put out of the city.

Between the years 1844 and 1853 she traveled through Persia like a flame of light, of beauty, of perfection, filling all who came in contact with her with a great enthusiasm, and brought to them who followed her the knowledge that they were living in a new age; that they must have a new power. On one occasion they invited her to attend a meeting where they had arranged to have music and dancing. This was a diversion almost unknown amongst women except at weddings. In a short time all the guests gathered around her to hear what she had to say to them, and all were impressed with her marvelous power. At last the Shah of Persia became aware of the revolutionary workings of this woman and had her cast into prison. From behind the wall of the prison she wrote the most eloquent and inspiring poems. She had no paper nor any ink, but she would find scraps of paper and write upon them with the juice of plants and burnt matches, and then send the paper out to her workers in the field. These poems are today set to music and are chanted and sung in religious gatherings. Wherever they were sent, they inspired the hearts of thousands and thousands of women to greater activity toward emancipation.

Finally the last scene of her life came when the Shah, the monarch of Persia wanted to see this extraordinary woman himself. So he sent for her to come to see him. When a menial subject calls and is brought before the Shah, he must bow down several times before he stands up before the throne. There are many customs in that country which are unknown here. The subject must not raise his head until the Ruler addresses him. But this woman just walked straight before the Shah, and before he could recover his astonishment or even look at her, she began to talk and continued for half an hour. He was lost with amazement. She spoke of the conditions then prevailing throughout the country; of the mistreatment of women for years and ages; and she said that the time had come when he, the Ruler, must take the matter in hand. So greatly moved was the man that he called his servants and said, "Take this woman away from me, because if she stands here ten minutes longer, she will change my mind and my influence and make me to do her will."

The tragic end of this great life took place in 1852, when the Shah, becoming alarmed at the influence which she exerted over the people, decided to have her put to death. He had her put into prison and sent a man to the prison to kill her; but when he stood

before her, he was so deeply impressed with her beauty, her gentleness and her fearlessness that he said, "I cannot kill this woman." So the Shah sent another man who strangled her with his handkerchief. Her body was placed in a tomb, which has ever since been regarded as a sacred spot and has been frequently visited by women who followed her teachings. She was not the only woman who devoted her life to this cause; many others have followed in her footsteps, and the tremendous sacrifice made by this wonderful woman has resulted in the blessing of civilization and education for her sex today.

Another change resulting from the Bahá'í Movement was the education of boys and girls, and the founding of new schools over the country, based upon the principles of modern civilization. The religious differences existing in the minds of different sects were likewise removed.

Just to show you how widely separated the people were because of religious prejudices, I will tell you a little story of a Mohammedan priest who became very sick. There was a Christian physician who had won quite a reputation because of his ability to heal the sick, so the priest's wife called upon him to see the priest, who was almost at the point of death. When he saw the doctor he asked his wife, "Who is this man? I never saw such a peculiar dress." The woman told him that he was the Christian doctor, that he was very skilful and that he would heal him. But the priest said, "Do you know that if I take the medicine of this man, he being an infidel, I shall go directly to Hell?" The physician, unable to understand the man, asked the wife to explain. Then he said, "Tell him he will go to Hell anyhow; but if he will take my medicine, he will not go so soon; he will only go little later." So the priest decided to postpone his journey and take the medicine. I know that it is impossible for you in this country to conceive of the religious fanaticism of which I tell you.

With the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh, all these things changed. Through his influence men and women became brothers and sisters and lived amicably side by side. In short, this is a review of the --old and new Persian life, -- giving you a brief idea of what has taken place in the way of change in religious and social and civic conditions. We hope that, through the influence of this new development of life, Persia will again become one of the members of the family of nations, and will contribute a share toward modern civilization. Not only do we trust that the conditions of Persia may be ameliorated, but that all the political, economic and educational conditions of the whole world may be so changed, that the standard of international conscience may become so elevated that all the nations of the earth may become as members of one great family.

## “The Poets of Persia”

Monday Afternoon, 14 March 1921—Pacific  
Coast Women’s Association, 1725  
Washington Street, San Francisco, California

The country of Persia is well known for the poetic note of its inhabitants and the love they have for flowers, trees and nightingales.

Dating the literature of Persia one thousand years ago, during these ten generations Persia has produced many lights in the firmament of poetry and ideals.

They were not simply poets of nature expressing the moods and the ideas, but they through their poems advanced the condition, the literary life and the progress and civilization of the land.

Although Omar Khayyam is ranked as a minor poet in the land of the lion and the sun, yet he is much beloved, and his quatrains are quoted in all the literary circles of Europe and America.

Being an astronomer or a philosopher of the highest type, Omar Khayyam weaves in his quatrains his knowledge and his imaginings of nature and of the universe, of God, and chance, and necessity.

He was really an epicurean agnostic who questioned the whys and wherefores of every problem, whether human or divine, but this was because he lived at a time when theologians and metaphysicians had so engulfed the minds of the people that they thought they were the only thing, while Omar Khayyam with his wit and his knowledge of things came to disturb their mental equipoise.

In one of his quatrains he says, “I love the people of the barroom because they are the members of the society of the hearts.”

“When you study the life of those who frequent the barroom their first type is better than those who are outside.”

“One people of heart does not come out of these theological seminaries. O God, destroy them, because they have never produced a man.”

“The pious”, he says, “tells us that the paradise and the houri are the things to strive for. I say the wine and the pleasures of this world are the things to look after.”

“Take the cash and let the credit go.”

“It is very pleasant to hear the sound of the drum from afar off, but not very near.”

One night he was carousing and drinking with his peers, and they had the bottles of wine on the table, and suddenly a storm raged, the windows were flung wide open, the wind blew through the room, and the bottles were thrashed on the floor.

At that time he wrote a quatrain saying, “O Lord, thou didst break the bottle of my wine. O Lord, thou didst close the door of merry-making of our faces.”

“I am drinking wine, but thou art shedding the wine as though thou art intoxicated.”

“O God forbid, art thou really a drunkard that thou causeth all this havoc and destruction?”

Among the poets of Persia there were a number of them who rendered greatest service to the literature of the land.

Firdausi is the king of the poets of Persia. He wrote the epic poetry of that land, the legends and the stories of 5,000 years in 16,000 couplets. His book is compared to the Odyssey of Homer.

Firdausi in reality revived the literature of Persia, brought back the ancient glory, and incited the public to devote their time to the study of their ancient history, because just 200 years before the life of Firdausi the Arabs came to that country and established their language, their religion, and thus absorbed the national life of Persia.

The language of Iran was wholly transplanted by the Arabic language.

The books and the various ancient manuscripts were entirely burned and done away with by the Arabian marauders and tribesmen.

Just as King Arthur in England gathered around him many bards and seers, likewise the then king of Persia changed his court into a literary circle, called in all the poets of the land and told them to write a history of Persia in verse.

Firdausi was the one selected to render this mighty service, and he wrote this vast volume, a treasure-house of the highest and noblest thoughts, without using one Arabic word, and you can realize how difficult it was at that time when Persian and Arabic languages were so mixed that it was almost impossible for any man to do this service.

So with this grand work Persia received two inspirations, first a national revival in the native language, and second the history of 5,000 years was written in heroic meter, sung by high and low throughout the land.

He uses a great deal of hyperbole and imaginative flight, and the Oriental poets in general use a great deal of hyperbole, but this Firdausi stands at the head of them all.

The ancient science of astronomy taught that there were seven strata of the earth, and seven heavens, so he takes this as the means for a tablet, giving a description of the world. He says: "through the hoofs of the horses running in the battlefield the heaven became eight strata and the globe became six," meaning that so much dust and so much earth was raised to the heaven that one strata of the earth was taken up toward heaven.

He has many wonderful lines which are like epigrams. For example, one of them is, "If the seed of the tree is bitter, no matter if you plant it in paradise, or water it with the spring of heaven, or even irrigate it, flood it with the sweet honey, when the time of the fruitage comes it will yield the same bitter fruit which was in the seed."

Regarding the law of compensation he says that whenever in your mind you think of shedding the blood of any soul, that very thought brings to the soul who is thinking or harboring such an idea the retribution, and that man, that soul, will suffer on account of his evil thinking.

Sadi was another great poet of Persia 700 years ago. He wrote many didactic poems, and his literature is being studied in all the schools of the land.

Although he lived so far away from us, yet his thoughts and his poems are so filled with modern ideas, with broad principles, that it is as though he had lived to-day.

He says, "Humanity, the children of men, are the limbs and organs of one body, because originally they were created from the same substance."

"When one limb of the body of man suffers through a pain all the rest of the organs of the body will likewise suffer automatically as though they were the partners and the co-shares in such a pain."

Hafiz is the greatest lyric poet of Persia. He is looked upon even by the Western writers as the gladsome songster of the world, because he never felt the pangs and the sufferings, but his book is a rose garden full of imperishable flowers.

He says, "I read to you from the volume of truth a few lessons concerning generosity and liberality."

"Whosoever scratches the surface of your body" (which means whosoever gives you any pain) "give back him just as the mine that

is scratched on its surface gives back the jewels and the pearls, likewise you do the same.”

“Be thou not less than the overshadowing fruitful tree, because whosoever stones it it will give back fruits. ”

“Learn the lesson of generosity from the shell, because when the shell is cut into two it gives to the world the pearls of great price.”

Again he says, “The mystery of association, the principle of getting along in this world, lies in this: be thou just with thy friend and merciful and forgiving to thine enemies.”

Simply he says, “Do not harm or injure the feeling of any soul on the face of the earth, because in our religion there is no greater crime than this.”

“Do thou associate with the people, with thy friend and with thine enemy, in such manner that when thou art dead the Muhammadan would like to inter thee under the ground, and the Hindu may like to burn thy body on the pyre of fire.”

Again he cries, “Aloud I say, and with heart of glee, love’s slave am I, and from both worlds am free.”

“On the tablet or on the mirror of my heart I do not see anything else but the reflection of the stature of my beloved. The master of the schools has not taught me any other lessons except love. That is why I always speak about it.”

“From the time that I became a slave of a palace of love, hour after the good news and the glad tidings of that kingdom come to my ears.”

“The stars of my hope is today hidden behind the cloud of circumstances. O Lord, cause it to ascend from behind these murky conditions and illumine the temple of my soul.”

“I am the bird of the kingdom of paradise. This body is simply a temporary cage in which this bird of paradise lives for a few days.

“I am a nightingale that is encaged in the prison of the body. I do not have a tongue to adequately describe the pain and sorrows of my suppression from that divine world.”

“I was an angel. I lived in the paradise of glory. The sin of Adam brought me to this ruin of old.”

Thus Hafiz is one of the greatest spiritual guides for the people, and he gives most wonderful suggestions, how the soul must be unfolded and developed.

In regard to this matter he says. “Thou who art unworthy strive thou day and night that thou mayest become worthy.”

“As long as thou hast not walked in the ... how canst thou ever hope to be a guide?”

“Thus in the school of significances, knowledge and mysteries, o thou my son, strive and excel thyself that some day thou mayest become a father.

“This submersion in the world of eating, drinking and clothing has kept thee away from the fountain head of beauty. Reduce this luxury, this complete absorption in the material things, and then thine inner eye will be opened.”

“If the light of the love of God dawns from the horizon of thy heart, then indeed thou will become more glorious, more world illumining than the sun in midday.”

“Thou shalt attain life when thou shalt forget thyself, and enter into the realm of self- evanescence and self-determination.”

In brief, these poets of Persia filled their books of the treasury with all the highest ideals, pure scintillating stars that could shine in the heaven of the human mind.

One of the great Orientalists of Europe, after studying the literature of Persia for many years and translating many of them, said, “I know that the literature of Persia is the most subtle, the richest, the most imaginative, and the flight of the birds of their minds arose to the highest heaven.”

One of the recent poetesses of Persia, who rendered a great service to her land, was known as Qurratu’l-‘Ayn. She was the first woman in the Persia who through her poems and through her texts and literature and articles laid down the foundation for the freedom and emancipation of her sex.

You all know that all over the Orient the women filled a secondary position in the social life of the nation on account of their lack of knowledge and lack of opportunity in taking part in life.

The cause of their retrogression was the purdah or the veil on their faces when they went out.

Qurratu’l-‘Ayn was the first woman who, in the middle of the last century, threw away the veil, came out from behind the harem, and associated with men.

It is very interesting to think that this woman belonged to one of the most reactionary families of Persia, from amongst the mullahs, the Muhammadan clergy who were all against the freedom of women.

At first she tried to impress the members of her own family with these principles of equality, but they put her in prison. She was freed and began to travel in different parts of Persia and disseminate the seeds of her enthusiasm and work.

She gathered around herself a number of very wide awake women, and with the begun to journey from one end to another end

of Persia, thus awakening her sisters from deep slumber of many centuries.

She raised such a storm in Persia that at last the Shah of Persia put her in prison. While she was in prison she was not allowed to associate with or meet any soul. But she wrote her soul-burning poetry. But she did not have any paper, so she wrote them on small scraps, with the juices of vegetables, and sent them out clandestinely to her friends, and thus songs being chanted to-day by all the women's clubs of Persia full of hope and longing for their freedom and enlightenment.

In a short period of time her example and her intellectual activity changed the views in regard to the women amongst the men.

At last the king of Persia, being of an autocratic nature but becoming curious in regard to the vast influence that this single woman exercised over the minds of the people, wanted to see her, but in that land whenever a man or a person is allowed to enter into the presence of the shah he must bow down many times and stand with his head down waiting for the command of the king. Now when they brought Qurratu'l-'Ayn before the king she just walked straight before him and started to speak. The king did not find time to say anything, Qurratu'l-'Ayn's talk was so filled with life, with calling upon the king that he is the one to take up this matter, that for half an hour he was just listening wonder struck. At last he came to himself and called upon his chamberlains to take away this woman, because if she stay a little longer she will convince me in regard to her ideas, and it is not good for the land to do what she says.

Thus, as she was one of the disciples of Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the great movement which aims to bring fraternity and oneness amongst all the nations and religion and races, she embodied these ideas in her work, which were far ahead of her time. She filled her writings with these radiant thoughts.

At last the shah thought the time had come for this woman to stop her work. He sent a very blackguardly man to kill her, but when he entered the room where she was imprisoned he ran out of the house and went to the king and said, "Do what you will with me." And finally they sent a drunken man with a handkerchief to take hold of her and strangle her. This was done, and her pure soul was released, with the full knowledge that she had given up her life for human emancipation.

This was the result of her spiritual fervor, and to-day her poems and writings are scattered all over that land, her life written, her biography written by many European scholars, showing how fast and tremendous was the influence which she exercised and still exercises over the minds of the people.

## Presentation to Hindustan Club

Saturday, 19 March 1921, 4 P.M.—Hindustan (Nalanda) Club, 2026 Center Street, Berkeley, California

This afternoon we have with us a distinguished Persian scholar. He has come a long distance to visit this country, and to-day we are greatly honored in having him as guest in our humble club house. I am sure that he has many things to tell us that will be very interesting, and so without further introduction I will now ask him to give us a message,- Jináb-i-Fádil Mazindarání.

Indeed, this is a great joy for us to meet our own compatriots from the far off land. This was not expected, because we have been traveling so far away from Persia and the Orient that we did not think that we would have the great privilege and pleasure of meeting such a fine group of students from our own country.

In reality, India and Persia are classed in the same category, in the same country, because their habits, their literature, their ideas, their concepts upon life, their way of thinking, are all alike, and consequently they are sprung from the same race.

Twelve years ago I took a long trip through Southern India, Bombay, Calcutta, Rangoon and Mandalay, and was there for nearly one year, traveling from place to place, coming in contact with various Indian societies, and at that time I studied the language of your country. I used to speak it quite fluently, but from that time on, having no practice, I have forgotten it.

And while I was in Calcutta and other parts of India I found many, many inhabitants and Indians speaking the Persian language very fluently.

And many of them had memorized the verses of Persian poets and recited them very fluently. Even they had in memory more verses and poems of Persian than I had myself.

We know that long before the British possession of India the Persian language was prevalent all over; it was the cultured language of the people, and consequently most widely used.

But the peculiar thing was that the Zoroastrians who came to India several hundred years ago had forgotten their own native language. They could not speak it, while the Indians spoke it.

In brief, the ideas and the thoughts of the Indians and the Persians have always run parallel to each other, not only in their daily thoughts and concepts, but their philosophies are very much alike.

The only thing that has kept the Oriental people from one another is those differences which are non-essentials, and these differences have kept them in a state of decadence, weakness and degeneration.

For example, there are many kinds of differences in the world - clash and conflict - which are being waged between the different classes. For example, there may be an economic conflict between two classes; there may be a racial conflict, or a national or political conflict - all of them based on some obvious reason, it has some concrete practical foundation. There are many. Or trade, or commerce, is the cause of it. But religious conflict, religious prejudice, has no foundation whatsoever; it has no basis for human differences or warfare, but still we in the Orient have been attacked by this kind of prejudice.

Just as we have various kinds of taste in eating, likewise in intellectual, ethical and religious world there are different kinds of taste, and although the people of a country live in various provinces and have different pursuits, yet they should not let these religious tastes, these ethical ideas, be the basis of differences in carrying on the work of the nation and the unity of the people.

In our country - Persia - we had likewise these religious differences, and often the inhabitants would wage war upon each other, pillaging one another's property, killing large numbers, because one class had a different interpretation of a religious idea than the second class, and thus these things which had no foundation in fact, these notions which were merely metaphysical, which were merely philosophical, had been the greatest cause of dividing the Eastern people and not letting them come into a general understanding.

Again, the autocracy and absolutism in government has been a second plight of the Oriental nations, that these nations were made the tools and the instruments of a few self-seeking leaders in government, and thus they made the people kill each other in order that they may gain their own selfish ends.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the only thing that will clear the horizon of the Oriental countries from these clouds is the application of public education.

The Oriental students who are studying in these countries must have one supreme aim, one great universal purpose, and that is to acquire as much foreign practical knowledge that they can get, and on their return to their respective countries set aside every other thought, every other ambition but to illumine the minds of their native friends and the inhabitants of their countries; but in enlightening the minds of their people, in education them, in giving them this broader horizon of looking upon the world, they will give them that stamina, that force for self-determination, for political independence, for wise administration of their affairs that they are longing for.

You all know that scientific knowledge, practical efficient understanding of the laws of nature, is like pure water that cleanses the evils, the stains placed upon the characters of men; whether those stains are moral or political or educational, they will be all washed away, the bodies will be cleaned, the minds purified, the hearts strengthened, and thus through knowledge we will have a new people.

What has distinguished the Western people from the Eastern people? Is it through their intelligence or their native acumen? No. many Orientalists have confessed in their writings that the Oriental people have a greater native intelligence, have a broader grasp of these facts than the Western, but they have applied themselves here and have not given up hope.

While the Western nations have been engaged in the discovery of the material laws, in applying those laws to the amelioration of the conditions of their people, the Oriental nations have been wrangling with each other over metaphysical and religious questions, problems that had no practical outside use. They were all based upon imagination, upon creeds and dogmas, and we have made those things mostly the chief pursuit of our life, and have thus deprived ourselves of the fruit of practical knowledge.

When I was in Bombay I heard that one of the mullahs, one of the great religious leaders, had sent out an edict that the young students must not put on eye glasses, they must not carry sticks in their hands, because they will resemble the Occidentals, and that is irreligious, that is an innovation, and they should not do it, they would leave their religion if they did it. Now what has this to do with religion? Nothing whatever.

Now in Persia in the last 50 or 60 years there has been a great eagerness on the part of the young men to study, to open schools, to go to Europe and America and gain this modern knowledge. Even the girls have been encouraged to do the same thing, but our kind neighbors – the governments who are next to us – have been so

solicitous to offer to us their laws and their ideas of how we should run our government, that we have not had time to do anything else but to refuse their offers as much as we could.

Another cause which has been conducive to the awakening of this Persian generation is the Bahá'í Movement, which has stood for the acquirement of knowledge, for the purity of morality, and for the application of the true laws of religion instead of the creeds and dogmas which served as chains.

Firstly, it emphasized the importance of education, and thus the young men began to study and form schools, and, secondly, it removed the differences which existed amongst the contending religions and united them in one harmonious whole.

One of the great principles that Baha'u'llah taught his followers was that the founders of all the religions of the past, from Confucius, Lao Tzu, Buddha, Krishna, Moses, Christ, Muhammad, and many others, all of these founders of religions have been divine, they have brought spiritual principles, and they have tried to teach their followers the law of love and amity.

If you read the original writings of these prophets, although they speak in a different language, and lived in various countries, yet the fundamental idea behind these various teachings is identical and the same.

If we could suppose that these prophets would return today, no matter how many of them, do you think that they would advise their followers to continue hating one another, in warring on one another, in not associating with one another? No! They will give them the best advice, that they must love each other, they must continue to make this world a better world, and put aside all the man-made differences and ideas which had come in their midst.

Let us suppose that they have come back, and instead of waiting for them to come back and teach us this lesson of union and affection, that we already know they would like us to do, let us rise and do it, clear our hearts of all dislike and hatred for one another, and fill our minds with the brightest thoughts and the clearest expression of human knowledge, and go out into the world to fight against the enemies of ignorance.

To-day, in the name of humanity, Hindus, and Persians, Jews and Christians and Muhammadans, all of them must look upon one another as the members of one family, as the links and organs of one body, and thus co-operate with one another to make this world a true habitation of real men and women.

We hope that when all of you return respectively to your own counties you will spread these ideals of unity and co-operation, and impress upon your own people that the time of hatred and religious prejudices has gone, and the time of unity and love and brotherhood has come.

## MAHBUB ALI

First, I will thank our honored guest, Jináb-i-Fádil Mazindarání, that he has honored our humble house by having his presence here this afternoon. We also wish to thank Mirza Ahmad Sohrab for his beautiful translation, and Miss Straun for so kindly bringing our guest to us.

We are 30 students here, from six religions, and we are at this time more co-operating than ever in the history of India, and we will take his message very seriously and keep it in mind. I think, as Jináb-i-Fádil Mazindarání know, we are in the clutches of autocracy. We will do everything we can to have Hindustan and Persia to co-operate. I request him very earnestly to tell the people of Persia that we from India, from all the religions and sections, will be ready to co-operate in every way with the people of Persia. I thank you. We will now serve some Oriental refreshments.

## “Grounds of Mashriqu'l-Adhkar”

Sunday, 24 April 1921—Chicago, Illinois

Last year I arrived in Chicago and visited this tract of land, which is dedicated to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar. At that time it was simply a piece of plain ground without all this machinery, which is now engaged in digging the soil and laying the sacred foundation. This year I come and see that, Praise be to GOD, the believers from all parts of this country have come together and witness with their own eyes that the foundation is being laid and the building commenced.

There is no doubt whatsoever that in a short space of time other believers will come here and witness the actual construction of the Temple, and its final completion and dedication to the service of humanity.

Unquestionably, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is one of the greatest instruments for the diffusion of the Word of GOD and the spread of the Cause of GOD throughout the world. Consider, that although we have not yet the actual Temple raised before our eyes, yet the model, seen by thousands and thousands of people, the photographs of the model, appearing in the papers and magazines, and all the lectures given about it, have created a tremendous interest and awakened a most wonderful, searching desire to know more about the principles of the Bahá'í Cause.

Naturally, we who have been traveling throughout the United States and Canada, from one end to the other and, have realized this from a more concrete and practical standpoint than those who have been living in one town— having only the vision of one city. Whenever we spoke in those vast audiences in different cities of these United States, 1,2,3 and 4,000 men and women listened with the greatest attention to the explanation of the principles. When the talk was over, many hundreds would come to us, and in order to show their interest in the Cause, they would say: “Oh yes, We have read about this temple of which you spoke in our papers, in the Literary Digest, in the Art Magazine and other papers.

The light and the deep interest which were manifest in their eyes and their faces were the greatest demonstration that the temple has

created widespread knowledge about this Cause, among all the classes, from the literary down to the laborer in the street.

The people of the world are, generally speaking, so disgusted with the lack of the spirit in the temples of their faiths and religions, that whenever they hear about this universal temple, whose doors are open to all faiths and all religions, and all races, and which is filled with the Holy Spirit, and irradiating that spirit into the consciousness of man, immediately they rise with the call and are filled with the hope and desire to see the outward building before their eyes.

Inasmuch as these were the results of the model and the pictures of the temple, you can easily imagine what will be the tremendous outcome of the actual construction of the temple, not only in Chicago, but throughout the United States and then throughout the world.

Hence- we who are gathered on this sacred ground, you who are delegates from different parts of the United States and Canada, must study, consecrate your highest and your best thought to this work, so that when you come into consultation, you may avail yourselves of those critical concrete examples- which may expedite the building and bring about great results, without much theoretical discussions.

All our thought must today be concentrated around these two facts, that we have now a model, and the next step is, we have to build it, and we must find ways and means to build it. This is the work of this Convention.

The invisible confirmations of Abdul Baha are the only things that will lead us into the right path- suggest to us those spiritual truths which will enlighten the minds and the hearts and for this we must pray, we must supplicate, to give us the right heavenly direction.

## Address at A.M.E. Church Monday Evening, 20 June 1921—A.M.E. Church, Sharon Hill, Pa.

It is a precious privilege to come here this evening in this temple of the Lord, Jesus Christ and turning our hearts and faces to Him, to speak with the greatest love and amity for all of you.

During the last fifteen months that we have been traveling throughout the United States because our aim has been to promote universal love and friendship amongst all the races and all the peoples and all the religions, we have had many occasions to address similar gather of our brethren and sister in other cities. Whenever we were invited to talk to a colored congregation always a large number of the white friend would come. That is because they know that we had no other thought and no other desire but to promote better understanding between these two races. Likewise, on many occasions when we spoke in the white churches, there were many colored friends, and thus these various gatherings and meetings were like unto a bouquet of flowers; on white, one colored and of various hues, but all adding to the charm and beauty of each other thru variety. Because in such meetings the minds were free from all kinds of narrow prejudices, the hearts were filled with the love of God, and the spirits turned toward the great Saviour of the world, whosoever entered in those meetings realized that the meeting was filled with the spirit of love and mutual service and the desire to know each other better.

In reality we are living in an age and in a cycle in which we are in need of the power of the Holy Spirit more than at any other time; because only thru the power of the Holy Spirit do the people become able to unite with one another, to work with each other and to lay aside their prejudice. There is no power on the face of the earth to break the natural sentiments of men and the prejudices and narrow mindedness. Political power, governmental power will not do this. Only educational power can remove the veils of prejudices from amongst the people. Only the power of the Holy Spirit can do this. This is the only solution for all our troubles.

The root of sin and transgression, the root of warfare and struggle amongst men is in the mind and the heart. Even if thru material

means, for a time we may cut that root, it will grow up again, but if we gain the power of the Holy Spirit then we can cut the root and the branch of this tree of hatred and animosity and cast it out of our minds and hearts, and consume it with fire. Then it will never grow again.

Before the appearance of Lord, Jesus Christ, Moses came into the world and made certain laws and rules. For instance He said; An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand. If someone makes you blind you also make him blind. If he breaks your tooth, you break his tooth, if he breaks your hand, you break his hand also. "This law of retaliation will not destroy the root of sin and transgression, the only thing that happens is that we have two blind eyes, two teeth out, or two broken hands instead of having one.

Christ, the Lord, brought the power of the Holy Spirit so that man may never have to blind anyone's eyes. It never occurs to him to blind another's eyes because his eyes have been blinded. Christ came to uproot the very plant of sin and so free the world from all these faults and shortcomings. Thus if a person obtains the power of the Holy Spirit, he will become free from sin. It will never come to his mind to injure or harm his fellow men. When the power of the Holy Spirit becomes manifest and apparent in an individual, he shows forth certain qualities and attributes that everybody recognizes. Just like a rose it is not necessary for the rose to cry, "I have fragrance," everybody can smell it. It is not necessary for the star to say, "I shine," you can look at the star and you will see its radiance and beauty. So it is with man who has the Holy Spirit, even if he does not say the word everyone will recognize that he has it.

The first effect of the power of the Holy Spirit over man is, that his mind must be washed from all kinds of thoughts which are limited, which are narrow, and prejudicial to other people, and then his heart must become full of spiritual emotions and sentiments, and love for all the people of the earth.

The second result of the power of the Holy Spirit is the working of the Saviour within. This is the holy life, the sanctity and purity amongst his fellow men. He must be freed from all sin and living in a state of sanctification.

The third result is that man will not look upon any worldly classes and distinctions. He will be walking in the highway of Christ, and he will serve all the people without any racial, religious or national distinction. We will be a lover of mankind, just as Christ was a lover of mankind.

The fourth result is that the heart and the mind will be freed from all ignorance, from all limitations, and from all kinds of enmity and animosity for the people. It will be as though the heart of man was dark and suddenly a lamp is lighted therein. This lamp will scatter the forces of darkness.

The Holy Spirit is the fountain of Light, it is the river of the water of Truth that flows from the mountain of God and washes away all the dust that has accumulated over the minds and the hearts of men. The Holy Spirit is the refreshing breeze of the early dawn that wafts over the dead trees in the early springtime. No sooner does that breeze pass by these trees than they are covered with green leaves, with fragrant blossoms and fresh fruits. These fruits are the healing of the nations. The Holy Spirit will give life to the dead, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and speech to the mute and will make the lame dance with new life. The Holy Spirit will make the earthly man the heavenly man; the satanic man the angelic man; and the man who is in the gutter will be raised thru the power of the Holy Spirit to the throne of sanctity and purity.

Consider what a marvelous effect the power of the Holy Spirit had over the apostles of Jesus Christ. It gave them knowledge, wisdom, self-sacrifice, happiness and joy, so that they desired to work and to labor in the vineyard of the Lord day in and day out, until the very last breath, when they were martyred in His Path. The apostles of Jesus Christ thru the wisdom and confirmation of the Holy Spirit, became like unto shining stars and they are radiating and have been radiating over millions and millions of men during the last many centuries.

Let us state one thing here, and that is this, that the door of the Kingdom of the Holy Spirit is never shut. It is open and its benefits and bounties and providences are pouring down to-day as they used to pour down centuries ago.

The Holy Spirit is like unto the shining sun. The sun is ever giving forth its rays and heat unto the atmosphere of the world. Therefore, if some of us do not receive the countries of the Holy Spirit, it is not because the Holy Spirit is not anxious to give us that bounty, but we do not make ourselves receptive channels. The mirrors of our hearts are dusty. We do not polish those mirrors so that the sun of the Holy Spirit may shine on those surfaces. If a mirror, no matter how clear it is, turn its back to the sun it cannot reflect the sun. Even if it faces the sun but it is covered with dust still the sun cannot reflect itself therein. But, on the other hand, if we polish the surface of this mirror from our own follies and human frailties, even if the sun is millions of miles away from the mirror, no sooner do you turn it toward the sun than the reflection is there.

God's justice is universal and not particular. He has created all His children with the same powers and functions. Outwardly some of us may be white, others red, others black, but inwardly each individual is endowed with the same.....[a line is missing here]

the same divine, heavenly birthright. God has placed in each heart that mirror and He has enjoined upon each human being to keep the mirror polished and purified from the sins, the shortcomings and transgressions of this world, so that whenever the

mirror is turned towards the sun of the Holy Spirit there may be complete reflection and sanctity and spirituality. This was the justice, the universal equality with which God created all of us. But have we also fulfilled our responsibility in regard to this matter? Have we really kept the mirror pure or have we filled its surface with dust? So that the Sun of the Holy Spirit cannot properly function through it.

The dusts and rusts over the surface of this mirror are many, but one of the greatest is racial prejudice. This racial prejudice has been very prevalent all over the world and it springs from pure ignorance and narrow-mindedness. By what proof do we demonstrate that racial prejudice is a figment of the imagination. Firstly, biologists and all the scientists tell us that man is created from the same substance, no matter where he is born. In the material, original elements of which God has composed our physical bodies He has not added to or subtracted from. He has equally endowed each individual with the same physical properties. It is the same with our physical organs. We see that man all over the world has been endowed by God with two ears, two hands, two eyes, one tongue, etc. He has not given a man one eye or one ear. It is the same with the five senses. Have you ever hear of any race having more than five senses? People are also endowed with the same intellectual faculties in the same proportions.

The mercy of God above everything else is universal for everyone. His sun shines upon all. His rain pours upon every portion of the ground. His breezes waft over all the trees. His lands belong to all humanity, so you will see that there is perfect, partial distribution of these natural bounties on the part of God.

Beside this He was not satisfied with all these powers of equality but sent, from time to time, many prophets not ten or twenty or 100 but thousands and thousands of prophets and when we read the Teachings of some of these prophets we see that they are all teaching men to love one another to be kind to one another. The doctrine of the oneness of the world of humanity has been taught by all the Mouthpieces of God. They praised men when they were engaged with the means of unity, and they told them to avoid anything which would increase disharmony.

Notwithstanding this, when we look over the world of the mineral kingdom, we see that there are different colors amongst the jewels, amongst the properties of matter there are many colors; but each adds to the charm of the other. In the vegetable kingdom the same rule applies. When you go into a garden you will see pink flowers, yellow flowers and flowers of all colors and all of them with their charming hues increasing each other's loveliness. In the animal kingdom the same rule holds good. There are different kinds of animals each one having various colors but none fighting over it. If you put a herd of cattle, black and white, yellow and various colors in a meadow, they will not kick each other because one is black, one

white, or because one comes from this country and another from another country. Nay, rather, if we could understand their language they would say; look at this man who thinks he is wise and who has so many teachers, yet he commits that which we animals with our inferior intelligence do not commit. These cows who live according to the nature law have never had any teachers to teach them how they should act toward each other. They have never gone to school, college or university. They have never heard lectures or read newspapers to find out what they should do. But see how they live, peacefully and happily and yet we fight, notwithstanding all these bounties of God.

Notwithstanding this thick rust of racial prejudice yet man expects in many instances to receive the bounty of the Holy Spirit, while he is practicing and living a life of prejudice. National prejudice is also one of the rusts. All the countries are the countries of God and they do not belong to this or that government. We have appropriate them.

Racial prejudice is another dust. God has revealed Himself to all His children in diverse forms and manners and God had kindness and love for all His children. Thus if we desire, if we hope, if we work for the reception of the Holy Spirit, for the down pour of the clouds of the Holy Spirit over us, we must free ourselves from all these racial, national and religious prejudices. Then and not until then will the Holy Spirit shine over the mirror of our heart in such a manner that we will become wholly illumined and enlightened. Then we will become real Christians, walking in the highway of the Lord.

Just about two weeks ago, while we were in Washington, there was a great convention to establish amity between the colored and the white races in one of the biggest churches of that city. For three days there were afternoon and evening sessions. Great speakers spoke there from Congress, and when a person entered in the sessions of that convention, he was filled with joy and happiness because the time has come for the unity of the two races. Many thousands of white and colored people during those three days entered the church, sat in the pews side by side, forgetting all the prejudices of the past, and thinking in no other terms but the terms of brotherhood.

Those who had charge of the arrangements for these sessions invited to that fathering the members of the Senate and the House of representatives and the leaders of various churches, white and black, from the Howard University and other colored institutions, and they delivered most fiery, eloquent speeches in regard to the necessity for closer relationship and closer understanding between these two races.

The spirituality and the effect of the meeting were so great that there was a young colored boy who sang the song 'My Mammy', and

there was a white woman in the audience who was so thrilled and moved with that song that after the meeting she gave him her diamond ring as a token of her appreciation.

To-day any movement, any society,, or any institution that is filled with such ideals and that serves and works to promote these ideals of better understanding is doing a great service and we must be very grateful to them, and thankful that the Holy Spirit is working through them to make this world a vineyard of the Lord. We must know that such kind of deeds will make us beloved in the Thresholds of God, such philanthropic and humanitarian intentions will make us all real followers of Jesus Christ, such universal ideals and service will be more useful, more effective then anything else in the world.

Just about a year and a half ago, before I came to this country, I went to Palestine and in Haifa, on the shore of the Mediterranean, there lives and wonderful Being with white beard and flowing robe like a patriarch of old and of the world of mankind. He is a spiritual being. His name is The Servant of God. That is what He has chosen for Himself, and He is known all world by that name. When people go to see Him they observe in Him the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of self-sacrifice, of work, the desire to make all men as the members of one household. In order to teach this elemental and universal doctrine of brotherhood He was put in prison, for fifty years, fifty long years He had to suffer imprisonment from the hands of those who were in control of the government, the religion and the nation, as they did not desire to have these doctrines promulgated; but the power of Truth was stronger than the forces of their kingdoms. Because the Servant of God is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit He has been able, during His lifetime, to unite millions and millions of people of different races, religions and nationalities who were very antagonistic against each other; to make them live with one another with peace and look upon each other as brothers.

You can imagine His house, built along the shore of the Mediterranean near Nazareth and Bethlehem, and where every night hundred of different races and different religions, men and women, sit around His table taking part of the material food and listening to His spiritual Teachings. Although these people have come from every corner of the earth, from India, from Japan, China, Persia, America, England, France, etc., they all sit around that bounteous table and He tells them " O ye people, although ye have come from these different countries ye are all the children of God, ye are all the waves of one ocean, ye are the stars of one heaven, ye are all leave and fruits of one tree, and flowers of one rose-garden."

"You must all realize that although you may have different colors outwardly yet just like the body which has various organs and members, all working together, so you must work with each other. Just think of the pupil of the eye. It is black and yet it is the source of all light. If a person is ignorant it is your duty to each them and not

to him them. If a person is sick you must try to give him help and not neglect him. If he is deprived you must try to raise him. Do not think that the world is alright as long as you are alright.”

Therefore, while you are living here in this part of the world and we living on the other side of the world, each one of us individually must polish the mirrors of our hearts so that the sun of the Holy Spirit which is shining upon the world may reflect itself upon our hearts and through that reflection we may be able to serve to the utmost of our capacity those who need us than thus make this whole world one home and the members of this globe as one family, working together and realizing the sorrow and joy of each other or the benefit of the whole.

## Q&A at home of Mrs. Revell

Tuesday Evening, 21 June 1921—Home of Mrs. Revell

Question: Don't you think the orthodox churches will be very hard to overcome?

Answer: All the liberal movements which have appeared among the Christians in the last few decades belong to the same class of vicarious atonement. They likewise held to the blood of Jesus Christ as these orthodox churches do now. The same power that has freed the minds of many millions of people from this belief, that they may do anything they like, and the power of blood will save them, I mean this educational power that freed the minds of people from this belief will continue to free them until the time will come when it will be simply a curious theological thing of the past. The blood of Christ is a savior. We believe it saved the people; but how did it save? There is a meaning to this. If Christ had not accepted the cross for Himself, and sacrifice, and martyrdom, if He had not brought upon Himself that divine resolution that in order to spread His Truth He must sacrifice His life, how could Christianity itself be spread? How could all these institutions be established? All these things are a result of the sacrifice of Christ. His blood saved the people, but it saved those who lived His life, those who worked in accord with His Teachings and not those who were verbally His followers and yet did not do His will. We read often the writings of Christ but we never have lived them, If we bring into our minds the scene of the Lord's Supper when He brought His disciples together and exhorted them, saying, "You must keep My commandment. What is My commandment? Verily, verily I say unto you, if a soul does not love he is cut off from Me". What does it mean to be cut off? It means that he is not a Christian. He has not loved for the whole world in his heart as Christ had. If a branch is cut off from the tree it will yield no fruit, it is only good for fire.

Question: Do the Bahá'ís believe in eternal damnation?

Answer: We believe in eternal progress in the spiritual kingdom, and the door of spiritual progress in the beatitudes of life is never closed, and never will be closed, and this progress has no end. God

has placed in the soul of man a ladder, the steps of which are infinite in number. One end of it is placed in the heart and the other lost in the clouds, and as soon as we leave this mortal body, we begin to ascend this infinite ladder of progress. We can ascend these steps one after another, thru three doors; faith, love and service. In whatever stage a soul stops and is satisfied and thinks there is no higher stage, this stage constitutes for him hell because he does not try to go higher, because he is satisfied; and therefore wherever there is lack of progress there is hell. Therefore perfection is heaven; imperfection is hell. Progress is paradise; lack of progress and staying in one place all the time is torment. What greater torment can we imagine than staying all the time in one place? Of course this thought may have already come to your minds: "What is the difference then between those souls who live a sweet, beautiful life here and those who do not? If there is this eternal progress vouchsafed for all, then how can we distinguish between these two classes of men". The difference is this: One soul may be equipped with all the moral and spiritual energies and the other minus these energies. Or, one man may be traveling by airplane, another one traveling on an express train (20<sup>th</sup> Century Limited) a third one may be traveling on horseback, a fourth one on a lame donkey and a fifth one may be a lame man walking. All of them are traveling, but what a vast difference between these various methods of traveling. One speeds thru the immensity of space, another grovels along. Of course, we have always been at a loss to locate hell. Some of the theologians taught that it was in the center of the earth. It is very hot there. All the prophets before Christ were living there; Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Isaiah etc. were living in hell, and then Christ came and descended into hell and, for the first time, then those men were carried up to heaven. Geologists have shown us that there is nothing in the center of the earth except molten fire. Perhaps hell is located in other globes. We have not yet been able to find it. Hell is within us. It is the ignorance, the prejudice, the remoteness from God, the materialistic ideas that withhold agnostics. All these are hell.

Question: What progress has Baháism made in Catholic countries?

Answer: There are a number of Catholics who have become Bahá'ís by exercising their reasoning power. As you know, from very many roads people have come into the Bahá'í Movement, and these Catholics have come into the Movement thru their own method. Amongst all the religions of the world, there are those who are liberal and those who are orthodox, those who cling to traditions of the past, thinking that they are the foundation and people from both these classes have become Bahá'ís.

Question: Is God a principle or a being?

Answer: First, it is quite clear that God is not a physical, personal, human being, and this belief that God is a being, established on a throne, up in the high heavens is also exploded on account of the science of astrology. We believe that there is not such a heaven as we used to think of with angels in it etc., because if we imagine a God as a finite, limited being, then He would be in need of a higher creator; someone who would create that limited, personal God. This is an intellectual proof that every finite, limited being is in need of a creator who is unlimited and infinite. Therefore, according to our definition, God is an Infinite, Unbounded and Exhaustless Energy or Reality. For His Kingdom there is no beginning nor end; nor for His creation is there any beginning or end. Nor is there any beginning or end for His Manifestations or prophets. He is not specially localized in heaven or in earth, in the mountains or in the skies, but He is Omnipresent and Omniscient. The rays of His Bounty and Favor are manifest and apparent in all the created Phenomena. Every phenomenon speaks of Him. The greatest effulgence of that Infinite Intelligence, God, appears in the heart of man, and God is nearer to man than man to himself. God has always been; that is why His prophets have realized consciously God within themselves, so that they did not need to ascend to heaven or go into the depths of the valleys, or anywhere to find Him, they found Him within their own hearts. We can only conceive of a man who has lost God who may go to heaven to find Him, but if he has Him within himself he would not like to go anywhere else. The story that Moses went up on Mt. Sinai to speak to Jehova is not literal in the sense that he went to speak with God, but Mt. Sinai was a secluded place where he could commune with that Spirit of Divinity which was within him. As long as he was in the desert, the children of Israel kept him so busy with their various ideas and beliefs that he did not have time to commune with God.

Regarding those who believe in a personal God. How do we show them that there is an impersonal God? Just the way we try to explain that there is not such a heaven as they imagine, and if they could imagine a personal God, He would be limited in His Power; but that Infinite Intelligence called God, is everywhere in the universe, it is like the sun which shines over all.

Question: What is the Bahá'í word for Yogi?

Answer: The Bahá'ís don't have the Yogi systems. The Bahá'í Yogi, if you may call it that is service to humanity, turning one's self to God in the seclusion of one's own home. Concentration and meditation are not under any definite mode, you can concentrate and meditate any time of the day or night.

Question: What would 'Abdu'l-Bahá deem the best method to teach the ignorant masses the difference between a personal God and a God principle?

Answer: We make them understand that the concept of God has been growing in humanity from age to age. There was a time that the principle of Pantheism was prevalent, when people thought God existed in the mountains, in the trees, in the rivers etc. there was a time that people thought that the sun, moon, and stars were God. The Greeks and Romans had gods. All these different false ideas of God, so that the consciousness of humanity, in regard to the idea of God, is growing and expanding. The last stage was this personal God, which became very prevalent amongst the realists. That was a stage in the growth of this ideal. Just as the inadequacy of these earlier ideals, in regard to God, became very well known likewise the inadequacy of the present idea of God will become, little by little, known even among the masses until the impersonal idea of God will become universal.

## Address to A.M.E. Church

Friday Evening, 21 June 1921—A.M.E.  
Church, 32<sup>nd</sup> and Gray's Ferry Road,  
Philadelphia, Pa

If many of you have not heard the name of Persia, all of you have heard the name of the Holy Land, Palestine. Persia is a neighboring country of the Holy Land, so that the two countries are very near each other. Both Persia and Palestine have a most sultry climate. The mountains are very high, the valleys are very deep, the rivers are broad and everything in those two countries lends itself to the making of life beautiful and lovely.

In both countries, Persia and Palestine, we have had many prophets, many teachers who came to teach the children of men how to live, how to be kind to one another and how to love each other. The prophets of the Old Testament, whose Books you read every time you come together, lived in Palestine and visited Persia. For years they went between the two countries and thus the ideas and thoughts of those prophets were interchanged. Christ who was the Lord, and the Son of God, came over from Palestine, also from Jerusalem, from Nazareth, from Bethlehem; all these countries were blessed by the feet of the Lord.

We bring you good news and that is that there was a great spiritual man among the colored race in Persia. In those countries some of the people called him a prophet; others called him a spiritual leader, but he was one of the colored people. The name of this man is very well known in the history of the East, to such an extent that when they want to say that a person is very wise, very learned, they would say "he is so and so ". His name was Lokman. Although we have no book which has come down to us from him, yet there are many extracts in the various books attributed to him, and he addresses all his wise sayings to his son.

We do not really know whether he had a son or not; probably he called all people his sons. Many prophets in Persia and in Palestine called the people their sons, because there was this spiritual relationship between them and the rest of the people.

For instance, Lokman addressing his son says; "O my son, whenever thou desirest to begin a work mention first the name of God, because that will bring in that work, or that undertaking a great blessing." Again he says; "O my son, when thou art walking on the face of the earth do not walk very hastily, nor do thou walk very slowly, but walk with moderation and with humility. Do not step with pride and haughtiness over the soil and over the earth because at one time the particles in this soil were in a human body, and thou must be very careful so that thou mayest not show pride and haughtiness in thy acts. Probably this earth over which thou art walking now was, thousands of years ago the hand of a great writer, or the head of a wonderful thinker or the eyes of a very beautiful person. Therefore thou must be very humble. Again he says; "My son, before thou becomest satisfied with food stop eating Leave the table when thou art a little hungry. Do not fill thyself with all kinds of food, because it will bring over thee sluggishness and heaviness and that will decrease thy agility and spirituality." Another advice to his son was, "Whenever thou art sorrowful and grief-stricken, find the shirt of a happy man, put it on thy self, and immediately thy grief will pass away." Then once when his father died, this follower was very sad and he went around the city to find a man who was happy so that he could get his shirt. He went all over the city and found that every one had lots of trouble on his hands. Then he realized that what was meant was that there is not a single son or daughter in this world who has not some sort of trials and vicissitudes which would bring pain and suffering.

Both in Persia and in Palestine there have appeared many prophets, many teachers who have taught their followers to love each other and to practice that which is right and good. The aim of the Christ, the Son of God, who came and accepted all manner of suffering and trials and all the other prophets who came before Him was no other than to make the people love one another and to make them live peacefully and harmoniously amongst each other. When we read the Gospel from the beginning to the end, and we take the gist of it, we see that it is love. On the last night, when Christ was having his Last Supper, He was advising His disciples that the next day He would be crucified, and He said; \_\_\_ that I am going away, you must keep My commandment; and what is My commandment? You must love one another." Then He said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, a heart in which there is no love is like a branch which is cut off from the tree. It will not yield any fruit. It is good for no purpose." So it \_\_\_ with the heart that has not a power to love and to be loved. What is the result of love? Why did Christ come to teach this love to the people and make them feel consciously that love is the highest attribute in the world? It was this; that all the people of the earth may come, little by little, to look upon one another as brothers and sisters; that no racial, or tribal, or national distinctions, or differences of color, creed, or dogma may exist. We must realize that God is the Father of all humanity. He is not a respecter of

persons, and if God is the Father of all humanity, then He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to all mankind. Christ did not come for one nation or one race, for this continent or that tribe; He wanted His message to cover the face of the globe. Just as the love of God is universal and for all, likewise the love of the prophets and the love of the Son of God was for all the people; and if these two kinds of love are universal, impartial, all-inclusive, likewise the love of the followers of the prophets and the Son of God must be all-inclusive and universal.

The white and the colored, the yellow and the red, Persia and the United States, China and France - these distinctions are in the minds of men; these are the things that we, as human, ignorant, finite beings raise as barriers; we give so much importance to them. But when you go into the Kingdom of God, when you stand in the presence of the Lord, there is no distinction of color, race, country; they are all one in His estimation, and everything is equal in His sight. Thus in the sight of God there is no color. There is only one color which He takes as most important and that is the color of service, the color of love. If we have that color then we are beloved in His sight. God does not look upon color at all; He looks upon the hearts of His servants. If the heart is pure and white, no matter what the color of the skin might be, he or she is the beloved son or daughter of God, if he is characterized with God-like attributes and qualities and virtues. The colored one whose heart is illumined with the light of the sun of love, fellowship and service, he is like a star shining in the heaven of glory; and the white man whose heart is not touched with love, or whose heart is filled with prejudices, whether racial, national, or educational he is more black than charcoal, then the blackest night.

In the mineral kingdom we have many kinds of colors. Take the gem for instance. There are white gems and yellow and red and those with other tints and hues each one adds to the charm and beauty of the other. If you had a hand full of jewels and all were white you would not enjoy them; but if they were mixed some were white, some pink, yellow, red, orange what a beautiful sight it would make.

Likewise in the vegetable kingdom. If you go into a garden one mile long containing nothing but white flowers your eyes will get tired looking at them; but if there is a wonderful scene of pink flowers, red flowers, yellow and black flowers; one vast variegated scene of roses and other flowers, how beautiful and charming it is. This world of ours is the garden of God. We human beings are the flowers of God. If all of us were black flowers, or white, or red flowers then we would think that God is a monotonous Creator. Instead of that He has created us different and thus it shows His marvelous power in designing; that He is a most wonderful artist in bringing together all the colors, in showing the fertility of His art.

Look at the flock of doves. They are one kind. They may have different colors; one black, one spotted, one gray; but all of them,

because they are one kind coo with each other with the utmost love and amity. They don't fight with themselves because they are of different colors, but because they are of one kind they associate with each other with the utmost beauty, harmony and peace.

Take again a herd of cows in the meadow one black, one white, one spotted. One of these cows may have come from New Jersey, another may have come from Persia, a third from France. They do not kick and bite each other because one is a Jersey cow, the second a Persian, the third a United States cow etc. they will associate with each other with the utmost kindness and amity, grazing in the same meadow. The cows live in accord with the natural law of creation, and yet we look upon them as inferior beings in the Kingdom of Light. We know that they never had any teacher, they never had any schooling, never had any professors or any prophets so that they might be taught that they must live peacefully side by side; but men have had all these. Man calls himself the son of God and he has had all this schooling and yet he does all these things that the animals do not do. Again when we look upon the creation we see that although there may be different colors yet as far as our limbs and organs are concerned we are all alike. Each person has two eyes, and two hands one head, two ears, one mouth etc., and intellectually we are given the same faculties, emotions and sentiments so that we are alike in all these creational factors. The mercy of God is also universal for all His children. His sun shines upon all creation. His rain pours upon all. His breezes waft over all the trees, and His Bounty, Benevolence and Kindness are for each individual.

Likewise we read in the Book of God, in the Bible, that humanity had one Father and one Mother, Adam and Eve. We all believe in that don't we? Now how many colors did Adam and Eve have? They were not white and black and red at the same time. They had one color. But how is it that we have different colors? When the children increased they travelled to different parts of the world, and this color is simply an accidental matter, according to the climate and the geographical position on the earth, because some people lived in the tropics and others in various latitudes of the earth; therefore, these colors came thru these conditions of climate.

Inasmuch as the word of God tells us that we have had one father and one mother, one common parent, and inasmuch as the bounties of God are poured upon all of us without any distinction, creationally we are alike, intellectually and spiritually we are alike, then why all these differences, this hate, this prejudice, this warfare, this strife? All these things are based upon the ignorance of man, the delusion of the mind. We have taken certain illusions as facts, as things which have reality while really they are all imaginations. As long as the people still hold to these racial, religious and dogmatic prejudices, still have hate and envy and greed and sin and transgression in their lives if they read the Bible from beginning to end, 100, 000

times, and if they sing the songs of all creation they are not Christians, they are not the followers of Jesus Christ, because the followers of Jesus Christ are free from all these things. This is the meaning of the word of Jesus Christ Himself when He said; "He whose heart is empty of love, who has not love in his heart, he is not of Me, he is cut off from Me."

It is therefore our hope and unquestionably it is your hope that in this age in which we live, in this twentieth century, all these realities of the Teachings of the prophets and all these wonderful principles of Christ which were left unpracticed for 2,000 years may be put into practice to-day, each person may do his and her part so that this principle of universal love this principle of the oneness of the world of humanity, this principle of international peace and love may become spread in all parts of the earth.

In the last seventy years there has appeared in Palestine, in the Holy Land, a New Being, a New Man, Who is striving to put into practice these Christian principles, these God-like attributes, so that men and women may be able to bring the Kingdom of God into their hearts. The principle of the oneness of the world of humanity is not new. All the prophets have spoken about it. Christ came and gave His life for it, and for 6,000 years we have been speaking concerning this in our literature, in our books, and yet it has not been put into practice as universally as we would like it to be practiced. Now this New Teacher, whose name is 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and Who is living in Haifa, in Palestine, in the Holy Land, is trying to put these spiritual principles of brotherhood, of unity, of truth into the lives of men; because He has within Him that purity of life, that influence of word, that power of self-sacrifice, He has made millions of people give up all their sins, passions and greed and live this divine life. His work was not simply amongst the white or the colored, or simply amongst the Christians, but amongst all the religions of the world. That is the wonderful part of this work; that He is teaching the pure and simple principle of human brotherhood, teaching all the religions that they are brothers, that the time has come for them to practice the law of friendship and love instead of the law of hate and separation.

More than a year ago I was in Palestine myself and there I was the guest of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, this great Teacher of today, for five months; and there I met many people, hundreds upon hundreds, of Buddhists, Christians, Mohammedans, Confucionists, Turks and Persians, white and colored, Europeans and Africans, Americans and Canadians; all of them in His Presence putting aside their differences and associating according to the law of universal love, never looking at the color, of considering the religion that the others professed but realizing that they were all the children of one God, and are here to love and not hate one another.

'Abdu'l-Bahá is about 77 years of age. He is a very patriarchal man, with white beard and majestic appearance, and as these races and nations and religions come to Him He teaches them that when

they go out into the world, they must put into practice the principle of the Sermon on the Mount, of the Teachings of Christ, the Son of God; that the time has come to talk less and act more.

When I arrived in New York last year, I found these Bahá'ís, who are the followers of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, forming a circle, forming a society in Harlem, in the church of Reverend Bolden, a very progressive, colored minister. The society was called the Rainbow Circle, because this society had the all-inclusive principle of bringing all the races together; the white, the colored, the Persian, the Chinese, the Syrian, the Japanese etc.; all used to come together and sit side by side, and once a month they had an international dinner.

Again, when I was in Palestine, a very prominent woman from Washington was there and this Teacher, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, told her that He had heard that there is much prejudice between the white and the colored in America. He said that it was strange, and that it was not at all good, and He said to her that when she returned to America she must bring about a convention where this question of the amity between the white and the colored may be discussed. So, last month, in Washington, this convention was held. It was very wonderful, and it had a great influence in bettering the feelings between the white and the colored in that city, and its effect has spread far and wide.

The sessions of the convention were held in a large church, one built many years ago by founders who hoped to bring better understanding between the white and colored, and thus both races are always permitted to go there and worship side by side. For three days these sessions continued, morning and evening, and there were speakers from the Senate and from the House of Representatives, and great leaders of thought from various parts of the country, all of them striking the note of universal brotherhood, and saying that the time is here, in our midst, when the sons and daughters of this country, no matter what their race and color, must live amicably and peacefully and happily, and all these prejudices must be banished from the minds of men.

So the Bahá'ís, believe that unity and love, brotherhood and fellowship, peace and harmony, are the essence of the Teachings of all the prophets of the past. They did not come to teach hate, animosity and warfare. They came to teach these principles of unity and love, and we have, today, put them into practice. If the followers of a religion, no matter what that religion is, practice all the formulas of the creeds of their church, or their religion, and there is yet the least trace of hatred, of ill feeling, or animosity, or passion in their hearts, they are like a globe which may be outwardly very clean and very beautiful, but having no light in it. The light of this glass is love and if there is no love there is no use for the glass to live. If such a man holds only to the outward principles of his religion and does not act in accord with the inner principles of unity and fellowship he is like a body, decorated with jewels and

gems, but having no life. Humanity as a whole is like one body; each one of us is like a limb or organ of this body of man. You know even when your finger pains, that pain spreads all over the body; even your mind if affected. The same harmony must exist between the children of men so that when there is suffering in China all the other countries will suffer sympathetically. But we must consider that each member of the body has its own special function; for instance, the first finger does not interfere with the other fingers, my eyes with my ears, etc. Each one has a definite service to perform. So it is with man, each one has a certain service that the other cannot perform. Each must help the other.

The utmost is this, that a man may be ignorant, the other man who is wiser must educate him; he must not look down upon him because he is ignorant. Another man is sick, the well man must nurse him and bring him back to health and not reprimand him. That would not make the other man better. Or a man is poor, it would not be wise to let him become poorer, we must help him to gain some of the self-respect and comfort and happiness of this world.

Thus our duty in this world, no matter where we are, whether in Persia or in the United States is to polish the mirrors of our hearts. Our hearts are filled with the dust of sin and transgression, of confusion and of short comings, and our duty is to keep it polished all the time and realize that there is one God, there is one Son of God, there is one humanity, there is one religion and that is the religion of love and the religion of kindness and the religion of service; and when we do this then we will know that we are real Christians and then we are real Bahá'ís, because Bahá'í means "the follower of Light", those who love Light, who worship Light, and who would like to live in the Kingdom of Light for ever and ever.

## Some Bahá'í Principles

Tuesday Eve, 21 June 1921—Mrs. Revells. N.  
19<sup>th</sup> ST, Philadelphia, Pa

[SAMPLE HEADING]

We are very happy to welcome you here to-night. On such a hot evening you have taken much trouble to come and it is with great pleasure and happiness that we are going to speak tonight on the Bahá'í Movement and its Principles.

It is an incontrovertible fact that in this age in which we live we are in need of spiritual revivals, of spiritual movements more than anything else. Why is this so? Because the boy of humanity is afflicted with so many complicated diseases that no other remedy can heal these diseases except the remedy which is dynamically spiritual.

On one hand we have a wave of immorality, of murder, arson and lawlessness all over the face of the earth, the like of which has never been witnessed in past history.

The history of the religions of mankind show us that those religions in the past had a certain divine influence to overcome the sinfulness and the corruption of human nature. Although in those ages there were also sinners and those who broke laws, yet the religions had a great influence in shaping the lives of man; to to-day, notwithstanding the fact that we have so many religions in the world, they are entirely impotent and powerless before the army of corruption and immorality. All the wise men, all the leaders and statesmen to-day acknowledge this fact, that the world is indeed very sick.

On the other hand, we see that the nations are filled with greed, with love of conquest, with deception in their policies, and in their treatment of each other, and they are spending a great deal of human intelligence over the invention of those things that will increase bloodshed and carnage.

Although in those past ages the great nations encroached upon the rights of small nations and there was much tribal warfare and

bloodshed, yet to-day the great nations of the earth are trying to oppress the smaller ones, but now it is in the name of so-called civilization. They go to other countries to civilize the people or to constitute themselves as their guardians.

Although from the standpoint of material civilization the world has advanced greatly, inventions are multiplied, arts and culture have developed the minds of men, yet from the standpoint of spiritual civilization, which is love, international relationship, co-operation, and the banishment of slavery from the industrial and economic world. The world is in a chaotic condition. How can we bring about a spiritual revolution, a social change in the conditions of souls? Through force, violence, hatred and bloodshed? No. Because all these have failed; they have been repeatedly tried and brought no results.

Consequently the only remedy for these conditions is mutual understanding, kindness, sympathy and spiritual fellowship. For this reason we feel that we are in need of a great spiritual movement, a movement, not the expression of the thoughts of men or a code of laws, or even ethical principles because we have practiced these things in the past. We have volumes and volumes containing ethical laws and moral ideas; but what we need is an authority, a dynamic power which may put into practice those principles which the people have neglected, those ideals which they have overlooked illuminating luminary that may cry at every moment "Here I am, I am the sun"; but it may shine and irradiate its rays thru the space, silently but all the cosmopolitan institutions which have sprung up in the last century in the different parts of the earth instituted by forward looking men and women who are working for the realization of these principles.

In the middle of the nineteenth century there arose from the horizon of Persia a great and glorious Sun, the Sun of Bahá'u'lláh revealed His laws and principles all these recognized forces arose to keep away and maim the spread of His influence and teaching.

Thus history repeated itself on a larger scale. The same persecutions which transpired in the time of Christ and in the lifetime of other great prophets appeared in the Bahá'í Movement. But these persecutions and martyrdoms increased the power of the Cause rather than prevented its promotion, because Bahá'u'lláh advised His followers that it is better to be killed rather than to kill; that war is abhorred by all the great sages and that it is better for them to kiss the hands of their executors than to revile and oppress them.. While He was Himself put in prison and His followers were hunted down in different parts of that land He cried out in a powerful voice to the people who were nominally free outside that these persecutions and sufferings are like unto rain that will cause the growth of the plant of the love of God. They are like the rays of the sun that have the energy and the power to re-create this dead world and bring to it new life and development. About 20,000 of the

followers of Bahá'u'lláh were martyred in the last century. When the enemies of the cause realized that they could not stop the advancement of the Movement they exiled Bahá'u'lláh out of Persia first into Baghdad in Mesopotamia. There He stayed for eleven years and then He was sent to Constantinople and later on to Adrianople in European Turkey and finally to Palestine where all the prophets of the past lived and taught.

Bahá'u'lláh was sent to the penal colony of 'Akká on the shore of the Mediterranean and here for 24 years He was confined within the four walls of this narrow prison and from behind the walls of this prison He sent out all His Teachings and ideals of human brotherhood and kindness. While He was in prison His soul soured toward the world of humanity and He wrote many epistles pregnant in significances and matchless in eloquence and beauty to the kings of the earth and even to the religious leaders of mankind. His Books and Writings are very numerous but they all deal with these Principles that are the very life of this Age, the Light of this Century, the cause of the progressing of human consciousness. They are like unto the rain which vivifies the dead trees.

First He taught the oneness of the world of humanity and addressing the nations of the earth said; " O ye people of the world? Ye are the leaves of one tree and the fruits of one branch, the stars of one heaven and the flowers of one rose-garden. Ye are all the members of one family". This dissension and dispute which exist amongst you spring from your ignorance and your narrow mindedness. You must do away with it in this Age.

God, the Almighty, has revealed His Truth for all His children of this world, no matter where they live, whether they are in the East or in the West, in the North or in the South must look upon each other as the rays of one star, they must not see any differences. They must try to banish from their minds all these elements which have appeared in the past. If a person is ignorant they must educate him, but not think that he is inferior being. If he is sick they must nurse him and not reprimand him; if he is dark and fallen they must illumine him and raise him from his lower station. Bahá'u'lláh did not simply advise the people with this beautiful imagery and spiritual lesson but He created in the hearts of the people that universal consciousness, that love for mankind, that great driving force that makes the people do these things and under His banner many millions have arisen to-day who are fighting against all these enemies of minds and hearts. Therefore, the Bahá'ís, the followers of this great universal Light, no matter where they happen to be are working for the realization of these international ideals. If they are in America, for instance, they form, as they did a few weeks ago, a great convention, for the amity of the white and colored, in Washington. In Persia, they likewise form conventions to bring about complete and harmonious relationship between these races that live in these far away places.

The second principle that Bahá'u'lláh taught is the identity of the teachings of all the religions of the world. This in itself is one of the most marvelous teachings of this Age; because we realize more than ever how necessary it is for us to know that the Founders of all the religions were inspired and divine. It is true that it is very difficult for the follower of different religions, if they are sincere in their faith, to come to believe that the prophets of other religions were as inspired and as divine as their own prophet. But the Light has broken over the minds of the people in this Age and we, little by little, have come to realize that this principle is the very foundation of all harmony and unity between the religions of the world.

The study of comparative religion shows us that from a general standpoint every religion, no matter what name you may give to it, is divided into two parts. The first part deals with morality and ethics and the second with the laws and the conduct relative to the community and society. The second part is secondary and unimportant because there were certain laws and statutes created under the exigencies of the times and circumstances to protect and guard the life of a certain community at a certain period of human history. But the first part is the essential, the important part and that has never changed. It is invariable. He clearly stated that all these regions were created for the sake of love and unity, accord and harmony amongst the people of the earth. If they actually bring to such a state of harmony these people then they have rendered their duty and accomplished their responsibility, but if they have not then they are not real religion. They may be a bundle of tradition which conflict with the nature of things and they are against the good nature of God and the sooner we get rid of them the better we are, \*\*\*\* cause our ancestors and forefathers held to certain dogmas and creeds and now they are out of tune with modern consciousness. They are antiquated and there is no reason why we should still hold to them. Truth is one and indivisible. It has always been one and always will be one. It is not a subject of conflict. That which brings conflict and dissension is greed and dogma because they differ from one another.

Another principle of Bahá'u'lláh's is that from now on all religious beliefs must conform with reasonable and scientific deductions. For ages and ages science and religion fought against each other. Bahá'u'lláh said; "they are like two wings for the bird of the soul to ascent to the heaven of perfection. Each must help, inspire and elevate the other".

Several years ago, while I was traveling in India, upon reaching Calcutta I saw the city thrown into utter confusion and chaos, people barricading the streets and killing each other. I asked what was going on. They said, "There is a religious war amongst the inhabitants". I inquired the reason for this religious war. They told me that a Mohammedan had killed the holy cow of the Hindus. I said, "I have never heard before of a holy and sanctified cow. I have

heard of a holy man but never of holy cows". "Then you have never been in India." The believe from the time a calf is born, if it is spotless, and one color, that it is holy and they dedicate her to the deity and she is pampered loved above all other beings, because she is this divine cow and she fills such an important position in the religious system of India. She walks along the avenues like a queen. She goes to the stores and eats what she wants and no one interferes. It is looked upon as a privilege to have this cow go to a vegetable window all that the man has.

One day this holy cow instead of going to the Hindu bazaar went to the Mohammedan bazaar, and the Mohammedan, not having the same consideration for the cow, and the cow not realizing any better, went to the Mohammedan grocery and began to eat all the vegetables. The Mohammedan tries to drive her back but the cow was never treated this way and she continued to eat. Finally he brought this hatchet and killed her.

When the Hindus heard about it they were thrown into a wild rage and went to the Mohammedan quarters and many hundreds of people were killed for the sake of one holy cow. In the meantime the Hindus were thinking of retaliating and because the Mohammedans looked with the eye of uncleanness upon the pig one early morning they took a pig and left her in a Mohammedan Mosque. When in the morning the Mohammedan priest with his followers came in to pray they saw the pig in the Mosque and they fought with the Hindus and again many more people were killed for the sake of an unclean pig. The English had to send a regiment of soldiers to quell this disturbance and finally bring back normal life to the city.

When we read the sacred Books of these teachers of religion we realized that Mohammed did not come to teach his followers to look upon the pig as unclean, nor did Krishna and other prophets of India come to teach their followers to look upon the cow as holy. But these were the dogmas the religious creeds, that were fashioned by leaders and interested men who wished to keep the people in ignorance and lead them the way they liked.

Bahá'u'lláh likewise teaches the establishment of universal justice and equality of opportunity for all men, saying that just as God is the Universal Father of all humanity, just as He does not differentiate between the people of the world, likewise as government, or a state cannot make any differentiation between the citizens. The doors of opportunity and education must be open to each individual in the world. A universal curriculum of education is advanced by Bahá'u'lláh so the educational system and the instructors may have text books, scientific, industrial and economical to be taught in all the schools of the world, in every part of the earth, so that a universal conscience may be developed, an international man may be trained and the world may find universal citizenship.

The principle of the adjustment of conditions between capital and labor, the toilers of the earth and those who have the purse strings in their hands also is dealt with by Bahá'u'lláh so that perfect harmony and consideration of the rights of the two may be realized and society may advance with the greatest momentum without any friction. In all His tablets to the kings and rulers of the world Bahá'u'lláh advises simultaneous disarmament, not the disarmament of one or two or three nations but the disarmament of all the governments and the formation of a United States of the world and a parliament of man, a universal international language thru which this international conscience may be able to communicate with all the children of men.

The establishment of equality between men and women, educationally, socially and politically was advanced by Bahá'u'lláh seventy years ago in the Orient. The Bahá'ís had to meet the conventions and the prejudices against this rule for many years; but little by little, they are advancing a growing while praise be to God, the women of the United States have gained these rights.

These were a few of the religious principles of the Bahá'í movement but there are many metaphysical and philosophical ideas such as the principle of divinity, the teaching of the immortality of the soul, the ethical and moral ideas are all revealed in His Writings. In brief, when the followers of any religion, or any society, whether social or ethical enter into the Bahá'í movement they find therein their highest ideals, their cherished dreams realized and fulfilled. The aim of this Movement is therefore to make this world one home, the different races live side by side with the utmost amity and unity, the religions of the world throw aside their creeds and dogmas and hold to the universal principles and the nations and governments remove all the conflicts, all the political intrigues that they have been practicing in the past and to-day to establish amongst themselves the ideals of constitutional co-operation.

The aim is very high, very exalted. On the other hand the obstacles are tremendous. The difficulties are almost insurmountable, the fearless man quakes with fear, but those who have vision, those who are given the power of insight realize that the power of the Kingdom is behind this Truth and it will advance in spite of all these obstacles.

The Movement originated seventy years ago in Persia, within the mind of Bahá'u'lláh alone and to-day after the lapse of these few decades it has spread all over the earth. Millions of people are holding to these ideals and just as this marvelous and miraculous progress has already taken place this is the greatest index of the dynamic force of the Bahá'í Movement. Its future is no less great and we are sure that within this very century of ours all these principles will be established in this world, so that we will have one home, one family, and one kingdom of love in which the souls of men may live and abide forever.

From the beginning of this Movement the pole were roughly divided into three classes. The first class were those who believed in these principles. They were optimistic and had great faith and great conviction in their promotion and they gave up their fortunes and lives to promote them. The second class accepted the principles intellectually. In the minds they realized that these were the Truth but they did not like to go out of their way to promote them because they feared they might somehow conflict with their interest, no matter what these interests were. The third class were pessimists and enemies. They arose with might and force to oppose the promulgation of these ideals. Those who antagonized the cause, who tried to stop its promotion were the kings of the Orient, the monarchs of the east and the religious leaders of many of the faiths of today. But it is interesting to state that all their opposition assisted and encouraged the promotion of the Cause rather than prevented it. We have the greatest confidence that no power on the face of the earth can extinguish the light of the sun. It will shine on and on until the very last day of this world and it will illumine every corner of this dark earth.

This is a hot night and we are very grateful that you have come and this is all that we have to say to night. Meanwhile if anyone desires to ask any question we will be very glad to answer them.

## Address to Spiritualist Church

Sunday, 19 June 1921—Spiritualist Church,  
18<sup>th</sup> and Thompson St., Philadelphia, Pa.

It is indeed the source of greatest happiness and pleasure that we again come before such a noble gathering of Spiritualists and seekers of Truth and this privilege is again ours, to speak to them on these topics of life.

For fifteen months we have been traveling from one end to the other end of the United States and Canada and invariably in almost all of the large cities we have addressed the meetings of the Spiritualists and the Spirit was so strong, and the power of love and amity so manifest that we felt ourselves at home, at the end of a long journey; for we all know that the glory, eternity, the greatness and the majesty of man is dependent upon the spirit which shines through him and not through the body. For if we look simply upon the body of man, we find that in the animal and in the bird kingdom there are certain species and kinds of animals and birds that are more clever, that are cleaner, that are more agile and more active than this heavy, gross, material substance going into the make up of the physical body.

In points of intellectual faculties and instincts man likewise cannot glory over the animal kingdom because there are certain animals that are keener in intelligence, in point of power, or vision and sight than man.

The olfactory sense and the power of sight in certain animals have so developed and are so marvelous that man can never reach to the point. Inasmuch as physically and intellectually man cannot put himself about and beyond the other species in the kingdom of life, then what is the distinguishing feature? What is the most wonderful characteristic of man? It is the spirit. The spirit appearing in the physical body is characterized with certain attributes, properties and manifestations, of which the lower kingdoms are deprived.

The spirit of man is a collective center in which you will find the highest and the most refined attributes of the lower kingdoms of life plus certain spiritual and Divine qualifications which come from the highest world of truth. The spirit of man is a comprehending reality. It is an all-encircling truth and envelops all phenomena. It is a king, a sovereign in the world of existence.

All the physical forces, the intellection, the ideation, the various activities of the minds and reasons are entirely under the control of this higher reality, this spirit, so that the mind and the reason advance logical proofs. The eye sees, the ear hears through direct command of the spirit. Hence those various organs are simply instruments for the activities of the spirit. The eye is the telescope of the spirit and the ears are the telephone.

Consider all the inventions, all the scientific achievements, arts, and sciences. Where were they? They were invisible, hidden, and they became apparent and manifest through the activities of this spiritual essence within man.

The spirit of man is like unto a mine in the depth of which one finds the jewels, the pearls and the gems of knowledge and wisdom. Not even one percentage of the height and depth of this mine of the spirit is yet explored or displayed before the sight of man. Likewise, the spirit of man is like unto the depthless ocean, boundless and infinite.

The world of humanity has been striving, step by step, for the last many thousands of years to bring out of this mine the treasures of knowledge, intellectual, spiritual, moral and ethical. All that we have to-day is an atom in comparison with what is hidden in the kingdom of the spirit world – still unknown and invisible from the sight and insight of man.

Who were the prophets and the Manifestations of God? They did not descend from Heaven. They were human beings like ourselves. They brought into consciousness of man the Divine Knowledge, the Divine Wisdom which they found in the Kingdom of the Spirit within themselves. Therefore, those who reflect over this matter will realize that the spirit is the all-illuminating sun within ourselves. They do not need any proof or argument to substantiate that the spirit exists. The proofs and arguments are for those people who have not spiritual insight to think and to reflect.

When you are puzzled over a certain problem you go within yourself and you begin to consult with that inner consultant, with that something that is whining you and you say: "May I do this or may I not," and unerringly the judgment is always given in the right way. If we have a hearing ear. Now what is that within us with which we consult? It is nothing but the spirit.

When you say, “my hands”, “my head”, “my eyes”, who is this I within you to which you attribute all these outer organs and limbs? It is the spirit which is the real possessor of these organs and limbs.

What is death and what is life? Death is the decomposition of certain cellular elements, which have been brought together into the makeup of a given physical body. Life is that organism which causes the living of a certain substance. Inasmuch as the material phenomenon are subject to this composition and decomposition, therefore, they are destructible. But the spirit of man being a spiritual substance is indestructible. It is a simple and not a combined substance subject to disintegration and destruction.

The spirit is a ray, an emanation from the Sun of Divinity. Inasmuch as the Sun of Divinity is immortal and everlasting its emanation is immortal and eternal. Now and then a thinker of a student may puzzle his mind over the solution of a subject. No matter how much he may think the solution does not come. He worries, he troubles himself, but without avail. Suddenly as he is walking in the street and not thinking at all about that problem, out of the atmosphere, the solution comes. Now where did that solution come from? It was not within himself, because he tried his utmost and did not succeed. It comes from the Kingdom of the spiritual world, from which all solutions come; just as there may be here an electric globe which is dark because the wire is broken and when contact is established, immediately the light appears in the globe.

The holy Books, the Gospel and the Bible record many visions which were experienced by the prophets and seers of the past. We will give one of them. This is the story of the transfiguration where Peter saw Christ speaking with Moses and Elias. This was a true vision of the spiritual lives of those prophets. We may have the Jews believe that Alias ascended into Heaven, in a chariot of fire but they do not have the same belief in regard to Moses because he died. Consequently, it was the spiritual substance of these divine prophets with whom Christ was speaking.

Many of you have had a dream and your spiritual consciousness may have projected itself into an event or a place which you had never seen. Six months or a year afterward you find yourself in that place and it is familiar, or you are speaking with a man and you think that you have met him. When you think carefully you come to the conclusion that this in the place or person that you saw in the dream. So it was the spirit within you which had this wonderful experience before it happened.

There are people who may say that either through the feelings or through the intellect or a vision we have come to believe in a continuity of life after death; but where is the spirit, and where does it go after this life?

The answer to this is, why do you inquire about the spirit? You would inquire about the body. Where does the body go? Because

when a man enters a room and leaves his outer clothes outside they will not ask him, where did you put your clothes? Which are the same as this outer flesh. For the spirit is exactly like these outer garments. The spirit takes possession of this outer garment, uses it for a time and then casts it off. Therefore the spirit does not go anywhere. It is here. It is everywhere. It is living in the same kingdom in which it lived while it was in the body.

While we are alive there are two forces in us, the material and the spiritual. The body lives in the natural kingdom, the spirit in the spiritual kingdom within. When the substances of the body are disintegrated the spirit will still live in the spiritual station, without going anywhere. It is eternally present.

Suppose we have a magnetic rod on the top of our house and that magnetic rod is constantly taking unto itself the electrical energy with which the atmosphere is charged. Then something happens to the magnetic rod. It is broken. Do you think the atmosphere will be void of electrical energy? The electrical energy is still in the atmosphere, even the rod may be broken. Again, if you place a mirror before the shining rays of sun, the sun immediately reflects itself on the translucent surface of that mirror. If you should break that mirror the sun would still be there. You have not broken the sun. You have only broken the mirror which is this physical body, while the sun is the light of the spirit. If we go a step further, we realize that the world of existence in total is the world of immortality.

Not only is spirit immortal but matter and substance, of which this earth is composed is likewise immortal and indestructible. There is conservation of energy in all phenomenon. When a person dies and his physical conservation of energy in all phenomenon. When dies and his physical body does into the various kingdoms of life, do you think that this is the end of him? It will start another circle of growth and development. Out of these cellular elements, plant life may grow, and the animal may eat these plants, and in turn many may come and eat the animal, and thus these indestructible atoms of existence are going through the circle of life and advancing, step by step, in each kingdom, taking unto themselves certain virtues and attributes. Thus the infinite number of molecules and electrons are in constant motion and they advance eon and on from one kingdom into a higher one. They are journeying and traversing with the power of perfectibility, and as they journey and advance they take unto themselves the virtues and powers of each kingdom and with that capacity they enter into the larger life and consequently each higher kingdom is more perfect than the inferior kingdom and the progress is infinite.

It is through this constant spiritual and material evolution that the phenomena of creation are advancing, not only intellectually but materially as well. Progress is without end. We are trying constantly to attain to the unattainable and to reach the flying

perfect and to realize more and more that measure of perfection which is relative and not absolute.

It is not necessary to assert as the theorists assert, as Darwin asserts, that man has grown out of the orangutan or other unshapely animals; but if we could bring a primitive man of 7,000 years ago and put him side by side with the most beautiful, perfect being of today we would see what a vast difference exists between the two and how much even the physical being is etherealized and ameliorated. How and by what means have we achieved this physical refinement? We can truly say that the atoms of our beings are more beautiful and more perfect on account of these infinite journeying through the realms of existence, to such an extent that if you put a man and a woman of today beside a man and woman of 10,000 years from now, still there will be the same vast difference as exists between the man of to-day and 10,000 years before.

One of the Persian mystic poets says; "I was a mineral, I died from the mineral and became a plant. I died from the plant kingdom and became an animal. I died in the animal kingdom and there I became a man. Wherefore, then death should I fear? When did I grow less in dying? From man I shall likewise die and enter in the kingdom of the angles. I shall become that which entereth not the imagination. Therefore this death of mine hath been reality, birth. It is not death, it is simply a translation from an inferior into a superior, more expansive life."

When man is born into this physical life you might say that he died from the matrix of the mother and was born into the world of nature. Likewise this physical man dies in the womb of the world and is born into the kingdom of God.

Another mystic of Persia says; "How happy that day when I shall leave this ruined abode. I shall leave everything behind and go to meet my Beloved. In the hope of a kiss on the lips of that Divine Sweetheart I shall journey and advance through all the worlds until I reach my Heavenly abode."

Consider were it not for this hope of a life after death, this aspiration for this Divine, vast kingdom of existence, what would be the use of and the sum total of this physical life? This is a world full of suffering, privations, vicissitudes, hardships, struggles and turmoil, ups and downs. Were it not for a higher and nobler life would it not seem like a melodrama, like a play, which begins nowhere and ends nowhere, and they therefore would the Great Creator have brought these existences together, without having a wiser, a more definite plan for the perfection of humanity. Therefore, man has two phases, two natures. One is physical and animalistic sharing all the qualities and attributes of the animal and the other is Divine and spiritual and his glory and everlasting honor comes from the spiritual substance and nature within him.

When we read in the book of Genesis where God says, "Let Us create man in our own image and likeness," it does not mean this physical man. No, it means the spiritual man, the divine man, the heavenly man, the celestial man within.

There is a school of mystics in Persia who believe that man is only man if he has within him those divine, inner qualities; but outwardly he is an animal, having this outer resemble to his fellow man, but inwardly he may be characterized with the characteristics of the animal. He may be a man outwardly, while inwardly he may be a tiger or a hyena.

We will illustrate this by the following story: The Mohammedans consider Mecca just as the Christians consider Jerusalem and annually 100,000 of the Mohammedans go to visit the holy shrine of Mecca as a religious duty. One year one of the chiefs of this mystic school went to his followers walking behind him, he ascended the summit of the mountain and overlooking the vast valley of Mecca, he saw hundred of thousands of tents pitched, belonging to people coming from the different parts of Asia to visit this place, and one of this disciples turned to him and said: Master, see how wonderful it is, how people have become spiritual and religious. How may hundred of thousands have overcome difficulties to come here." The teacher smiled and said, "I will show you some of the mysteries." He placed his hands on the eyes of the disciple and when the disciple opened his eyes he saw the whole valley covered with all kinds of shrieking animals; dogs, cats, tigers, wolves, etc. The teacher said, "This is the real character of these people. Outwardly, they are men, but inwardly they are vipers." Inasmuch as this story shows that the spiritual part of man is the essential part, when that spiritual part, like unto a mirror, is cleaned from the dust of passion and greed and worldly achievements, then communication will be established between those who are beyond and those who are here.

If it was possible for those who had gone on to receive these spiritual revelation, it is likewise possible for those who are here to receive them.

The sun shines with all its glory but if the surface of the mirror is covered with dust, if you turn it next to the sun, or if you place the sun next to it there will be no reflection; but when the mirror is pure and clear, even if the sun is millions of millions of miles away from that mirror, there will be a constant communication spiritual and ideal between the two. They will be talking with one another in the language of Truth. Consequently, if we desire to put ourselves in touch with those who have left this world, and are in the Kingdom of Light, we must purify the mirrors of our hearts from these dusts and rusts. What are they?

They are prejudice, narrow mindedness, greed and all those things which numb the life of the spirit. Religious prejudice and

dogmas are like the chains and fetters that are on the body and limb of the spirit and the feet of the soul. We must with the power of resolution and magnanimity break these chains and free the soul from these limitations. Racial prejudice, patriotic and national prejudice are all poisons that have vitiated the life of the spirit and it is time for nations and religions to realize that they must strike at the root these things.

The animals although devoid of intelligence of God given understanding, do not act against each other, with these prejudices. If you put a herd of cows in the meadow, they will not kick against one another because one is black and one is white. They will graze with the utmost friendship and kindness. But man is not even willing to live according to that natural law. How do we expect then, in the face of all these prejudices, which act like a heavy curtain before the mirror of the heart, to receive these high, ennobling communications from the Kingdom of Light?

The spirits are willing and ready to communicate with us at all times but are we purifying these channels and vehicles so that we may become pure receptacles for the reception of these divine mysteries?

The Bahá'ís and their Founder, Bahá'u'lláh, teach that we are living at the dawn of this New Age of the spiritual concourse. That with this great power of spiritual vision we must scatter these prejudices, we must remove all these veils, rend them asunder so that the Kingdom of the Spirit may unveil itself before the face of man, universal consciousness and international mind become the possession of every child of God. All mankind become the members of one family, the stars of one heaven, the leaves of one branch and the fruits of one tree.

## Address to Y.M.C.A (colored)

Thursday Eve, 23 June 1921—Y.M.C.A  
(colored) (Germantown)

The weather is very warm and the hearts are very warm too. The weather is warm with the heat of the sun, and the hearts are warm with the heat of love so that when we put the two warmths together we have quite some warmth.

In the world of humanity there are no more beautiful things than the holding of such meetings, because in these meetings white and colored, Oriental and Occidental, the different races come together while their hearts are turned to God and they have no other aim but to exercise towards each other love. How excellent it would be to have more and more similar liberal associations and organizations the doors of which may be open to all systems of thought and schools of philosophies and religions and the eyes and the ears of the audience may at all times be open so that the breezes of new thoughts may rush in and refresh the inner chambers of those spiritual houses within us. If we dogmatically close the chambers of our minds and hearts it will be impossible for us to get constantly the new ideals which are springing up all over the world. We will stunt our own growth and we will go backward instead of forward.

One of the hopeful signs of the times is the opening of the doors of the churches and even the Synagogues of the Jews. All kinds of associations and institutions are willing and anxious to listen to every teacher, every speaker so that through them they may learn and impartially judge for themselves that which is truth and shun that which is evil. Through the reciprocal exchange of ideas, through the traveling of the eastern people to the west and the western people to the east there will be born a new plane of understanding, a new child human fraternity, and therefore the foundation of the brotherhood of man will be laid in the hearts. Brotherhood – how do we obtain it? Through understanding. How do we get understanding? Through the brain. How do we get sympathy? We get sympathy when the understanding through the brain is transmitted into the heart. How are all these things accomplished? When we listen to the words and utterances of those who are not of our own faith and our own creed.

In former times religious and national prejudices were so strong that people seldom presented themselves in a meeting which an outsider would address and even if some of the men and women took the courage to present themselves in that meeting they would come to it in great fear that their faith might be shaken and sometimes some of them would start a stampede in the audience and prevent the speaker from continuing his talk. There was a time when I used to speak with some of the fanatical, bigoted, prejudiced men and they would listen for a time and then they would become so angry that they would put their fingers so their ears and say, "I have had enough, I cannot listen any more."

One must be unafraid and courageous and listen to everything, because God has deposited in the hearts and in the minds of man a criterion, a standard which is the intelligence through which we can measure that which is right from that which is wrong and accept that which is conducive to our elevation and reject that which lowers us and which brings upon us shame and disgrace.

You are all aware of the fact that the historians of religions have investigated the matter and have told us that there are seven great religions in the world and each one of these great religions has been born in the Orient and has spread from the Orient to other countries. One of the seven religions has come to the West and that is the Christian. You are nurtured and trained in that religion; but the other six religions such as the Confusionists of China, the Buddhists of India, the Mohammedans of dark Arabia, the Jews, the Zoroastrians of Persia and the Brahmans have remained in Asia and more than two thirds of the inhabitants of the world believe in those six religions. Five of those great religions were founded before the appearance of Christ. One of them was founded about six centuries after Christ. When we study the literature of these religions we are astonished with certain similarities. For instance, all of them believe in God. All of them teach the immortality of the soul. All of them have temples, churches and synagogues. Under each religion we can have sub divisions which are branched from these religions and some of the historians have said that these are distinct religions. However the same seven great divisions of religion hold good. In former ages the followers of each one of these religions thought that theirs was true while all others were false and this condition came about because they did not know the teachings and the history of other religions. They were quite ignorant and were left in a state of misunderstanding. Not only did they not know each others teachings but they carried on their animosity and hatred to such an extent that they shed the blood of each other. Nay, rather they made war on each other in the name of religion.

One of the greatest miracles of the nineteenth century was the discovery of this fact that the teachings of all the religions are identical; that all these religions are founded by the prophets inspired by the revelation of God; that there is no pagan or false

religion as we used to think. How did some of the religions become known as idolatrous and (unclear)? Because these people took the pictures and the statues of their leaders, of their teachers, and placed them in their temples as reminders, as keepsakes, and little by little the ignorant people began to worship those people and give homage and respect to them; but the outsiders who did not know anything about this fact immediately called them idolaters, or the worshippers of images.

When I was in India I went into a Buddhist temple, and there I saw a statue of Buddha with very long ears falling on his shoulders. I said to the priest in the temple "I have never heard of a man having such long ears." He said, "Yes. It is written in our literature that Buddha had these long ears." But I realized that it meant that he had keen ears, spiritual ears, that he could hear the music of the Kingdom, but these people took it literally and so all these statues of Buddha are made with long, falling ears.

Another religion of the world, the Zoroastrians of Persia, nicknamed the "Fire worshippers" because their founder took the fire as the symbol of love and whether you take the Divine Love or the human love, love is the greatest attribute and virtue in the world of humanity. If it is the human love the lover is ever willing to sacrifice everything he has in the path of his beloved, and if it is the Divine Love the lover would give up even his life for the sake of God. So later on the followers of that religion, not understanding this wonderful truth, took the fire as a literal thing and began to pay homage to it. In reality we all know that no intelligent man would ever worship the fire as the Creator, because the fire is the creature, it is simply a created object of God.

The Christians have the cross. They have it around their necks. They have it in all their churches. Now the Mohammedans looking at this extraordinary reverence that the Christians pay to the cross have nicknamed them "the cross worshippers" while in reality this is simply a symbol of sacrifice which reminds the Christian of the sufferings of Christ and thus it will make him go through sufferings with greater endurance.

Christ said; "Let those who desire to follow Me carry their cross with them." This meant that just as He has been willing to undergo all kinds of sufferings and persecutions and finally ascend the cross. Likewise His followers are those who at all times will be willing to endure the trials and ordeals of life with serenity, composure and happiness.

In brief, whether you take the idols in the temples of India or you take the fire in the temple of the Zoroastrians or the cross in the Christian churches they have been and are the symbols of a great Reality to which the people have looked, and even to-day those nations do not claim that they are worshipping them, so they are, but they are looking upon them as the channels through which the

may reach their Creator. Thus if you read the sacred books of the seven religions which we mentioned to-night you will see that their principals and ideals are alike in regard to the divinity, in regard to the life after death, in regard to the compensation, the reward and the punishment for good and evil. If there are discrepancies, they are in the secondary laws which are not important at all; but the fundamentals are identical.

Each religion calls on God by a different name. The words are various, but the Reality is the same.

I was speaking with a Christian gentleman about the prophethood of Mohammed in Arabia, and I tried to impress on his mind that Mohammed was also a prophet sent to His people in Arabia. He said, "no, I cannot believe that He was a prophet. I believe that He was an impostor, because I have read His Book from beginning to end and nowhere does He mention the name of God. He always says; 'Allah, Allah'. Now what kind of a prophet is He that He does not mention the name of God?"

I said; 'I beg your pardon, but Mohammed never lived in England or America so that He did not speak English. In fact when He lived America was not known. Do you think that Christ spoke in English? He was a Hebrew. He spoke Hebrew. There are two ordinances that are practiced in all the religions of the world and they are – prayer and fasting. For instance the Christians have their fast during Lent. For 40 days they abstain from eating any meat. The Jews fast for 26 hours at a stretch. The Mohammedans fast for 30 days and from sunrise to sunset they do not eat or drink anything. The Hindus have three kinds of fasting; the short fast, a longer fast and the longest fast lasting several days.

In the same way in prayer the Mohammedans go thru various practices rising, sitting, and bowing down. The Christians go into their churches and there they pray and sing songs. The Jews also have their system. So that we see every one of these religions has both these two lights. The way is different but the purpose is the same. There are other principles found in all the religions; some of which are morality, ethics, spirituality, service, co-operation and mutual helpfulness. None of the religions taught that you must steal; every one said that you must abstain from the property of others. None of them taught that you must tell lies. Each one taught that you must tell the truth. So, in regard to these spiritual laws, all the religions of the world have exactly the same kind of principles only expressed in different terms and words. For instance, in the Bible Moses says that you must love your neighbors and your relatives. Christ embodies the same ideal when He says that if someone strikes you on your right cheek you must show him the other also; if someone asks you to walk one mile with him walk two miles; if someone ask you for your coat give him your shirt also. Now whether these things are practiced or not is another question, but the same moral teachings are explained in this manner.

Mohammed voices the same teaching when He says that if you are walking along the street, and someone comes along and curses you without any reason, you should just continue your walk without looking at him, but if he curses you again and starts to follow you, you should just turn back to him and smile and say 'Peace be upon you my brother'. Again He says that the real believer in God is the one from whose hands and tongue no one receives any harm or injury. Confucius, the prophet of China, says. "Do not desire for another that which thou dost not desire for thyself." Zoroaster, the prophet of Persia says that it is not a great virtue and excellence in you if you do not harm your fellow man because he belongs to the same kingdom as you do, but real virtue consists in not harming the animals. He says you should not injure an ant, because the ant has life and life is very precious and sweet." Thus is it evident to you that the golden rule which is the highest and most perfect rule is repeated and taught and explained in different ways by all the prophets of the past.'

The different religions are like unto the rising of the sun from different zodiacal signs. Every month the sun appears from a certain sign in the heavens and therefore, although the Sun of Reality is one, the constellations are different, It was only thru the ignorance of man that the religions became divided and sub divided forming sects and denominations and causing strife and dissention.

Religious differences [have their] counterpart in racial difference. Just as humanity has divided itself because there are different people having various colors, likewise the religions divided themselves on account of opinions. In the animal kingdom there are animals of many colors but they do not fight. Why should the fighting go on in the human kingdom? This is the age science. This is the century of reason. This is the time of the drawing together of all the sons of men, and therefore the greatest bounty that God has given us is to work for the unity of human kind and to bring all the children of God under the one flag of spiritual fraternity.

The hearts of men are like unto mirrors. They were covered with dust to today God has so destined that these mirrors may become purified and cleansed so that the rays of the sun of unity and brotherhood may shine upon their surfaces. Thousands and thousands of people in the Orient and Occident are working and striving so that this great principle of the oneness of humanity may become practical.

For this reason the Bahá'í Movement has appeared in the Orient, and its principle aim has been to unity the religious systems of the world. Likewise the different races who were most antagonistic and inimical are, under the influence of the Bahá'í dispensation, united and harmonized; they understand one another better and they are under the one Canopy of spiritual understanding.

Before our arrival in Philadelphia, we were in Washington, D.C. and there they had organized a most wonderful racial convention; a convention to establish the amity of the white and the colored. For three days its sessions continued and it brought marvelous results. The sessions occurred in a large church, which is the only one that has for its aim better understanding between the white and colored and its doors are open to/both races. There were many speakers; from the Senate, from the House of Representatives, from different parts of the United States leaders of thought and presidents of different organizations; and there they delivered the most fiery eloquent speeches in regard to the necessity of the unity and co-operation between the white and colored races in this Age.

There were hundreds of white and colored people who attended those sessions sitting side by side with the utmost love and amity and the scene was most inspiring showing us how bright and hopeful the future is.

The Bahá'ís are the optimists of the world. They know that behind the clouds of war and misunderstanding there is a glorious sun of universal consciousness rising higher and higher and scattering the clouds of enmity and hatred from the horizon of the hearts. For this reason the forward looking men and women everywhere are striving with heart and soul, are working day and night, so that these gems of thought, these ideals of all the ages, these dreams of all the poets and seers of the past may come true. What are they? They are the brotherhood of man, the Fatherhood of God, the universal parliament of humanity, the international language, etc. They are in brief the universal religion; in briefer form the Kingdom of God, so that man may become the angels in the Kingdom, banishing hate forever from that kingdom and realizing that they are all the children of one Father.

## At Miss M. Washington's House

Thursday afternoon, 23 June 1921—the  
house of Miss M. Washington

Page 23 (Q) Persian hidden Words.

Here Bahá'u'lláh addresses the wise men of the world, those who are endowed with the spiritual hearing and with the divine insight. Although all men are human all have outer eyes and ears, yet there are a few amongst them who have this deep insight and spiritual hearing. The real men and women are those who do possess this heavenly intelligence and whose ears are attuned to the melody of the Kingdom. Man attains to this station when he hearkens to the Call of the Manifestation of God.

Bahá'u'lláh addressing such people says, "You who have followed strictly the command of God and have obeyed His laws must be very careful so that you may not be submerged in the sea of materialism and may be filled with the love of truth."

This constitutes therefore the first call of the Beloved to his friends. This is also the first step that man takes in the highway of advancement spiritually.

Bahá'u'lláh likens the soul of man unto the nightingale. Just as the nightingale has sweet and entrancing melodies, likewise the spirit is endowed with these spiritual strains. Bahá'u'lláh says: "Thy abode O nightingale of truth is not in the water and clay of nature but is in the rose-garden of significances." He wishes this nightingale of the soul to live beyond the grades of nature and its narrowness and soar towards the apex of divine vision and dwell therein forever.

The sentence beginning to messenger of the Solomon of Love "is like-wise related to the soul and it comes from a very wonderful story that is prevalent in the Orient. It is about a bird that Solomon has and he used to send this bird all over the world to bring back to him great messages.

Solomon was in love with the queen of Sheba and the Hippo was the bird which used to carry messages between him and the Queen

of Sheba. Therefore Bahá'u'lláh means: "O thou divine soul! Make thy dwelling in the Sheba (city) of love."

'Phoenix' again is another symbol of the soul and is used in oriental legends. It is said in the story that this bird was hidden in the most inaccessible mountain. No one can see it. It is beyond the reach of man so Bahá'u'lláh here addressing the soul says; "O thou phoenix of immortality. Live thou forever in the mountain of faithfulness."

If thou art desiring to attain to the spiritual stations of life this is the path.

Many words such as are used here come from the ancient spiritual legends and stories current among the eastern nations, in order to gain the background one must be more or less familiar with those stories.

This does not refer to any special tree or to a special material garden. It is the blessed Tree of the Cause. The garden is the Cause of God, the Kingdom of God and the Tree of life is Abdul Baha, and it is referring to the station of Abdul Baha which is designated in the Kingdom of God. Also the Covenant that He took from His friends that after Him everyone would turn his face towards him. It says; "I have addressed you in three worlds? The first words were: 'My will is that you must turn your faces to me and you should not prefer your will to my will etc'".

This also refers to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh in regard to Abdul Baha and "the Mount of Paran" and the Shrine of Teman" are the spiritual stations of Abdul Baha. This is in reference to the hardships and troubles that were heaped upon Bahá'u'lláh in the first period of the Cause. It has historical background. Here Bahá'u'lláh says that notwithstanding all the Covenants that were taken by the former prophets, all the predictions given and also the clear prophecies and the glad tidings of our Bible yet when He arrived, He did not find any fragrances of fidelity from the dwellers of the earth. They all denied Him and the followers of Bahá'u'lláh suffered martyrdom. All these are spiritual symbols and metaphors.

Regarding talk at Lily Dale to the audience of Spiritualists Jináb-i-Fádil said that the "degrees" that he mentioned are the degrees of the soul that one must go through even in this life.

## Questions and Answers

Thursday Eve, 24 June 1921—Location  
Unspecified

Ethics is the foundation of all institutions, not only governmental but other departments of human life. It is like the blood that circulates thru the body of man. No matter how much we may try to heal a certain portion of the body, if the blood is diseased, the germ will be carried thru the whole system and thus poison it, so that if the morality of a nation is weak all the institutions will be weak. The physical world to-day is sick. It is attacked by various kinds of dangerous microbes, for instance the microbe of religious prejudice, the microbe of racial prejudice, the microbe of creed, the microbe of passion, immorality and lawlessness in our business and various duties of life. All these microbes have attacked the physical body of humanity and thus there has been set up a reaction in various departments. So what you say is true, that we must give great importance to spirituality, ethics and morality, so that the source of blood may be cleansed and wholesome blood may be circulated throughout the whole body, and thus bring about a new race and a new life.

(\*) This was in answer to a question asked as to how conditions could be changed while there are in office men of certain types serving in the government today.

**Question:** Where is the starting point?

**Answer:** Where the disease is the most virulent. For example in the South, where the disease of racial prejudice is rather dangerous. There we must concentrate our force to bring about better understanding and cure the body in that way.

Of course we must start in all parts of the government, because no part is really perfect, and wise physician will naturally give attention to that which is most important, and that is the cleansing of the ( House of Representatives), let us say who are the delegates of the nation. To-day, from a comparative standpoint, the most democratic government on the face of the earth is the American Government. Leaving aside the monarchical system of the Orient, the European system of government has been so corrupt that when the eastern people hear the name of it they shudder with fear. The

European Governments have really no other aim except covetousness, expansion of their own selfish interests. They sometimes take religion as a protection for carrying on their schemes. Sometimes they send out missionaries, sometimes they send soldiers to establish the way for their trades and commerce, so that they use even the name of God to carry on their plans, while the name of the American Democracy has reached to all parts of the earth. It has been copied by all governments as a model of republicanism and it has paved the way for the better understanding of the people. The financial help that America gave after the war to the famine stricken countries of Europe and China and other countries has been the greatest instrument to sow the seeds of good will between these people and the American people and the reward will come later on.

**Question:** Is America less discriminating than England?

**Answer:** The United States has set an example for the democracy of the world. The system of autonomous government between the various states and the internal independence that they have, with external unity, is the greatest example that we have for the United States of the World, that is coming in the future.

**Question:** Do I understand that Bahá'u'lláh did not come to tear down, but to build?

**Answer:** Exactly. You have understood the Bahá'í Message exactly.

**Question:** Do you think it wise to have federated states all over the world?

**Answer:** It is bound to come. If the world is to gain peace and harmony, it must have that.

**Question:** In France the men look upon the blacks as human beings.

**Answer:** Of course in France there has never been a large population of the colored people. They have African colonies, but the French nation is a homogeneous nation, and consequently they have never been taught race prejudice and therefore they do not know what it means. On the other hand, while in America, we have this race prejudice, we must realize that it was in America that the Emancipation Declaration was pronounced; that it was in America that the final fight was fought, so that the human slavery was brought to an end.

**Question:** In this country the negro is considered as an inferior being.

**Answer:** If we travel throughout the world, especially in eastern countries, and compare the conditions we see and realize how in the last fifty years the colored people in this country have gained in education, in culture, in industries, in various walks of life; they have

made marvelous progress; so that you yourselves know that the colored people are received in this country by the white people on equal terms; but in Africa the same does not hold true. The African people in Africa have not had the advantages of education and training. We all must realize that these few remains of prejudice that have been left behind are going to pass away thru education. Only through the power of education will these changes be brought about.

# 50

## “Reconstruction of Jerusalem”

Saturday morning, 25 June 1921—Philadelphia, Pa.

TALK GIVEN IN THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE---RABBI KRAUSKOPF

It gives us indeed the greatest pleasure and happiness that this morning the privilege has been given to us to come into the Temple of the “Ancient of Days” and speak to the children of the Lord about the country, the Holy Land, wherein the Lord spoke to His people.

Persia has had always intimate connections with the Holy Land and although they are not exactly neighbors, that is they are not contiguous to each other, yet all through history they have had many dealings and connections with each other.

Previous to the conquest of Persia by the Mohammedans over 1000 years ago, Persia enjoyed the laws and ordinances of another religion called Zoroastrian, commonly known as fire worshippers, because they looked on the fire as the symbol of purity and the love of God.

Quite a considerable portion of the history of Persia is recorded in the Old Testament in connection with the Babylonian captivity and the deliverance there of the children of Israel through the great King Cyrus.

Although Cyrus the Great and his Ministers were not Israelites, yet they were so imbued with the doctrine of Mohammed, with the laws and ordinances of Israel that, no sooner did they gain control of Babylon than they gave perfect freedom to the Israelite children in that city to return to the Holy land and build the second temple of the Lord.

The records of the Bible show us that almost all the books and all the utterances of the ancient prophets were destroyed through the successive attacks on Jerusalem by the Assyrians and Babylonian kings and the greatest service to the Jews was the fact that they came back and wrote down again the records; to such an extent were the services of Cyrus the Great appreciated that Ezra called Cyrus the Messiah, the Anointed One.

Indeed, it is one of the most significant facts of history that a king should be so liberal and so broadminded that although he did not profess the religion of Israel, yet he was so anointed with the spirit of the Lord that he gave them permission to return and practice their own religion freely.

Thus, from that time, constant communications were established between the Jews and the Persians so that today we have hundreds of thousands of Jews who live in Persia with the utmost security and comfort.

Palestine has been always the dawning place of the inspiration and the revelation of the spirit of God. The natural scenery of that country, the high mountains and the deep valleys, the climate and the inspiring panorama from the various summits of the hills inspires one with spirituality as soon as one steps upon that sacred ground.

In reality, if a person enters the Holy Land with a spiritual eye, he will witness with his mind's vision the sufferings and the persecutions, the trials and the ordeals that the ancient prophets went through in order to establish the Kingdom of Righteousness, and he will hear, with his spiritual ear, the music of Heaven playing through the very atoms of the air in that blessed country.

Palestine, therefore, has given to us the sublimest spiritual literature that the world can ever have. We have the wisdom of Solomon, the spirit psalms of David-- even it is recorded in ancient history that the ancient philosophers of Greece came to Palestine to be instructed in the spiritual lessons of those days. [Specifically] it is said [that] Socrates [came] to Palestine and learned the principles of the immortality of the soul through the teachers of Israel.

Hence, in those days, Palestine was not only a center for physical and material civilization, but it was likewise the heart of the spiritual civilization of mankind.

### **Saturday Morning**

Through the various causes, economic and governmental, that period passed away and long generations of ruin and despoliation and suffering dawned upon that country. Palestine has been the passage-way of many conquerors and conquests and thus it is one of the few countries of the world that has suffered more than any other country of the world from the various hosts and armies who like unto the waves passed over the country and left behind them ruin and waste.

Let it be noticed here that one of the greatest causes of the retardation of the progress of Palestine has been religious prejudice, religious wars. The greatest religious war in the history of the world has been waged in Palestine when for 200 years the armies of the

East and of the West met on the plain of that country and fought the most terrible battle.

The names of the cities that are recorded in the Bible, that in those days were thriving centers of industry, beehives of commerce and culture and trade, today are mountains of ruin.

However, as a golden thread there runs through the Bible a promise of the reconstruction of Palestine, not economical and material alone but spiritual and intellectual, as it was read this morning, the prophecies of Isaiah give us pictures of the future when all the nations and the people will give us pictures of the future when all the nations and the people will come to the Mount of Zion and see the law of the Lord Jehovah.

The beginning of the fulfillment of these prophecies appeared in the nineteenth century when the religious and cultured contemporaries of the Israelite sons and daughters were awakened to the beauty and responsibility of that country.

Palestine being at that time under the dominion of the government which was despotic, and thus the Jews having no opportunity for culture and education, the western thoughts and ideals began to permeate that land by men and women who had studied the situation of that country, thus the country began to thrive step by step.

The foundation of the Zionist movement, the establishment of colonies in various parts of Palestine; the modern schools--more than 50--they became the oases in the desert and the centers to disseminate new ideas and new principles of education to the people of a stricken nation.

Nearly 50 years ago there was built at Beirut the American Syrian University and this University which has today the most up-to-date program of education, became the headquarters of all the intelligence of that country and also people all over Asia Minor, nay, rather the Orient sent their sons and daughters to be trained.

Not only these colonies were inspired from the European headquarters but many Oriental Jews who, prompted by religious convictions that this age will bring the final emancipation of that country, pushed their way on to Palestine, peopled their colonies in different parts, strengthened the old colonies and thus a new life appeared upon this earth.

Although they gained these colonies and these centers of education in the past 60 years, yet they had to fight against tremendous odds and restrictions and religious prejudices of the Turkish Government, which hedged them all around and would not give them any more freedom than was absolutely necessary, and the government was forced to yield.

The Israelite people of the Orient are very religious. They are extremely devoted to the ancient customs and manners of the Bible and notwithstanding this, when they traveled thousands of miles to see the land of their forefathers, they were not permitted to enter the Synagogue but must go around the walls and weep and cry and pray that the day would come for their return to ancient glory.

One of the greatest, nay, rather the greatest result of the world war was the liberation of Palestine. With the establishment of the British administration in that country, new ways of opportunity and progress were opened on all sides. Roads were paved, new branches of railroads built, banks were established and public schools founded so that in the last four or five years more progress has been attained than in the last four or five years more progress has been attained than in the last five centuries.

There is a chronological prophecy in the Book of Daniel where he says: "Blessed are those who shall live and see the days of 1335." There are many interpretations in regard to this, but one of the most trustworthy interpretations in the light of recent events, is the deliverance of Palestine.

Then if we take the interpretation of the Bible in regard to the day, that each day is one year and go through the various ages up to the time of the Arabian rise in the Arabian Peninsula and the conquests of that country by the Mohammedan rise we will see that this date coincides exactly with the Mohammedan date.

Another means of the progress of Palestine has been the railroad which was built during the war in Egypt, through the Sinaiatic Peninsula, that vast desert of sand dunes which took Moses and his followers forty years to cover and finally Moses, not being able to reach the land, asked Joshua, the son of Nun, to finish the journey. today you can reach Palestine in a few hours in the utmost comfort and happiness.

In those days when Christ wanted to enter Jerusalem, He asked His followers to go and bring a donkey from the nearby fields so that He could ride on it with glory and honor. Of course in these days it is not considered much honor to a man to ride through the city on a donkey, but then it was. Today you can enter Jerusalem in a train.

Thus, if one had slept 2,000 years ago and would suddenly awaken today and see himself among all this reconstruction, educational and religious, going on in Palestine, he would realize that all the prophecies in Isaiah, in regard to this, are being fulfilled.

There was a very curious prophecy or prediction amongst the people, that the land will go out of the hands of the Jews when the water of the Nile will come to the Holy Land, and this was also done by the British country.

In brief, the signs of new civilization, divine and earthly, are beginning to appear in that land; while there is much work to be

done because numerically the Jews are in the minority in Palestine and the religious prejudice is still intense between the various religions in that country.

The children of Israel are equipped with knowledge, with intelligence and with money to reconstruct the country in a short space of time, but the most of the people who are not of this faith are holding back because of the religious fanaticism which holds sway in their breasts. However, there is a new hope springing up in the hearts of those who love that country, that a broader spiritual vision be given to the people that they may all co-operate with each other and deliver that land from its despondency and give to that land that measure of greatness and enlightenment to which she is entitled.

Another means which has brought Palestine into the world consciousness is the establishment, at the headquarters, of the Bahá'í Movement at the foot of Mt. Carmel in Haifa. The principles of the Movement were read to you by our beloved friend (Dr. Krauskopf) and you can realize how important it is and, whereas formerly, the three religions of the world, the Jews, the Christians and the Mohammedans were only interested in Palestine, to-day, through the Bahá'í Movement, all the religions of the world are deeply interested in the fate and progress of that country.

Even the ancient Zoroastrian religion, the Persian; the Hindu faith in India, who never thought that Palestine was their country, through the light of the Bahá'í Movement and its teachings, have come to Palestine and have done their share to establish better conditions in the Holy Land.

When the British army rode through Haifa they carried on a solitary warfare outside of the walls because they were commanded by the foreign office in London that 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His followers lived there and they must see that no bomb must be thrown into the city and the people must be protected by every means.

Thus, when Field Marshall Allenby entered the town of Haifa, the very first question he asked from the municipal head was "How is 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Is He well, is He in the city, has He been well all during the years of the war?" When assured that He was well he called with Lady Allenby on 'Abdu'l-Bahá. And then General Sto, the first Governor General of Jerusalem, motored to Haifa to pay his visit to 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Mt. Carmel which, in the Hebrew language means the vineyard of the Lord, has become the center of the ideal of this world through universal brotherhood and universal peace and the Bahá'ís stand for universal peace and hope, in the near future, that they may build on the mountain a great international university and temple where all the people of the world may study and worship God without any restriction, creed, or doctrine.

The lights of universal faith, of spiritual consciousness, or the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of god and the realization of the word, are being disseminated through the Holy Land as they used to be disseminated from the Holy Land in the times of ancient Patriarchs.

Thus when we open our insight and look upon the history of Palestine of today, we see that a vast future brilliant, spontaneous and great is open and its progress economically, intellectually and spiritually is unlimited and boundless.

Our hope and prayer, our earnest faith is, that again out of the Holy Land the call of God may be raised, the Holy Land become a part of the religious, spiritual and intellectual center of the world. The Kingdom of God may be established, the rays of the Sun of Truth may be diffused, and Palestine may become the capital of the spiritual and the intellectual capital of the wisdom of God to man.

## Address at Green Acre Date Unspecified 1923—Eliot, Maine

TALK DELIVERED AT GREEN ACRE BAHÁ'Í SCHOOL

If we search and investigate and travel through the world of the human soul, we find it a boundless, measureless and fathomless reality, a reality which is unique, an ocean which is unfathomable and a world which is infinite. Ancient thinkers said there are two worlds: one is the world of the human soul and the other the world of nature; both are two unlimited books of God full of knowledge and wisdom and signs of the power of God. They described the philosopher as one whose inner world was a picture or mirror on which was reflected all the images of the outer world; the philosopher became the prototype of all the truth of life.

When we ponder carefully over the soul of man we realize that the effects of the soul conditions are manifest in all the motions and activities of the external man. For example, if the soul is functioning in a vibrant, spiritual, optimistic and happy environment its effect will be instantaneous and most powerful on the physical body. On the other hand, if the soul is in the grip of fear; if it is weak or in a state of melancholy, the body will immediately respond to those vibrations. Fear and imagination have a great effect upon the body of man. For example, if a person is swimming and permits fear to take possession of his soul, he will immediately lose confidence and control of his movements. If he is walking upon the ridge of a mountain or the top of a high building and fear enters in he will tremble and fall. A ropewalker on the vaudeville stage illustrates this principle very aptly. Through the reasoning faculty such perfect control is maintained that he walks upon the rope with perfect poise.

Also the effect of the inner man upon the outer is not limited to the man himself, but has a general effect upon others. If for instance, someone begins to yawn from fatigue in a group, others will soon follow his example, or if he is full of vivacity and happiness he will electrify others around him. These few illustrations point the clear fact that the world of the soul has independent existence; its effect is creative; it reverberates with the vibrations of joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, intimacy and estrangement.

Inasmuch as the soul has this inventive and creative power in the kingdom of imagination, how much more universal will be its scope if it is strengthened and buttressed by the spiritual forces of God. Thus if the soul of man is re-inforced by the divine powers and energies not only his own body will become a perfect example of health and radiation and joy, but he will radiate like the sun those electron of happiness and radiance to all who come in touch with him. The Manifestations of God, the prophets of divinity are those spiritual educators who have initiated a system of spiritual training based upon this law. But if the system of spiritual education is not put into practice by men who are the followers or apostles of the divine Manifestations its existence and no existence are equal. The benefit humanity will draw from this system will be commensurate with its application in the daily life.

One branch of this system of spiritual education deals with the inculcation of ethics in the lives of men. For example, in the soul of man there are certain tendencies or qualities: one is fear, courage, rashness. Now extremes in any direction means disease and the Manifestations of God come to teach us that fear is evil, rashness is unwise and that courage is the golden mean. Also we have a trinity of other tendencies, squandering at one pole and avarice the other. One may be so avaricious that, as the Persian poet expresses it - the palm of his hand is as dry as the surface of Sabra. The spendthrift wastes money, while generosity again is a golden mean. Also justice is the golden mean between tyranny and a lackadaisical acceptance of humiliation or adversity. Contentment and chastity are two other characteristics which have their extremes.

These five qualities are the five golden rules of ethics. These five pathways lead to a happy, contented life and revealed in the sacred books and taught by the Manifestations of God. If we simply read them, kiss the sacred books as a sign of respect, place them on the shelf and forget them, this will do us no good at all. Theories and words may have an effect upon the lives of men but Bahá'u'lláh tells us that in the last analysis deeds are the criterion of right and wrong. One may write a most inspiring book or give many lectures on these five qualities without any effect whatever, but if he arises and by his deeds manifests the quality of generosity, for example, by dispensing a portion of his fortune for the alleviation of suffering humanity his action will have a great effect. The Manifestation of God points to us the road and tells us this is the pathway. If we walk in it we shall reach a certain destination, but the walking must be done by ourselves; nobody will help us.

This fact is illustrated by the example of a man giving a banquet and preparing all kinds of dishes and when invited to eat the guest replies "It is too much trouble - eat it for me." We know the condition of such a man. Those who have not heard about this system of spiritual education are not so much responsible for carrying it out in their lives but those who affiliate with it and go

under its banner are those among the rest of the world who should characterize themselves with its qualities and embody its principles in their lives.

It has sometimes happened that a group of men and women have entered under the shade of the teachings of a Manifestation of God and have felt that they have so trained and educated themselves that they have reached the highest point of perfection, and so a kind of spiritual pride takes possession of them. In one of his books, the *Jewels of Mystery*<sup>24</sup>, Bahá'u'lláh says that when a seeker starts a journey through the Seven Valleys of human and divine experience in every valley there is genii or shadow, the shadow of pride, which watches every moment in the effort to bring him back. In one of his tablets 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that pride is like a dark well into which falls he goes down and down, his own weight adding to the force of the descent.

During the last seventy years Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, through their lives and teachings, have so trained and educated the believers that they are ever watchful - not of others but themselves and to such an extent that they do not use the word "leader" but rather the word "servant."

Now this moral training of the soul is one of the branches of spiritual education and we can never characterize ourselves with these golden qualities unless we begin at home with the self within us and try to control that self in order that we may be able to convey the same knowledge of triumph and victory to others. The Báb desired that his followers should keep a diary from day to day with accurate record of their words and acts as though it were a record of the life of someone else. Before retiring each night they were to read it over and see what was good and what was not. If there were certain good actions and words, they were to be repeated and if there were blameworthy things they were to be set aside. It is very easy in brief, to heal physical diseases but difficult to heal spiritual diseases. It is therefore our most important duty to pray and beg the confirmation of God to help us so that we may occupy our time in our own education and spiritual training and thus arise with perfect radiance and resignation.

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<sup>24</sup> *Gems of Divine Mysteries*

## “Suggestions Regarding the Study of the Íqán”

Date Unspecified—Eliot, Maine

TALK DELIVERED AT GREEN ACRE BAHÁ'Í SCHOOL

The Bahá'ís should make meetings in every village and town and study the Íqán thoroughly and make notes and outlines on the substance of each topic because you can make long and many notes on the book, as there are many subjects recorded in this book. Bring under discussion every note. For instance about the elixir of God. The meaning of "return" for instance. The union of the manifestations of God, and the discovery of the mysteries and allegories of God and the reasons why the nations of the world were veiled. All these are very important subjects and religion is based upon these foundations. We must arrange meetings in every town and every village. Bring these matters under discussion and every one of those present talk them over. Select a subject for each successive day not to go from one subject to another, just have one subject and stick to it for that day. It would be most advisable to talk over and write an outline and then extend it. For instance an organized meeting is established, the one who is well versed and better informed than the rest should suggest a certain subject out of the Book of Íqán. Say this is to be our first meeting and you are the servant of this meeting. In Persia we say servant, we tell everybody they should write about the Elixir of God and such a subject is to be found on page 160 of the Íqán. Point it out to them. For instance you charge everybody it is incumbent for everybody to give a lecture on this subject or they should write an article about it, the elixir of God. Take the most important sentences out of each and make a nice article about the whole thing, extract one or two sentences from each article and then you can write a nice article about it. Such a thing which is the sum of everybody's thought will be worth while to print in the paper. For instance for the second meeting appoint the subject of "return." For instance you will have to tell them that return has been referred to on page, such and such. Then they will not have to search for it, and for your next meeting they study about return. And so on for everybody. There is no end

to the subjects in the Book of Íqán, if you work at it all your life you will never come to an end. Take references from everywhere not only from the Book of Íqán.

This is only an example. Extend the matter as you go on. Your thoughts must revolve around this example. For instance you take a compass pencil and start a circle around this point. Our thought is just like the center of the circle. Some people draw a very large circle and some others will draw larger circles and another one will make a tremendous circle. Do not talk or think anything that is opposed to the thought under discussion. For instance in the matter of return do not discuss reincarnation that is another matter.

The words of God are just like seeds in our hearts, they must be planted and grow. A fig tree always produces figs, a thorn tree always produces thorns not roses. Our thoughts should develop and extend from these seeds not from the other seeds of other people.

Notes by E. Mckinney

Translator Manucher Khan.

## “An Interview of Mr. George Thompson, Secretary of the Colored Y.M.C.A.”

Thursday, 24 May 1923—Akron, Ohio

Mr. Thompson: I would like to ask in regard to the elimination of prejudice throughout America. Are you not of the opinion that we will be able to achieve greater results, more lasting results, if we begin with the children who are now of school age and lay a foundation there?

Jináb-i-Fádil: When the children are born they do not have any prejudice, they are white, while the grownups have acquired in their minds and in their hearts certain kinds of prejudices which are deep rooted. A great spiritual thinker of the Orient has said that the child is born in accord with the nature of love and purity. Later on his parents will make him a Christian, a Jew, or a Mohammedan. On the other hand, if the teachers, the instructors or educators carry into the school rooms prejudices of various types, it is impossible for the children to go out of those schools free from prejudices. For example, they may have text books which are quite free from prejudice along general lines, but when the students see in the actions and the deeds of their professors and teachers certain behavior which does not tally with the text books, they are quite apt to be guided more by their instructors than by the text books. Therefore the greatest step to free the country from prejudice is to have in the schools teachers and instructors who are liberal-minded, free from prejudice, tolerant, who welcome all new ideas with open arms; it has to start that way. What the Bahá'ís have done in the Orient is to have normal training schools for teachers along these universal lines, preparing them not only to teach in Bahá'í schools, but the Mohammedan schools ask for these teachers. They carry the example everywhere. There are many missionary schools in Persia but they have a certain orthodox platform to teach the children. There are also Mohammedan schools that have their creeds and dogmas which they are obliged to teach. Wherever the Bahá'í teacher goes, he or she turns things upside down by giving such liberal interpretation and broad vision of those various creeds that

the children get an entirely different understanding from what they would if the teacher was bound to teach as he was asked. In Persian schools we have to study comparative religions. The Ministry of Education has written a book of the lives of the prophets according to their orthodox belief. In this book the author goes on to recite the miracles. When school opens, the Bahá'í teacher gives an interpretation and liberal version of these miracles that will agree with science and with reason, so that the children do not go out of the college atheistic. So these graduates have an idea of world patriotism, universal religious, brotherhood, Fatherhood of God, and they are entirely different beings from those that come out of the orthodox schools.

Mr. Thompson: Do you not believe that one medium through which we can eliminate all wars and strife will be through our failure to glorify the men of strength and the men of force, such men as our generals?

Jináb-i-Fádil: This question goes back to the education of children. We must train the minds of the children that bloodshed and carnage and ferocity are all the attributes of wolves, and these generals, these so called leaders of men, are really wolves in sheep's clothing. The real general is the general of peace and amity. We really inculcate this kind of teaching in our liberal education in the Bahá'í schools of Persia. We should not have too much hope of the grown-up people. Our hope is in the growing children that will constitute the next generation. Neither can we have full hope in the children who are in the present school systems. Our duty now is to educate the future fathers and mothers so that these ideas of universal peace will be prenatal in the seeds of these children who are now being raised.

Mr. Thompson: I have been asked by some people with whom I have been talking relative to the Movement this question: How is it financed in America? You can appreciate the fact that we look at everything in terms of dollars and cents.

Jináb-i-Fádil: There is no regular plan or order to gather funds or to contribute funds to this Movement; it is all a voluntary matter. Let us say that a man or a woman is so thrilled with the thought of spreading this teaching that he or she would arise personally and spread the Cause from her own pocket, open her home as Mrs. Brooker is doing, give her time, invite the people and spread the Cause. A second person will not have the adaptability or the same facility to teach, but he might have some material means (?) so he will look around and find someone who could serve in his stead, and he could say, "We would like you to give part of your time to spread the Cause." He would do this quietly, without any red tape or any pledges, or anything like that.

One of the great distinctive features of the Movement and its Founder is that Bahá'u'lláh came from one of the noble families of

Persia; his ancestors and grand-father were all prime ministers and to him had come large estates, much wealth, and he spent all his money, he devoted all his wealth to the spread of these Teachings. A large part of his wealth was confiscated by the government because he embraced these principles. While, if we study the lives of former founders of religions, we find that Moses had nothing, Christ was poor, Mohammad was a But Bahá'u'lláh was wealthy and he gave everything he had. Bahá'u'lláh had an attendant, a colored man, Esphandiar, and he gave him a white wife—that was one of the radical departures he made in the beginning.

So Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, through their lives and through their actions, and through their giving up everything they had, showed to the world they had not brought any new theory or philosophy, but a new spiritual dynamic religion to be practiced and lived by every day and not to be taught alone. They taught their followers self-sacrifice and renunciation. Bahá'ís in the Orient have had great wealth, but they not only gave it all up for the spread of this Cause, but they also gave up their lives; 20,000 gave up their lives. So that hardships and tribulation and dispossession to the Bahá'ís were a great spiritual delicacy; they did not feel it at all. It was a joy and a privilege to go forth and give their time to the spread of the Teachings. There is a legend about an animal in Persia. They say, "The More you beat him, the fatter he becomes..." Bahá'ís are like that

Mr. Thompson: "I have often time taken consolation from the persecutions that have been perpetrated upon my people. I know the more they are persecuted, the more they will rise in life, the better they will become. "

Jináb-i-Fádil: Bahá'u'lláh, when he was in prison, wrote a Tablet to the King of Persia, quite a remarkable Tablet, in which he says: 'Do you think that these persecutions you have heaped upon me and my followers, this exile and this imprisonment and this martyrdom, will act to extinguish the light of this Cause? No, by God! All that you have done will be like rain coming down on the thirsty soil, and the thirsty soil in a few days will burst and be transformed. Beautiful roses and flowers will come forth.'

The distinguishing feature of the Bahá'í meetings in the Orient is the association of different religious—Buddhists, Christians, Mohammedans, Jews—you will meet them all in one meeting, associating in love and harmony. In this country it must be the association of different races—white, colored, Japanese, French, German, Persian, etc., because so far as religions are concerned, the prejudice is almost overcome.

Mr. Thompson: You are doing just the opposite things from the Ku Klux Klan. They go into a community and capitalize upon the differences, the racial hatreds and antagonisms. You attempt to bring about love and harmony.

Jináb-i-Fádil: The spirit of partisanship and nationalism is all over the world. You go to the religions and they cry and talk at the top of their voices, "my religion". The nation cries, "my nation"; the races the same thing; every where this spirit of nationalism is very strong. But the Bahá'ís are just the opposite to all this patriotic spirit; they are universal. They say, not my country but the globe; not my people, but the inhabitants of the world.

You may have heard of the Bahá'í Amity Convention in Washington. Mrs. Farsons, who organized that convention, was at one time in Haifa with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, at the time when I was there. She belongs to a very noble, aristocratic family. She asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá if he had any special service for her to perform when she returned to America. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said to her: "The special service I want you to render on your return is to have a Convention of Amity between the white and the colored." She did that when she arrived, although she had much opposition; they were very successful. At the close they cabled 'Abdu'l-Bahá the news, and the answer came back: "Now you have had one convention in Washington; I want you to have similar conventions in all parts of the U.S."

Mr. Thompson: Have you ever attempted to do anything in the Southland?

Jináb-i-Fádil: We are going to the South in the fall, all through the Southern states, although they have been writing to us, some of our very intimate friends, saying: "When you go, you must be very careful." We are not afraid they are going to tar and feather us. That is a very light thing. In Persia they have killed us.

Mrs. Brooker: There is one question I would like to ask Mr. Thompson. It is this: Why is it that when we try to work with the colored people, they won't come. We had a meeting in a home, invited a large number of the best colored people, and the man of the house even left. There were something like fifty invited.

Mr. Thompson: I account for it from this angle: The Negro is very , very emotional and in his interpretation of religion and when it comes to the place in his life and in his mental development when he must develop through the reactions of the brain, it does not appeal to him. In their religious service they are very, very emotional; there is not any ethical appeal. It is all through their emotions that give expression immediately in their actions in church. I account for that in this way: The American Negro has been so far removed from cultural and ethical training in the 300 years that he has had no opportunity for the development of the deep spiritual part of his nature. Now, to eliminate that it is going to take time. It is going to take opportunities for contacting with the deeper, ethical things in life that have been removed from him. They want an appeal to the heart. The teacher you mention was so far above them, they could not comprehend him."

Mr. Thompson went on to say that in endeavoring to get his people organized into various groups for social and philanthropic purposes, such as soldier organizations, business men's club, young school lads—at the beginning they were intense and enthusiastic, but it did not hold out. "We are as a race so emotional; in a short time our emotion simmers down; it ceases to effervesce."

Jináb-i-Fádil: In order to remedy these prejudices, the intellectual appeal is not sufficient, neither the purely emotional appeal. There must be a spiritual power that will unite the two. We find men very highly intellectual, of the vest and the deepest type, yet they have patriotic prejudices which are just as bad as religious prejudices. Hence, inasmuch as politics or statesmanship takes the best of the brain, and that we boast of the brain, it has not given result adequate for the intellect (?) We are despaired, in a way, from any intellectual salvation of humanity, pure and simple. We have to create in the hearts of men spiritual susceptibilities, divine sentiments, which are a combination of the two—the middle way. The universal consciousness is really placed between; it takes the best from the mind and the tenderest susceptibilities from the heart and transmutes it into service of humanity. That is what the Bahá'ís are doing.

## “Customs and Manners of Persia”

Thursday Morning, 24 May 1923—North High School, Akron, Ohio

It is a great pleasure indeed for me to come from far-away Persia and stand in this beautiful American rose-garden and speak with you face to face. It is always of greater interest geographically to us when we see the people of those countries that we read about in books, if we have an opportunity to see them personally so that we may have a mental picture of how they look or how the language sounds.

Persia is just on the opposite side of the globe, so that if one of your engineers could dig a canal through the earth, he would find himself some morning down in Persia – it is the antipodes of America.

Your ancient history tells you how the Persians in the olden times ruled over many, many countries. Persia was the Cradle of ancient civilization. Sciences and arts, arithmetic, algebra, astronomy, painting and music were some of the things which they studied and perfected. One of the great artists of Persia by the name of Farabee (?) invented a musical instrument. One day, in the presence of the king and his courtiers, he played on his new instrument. At first he played such martial notes that the people were stirred to such a degree that they almost wanted to fight each other. Then he played very joyous and happy notes and they were most amicable. Again, he played very soothing, dreamlike music and the people all went to sleep.

We had a blind poet who was the Poet Laureate of Persia the king of Persia. The king went to his summer resort and he enjoyed the place, the mountains and the scenery, to such an extent that he did not want to go back to the court. The ministers did not like it and they had to do something to stir up the king and make him return. The poet wrote a song and played on his lute with such effect about the beauty of the capital and the charm of the evenings there that the king got on his horse immediately and started away and told his men to follow him.

Persia is on a table-land many miles above the sea level. The cities of Persia have beautiful avenues, shaded trees, and on both sides of the avenue we have stream of water murmuring their songs day and night. Rose trees fill the air with fragrance. The mountains are very high and covered with various wild flowers and dancing water falls. That is why Persia is called the land of flowers and nightingales, because wherever you go you meet these objects, which are very pleasant to the eye.

The Persian language is the root of the European languages; that is, both of them are descended from what we call the Aryan root, the Aryan stock. We have many words in Persian that are the same in English, for instance, father, brother, mother, land (?) etc., with a little difference in the shade of pronunciation, so that we have two languages and two races that belong to the same stock. Persia and America and the European countries are like two brothers: one of them stayed behind in Persia; the other migrated to Europe and America, and this long absence from each other created division and various customs and manners to such an extent that today we might think we do not belong to the same family, while in reality we belong to the same stock.

For example, the beginning of your book is the end of our book – we start vice versa. You write from left to right; we write from right to left. You come in with your shoes on; we enter with our hats on. In Persia, where we have an assembly hall, the students leave all their shoes near the door and enter with their hats on. The customs are beginning to change in our days and the people are taking on more and more western habits. When you meet each other, in order to show your friendship and love for one another, you give a short hand-shake, a strong squeeze. In Persia they just make salaams and say, "Peace be upon you." When pilgrims and friends enter a city, they do not let them go to the hotels because in many places they do not have any; we entertain them in our homes. In many parts of Persia, when they want to eat, they sit on the floor, while here, when you want to eat, you sit on a chair around a table and use so many instruments that we do not know what to do with them. They use God-given forks – all of them are alike and they do not change.

Animals are still used very much in the Orient for carrying loads or traveling from one city to another. How nice it would be if you could ride on a camel from here to California! In Persia they formerly had to travel on donkeys and mules and camels, but in this country we do not see any except in the country. We are told that some of the children in the city have never seen a cow.

The keeping of the time is just the opposite way to yours. If you ask a westerner what time it is, he would say, half past eight. A Persian would tell you it is three o'clock; he starts from sunrise, from sunrise to sunset, not from midnight to midnight.

Persia has a great national patriotism, symbolized by the flag of Persia, having the lion and the sun, the sun rising from the back of the lion. Another national custom of Persia is the annual celebration of the New year, which we have on the 21st of March. As you know, it is the beginning of spring and all nature is awakened. The birds are singing and the flowers are shedding their perfume. You celebrate New Year on the cold, wintry day of the 1st of January. On the 21st of March every boy and girl gets a new suit of clothes; that is the most important thing they have to give. They also give gifts on that day. Inasmuch as the ancient Persians were fire worshippers, looking upon fire as the symbol of God, on those holidays they make large bonfires in the evenings and jump over them many, many times, and they were not scared.

The girls dress practically as you do here, with a little change of mode and fashion, according to the climate and the habit of the country. Men wear long robes and big turbans. The modern Persian man dresses like an American man with the exception of the hat.

Another custom of Persia which is beginning to lose its force is the seclusion of the women and the wearing of the veil. When a woman went out, she put on her body long black shroud covering her whole body, and over this a white veil in front of her eyes.

The custom was due to the religious training because the Mullahs and leaders of religion taught that women had no souls, that the men had a monopoly of intelligence and wisdom, They quoted St. Paul, who said that women should not uncover their heads in assemblies (but they do now) and that the men are brains for women. But the American people were wise enough not to follow that advice; they knew that the women know more than the men. So for a long time in Persia there was no association between boys and girls and they did not know what good times they missed.

In the last eighty years, however, Persia has undergone great change. There appeared a great teacher, an educator by the name of Bahá'u'lláh, who taught the equality of men and women, the abolishing of the veil and the giving of education to the girls. This great teacher said that the narrow prejudices and intolerances must be thrown away from every nation and the Persian must go out into the world and get the best that is practiced and taught amongst the civilized nations of the world. As the result of these teachings, to a great extent, the people have become freer; the educated girls have thrown aside their veils; they have schools, but they are not co-educational – they have schools for the boys and schools for the girls.

We are taking a long tour and we hope as a result of our trip we may go back to Persia and tell about the wonderful schools you have here and how the girls and boys study side by side and emulate each other. We hope the system of education may be developed in order that the American and Persian boys and girls, when in the

future they meet each other, may not meet on the battle-field or in a mood of contention or animosity, but with flowers of friendship, in order that this world may become one rose-garden and all the boys and girls like flowers and nightingales, singing and shedding their perfume everywhere. (Prolonged applause)

Mr. Smith, Principal of the school: "We are certainly obliged to the gentlemen. I think perhaps they are one step behind the American in this, that whereas they believe in the equality of the women, we recognize their superiority. (Laughter and applause)

*Ahmad: On page 4, where I have left a space, you said something about the Chinese women squeezing their feet, but I was unable to read my notes. Please fill it in.*

## Address to Spiritualists

Thursday, [24 May 1923]—Home of Mr. And Mrs. Drew, Spiritualists of Akron, Ohio

During our journey thru this country, we have been privileged to address many meetings of Spiritualists, especially the Second Spiritualists in Cleveland, two or three days ago, and everywhere we have gone in the midst of these dear friends we have felt very much at home.

The West today is steeped in a sea of materialism, the inadvertence and lack of communion with the spiritual world, so from among all the meetings we have attended, the Spiritualist meeting seems to us nearer and dearer to truth and to the search after truth. The spiritual movement, as manifested in such gatherings has been indeed brought about by God because it was necessary amidst this gloom and darkness of materialism to have a gleam of light and illumination.

All the religions of the world, spiritual realities, great truths have appeared from the Orient. The Orient has been from time immemorial the daybreak of spiritual teaching. Even the religion of Christ, which is spread far and wide in Europe, America and many Asiatic countries, came from Christ, although many Occidentals have for so long a time looked upon Christianity as a Western product that they have lost its original source and think that it must have come from some of the countries of the West.

The West, on the other hand, has been the home of practical knowledge, inventions, sciences, weights and measures and material things. Even when the religions come from the Orient to the western countries, those religions were westernized, institutionalized, in a way dogmatized, and the people came to look upon them with a literal spirit rather than spiritual understanding, so that the symbolism, the realities, the metaphors of the Holy Books were understood literally and therefore the real significance was lost to the eye of the spirit. You may hear from certain sources that Christ was merely a moral teacher, nothing more or less; that he really did not inculcate high spiritual truth; that he was a plain speaker of certain moral and ethical principles, while all the teachings of Christ from the beginning to the end are based upon

the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. In the New Testament, when Moses or the prophets desired to encourage the Israelite nation in doing good, they stated the fact that if they acted in a righteous manner, their flocks would increase, the goats will give a greater amount of milk, the vineyard will produce more grapes and wine, but there is no definite promise of the immortality of the soul. But in the New Testament it is all so different. We are promised that we shall enter into the Kingdom; we are told there are many mansions in the Father's palace. There are a few allusions in the Old Testament to the immortality of the soul, but they are so veiled that the majority of the people could not understand. When the Christ appeared he elucidated, explained and unfolded, and proved the doctrine of the continuity of life after death. Likewise, in the sacred books of other religions we find the belief in the life after death more or less defined. We have this doctrine quite clearly explained in the Koran, the Bible of Islam. It can be stated definitely that if the life of man began and ended with this material existence of a few years, it would not be worth while to live, because this life is so permeated with all kinds of troubles and vicissitudes that the fruit and the outcome of it must come hereafter. Even if the philosophers, inventors and scientists try to increase the means of comfort and happiness in this material world, yet there are so many accidents, so much turmoil and conflict, difficulties, trials and ordeals that upset the life of man and come to disturb and discourage man, that were it not for the hope and the anticipation of a reward in the life hereafter, man would lose all his buoyancy and optimism. How wretched, how unhappy, how hopeless and helpless are those people who have no thought of the life hereafter. They live an animal life, without any idea or hope. But how happy, how radiant, how joyous and how animated are those who believe in the life hereafter, and who base all their actions and deeds on this principle of spirituality and divine anticipation. The person who is endowed with spiritual vision and sees the life hereafter broader and more divine, if he gets sick or if he sees himself hastening toward the last hour of life, he feels perfectly contented and resigned because he knows he is going to be free from this prison. But the one who does not believe that he will continue after this life, he will look upon himself as a candle which will become extinguished and after that is eternal gloom and misery.

In the words of the Spiritualists of the Orient, we find this quotation: "God, addressing his servant says: O my people, I have created you for immortality and not for death." There is no death. There is a constant translation of birth from the lower to the higher, and from the higher to the highest. The universe is an arena of life. The mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom and the human kingdom are all submerged in the sea of life. They are endowed, even on the physical plane, with life immortal. There is no death at all; there is an everlasting conservation of energy on the material and on the divine plane. In other words, there is no

annihilation; there is only a setting and a dawning. Sunrise and sunset are geographical expressions; there is really neither sunrise nor sunset, from the standpoint of the sun. It is only the rotation of the earth that makes it appear to us at different hours of the day to have sunrise here and sunset there. If you could arise above the earthly plane and enter into the kingdom of the sun, you will have eternal sunrise; you will have eternal light. Likewise, as you watch the panorama of life around you, you will see people who are born, live a number of years and become old and decrepit and die, just so.....

There is neither death nor birth, but there is eternal progression of the spiritual entity of man. Death means decomposition of the material elements which had gone into the makeup of a composite body, like man. These molecules and atoms, millions of them, break up and go into their respective kingdoms. Then those very atoms start journeying and coursing thru the world, going into the makeup of different bodies, different forms, but all the time traveling, never resting. You look at the flower: how do you know that the constituent elements of this very flower are not the cells or the atoms that had gone into the makeup of a beauty thousands and thousands of years ago. The same flower or grass may be eaten by the animal and go into the makeup of a higher kingdom. The animal may be slaughtered by man and, lo and behold, the ancient monad has been coursing throughout many ages, and suddenly it reappeared in the form of man! For this reason, you can look upon the universe and its phenomena as travelers, as pilgrims, starting from their point of origination and traveling toward their goal. The ancient sages stated this fact by saying that you look upon the mountain as a stationary object, but in reality it is moving; that every atom of existence is coursing thru a wide circle. There is nothing stationary in life. Motion is one of the eternal laws of the universe; everything is in a flux and change. The inevitable law of change is progress; the result of traveling is of necessity improvement and betterment, therefore these millions of atoms that have been traveling thru the universe for millions of years unquestionably have been taking to themselves the virtues, the qualities, the attributes of the lower kingdoms, constantly refining and bettering themselves until today. From this standpoint, the physical, intellectual and spiritual world has been constantly improving. Even from a material point of view, the man of today is handsomer than the man of 5,000 years ago. Why? Because the atoms have been traveling and taking unto themselves the refinements of experience. The same law of eternal progression will apply to the future. The woman of 5,000 years from now, or the man, the Chinese of 5,000 years from now, will be more beautiful, will have at its disposal the revelation of greater laws of nature, the unfoldment of more mysteries than those who live today.

A Persian mystic, Mas----- said 800 years ago: "I was in the animal kingdom. I died and entered into the vegetable kingdom. I died in the vegetable and become an animal. In the animal kingdom I died and became a man. Wherefore then should I fear? When did I grow less by dying? Next I shall die from the man and shall grow wings of angels. From angels too I shall advance. I shall become that which entereth not the imagination. I shall at last stand in the presence of Infinite Intelligence." Every inferior state of life is a matrix in which the being is nurtured and fed and developed until he has burst into the larger matrix, just as the babe in the matrix of the mother is nurtured until he is born into this world. Likewise this world of nature is the matrix for the development of the soul and death means birth when those souls are born into the higher kingdom. Death, in other words, means this: The man walking in the wintry season in the street, covered up with heavy clothing and all kinds of mud, tired and weary, then he enters a house warm and beautiful and throws off all those bespattered and soiled garments and, lo and behold, underneath he has the most beautiful, shimmering robe! Death is exactly like that. We throw down this gross, material body and we put on the spiritual robe of eternity.

Again, it is like a bird that has lived in a cage. No matter how much the cage is gilded or how beautiful, still the bars keep it a prisoner. When the cage is broken, the bird flies and soars toward the infinite space of God and fills the world with his songs. A Persian poet says, in regard to this matter: "Day and night I hold converse with the eye within me, and I consult with it and ask it difficult questions. Why is it ----- and how? Where did I come from? Where is my native abode? How am I going to be released from this prison? He is asking from the soul within him these questions. Then the answer comes back: "I am the bird; I am the nightingale from the rose- garden of eternity. For a few days nature has made of this body a cage and I am here in a prison."

There is a community in the Orient whose habits and customs of welcoming a child into the world and having a funeral are opposite to the western people. When a child is born here, a feast is spread; the parents are congratulated; they have a christening festival and there is rejoicing and happiness everywhere. There, when a child is born, they weep and cry and do not offer any felicitations to the parent, but when the man dies, they have a banquet of rejoicing and the relatives are congratulated because they say (Praise be to God!) this man is released from his prison, from this pain and suffering, and is now with his Lord, very happy, and we must rejoice with him.

Often people ask, when the spirits leave the bodies, where do they go? We answer, they go nowhere; they are with us all the time. You may ask where the bodies go? They return to their original constituents, but the spirits are everlasting, eternal, right here with us. This is the world of sleep, not awakening. If a person were

asleep in this room, he would not be conscious of our presence. Likewise we are all asleep in this world; our most wakeful moments are fast asleep, and that is why many of us do not become conscious of the spirits, because our spiritual eyes are not opened. We are so surrounded and encircled with material things from the time we open our eyes until we go to sleep at night, our eyes see material things, our ears hear gossip and material talk, our hands touch material things; we are concerned entirely with how to eat, how to clothe ourselves, how to shelter ourselves, and that is why the spiritually-minded men are so few. Just as the material sun in heaven is in constant communion with the objects on this earth, the trees, the birds, the flowers, the mountains, the ocean; they all speak or communicate with the rays of the sun in their mystical language. Similarly there is communion and conversation between those who are departed and those who are here. Spiritual communion is possible all the time. It is not the fault of the spirits that there is not more communion, but it is our fault; we do not cleanse the mirror of our souls; we do not purify the mirrors of our hearts so that the rays of those heavenly persons reflect upon us. By what means are we enabled then to cleanse the mirrors of our hearts? And what is the dust that covers the mirrors? Passions, greed, selfishness, blameworthy attributes, intolerance, narrow-mindedness, religious prejudice, racial prejudice, antipathy and enmity against one another, ill will and suspicion, lack of confidence – all these are the means that prevent us from putting ourselves in touch with the divine presences. When we make this effort, our spirit will obtain its natural simplicity and beauty and will become like a clear mirror. There are many souls who make the greatest striving to put themselves in contact with the spirits. If they could put one-half of that effort into the purification of their souls, their human defects, frailties and ambitions, they would reach the goal one hundred times more quickly than by those extraordinary efforts made without this spiritual purification.

Bahá'u'lláh, a great spiritual teacher who appeared in Persia 80 years ago, had as his aim the cleansing and purification of the mirrors of the hearts of men. He taught them how to get rid of these prejudices, how to go about abolishing these biases, so that the world of humanity at large may become a vast mirror of reality, on the surfaces of which may be reflected the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, the beauty of the world of Divinity, the qualifications of heavenly life and the presence of the spiritual beings. Consider the religious outlook of the world today. There are seven great religions extant. Each religion in turn is divided into hundreds of sects. Each sect has many bisects and denominations, and each denomination has a church they have built, a colossal cathedral. In front of each church or mosque or synagogue it does not matter what religion – there stands a man, a priest or mullah or minister, and he cries, calling to the people, "If you want heaven, come here. If you want salvation, come here. If you want the

presence of God, come here. If you want hell, go there. If you want damnation, go there. If you want the punishment of Satan or the Devil, go there across the street. We have a monopoly of truth; God is with us, the angels are with us; all come here."

The Christian ministers argue and fight amongst themselves whether they must baptize a child by sprinkling water over him or immerse him. The Hindus baptize a child by daubing on his forehead and all over his body all kinds of dyes. The Mohammedans pray over him 24 hours, and each nation has a peculiar habit, claiming by so doing they will breathe over that child the Holy Spirit. They do nothing of the kind. The purification of the spirit, the inbreathing of the spirit comes only thru turning one's heart toward the Kingdom and divesting it from all kinds of prejudices, making of it a shekina of the treasury of God. If a person purifies his heart from all these blemishes, he has actually obtained and attained to salvation. But if he has not done that, even if they wash him in the Pacific Ocean, or if they cover him with all the dyes of Germany, he will be the same man.

The object of Christ in teaching us to pray every day, or once in awhile, "Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven: this coming of the Kingdom is not realized except thru the purification of the hearts of men. When these hearts are cleansed from these blameworthy attributes, they will become as thrones for the establishment of the Divine Spirit. Then these hearts will become the home of truth. They will be the mirrors reflecting the rays of the Sun of Reality. It will be the means of bringing about the brotherhood of man, the Fatherhood of God, universal peace, universal fellowship. Then there will be a constant communion between the unseen and the unseen, the invisible and the visible, the world of eternity and this world. This world will become the world of God and the hearts of men will become the kingdom of truth.

We are very happy that we had this opportunity to come here and speak with you and have this heart to heart talk.

... ..

After a song was sung, one of the ladies present said that the truths that had been uttered were in accord with what they believed, viz., that we must purify our hearts.

Jináb-i-Fádil: One of the great principles of the Bahá'í Movement is that the fundamental teachings of all the religions of the world are identical. This was impossible to comprehend or to understand in former ages because the books of these different religions were not obtainable. Even if they were obtained, they could not be understood; they were written in various languages. Today you go to any library and you can get the translations of the books of the seven religions of the world, study them and see how identical they are. For many centuries the Christians boasted over the so-called

pagan faith, that they had a monopoly of the truth, especially the Golden Rule. But now, to our surprise, we read of Confucius and we find the Golden Rule is given by him 500 years before the Christ, in practically the same words. "Do not do unto others that which you do not like them to do unto you." Zoroaster, who lived 800 years before Christ, in Persia, repeated the same thought in another form, saying: "It is not the distinction of man not to harm any human being, but it will be his distinction if he does not harm the animals, even the insects."

Hence the law of love, the law of non-resistance, the law of kindness and mercy, has been given by all the prophets whose books we read today, and from this we draw the conclusion that those prophets who appeared in dim antiquity and whose books are destroyed, have also taught the same law. The seven sacred books of the world, therefore, constitute the Bible of the Bahá'ís; they read and study them and look upon the prophets of these different religions as divine and inspired. They have come to realize that it is as though one person has written all of them, with this consideration of the time, place and adaptability of his race, habits and customs.

The Bahá'í Movement is the flag that is unfurled today and its desire is to impress upon the minds of the people of the different religions, nations and races of the world that there is one God, there is one humanity, and they must gather under this one canopy of Divine Unity and associate with perfect love and amity.

Q. The teacher spoke of reincarnation. What does he have to say about that?

A. There is no return of any individual spirit, but there is a constant purification and progress of the spirit. The spirits do not return (to physical bodies), but they are robed with whiter and more and more beautiful garments as they ascend from world to world and kingdom to kingdom.

Q. They can communicate, can they not?

A. The example we gave was that just as the sun communicates with the earth and the flowers, so the blessings of the spiritual presence of those who are departed are felt by us in a spiritual way, with the eye of the spirit.

Q. If they materialize, how are you going to get around that?

A. The sun materializes objects, also. It is the presence of the heat and the rays of the sun that produces all phenomena, so the world of the spirit is shining eternally. There are some who realize its warmth and heat and presence, others do not. The animal does not realize the presence of the sun; and the flower does not have any conscious knowledge. Some people are like flowers or animals; they may feel indirectly and dimly, but they do not have the conscious knowledge that the man of vision has. There are many missionaries who are so orthodox in their faith, when they go to the

Orient they invite the Mohammedan to accept Christ. The Mohammedan says, "We do believe in Christ. There are many chapters in our Koran extolling Christ, saying that he was the Son of God, the Spirit of God; we believe in him." "No, it is not sufficient," the missionary says, "you must curse your prophet Mohammed, then you can be a good Christian." The Mohammedan says, "If we curse our prophet, we might as well curse all the prophets. Where do you find in your Bible that one must curse his prophet in order to become a Christian?" That is a very narrow way.

Mohammed appeared in Arabia 600 years after Christ. He was the greatest iconoclast the world has produced. He taught the Oneness of God as no other prophet has done, but the strange part is that Mohammed is accused of being pagan. The Mohammedan cannot accept the doctrines of the Christians – three gods in one and one God in three!

Now, if these theological and metaphysical discussions continue to be the bone of contention amongst religions, we will still be divided. They are non-essential. This is the Day of Unity. We must forget these things and all gather around one big banquet.

## “Persian Mystics and Their Teachings”

Thursday, 24 May 1923—Akron, Ohio, Home of the Brookers

The countries of the Orient have been always the daybreak of the light of spirituality and heavenliness. The religious history of mankind demonstrates to us that from time immemorial there has appeared in the Orient prophet after prophet, religion after religion, seer after seer, all inculcating the life of God, the mysteries of truth, the emancipation of the soul and the divinity of the origin of man. One of the innumerable divine beings that appeared on the face of this globe was His Holiness Christ. You are Christians, therefore you are more familiar with the sacred scriptures of Christ than any other religion; you study it all the time; you teach it to your children in the Sunday schools, so it is imbibed in the blood.

But there are many other prophets whose books have just come to light in the last one hundred years because the science of religion, the inter-communication between the countries, the discoveries of the dead languages, made it possible to translate these books and bring into light a flood of spiritual wisdom which had been hidden from our sight. Most of these books are today obtainable from any large library in the United States, so that any student can procure these books and find out for himself how God has been directing the destiny of mankind from the dawn of creation.

There are many hypotheses in regard to the coming of the Manifestations of God from the Orient. Why did they all come from the East? Some state that the atmosphere of the East is spiritual--leads man to contemplation and thought over the origin of the world and the establishment of the moral institutions. Others state because in the olden times the Orient was the cradle of civilization, that the origin of the material sciences was likewise in the East, and that is why these prophets came from those countries. No matter what was the cause, it is a historical fact that all these great Manifestations of the will of God came from the Orient. In all the various schools of philosophy in the Orient, there has always been a

school devoted to the study of the esoteric laws of the universe. There were called mystics or Sufis. They have been always in the East and their (influence?) example was carried to the West.

In the olden days, Socrates was in reality a Sufi. Plato, with his transcendental philosophy, was a Sufi. Later on, in Alexandria, there was established the Platonian philosophy--they were the real Sufis. Emerson established the transcendental school in Boston--he was a Sufi. Christ was the chief and the head of all the Sufis of those days. There are many people who believe in it because there are a number of his statements and his sayings that gives us a clue that he was a student of those teachings. They state that he belonged to the sect of the Essenes among the Jews, which sect was no other than a mystic sect, studying the inner, the spiritual laws of the Bible.

The first teaching of mysticism was this: there is an inner man and an outer man, a divine man and a material man, a heavenly man and a physical man. The real man is the inner man, not the outer man. How often it happens that the outer man is a most beautiful man, charming, very gracious, but the inner man is a real wolf, characterized with ferocious attributes--greed, envy, hatred, maliciousness--that is the real man and the outer man does not count at all.

They believed that the masters of mysticism were endowed with the sixth sense, or what we call in modern phraseology, the subconscious, or in the language of the street, the "hunch". No sooner would they look in the face of a man or come in touch with him that they would know what kind of a man he is--whether he is a real man or only outwardly a man. They likewise taught that these masters, thru their science and premonition, found but the real inner characteristics of each man, a composite of all the qualities and attributes, composing the real body of that man. Suppose that a man had black, thirsty attributes, he was likened unto the wolf, so they would say, this man is wolfish. If he has the characteristics of the hyena, they would say that a hyena has appeared in the shape of a man, and so on. From the height of their vision, when they ascended into the Mount of Transfiguration, they looked upon the world and they saw the people as they actually were without any veil or cloak.

The Mohammedans once a year go to Mecca to visit the holy Kaaba of Mohammed. From all parts of Asia hundreds of thousands of people travel to reach this spot on a certain date. Therefore, in a certain year, a Sufi, accompanied by his disciple, made this pilgrimage. The Sufi was riding on his camel and he had just reached the top of a mountain. Looking down in the valley they saw a big city of tents where these pilgrims had pitched their tents and were eating and drinking and preparing for the visit to the holy land of their prophet. The disciple was exultant and happy. Turning to his master, he said: O my Lord, O my Teacher! Do you not think the people have become very spiritual? Look at the thousands of people

who have given up comfort and home and joy and traveled thousands of miles and have arrived here for this divine pilgrimage! This is indeed an occasion for happiness because the people are very spiritual." The master smiled and said, "Come near." When he arrived, the master touched his eyes. "Close your eyes. Now open them." He looked down into the valley and lo and behold, the human beings in a moment had been transformed into wild animals--dogs, cats, wolves--all a pandemonium; owls were screeching and all were fighting. The disciple was astonished. Then the teacher said, "These are the realities of those men; they are not religious; the real characteristics of those men are what you saw with the eye of vision."

They taught that as long as man has not attained to the real station of inner manhood, as long as he is not characterized with the attributes of love and service, selflessness and devotion, which are the attributes of a real man, even if he prays a thousand years, even if he confesses his sins ten thousand times, it does not help him at all.

They believed that every age and cycle produced a superman, a man who is endowed with an over-soul, which characteristic made him to be the Master, leading the initiates or the disciples into the temple of wisdom and understanding. To become the perfect man, that, as they taught, was the object of life. They had to go thru many vicissitudes, travails and trials in order to become the perfect man, and for this they had many disciplines and regulations; for example, sleeplessness. Another was to sit down and speak with no one. A third was to reduce the amount of food and live very, very simply on nuts and vegetables. Another was to exclude yourself from the companionship of your fellowmen and live in seclusion for a period of time. A fifth was to meditate. The most important was to go against the human will, that will that leads man into the highways and byways of passion and desire, greed and envy--just do the opposite to that will; all that it tells you, oppose him. They taught that the devil with horns and hoofs was not something outside; it is a living creature, inside of every individual. Each individual carries within him a satan, and that satan is the material will, the natural will of man, the propensity that leads man into the commitment of injustice and tyranny. Man has to constantly struggle and fight against that inner devil, and by training the divine will to fight against that human will, the devil, he will achieve the victory. They taught that man is created half devil, half angel, and these two halves are fighting as long as he lives. Through the power of God, if the angelic element gains victory over the satanic, man becomes a heavenly angel, but if the satanic spirit becomes victorious over the angelic, he becomes worse than satan. He said there are no angels with wings hovering over us, and no devils with hoofs jumping around; the real angel and devil is that man of five feet, six inches.

They also taught that paradise and hell are within man, that thru his own effort, thru his own exertion, man can so characterize himself with the spiritual attributes, with angelic qualifications, that he may live in heaven for aye. On the other hand, he may bring about ways and means whereby he may abide in the fire of hell right here in this world; there is no need to anticipate any further hell. He can have a nice, warm hell here if he likes.

Another important philosophic principle of the Sufis, or the mystics, was this: Divinity, the kingdom of God, the world of spirituality, is like a wonderful mirror in which are reflected the mysteries, the events of the past, present and future. I want you to imagine this in your mind as clearly as you can just for few minutes, detach yourself and think of God as a great mirror in which is the wisdom and understanding and knowledge of the world and the universe. This mirror is so beautiful and clear that everything is like a clear spring of water. The mind of man, the brain and the spirit is also like a mirror, just as beautiful and clear as the other one. Now if this mind of man comes opposite to the mirror of divinity, naturally, all the pictures, all the images will be reflected in the mirror of the minds of men. You understand! But in order to be able to receive all the reflections of the mysteries from the mirror of God into the mirror of the mind of man, we must have two conditions: the first condition is that the mirror of the mind of man must turn its face toward the mirror of God, not its back, and second, the surface of that mirror must not be covered with dust. Should these two conditions become realized for one second in the heart and the mind of man, whether in the state of wakefulness or in the state of dream, you can easily see how, in that one second, all the pictures will be reflected in the mind and heart and he will become the treasury of the mysteries of truth. Some of you might have had, such a feeling of revelation or inspiration when asleep or awake it is just like lightning; it illumines the horizon. In that one second you see everything. Now the majority of men may only once or twice in a lifetime get such an experience. From the beginning of the world there have been very few men, only a few, who enjoyed such a state of divine illumination all through their lives, or some portion of their lives. We have the story of Jacob and Joseph in the old Testament, how at first Joseph was thrown into the well and then sold to the Egyptians and carried into Egypt and became the prime minister. Later on his brothers, through famine, went to Egypt. He sent his garment to his father, and the sight of the garment gave sight to the father and, as the story is recorded in the Orient, he found his sight by inhaling the fragrance of the garment of Joseph when it was brought to him. The mystic poet has taken this incident and given to it a spiritual significance. He asks Jacob. "O thou patriarch, how is it? O thou whose heart and mind are illumined with light! You realized that your son is in Egypt when the garment was brought to you. Why is it you did not feel the same when he was thrown into the well a few miles away from you?" He answered that

our estate is like the flash of the lightning. Sometimes, we get a revelation and at other time the whole world is dark before our sight. Sometimes, through the power of inspiration, we are carried to the seventh heaven and again we are thrown into the depth of the earth and we can not see that which happens next door.

In order to reach to these two conditions--that is, to turn the mirror of the heart toward the mirror of divinity and to purify it, they have stated they are likewise two conditions: faith and prayer. By faith they do not mean just simple, blind faith, because that will have no effect at all, but faith based upon intelligence, upon truth, upon effort and understanding. And by prayer they meant the attention of the heart, not simply repetition of words, an intense spiritual prayer that will make man forget himself and his surroundings.

A story is related of one of the mystics that, while walking in the country, he got a thorn in his foot. When he came back his followers tried to extract that thorn because he said it pained him very much, but later on, when he went into the state of prayer, he had abstracted himself to such an extent that he was not conscious of physical pain; they took out the thorn and he did not feel it, so that prayer in that man's case acted as an anesthesia.

The mystics said that real prayer is when man, like unto the drop of water, loses himself in the sea, or similar unto the rain dancing in the light of the sun. When these two conditions are realized, the mirror of the heart will be turned steadfastly toward the mirror of God and the minds are made possible of reflection. But if the surface of the mirror is still covered with dust, there will be no reflection. What is the dust? The dust is no other than prejudices--national, patriotic, religious, factional and many personal prejudices. The faults and idiosyncrasies of men, the likes and dislikes that are based upon nothing but the whims of men and women, are the dust that covers the face of the mirror of the heart. When, through a divine resolution, we are enabled to cleanse the mirror from this dust, you may rest assured there will be a wonderful orientation of all the spiritual knowledge latent in the mirror of God, toward the mirror of man.

The teachings of the mystics were based upon the revelations of the heart and not the dogmas and creeds of the church. They did not give any importance to rituals. They taught the religion of love, fellowship and association--that was their religion. In their poems they satirized and ridiculed the so-called leaders of religion, the fundamentalists of today, who stick to the creeds and dogmas and the outer husks of the church, rather than to the spirit, the power and the dynamics of religion.

Hafiz, one of the great mystics, says: "These preachers who go into the pulpits and preach such doctrines, when they come down from their pulpits and go into the privacy of their homes, throw off

their cloaks and do such things as they would not allow the poor people to do. I would like to ask this question from these religious leaders, who ask the people to come to them and repent: Why do you not repent yourselves? It is as though they did not believe in God, in the judgment and in justice because they play so many tricks and practice so much hypocrisy and appear with so much sanctimoniousness and religiosity as though they are the angels of heaven. O Lord, show them off; make them appear in their true colors."

So these mystics believed in the inner life, in peace, in harmony, in truth and in friendship, and you do not find even in the writings of Christ, teachings more attuned to the spiritual life than these.

Again the mystic poet says, "I wish to write for you some verses from the chapter of morality, the ethics. Whosoever injures me, I will give him a healing balm. Be thou not less than the over-shadowing tree because whosoever throws at it a stone, the tree will give back delicious fruits. Humanity are the members of one family because originally they were created from one substance. When one limb of this body of the human family receives a hurt, all the other limbs will automatically feel the same hurt. The peacefulness and the tranquility of the whole world lies in these two words: be thou merciful to your enemies; be thou kind to your friends."

The Mohammedans, as you know, as well as the Christians, inter their deads. That is a sign of honor they offer to their dead. For ages the Hindus have burned their dead. This was the honor they gave to those who had passed away. So the mystic says concerning this: "Live thou with the good and bad, with the saint and the sinner, in such a way, associate with all with so much kindness and love that when you die the Mohammedans will like to inter your body as a sign of respect, and the Hindus will like to burn it as a sign of love that they have acquired for you.

The warfare and strife amongst 72 sects of religions are all pretexts and excuses. They did not find the truth, so they started to fight amongst themselves.

These were some of the teachings of the mystics. You can then realize that the principles of mysticism are identical with the principles of the prophets, the teachers and the revelators whose object was to change this world into paradise, to make men love one another, to be more peaceful, more brotherly, more kindly towards each other. This is the cycle of maturity; this is the day of sciences; this is the time of divine revelation. It is our hope and trust that a new illumination, a new light may flood the world of human consciousness and drive away the satans of enmity and hatred, so that the religions of mankind, the nations and the governments that are today at loggerheads, that have lost a great deal of the simplicity and the beauty of their faith, may regain that power, that spirituality with which they were endowed in the beginning; that

they may associate with one another as the members of one family; that they may shine as the stars in one heaven; that they may diffuse the fragrance of love as the flowers in one meadow, and that they may scintillate in the light of the sun as the wings of birds ascending heavenward. "This world is one home; let it be in unity."

### QUESTION AND ANSWER

*Q. Mrs. Brooker: There is one question I would like to ask. Mrs. Luxmore is going to play for us, then I should like to have Jináb-i-Fádil give us some idea of what the Orientals think of Americans.*

A. The Oriental people have been so disgusted with the way they were treated by the European system of politics that they have turned to America with a great eagerness and love to the extent that, while they hate Europeans, they love the Americans. Whenever they mention the name of the New World, America, they are thrilled with joy and happiness. They turn to America as the home of peace and comfort, guidance and knowledge. Persia has opened her door wide to America, and already there are more than two dozen Americans engaged by the Persian government to reconstruct the finances, to prospect the oil fields of Persia, which are looked upon as the richest in the world, to survey the land for the construction of railroads, the same thing as with Turkey. You have probably read the name, Cheeter Concession, given to America to reconstruct Asia Minor and almost build a city with American capital. Also the Persian minister in Washington has taken steps to bring to America every year a large number of students to be placed in various universities to acquire technical knowledge--electricity, agriculture and various other sciences--to build up the Persian nation when they go back. This is the beginning of a great chapter in the history of Asia and America, and their relations with each other will increase year after year until the Asiatics and Americans will attain to the utmost state of inter-communication, prosperity and happiness, something undreamed of as yet.

*Q. Don't you believe that the hardest thing they have to overcome is race hatred?*

A. We find not only race hatred, we have religious hatred also. And since this World War we have a new problem to grapple with, and that is the awakening of a pseudo consciousness, thru their contact with western nationalism, which breeds war and hatred against each other. We have to fight against all these things and overcome them as time goes by.

[Applause]

## Talks without a Date

## “Fellowship for World Unity”

Wednesday—Location and Date Unspecified

We have been traveling throughout the U.S. for quite a few weeks and everywhere we have gone we have come in touch with many gatherings and meetings whose keynote was optimism, happiness and joy. The object of every meeting must be the exchange of thought on a plane of equality and fraternity so that we who have come from the Orient and you who live in the Occident have one main purpose and that is through this interchange of Eastern and Western ideals we may make the world better, the people happier and the inhabitants of this globe more kindly toward one and other. A great teacher was once asked, “How did you manage to gather so much knowledge and wisdom?” He answered, “I always look upon myself as an inquirer, as a student, and not as a teacher.” A Persian speaker has said, Man must search after knowledge and self-improvement from the time he is born into this world to his last breath.” Reality is everywhere if we were willing to search and investigate it. Even if you take an atom, therein lies a universe of knowledge and wisdom. Every brain is like a casket of jewels, closed to the outer eye. The student must find the master-key with which he might be enabled to open that casket and take as many of those jewels as he is capable. Search after truth is, and must be the most persistent occupation of each individual, just as a thirsty one will long after the cool, salubrious water, likewise the seeker after truth does not let himself be influenced by the ideas of others. He will investigate a problem independently from his own God-given standpoint. He will enter any meeting, listen impartially to any subject, associate with every group and enjoy their companionship. Take from them that which is good and set aside that which is negative and never mention it any way. We must judge people by the character that they live and not by their speech. No matter from what country a man may come or what faith he may profess, or to what race he may belong, if he has truth, if he has some principles of which we are devoid, we must be impartial and loving enough to accept those principles and overlook the outer conditions of life. One of the Persian poets says, “A rose will be always a rose, no matter in what soil it may grow.” The sun will be the sun even if it shines from the west! Moonshine is always moonshine, whether it is made in China or in the western mountains of Kentucky. Therefore the first

step in the path of the investigation of truth is this: we must search, search, search to the end of our life and be very happy about it. Listen to every man, inquire into every proposition, walk in every highway, go into every church, become the member of an many clubs as you pocket-book affords, investigate and let the palace of your mind be open, the windows especially wide open so that the gales of new ideas may always blow through it and keep it well ventilated. In this country you have the type of perfect lovers, Romeo and Juliet. We have in the Orient Mahnoon and Leila; Mahnoon was the lover and Leila was the beloved. Mahnoon was in love with Leila for many, many years, and he went around singing and reciting poems praising his beloved until he almost lost his mind so intense was the power of love in him. One day a man found him sitting on the sand, searching and searching and searching thru the sand. They thought he was crazy. They asked him, "What art thou doing?" He said, "I am searching for Leila." "Hast thou lost thy mind?" "She is a divine being; she is a spiritual beauty, and thou art searching in the dust?" He answered, "I am seeking for her everywhere, even in the dust; perchance I may find her somewhere." Therefore, the love of truth, the lover of reality must never be despaired, He must seek after the knowledge in which he is interested, no matter what kind of knowledge, whether it is literature or science or art, he must make up his mind to accept every hardship, every tribulation, every suffering in order that he may reach his goal. At the same time, God has deposited in man this discriminating power, the power of judgment, the power of selection, that man in his search after truth must use and employ, that power which determines right from wrong, evil from good. Now and then this prejudice, bias, personal preference from one over another will blind that power of discrimination to such an extent that man is misled either consciously or unconsciously from the path in which he had started to travel. Prejudice and intolerance are like colored glasses thru which man looks upon the outer world, while the glass thru which he must really look and judge a thing is the white glass of impartiality. But man uses these colored glasses, consequently he sees things colored, distorted, out of proportion.

One great poet of Persia, who had reached to the very highest point of knowledge, says: "Dost thou know how I found my beloved (mystical, meaning Reality)? Dost thou know how I found my beloved? Because with whomsoever I associate, I see in him a spark of the Divine, a token of that Eternal Beloved, consequently I gathered together all those strings, all those links and made them into the chain of truth." Hence, when you start on the road of the search after truth, you must see things with your own eyes and not with the eyes of others; hear events with your own ears and not with the ears of others. Judge and weigh and discriminate problems with your own mind and not with the mind of others. Let us say you are talking with a person on some moral or ethical subject, some religious problem, and that person listens to you for quite a long

time and outwardly you think you have made a deep impression upon him, and when you have finished he will tell you, "This is all very interesting, but I have to go and consult with my minister and see whether this is all right or not." A man of this type will never find the truth because he wants to know the truth and to find the truth and to discriminate the truth through the mind of some other person whose judgment he places above his own.

Another Persian poet, stating how prejudice blinds the minds of people, says: "Prejudice has been the cause of the destruction of many people. P God, curse prejudice from Thy holy throne! As long as thou dost let thyself be influenced by the prejudices of thy ancestors, I am sure that thou hast not attained to truth."

A Christian saw Christ in a dream. To his astonishment, Christ appeared to him as a brown person, with black hair, dark eyes, and rather an Oriental type of face, and this Christian said, "Lord, I always in pictures and paintings saw Thee as a blond, with golden locks, blue eyes and very lovely beard. How is this?" The Master told him in the vision that the painters in Europe who had painted him in the early times took as models the people around themselves, who were of that type, consequently throughout the ages we have a blond type of Christ, while in reality he was a purely Oriental type. He came from Palestine. You may have seen people from that country and know how they look.

The Oriental philosophers have stated that the world of God, the world of truth is like a great mirror in which one sees the images of the realities of life. The heart of man is also like a mirror so that if these two mirrors are brought near to each other, there will be a complete reflection from the mirror of truth into the mirror of the heart of man. In order to get this reflection, it is therefore necessary first to have the mirror of the heart turned toward the mirror of Divinity or Truth at all times, also to have the surface of the mirror polished and cleansed. If these two conditions could be realized, this man would become the center of all knowledge, all wisdom and all learning, just as the prophets and sages of the past became the object of these knowledges. However, the mirror of the heart of the majority of men is covered with dust of prejudices—racial, notional and religious. Likewise many personal likes and dislikes, preferences, traditions and dogmas that come from the ancestors—all these things keep us from attaining to the realities of life. If for one moment we could cleanse the mirror of our hearts from all these dusts and rusts, all imaginations, then in that very moment the heart of man would become the object of great mysteries and revelations. The causes of the enmities that are today in the world are various. One's country is supreme; each nation is a special country and has special interests, and those interests conflict with the interests of other countries; thus we have war; thus we have racial difficulties; the colors cause distinction and variety and difference. Then we have religious controversies between the

different sects and churches, and these are the means of separation and alienation. To illustrate this point, there is a little story in the Orient that once upon a time a Christian, a Mohammedan and a Jew took a boat-ride on the Sea of Galilee. While they were having a good time, a storm arose and the boat was about to be capsized and the men felt disturbed and worried. The Christian turned his face toward heaven and said "O my Christ, my Lord, this infidel of a Mohammedan was the cause of my coming here. Were it not for his sake, I would not be here. Lord, drown him to the bottom of the sea." The Mohammedan turned to heaven and said, "O Allah, O my Lord, this Christian, this man, unfaithful, he brought me here. Drown him to the bottom of the sea and save me." The Jew did not say anything—sat quiet perfectly calm. The others asked him why he did not pray. He said, "I am praying to my Jehovah so that he may answer the prayers of both of you." This is religious prejudice, pure and simple. The prophets of each one of these religions taught love, harmony, kindness, but their followers change that love, harmony and kindness to hatred, animosity and ill will toward each other. Even in that time of danger when the thought of each one should have been for the rescue of the other, where the danger of one was the danger of all, they allowed their prejudice to rule over their better selves, wishing for the destruction of each other. How much more beautiful and lovely if they could associate with one another in perfect companionship, perfect joy and love, just as we here are associating in this meeting! Religious prejudice is the greatest imagination that has ever ruled in the world, Look, here is a Jew, a Mohammedan and a Christian—all three are human beings; each has a head, eyes, ears, some variety of organs, yet in their minds, their imaginations, they imagine certain things! One thinks he is in the right and that his fellow is in the wrong; consequently they go on fighting and quarreling without any reason.

God is the greatest artist. An artist will use all kinds of colors in his portrait, so also the Creator in His knowledge and wisdom of the divine art has brought forth into the world people of many colors. This is conducive to the charm and beauty of the world of creation, just as an artist in his painting selects different colors and combines various tints and hues, similarly the world of creation is a great painting, painted by the invisible hand of God. Each color is a contribution to beauty and perfection. Now in this meeting of yours, we are from Persia, you are from many parts of America no doubt, and we have some sisters and brothers who belong to the colored race, all sitting together with perfect happiness and joy, This is in itself a garden of flowers of many colors, all beautiful in their place and position. God is the gardener and this world is his garden He plants all kinds of trees—pear and apple, fig and orange, bananas, and some lemon trees. Now and then he likes to send a few lemons to his beloved ones, so he orders them all, he takes care of all of them, he does not neglect any of them, even the lemon tree.

I expected to go next fall and travel throughout the South, the southern part of the U.S. and deliver a number of lectures concerning the brother hood of man and the Fatherhood of God, along these high Christian principles, but some of my friends told me. "You must be very careful; do not go; take precautionary steps, because a certain minister who had been giving lectures on this topic was taken out of his church into the country and was given a good coat of tar and feathers and sent out of the community." So I do not know what I have to do, When I was in the East I heard of the wonderful unity and harmony that exists between the various groups, social and religious, in this country. I never dreamed that a thing like lynching would transpire in this country, or many other things with which I have come in touch during my travel lately. You take a herd of cows grazing in the meadow; one may be a New Jersey cow, another from Texas, a third a German cow, a Persian, a Japanese and so on. They will graze together in perfect peace and amity. They will not say, I am a black cow, a white cow, yellow cow, green cow; they will not start fighting and kicking each other. They have universal suffrage; they never fight to get it; they are ever peaceful and happy. Now these cows have never gone to school; they don not have any college or university; no prophet has ever come to them to tell them to live this peaceful, happy life, yet they live according to nature, kind and hospitable, and considering the rights of others. But man has had schools for thousands of years, colleges and teachers and professors, and prophets have come from age to age, teaching men to live happily and peacefully with each other.

And sometime they claim to be sons of God, brother and cousin and all kinds of gods, fighting among themselves like devils. On Sundays they go to church; they open the Bible; they read this passage, "Let us create man in our image and likeness," They say, "I am in the image and likeness of God", and as soon as they go out, they start to gossip and talk against each other, and fight and discriminate and condemn—all kinds of qualities and attributes which you never think will emanate from a man who is in the image and likeness of God. How can any man claim that he is in the image and likeness of God when the world is so full of all these conflicts, troubles, wars, rumors of wars, nations against nations, races against races, governments against governments, fighting, shedding each others' blood, filling the air with poisonous gas, every day inventing new instruments of destruction. These are not emanations from God's consciousness; these are emanations from Satan's consciousness. This is the age of science; this is the epoch of illumination; this is the time of the drawing together of the sons of men. It is our duty, it is your duty, that we may forget the past, abolish these prejudices and misunderstandings, and East and West step forth out of the arena of self into the broad arena of selflessness. We must plant all over the world optimistic clubs like this one, good fellows clubs, who may come together and associate

with each other in the spirit of pure friendship, camaraderie, loving kindness, and fill the air with the songs of joy and happiness, singing like the birds and thrushes. Thus we may banish discord and division from the face of the earth. Then the world of humanity will become like the members of one body, just as in the body of man we have different organs, all performing different processes, yet all functioning together. Take the hair of our heads: one is black, another is brown, a third is golden, fourth is gray, a fifth white, etc. , but they are beautiful; they are all works of God. The pupil of the eye is black, yet it is a spring of light and vision. So are the children of men; each one has his own place, his own contribution to give to the general welfare. For 6,000 years the world of humanity has been fighting with each other; they have been shedding the blood of others; they have become divided into sects and groups. Let us try for fifty years the path of unity, good fellowship and kindness. If it does not work, we can very easily go back to the old system of carnage, strife and division. If it works, we have started on a basis of world-citizenship, world cooperation and world unity. This is the object of what you might have heard, Bahá'í, the Bahá'í Movement, trying to unite the people of the world with the bond of friendship, and establish in the hearts of men universal love by turning the whole world into an optimistic club.

We are very happy that we were permitted or invited to come to this group of yours, this group of good fellows whose motto is happiness and joy and friendship, Fellowship for World Unity. Wherever we go we will carry this banner for you and spread fellowship and world unity from this centre to all parts of the world.

## “Universal Consciousness of Christ”

Date and Location Unspecified

Praise be to God that this morning we are gathered together in a building which was built in the name of God, a building for us founded in God. An edifice the vision of which is laid purely and simply for the investigation of reality, for the dedication of the lives of prophets, evidences of all Truth which have been creeds of the past.

Having traveled during the last few months, I have come to consciously realize that the happiness of man is to get knowledge, contract all mighty manifestations of men and women who taught with the oneness of Spirit.

I have read many of the ideas embodied in the most recent books belonging to some of those religions and creeds and I have found that the thoughts have been had by present writers of those of thousands of years ago. The form is changed though the reality is the same. Our poets and writers have written so many wonderful statements of the beauty of Truth so that when we read them today and test all those statements they submerge in the sea of Truth, and the witness beholds all Truth in their own eyes. Our mystics, prophets and poets studied that Truth as a universal ocean of Truth, in the bosom of which all living creatures exist, in the circumference of which all humanity lives.

They further said that the reality and existence of life, the sum total and the equality of every living being is that ocean of Truth, that the Truth being the ocean, human existence is similar to the waves and the ripples of that ocean or Truth is like unto the sun and existence in this total is similar unto the shadow.

They liken the world of humanity unto a great castle the walls, ceilings and floors which are all crystal as a Divine Being, Truth, on whatever side it looks whether it looks on the up side or on the floor it sees itself reflected in this great Divine Being which is reality and Truth, and is manifested in all parts of the world.

All the thinkers, the scholars, the prophets, the inventors and the workers were the servants of Truth, the spreaders of Truth and the

prophets of Truth, having no other aim than to bring mankind to the greatest understanding of the great ocean of Truth in which we live and have our being.

These prophets were the guides that led mankind through the precipices, the dark valleys, the mountains and the hottest parts of the desert bringing them always directly to the consciousness of God. While every thought of man will seek and realize that great consciousness of universal Truth. Whenever man will attain to the Truth then and not until then will they become united, because the Truth is one and identical and around that great Divinity all mankind will be able to satisfy and test their own selfish purposes. To completely illustrate this point let us suppose that twenty persons appeared on the edge of the desert and far away in the horizon they see a dark moving object approach toward them, "What is that object?" one said, "it is a man," the other said "it is a dog," and each one will give a guess and each of them is as good as the other. Then it appears as a hazy cloud, they contend for the truth of this object but suddenly it merges from the horizon and all their doubts will be encouraged in the Truth, and this is the history of the development of man and the progress of the Truth. Hence the human world, through the directing and education of the prophets and the Divine mouthpieces have been invited from the chaos of this early state of doubt and ignorance into the light of knowledge and wisdom and a complete oneness with the Truth.

The prophets from time immemorial have been universal teachers because they came and brought Truth and Truth has always been universal and not particular. The prophets have been given by God universal consciousness, the consciousness of all the prophets have been universal but because one class of men accepted and another class rejected them, they thought that prophet came particularly for their knowledge and theirs alone and that he wanted to monopolize all the creeds of men. He equally came for the service of all humanity, He did not come particularly for the Jews or the Greeks, He came for every man on the face of the Earth. But those who believed in Him were probably made to feel somewhat self-satisfied that this great god-man had come for them. Even most of those earlier minor prophets had come for all mankind and not for one nation and exclusion of another. But limitations and the ignorance of man made him believe otherwise. For instance the Jews came to believe in the prophecies the Moses, the Syrians of Persia acknowledged the Divine all, equal belief in the holiness of all, and they thought all of these prophets were for them alone, and their deliverer. Why do we state that these prophets, although they are accepted by one class of men are still universal? Because they were the prophets of God and the Truth of God is universal. If we accept that affirmation that God is universal then the consequence is that the Prophet of God is universal and He has come for all mankind. If we hold to orthodox creeds of some who see in their religion that

God is the Father of their particular race then we can also say that their prophet is also a prophet of one race. Just as the rays of the sun shine upon all parts of the world, upon the sweet roses in the garden, and upon the blackest ground likewise the mercy and patience of God is established upon all. If God reflects, his Truth for one particular people, then we have to believe that God is a very greedy person that he likes one class of people more than another, God is not a respecter of persons, nor is God bringing promises to one special family and giving them all of the Love, neither does he like these people much better and says let me teach them and no other. His love is perfect, is generous, and by all inclusive and not restricted.

In its own time the Mosaic religion was not universal because we read in the old testament that many neighboring travelers came to believe in the religion of the Jews, showing that this progress of Truth was often manifested in those remote ages. The historic prophets warned their own people that they must not worship the Gods of the neighbors because Moses told them that they should not worship those ideas, but he did not say that the neighbors should not worship them nor that they should stop them. No, consequently from these Manifestations of God arise the different doctrines that exist between the workers, like unto the day they shed their light upon all the world.

If there is a belief which has built a wall around itself, it cannot expect to hide itself behind that wall, and say we have the deliverer and this is all the Light. Simply as when the rain descends from the heights and falls upon the blackest ground, the capability of that black ground is to send forth thorns and thistles, while the capability of the fertilized ground will bring forth roses and flowers and animals. On this question we state that all the prophets of the past have brought universal messages, that their consciousness was universal and not particular to one, and the rest deprived of it. What do we mean by universal consciousness? This is as a prophet coming into the world, loves all humanity alike who embraces in his arms all the races of mankind, all of them are equal in his presence and he gives his instructions to each, even to men who prejudiced against him.

Probably a large percent. of us human beings, I do not know how many, have limited consciousness, some love their wives better, some love their dogs better than any thing else, they are attached to their gardens, their business, and their possessions, all these things limit the minds of men, but the prophets of God have that universal consciousness, and direct every man as his brother and sister, and in that way they share the burdens and grievances with which man is surrounded. That is why they are products of the virtues of all the ages and have come to establish the rights of all the people, and to bring into harmony all these dangerous things of which humanity is afflicted.

The universality of the consciousness of Christ and the body built of his teachings to every neighbor and every life is beyond and question or doubt.

Firstly, we call God the Sun and the Teacher, secondly, we call God the Father and all the people are his children, thirdly, God is a garden and children are the flowers and tress of this garden. The consciousness of Christ and the teaching of Christ, these are like unto a pure stream gushing from the depths of a cleft flowing gently carrying away all the thistles and causing the growth of flowers.

His universal consciousness was similar unto a wall of fire that burnt away every root of sin, and transgression and he saw these things were merely the limitations of universality.

All these praises that we offer at the feet of the prophets will be like the mighty arts and paintings simply if we ourselves do not possess that universal mind and the universal sympathy. No matter how much we praise and glorify these prophets and their attainments, still we cannot deeply express their beneficence in which they live all the time. The only time that we can well acclaim on them or consciously state that we have obeyed their commands is when that universal consciousness like unto the sun shines from our hearts, when we have deep lying thoughts in our own being of the principles and sacrifices which they did.

The majority of us go once a week to a church, we take our hymn books and sing songs of praise, and then for the time being we take the bible, but when we leave the church that demeanor is left in the church, and then we go back to our business without applying the teachings that Christ brought to the world two thousand years ago.

In Persia a man became sick and the relations brought to him a doctor. The doctor felt his pulse and then prescribed a medicine and went out. No sooner had he left than the nurses and relations gathered around each other and discussed the profession of this doctor whether he was a chiropractor, or a homeopathic or divine healer, whether he had a diploma or not, and what is this prescription for? How are we going to give the prescription to the man? Suddenly one said, "How is the patient," and he found the patient dead. Now take the messages the spiritual medicine which has been given to us by these prophets—were they for this race or that, did they teach this creed or that—these mere discussions did not solve our problems at all and every time we had a chance we added another denomination, until today. This is the day in which we must talk less and act more. Reduce all these theological dogmas, and creeds and articles of faith which we have held around the consciousness which God has given us, and grasp that universal consciousness that Christ brought in his life time. Then and not until then these hearts will be purified, these limited minds will become like the roots of the trees of the valley and will be up-rooted, and we will become the embodiment of all that is holiness in Christ, then we

will become conscious of Christ within and that still small voice, which is the cause of the universalness of the world.

About a year ago I was living in Palestine and studied there for five months and there I was the guest of a great Spiritual Leader, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who is the prophet of this age. There I saw with own eyes how the limited consciousness of mind had become enlightened through his teachings. Suddenly these men and women living in his presence come into the same light and Truth of Universal Brotherhood.

This is the most miraculous age of this century because there you see the religions of the people who have been antagonistic and they looked on each others' prophets as deceivers, and He with His power stopped it all, and brings the secret of vision to all, and they see with their own eyes that they are the brothers and sisters of one another and all Love is fulfilled.

The knowledge of a thing will not give us the thing itself, for instance to know and teach that justice is good will not make the man just. To know and teach that light is good will not make electricity, the good thing is to learn the laws of electricity then we will be able to teach others of the practicality of our purpose.

Today there are many men who are teachers in public, they teach us that Love is good, possession is good, and all these qualities simply seem so useless, unless their application is good, but when we study their inner lives, the relation with their families, then we see that those teachings were all verbal with no power behind them. As regards to the principles the world is filled with them we have more than we can take care of, what the world need is a dynamic energy which will make men live up to these principles they possess.

Today those who go and visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá see with their own eyes, so that all the people of those countries, serving Him unconsciously turn to Him. They call him Father, if a man is in trouble they turn to him. Today the world is filled with the ideas of universal peace, we hear very much talking about it, but at the same time they are trying to increase their armies, as like unto the convention of the bartenders who will give a great lecture about the injuries that will come to man if he will drink liquor, but no sooner he has finished, he goes out by a back door and opens his bar across the street and starts up his business again.

Referring to this peace conference in Geneva which is already public, do not think by sitting there and talking about these problem and having a good discussion about it that you will be able to bring peace, because if you yourself feel a prejudice you have not the power to bring it; and the root of religion is in the heart no matter if we do attend this meeting. Hence, we are in this age in need of the power of the Holy Spirit, and the dynamic power of Truth. When our greed and selfishness will be done away then the universal

consciousness will sway over the consciousness of men. When this contains his principles and in it all these races become united then the kingdom of God will be revealed within us, then the universal consciousness will be the sole determiner of the affairs of human beings, then this globe will be one paradise and it will be like unto a engine acting and working and trying to create those ideals in the minds of man which will bring human harmony and universal kindness through every being.

## “Palestine During the Days of Reconstruction”

Date and Location Unspecified

It gives us great pleasure to be in a meeting wherein we find the members of our own race. If we study history, we find that the Jewish Race has accomplished a great deal in the war. At a time when the Arabians, thousands of years ago established the idea of the union of God, many nations of the world were idle worshipers. His holiness Abraham laid the foundation of this great universal idea of God and later on many great men from amongst the Jewish people continued this thought and spread it throughout the world.

One of the most authoritative religious books is the Old Testament. Aside from its religious and spiritual teachings the Old Testament has rendered a great service from historical and scientific stand point of the world.

We Persians find a large part of our history in the Bible. We read in the Old Testament, the history of our old Kings such as Cyrus and others who freed the Jews after their seventy years of Babylonian captivity. Of Israel, Isaac, and others who went to the Holy Land and built the temple of the Lord. Cyrus gave permission to the Jews to return to the Holy Land, and he gave them also the utensils and s..ed vessels to the Temple, the road to the provinces, the half the Jews and rendered them assistance. For three hundred years the Jewish s.ears, and prophets and the Nation on a whole were in a state of Happiness and content.

Cyrus rendered such great assistance to the Jews that the Prophet Isaac caused him to be called the Mssaii, the anointed one.

Another distinct figure of this Israelites is the appearance of a long succession of prophets who professed regarding the End of Time and the brotherhood of men and was counted by all the thinkers and scholars throughout all the ages.

Moses, God Like, delivered the Jews from the captivity from Egypt and brought them into the Promised Land. He is the founder of the Ten Commandments, which have become the bases for all the laws of other nations. Consider the wonderful writings and the work of the great Kings such as David and Solomon. The Psalms of David

are being read in .... .. of Solomon are the inspiration of understanding, wisdom, and knowledge. It is reported in Oriental history that many of the Greek Philosophers such as Socrates went to Palestine to study with the Israelite prophets, that when they went home they spread the idea of God and of the soul. Therefore these few instances would show you how great were and are still the Jewish race that gave to the world a religious book which is the inspiration of millions and millions of people throughout the world.

Even Christ was a Jew. He spread the idea of Jehovah as taught by Abraham, Jacob and other prophets of whom we have never heard. The name of Jehovah and through Him, the Old Testament was translated in so many languages, so that we can truly say that rendered a great service to the Israelites because He promoted the names of the Jewish Prophets, He made the peace, and translated their books and today in all the homes in this and other lands you will see a book on the shelf or on the table such as we have had. Christ says, "I have come not to destroy the teachings of many- my ancestors, but I have come to fulfill them."

Mohammad lived in Arabia. He was also a descendent of Abraham. If you read the book of Mohammad, you will see that He spread the idea of ..... Biblical rule. The wild and savage people of India. Reading His book you will read many phrases given to Abraham, Jacob, Isaiah?, and Moses, and if you take all these wonderful sayings of Muhammad out, what little would be left. So that if Muhammad who was from the line of Abraham had not appeared in Arabia then Abraham would have continued to be the worshipers of idols, consequently, you will see that the great ..... .. religions, the Jewish, the Muslim, and the Christian religions of today are the principal religions followed today.

One of the great causes of the devastation in Palestine was that every difference which exists amongst these three religions, namely the Jewish, Christian, and Mohammedan, existed, and they fought over the line and killed millions of people in the name of religion. These causes brought ignorance and carried ..... to the different parts and at last really brought ruin to every part of Palestine, so that the people were impoverished and they had no schools of knowledge whatsoever. The Mohammedans in Persia looked upon the Jews as unclean, and the Jews looked upon the Mohammedans as ..... If a Mohammedan attacked the jug of wine which belonged to the Jew, the Jew would break the Jug and let the wine run on the ground, because it was unclean. On the day of the feast of ..... the Jews who lived in Persia put on their heads a long covering so that they may not see the faces of the Mohammedans, because the feast would have been destroyed. On a rainy day the Jews were forbidden to leave their homes, for the Mohammedans said that the Jewish robes would become wet and they would be apt to come in contact with their robes and then the Mohammedans robes would be defiled and so it would be better for the Jews not to

leave their homes on that day. On the Sabbath day, the Jews naturally could not make a fire and they would then call upon the Mohammedans to make it for them, the Mohammedans, knowing that it was against their religion to make a fire refused to be of service to them, and consequently they would be left in total darkness for the night. All these things show to you how prejudice and ignorance on both sides brought ruin on Palestine. Palestine's very air was spiritual and brought sound inspiration and relation. If you walk through the meadows in Palestine, you will be able to get many kinds of wild flowers, all of them crying aloud, "This is the Holy Land the Promised Land where the feet of the Prophets were touched."

You would almost have a spiritual insight where the voices of these prophets were in the air. Likewise, one can see even today how its early prophets went through their many trials and sufferings in order to teach Israel righteousness and kindness to the world; and such a blessed holy land through the successful cause and struggles and difficulties through the religions, and Palestine was in this misery. And in the middle of the last century, the Jews began to build many colonies in different parts of Palestine. One of the greatest means of the development of Palestine was introduced from Europe through the cultivated and educated Jews. These Colonies number about fifty in different parts of Palestine laid the foundation of betterment and prosperity in the conditions amongst the Jews, and likewise a number of schools were built up in order to teach them how to better their state. So in different parts of Palestine peace began to wake up. They have built libraries a few schools and they entered into an era of national progress. On account of the religious prejudice which the Mohammedans truths toward them. They could not advance very much and they had to give prizes and so the progress was very slow, all through the last fifty years

There was another source of progress in Palestine during the last forty years, and that was the American schools built in Beirut and other parts, and they opened the doors to the Jews and all other races and young men and women came out to devote their time to the people. Out of these American schools doctors, dentists, and officials came out to devote their time and energy to the service of their country. Another means that they developed in Palestine was the coming of the large numbers of Germans from ..... . They had read in the Old and the New Testament that the Lord would ascend from Heaven and they went there to build and introduce factories and educate and engineer in these parts. The city of Haifa on mount Carmel is like a modern city. Many historians of the great World War state that the greatest result of the War was the freedom of Palestine from the hand of the Turks, who for the last five centuries have been keeping the land in a state of misery. That really we are in the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophets

regarding the return of the Jews to their home, because now there is perfect freedom. Many hundreds of Jews from other parts are actually going to that land, and are helping in every way to build up this country, by this movement.

The English Government has actually promised that Palestine will be the national home of the Jews; and she is helping and assisting them build schools, repair the roads, and having a national university in Jerusalem and having a nation of prosperity in that land.

Another great thing which was done during the War was the building of a Railroad from Cairo and Jerusalem, Jaffa and Haifa and also other points of interest. When I was in that train going from Cairo to Jerusalem, it reminded me of the time when Moses had to travel with His people through the same place only it took him forty years to travel it, for it seems He lost his way in His march to reach the Promised Land. Today one can make that journey in twenty hours in comfort and happiness.

We read in the New Testament that when Christ wanted to go to Jerusalem, He had to ride on a donkey; but today you can ride from any part on the Rail Road. So, Palestine during the last few years has had more progress than she did in centuries before and we find the fulfillment of the prophecies by our own prophets. So that the strong hope and expectation of the earnest Jews, which is to build again in that Holy Land the ancient colonies and to surround the country with happiness and enjoyment. Of course if they associate with Jews, Mohammedans, and Christians who live in that land, and who are the neighbors and live in accord with the law and unity and love the greatest ..... and that land then will be flowing with milk and honey as the prophecies said in the olden times. If some of those who lived in the day of Moses and in the day of Christ and they would wake up he would see that Palestine is in a period of great reconstruction that many forces, which in a few years would greatly transform its life.

Another interesting thing of Palestine is the establishment of the Bahá'í Movement, during the last seventy years from Bahá'u'lláh, who is the founder of universal relation, universal peace, and brotherhood. Bahá'u'lláh has been imprisoned for more than twenty-four years and has now passed from this life and His tomb is now in that place. When Bahá'u'lláh lived He had a son 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who is now living today and is continuing the work of His father and is holding up the banner of peace. Today 'Abdu'l-Bahá lives on Mount Carmel and it is that mountain that the prophecies say that the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings will float toward it and we will receive our instructions.

Formerly there were three religions in Palestine: the Jews, the Christians, and the Mohammedans. All of them believed that Palestine was the Holy Land so that nearly a hundred million people

of the world considered Palestine the Holy Land but today through the appearance of the Bahá'í Movement all the people of the world look on Palestine as a sacred ground.

Seven months ago I was in Palestine and I met groups coming from China, India, Europe, America and practically from all the nations of the world had come to Mount Carmel to meet this new Teacher and be inspired by His reasonings and teachings and receive His blessing so that they may go into the world and spread the law of brotherhood.

The Buddhists and the few other oriental races who never believed that in the Israelite Prophets now look on Palestine as the Holy Land, and have come to Palestine to see this new prophet and to reconstruct that country, and education is spreading in that nation all through this great Bahá'í Movement. When ..... all these different nationalities and who were hateful toward each other are now showing kindness toward each other especially the Jews and Mohammedans they have forgotten and now they shake hands with each other and are like brothers and the age of hatred has passed and love and brotherhood has come. This unity is the Bahá'í Unity which has established these peace it is not like people who sit at the same table and eat and afterward they go away and talk about each other but this unity is based upon the heart. It is a Unity that God made and it lives in the heart and is the peace of the world. This is full of wisdom knowledge, kindness and sympathy. So the hearts and the minds are both made one.

This new teacher Bahá'u'lláh has raised a great tent in Palestine under which the inhabitants of different religions live with harmony and unity. When you go and witness this marvelous scene you are reminded of the prophecies of Isaiah that in the .....

This has been the prayers of all the people since the commencement of ages, there shall appear the Lord of all and he shall unite the hearts of the people into one great spiritual brotherhood and unity.

There was a story about a patient who was very sick and they brought in a doctor, and the doctor felt his pulse and then prescribed some medicine for him and then immediately left the house. As soon as he had gone the people of the house started talking about how they would give him the medicine. One said they should give it to him sitting up, the next one said that he should be lying in bed, while the third said they should give it to him in a spoon. When the discussion was over and they had decided how to give the medicine to him, one of them went into the patient's room and to his utter amazement he found him dead.

The religions of the world have been actually the same way. Instead of taking all the teachings as they are given to them, they began to discuss what titles they would give to them. In this day God has revealed His love and his unity. To see all the people of the

Earth as the people of one great family and as the stars of the heaven.

Now you will realize that Palestine is undergoing two kinds of reconstruction, both physical and spiritual through the building of a Railroad, the establishment of schools, the introduction of modern means of agriculture and the lives of the people are rapidly changed in Palestine through this Bahá'í Movement.

## “Modern Education in Persia”

Date Unspecified—Lions Club

It gives me greatest pleasure to be in the presence of the members of the Lions Club, whose virtues are unity, oneness, service, and work for the members of the community. The qualities that save mankind are those of love, unity, cooperation and service toward their fellowmen. These virtues are eternal and everlasting and they become more and more clear as we live them. During the last seven or eight months we have been traveling throughout the United States and Canada, and it has been my good fortune to address similar clubs in different cities and find their purpose is to tend and build-up a strong manhood and character, which are the foundations of modern civilization. In bygone ages the country of Persia was the cradle of civilization and enlightenment and the conditions of their achievements are found in the histories and books of those times. Even the European histories have told of the different sciences, astronomy and mathematics and also for painting and music. Music and painting were first brought by the Arabs from Persia, and then into Spain. These books have been known from the eleventh to fifteenth centuries and become an importance from that age to this and arranged the life of mankind.

The word astronomy is a Persian word and means star and the books of the stars so that even the word of this noble science was brought into modern language. The astronomic science was cultivated by these people and the magi of the ancient time and it was said that the wise men that came to find the Christ Child in Bethlehem practiced this science, but that the course of the inspiration was undeveloped. The longitude and the latitude of the globes were first measured scientifically in the Middle Ages, by two Persian astronomers; but in the last two or three centuries all of these sciences were neglected—the people gave more attention to religious creeds which darkened the human mind and brought decadence in the life of the people.

One of the noble arts which was fully practiced and appreciated in the East was music and the great master of music was \_\_\_\_\_. He invented a musical instrument the music of which was so beautiful

that it created the greatest stir in the court of the king and he was invited to come to the palace. When he began to play in front of the king the music was so joyful and happy that the people began to sing and to dance; and all at once the master changed the air and began to play sorrowful music and the people had tears in their eyes and were very sad; then he changed the tune again and played a soft sympathetic tune and they were very much soothed and before long they had all fallen to sleep, and while they were asleep the music master quietly stepped out and the people were very surprised when they awoke to find that the master was not present and they thought it was so wonderful that it was like unto a heavenly dream. Religious bigotry brought down these high ideals to such an extent that anyone who played music was considered very rude and coarse. They would not allow music to be played at their religious services.

There were also very many great poets in that time, some of which were \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and others especially with whose name you are familiar. These men were very interested in religious matters outwardly and generally otherwise inwardly. One of this man's poems was inviting all men to drink lots of wine and be merry. It is really better to be without religion and not be a hypocrite than to be a religious hypocrite. These seminaries that young men go to and then come out as men teachers in the name of God, but it is really better to destroy these seminaries because they are the home of ignorance. These were the conditions in Persia until the middle of the nineteenth century when a great movement appeared which inspired new ideals and seeks a change in the life of Persian people.

This new movement is known as the Bahá'í Movement, and it was first originated by Bahá'u'lláh. It first only existed in that country but now it has thrown its branches to different parts of the world. Through the entrance of this new Movement, the people can get rid of a great deal of their superstitions and ignorance and then inspired them to be educated, and they then looked out into the world to get modern education and they went to France and brought teachers and laid the foundation of many modern schools and each new teacher brought knowledge and information and they reared the children.

Now, the first step to take was to simplify the Persian language which was very complicated and they wrote a series of simple books from sciences and elementary \_\_\_\_\_ so that the children may gain the best knowledge. The Persian language originally was very simple, it is taken from the same root that the European language was derived from, but when the Mohammedan religion was introduced in Persia that brought a great change in the religion of the Persian people and they took up the language of the Mohammedans and were forced to accept it as their own. The Mohammedan language was very difficult but today the Persians

have gone back to the old system. And once they got their promise, it was followed so that throughout the country of Persia, even in the small villages, they have these small schools and the children are taught.

The teachers were trained in the normal schools at the capital and they were sent out to teach the children. The Persian progress began when the Bahá'í Movement was spread in this country and immediately the Persian Bahá'ís came in touch with the American system and they were called into the education service of Persia and all the doctors and teachers have been working for many years to introduce a means of progress which are so popular and successful in the United States. It is interesting to know that the educational system was laid down by Bahá'u'lláh seventy years ago and it was fully in accord with the system of education practiced so long in this country. The first principal of education that was laid down by Bahá'u'lláh, was that education must become compulsory and that the state must have an active part in this principal; and that every child must receive an education that is necessary for the services of the community. Secondly, He said every man in the community must pay taxes for educational purposes, whether he had a child or not. This is to pay for the education of those children in the city who have no one to take care of them and see to their education. These are and were the principals that were to be enforced by the Bahá'ís founded by Bahá'u'lláh, and when I came to this country I found those conditions existing here. Thirdly, the schools must be a place of joy and happiness and sunshine, and the children must love to go to school. The teacher must be a kind, loving, sympathetic helper, not like they were in the olden times when the children were frightened at the mention of the school or its task master. Today the environment must be happy so that the child will go of his own free will and must not be forced to do so. Fourthly, the education of the girls must be even better and more efficient than that of the boys, because in the future they are to be the mothers of the race and the children receive their earliest education in the cradle from the lips of the mother. Fifthly, that when they become educated they must work together and have a trade and a profession.

The results of all these educational systems must be a greater progress success and prosperity in the world of humanity and will do away with much of the turmoil of past years. The educators and teachers must teach the children in their earliest infancy the love of humanity, universal brotherhood and peace. Today, in most of the schools, they teach the children the hatred of races and superiority of one over another and they are brought up as selfish men and women and they think of nothing but their own selfish desires. Therefore Bahá'u'lláh advises the universal language to be brought into all schools and the teaching of love and peace and so humanity may be like so many links of a large chain held together by the love of humanity and universal peace. He has said that morality and

science are like two wings of a bird of the soul. At first one was taught at the expense of the other but in this age both must inspire each other and make happiness and goodness in the hearts of man. In brief, this Earth must become like unto a heaven and the individuals like unto angels and peace must be established in all parts of the world.

Translator, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

## Address to Poor Farm

Date Unspecified—Poor Farm, Duluth,  
Minnesota

We have traveled thousands of miles from the old country of Persia, and have been traveling for a number of months throughout the United States, and when we arrived in Duluth we heard of this place and desired to come and inquire about your health and visit you for a little while.

Love, sympathy, and kindness are the three qualities that correspond with religion, truth, and reality, and if everyone whether old or young rich or poor, must be characterized with these attributes. The physical war has been filled with tasks, trails, vicissitudes, and consequently they are part and parcel of this material life. Behind every life there is death; after youth comes old age; everyday is ended by night; and health often followed by sickness. Consequently this world of ours is so consistent that we leave all these various qualities of sicknesses, tests, and trails, and our duty is to reduce them as much as possible and fill their places with sunshine and happiness.

It is recorded in the Eastern history that there was once a great king who had a son. This king was so fond of his son that he did not want him to see any unhappiness and misfortune and pains of this live. Neither did he desire him to come in contact with old age and death. In order to prevent him from seeing these things, he built him a palace far from all men and filled it with all means of pleasure and gave him two great wise men to associate with at all times. The child was brought up in an environment of joy and happiness and luxury and everything that man could provide they gave to him. When he reached the age of maturity doctors and teachers were sent to educate him and when he grew old enough he was given a wife and all kinds of servants and his father would come once in a while to see how he was getting along. For years the prince was very happy and lived in this palace and was never allowed to leave the grounds. One day he was thinking and he wondered what kind of a place was beyond the palace walls, and what kind people lived there and what they did. He thought so much that he finally decided to go out and find out for himself. So, one night he wrote a letter to his wife and while she was asleep he bid her his last adieux

and left the palace and went out into the world to travel. As he was walking along the road lo and behold he met an old man whose back was bent almost in two. The prince as very much surprised and said to the man, "what is the meaning of all this? What is the matter with you? Why is your back bent like this?" The old man then told him that once upon a time many years ago he was also young and happy and had his health , but that was long ago and now he was an old man and he had to get old. The Prince was very sad and felt very unhappy and in this state of mind he continued on his journey. Not much farther on he met a blind man with a stick in his hand and again he was surprised and astonished and he went forward and asked why this man could not see. The man told him that he had been in an accident and had lost his eye sight but that years ago he also had two good eyes and could see like the prince. The young man was in the depth of despair and hated to go on. He went a little farther and he met some men carrying a dead man. He was unable to believe his eyes and he asked the people who were with the dead person and they said that this man had once been alive and had walked and talked but that suddenly life left his body and now he was dead. The prince felt very down hearted and sat down to think, and he wondered if there wasn't something wrong with the world. He tried to think out some way to stop this misery and suffering and for this reason he devoted his life to traveling and study to find some kind of medicine that would not make the people old or make them live and not die, and prevent all kinds of sickness, but he fell into the despair of failure. Just at the time when he fell into the deepest despair, the heavenly door was opened to him and he was given spiritual light so that he could stop the pains of these sicknesses and distresses of the world. That medicine was none other than Love of God, the turning of ones face toward the Kingdom of God. The keeping of one's conscience toward the spiritual kingdom.

The love of God is in the heart when the heart is filled with it. There is a land after it which there is no quality life which is not followed by any death and a youth which is everlasting; the richest men are those whose hearts are filled with the love of God; and the poorest man is the one whose heart is not filled with the love of God.

It is said that one of the Turkish kings in Constantinople had built himself a great palace by the sea, and now and then he would enter into his palace and watch the coming and going travelers. One day a poor sailor came and crossed under the palace window and looked up to the king and he saw that he had such a wonderful palace and all he wished for and he said, "Why is it that this man is so rich and I have to work so hard for my living from morning until night?" While this sailor was cursing in this manner the king was listening to him from his window and next day sent for the sailor and disguised himself in order to be unknown. He began to speak to the sailor and

he represented himself as one of the ministers at the king's court and began to speak with this man and said, "I have heard of your plight and of your misfortune and I have made up my mind to bring you to this palace and give you a grand apartment and enjoy the pleasures of the king." He was invited to attend a very large banquet and had the most wonderful dinner that was ever served to him before, and he took great pleasure in eating these various dishes of which he had never heard before. Later on in the evening a bed was prepared for him, but the king [saw] to it that a large number of needles were thrown between the mattress. The sailor went to bed and first he lay on his back, but the needles entered his body and so then he turned on the right and then on the left, but whichever way he turned he was pricked by them. His body was all pricked and he could not sleep a wink all night long. When dawn came he was very mad at himself to think that he had invited this invitation of the king. The King sent for him and asked him how he enjoyed the night's rest and all the pleasures of the king, the sailor told him that he would much rather be poor as he always had been and be comfortable than to live in a king's palace and not sleep a wink all night. Then the king made himself known and told the sailor that he had heard the sailor grumbling and that he thought he would give the sailor a taste of his life so that he would be satisfied. He told him that his life was not all comforts and joys but that he had many worries that bothered him so that he could not sleep at night, and also of his riches and losses and that he has neither rest nor composure. So, in reality wealthy men are those who have the greatest troubles both in conscience and mind and heart, while those who have inherited [income] are the ones who enjoy the greatest happiness and peace of mind. The poor ones are not in need of many things, while the rich ones have so many problems to solve and so many men to feed and are constantly trying to find out how to solve his puzzling problems.

It is said that once upon a time a wealthy man was at the gate of death and a friend of his asked him how it all felt and what was his state of thought. He said, "Why I was praying and was contented in dying, but now as I look over all my palaces, houses and savings I do not want to die, while the poor man leaves this world with peace and comfort and has no troubles at all. So both the rich and the poor must some day leave this world. The rich leave it with regret, but the poor with happiness and content. The heart of the poor is filled with God, while the heart of the rich is filled with problems of this world. This is why Christ says it is more difficult for the rich to enter into the Kingdom of God than for a camel to enter into the eye of a needle. Then this man is the one whose heart is filled with the Love of God who has the treasures of consolation and peace and have no other trials but to think of the beauty of the Spirit.

Now that we have come here and have met you, we feel very grateful and happy, because this institution is the thought of the

population and they are seeing to it that the individuals in this state are taken care of, while we do not have any similar institutions in the far-off country of Persia. In the institutions to take care of the people who have lived their life and who have reached a stage where they cannot live independently, but seventy years ago a new movement came into being and it is the Bahá'í Movement which has introduced new laws and statutes for the protection of these people. This new Movement has its branches in all parts of the world. Wherever you go you will find the protection of the poor and I have found it even in Canada and in the United States and in most of the cities they are doing their best to alleviate the sorrow of the stricken people. The Bahá'í Movement is a spiritual movement whose aim is to establish peace, reciprocity, and cooperation between the children of man and to do away with all prejudice that has been in the world. It is a universal peace and brotherhood of man; it is the establishment of peace amongst nations and also the creation of sympathy and fellow feeling between the high and the low, the rich and the poor.

The Bahá'í Movement was established in the last seventy years and has done away with all injustices, with all misery with which civilization has associated. And where the Bahá'ís are you will also find there is no poverty stricken people and are protected from sickness and provided with homes and live happily. Two years ago, as a result of the World War, there was much poverty and famine in the Orient and thousands and thousands of people died as a result, but the Bahá'ís have this cooperative spirit amongst themselves and have done their utmost service that those communities in which they used to live had a general store house, and all these people who were in need. From these store houses they distributed amongst themselves allowances so that no one suffered. The religion of God means love, cooperation, service and mutual existence. Religion does not practice these things, neither the church, or religion will have any benefit to the community. We hope and pray that in this age the people of the world are better acquainted with all these principals of justice, equality and fair dealing and they hope that they lose their narrow mindedness.

We are very pleased to have met you today, and we feel indebted to those who have arranged this meeting. While we are gone we hope you and other will turn toward the Kingdom of God and you will spend your days and nights with utmost pleasure and happiness, and we will pray for you and think and thank God that we have had the pleasure of meeting you.

# Address to Calvary Baptist Church

Date and Location Unspecified

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH—COLORED PEOPLE

We know that number does not count at all, it is the quality of the spirit, the earnestness of the soul, and of the heart that is of importance, and for which we are striving. If sincerity, righteousness and purity of purpose do not exist among the individuals of a large group, what would be the use of them coming together, even if there are hundreds and thousands and they are all wrong? Ten right are better than a million. There is no doubt whatsoever that as we look over the world, there is no need to prove to us that the world is sick—not only material disease, but spiritual disease all over.

The healing of material diseases is comparatively easy to cure. You refer to a physician, and he gives you a prescription, and you follow directions. But healing spiritual diseases is exceptionally difficult; they are colloquial in character and are one of the most difficult problems of life. What are spiritual diseases? Intolerance, bigotry, ignorance, prejudices, rational and national and spiritual remoteness from God, intemperance and immortality are the spiritual diseases with which the body of humanity is afflicted. The only cure is for the person himself to work within himself and realize how difficult it is to extirpate the root of these spiritual diseases and then he will understand how much more difficult it is to remove the diseases from among the children of men. To heal these spiritual diseases is so difficult that during the last six thousand years Prophets have come, Revelations have been given to the world, and these Revelations (your own Bible) have performed the most marvelous miracles and extraordinary spiritual feats, but yet the world is here today.

New Divine Physicians, new spiritual Christs have ascended the cross to heal these diseases, but yet mankind has been so steeped in the sea of ignorance that they have not become awakened yet. It is true that if one of these Prophets in His own age and cycle healed

a few sick souls, but once there were disciples and apostles who let man made ideas and creeds crept in and the same old conditions returned.

Let us compare the conditions before Christ and today after two thousand years of Christian teachings before Christ. Europe was more or less uncivilized, savage people lived in the \_\_\_\_\_ into tribes and they engaged themselves in battles and various kinds of bloodshed and we called them savages, barbarians, cannibals and other names, and to the utmost they killed with their rude implements a few thousand people in a few years. Today we call our selves civilized Christians but we engage in such large scales of war, we can kill with our modern machine guns and cannons millions of people in a few minutes. I find from statistics that the total loss of men and children and women during the World War was nearly ten million and these were from all nations. Today Europe is infested with over four million children who are dying from starvation if we do not sent food to them immediately. The Americans are doing their utmost to help them out. When we read, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," what good would it bring if a person blinded me and then I go and blind him; it would not help me, but it would make one more blind person left helpless, and that is exactly what they have done in Europe, increased the total sum of misery and cripples.

The Babylonians and the \_\_\_ and various Eastern nations were pagans and worshipers of idols, and they built wonderful temples and marvelous works of architecture. We are doing the same thing today as the pagans did then, but our hearts are in not thinking of God because when we come out of our temples we immediately go and again engage ourselves in the same corruption and sin, but we have made it a million times worse than those people who we call pagans and infidels. A temple is the House of God and not a empty Temple. God is Love, Christ is Love, and They are the spirit of humanity and association. If we find that Spirit in this country in a humble shack, it is better than if we build large temples and cathedrals and we do not find it in them.

The country that we all the time call "My Country" we idolize patriotism. What is country after all but the cemeteries of our dead bodies; it is possible that we may live a few days or years on its surface, but all of eternity we spend under it. And is it divine to fight over our cemeteries? Our country is the Kingdom of God and not only a mound of earth where we or rather our dead bodies spend eternity. After all it is something which has come to us through the laws of nature. Religion is one; but there are many kinds of religions and all of these are looking up on themselves as the final word of God. God and religion are one. Now these diseases, these disorders of the spiritual body of man are so complicated that we are in need of one divine spiritual power or physician who will give you the right kind of medicine. The Prophets were the Divine Physicians and the

Books of the Old and New Testament were the medicines. The Christians lived up to this doctrine. Many of them read it, and then they lay it away on the shelf again and forget it. If a person is sick and medicine is brought to him and he doesn't take it, he should not expect to gain his health.

Therefore what we need today is a new Divine Physician to come with a new power, with a new knowledge, with new authority, and put aside these old teachings, and now we must have a religion which we must live by and practice. No legislation or laws can remove from the country these religious prejudices and differences. We are in need of a spiritual power to remove these difficulties from all nations—a divine power that will come and establish the world of humanity. The world of humanity is one kind. God has created us all from the same elements, and each individual is composed the same way. We all live under the same blue heaven, and walk on the same ground. In emotions and sentiments we are all equal, and in powers we are exactly alike. God provides for all products and gives all the same spirit of grace and sanctification.

As long as God has created this one home, and that home is for man, but man has divided it into many countries through his own greed and selfishness, while all of them are the home of mankind. It is very different in the animal kingdom. If we bring a sheep from China, and Canada, and the United States and Europe and put them in a pasture to graze, they will do so and not fight with each other. The sheep from France will not act superior to these of Turkey; the sheep of England will not lord over those of China, but they will be all happy and contented. If animals can live together with the utmost kindness and love, why can't we do this also? If someone could understand the language of the sheep he would be struck with what they would tell us; they would say "Look at the men who call themselves the highest of all creatures and look [what] they do to all for the greed of country and differences in shade, and we animals live together contented and happy."

God has sent all his Prophets here to spread love and the law of Love, and make love their dominant force of living, and we have not lived by these laws. It is like the sick man: the family sent for a doctor and when the doctor arrived and prescribed a prescription for him after he had looked at his condition. Then he immediately left the house. The members of the family started to discuss different unimportant things as soon as the doctor left. One said he was a quack doctor and the other said he was not. One said the medicine should be given to the patient in a spoon and another in a glass and they kept on in this manner till one of the members of the house went to see how the sick man was getting along and to his utmost amazement he found the man had died.

It is the very same way with religion. Christ and different Prophets have come and given Their medicine to help overcome this catastrophe in the world, but the people stop to discuss the different

ceremonies and how they should be performed and we have failed to take the medicine prescribed, and that is the cause of all these religious prejudices and superstitions, and conditions both social and economical. Even the greatest statesmen are at a loss to think how they are to overcome all these conditions. In as much as we are unable to help ourselves, we are in need of a Spiritual Teacher to help us.

Nearly seventy years ago such a Divine Physician appeared in the Orient, whose name is Bahá'u'lláh. He laid down certain prescriptions the practices of which have brought about wonderful change in the Orient and Persia. Although at the beginning of this Movement there was much opposition to it and the government authorities prosecuted the people who tried to spread this Movement, and nearly fifty years ago the leader of this Movement was killed in Palestine, that spiritual power or force which we are seeking to remove the social diseases we find in the Orient are in the life and Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Firstly, He taught the oneness of the world of humanity and to overcome the national differences and rational bigotry. In the East, we have done away with much of the national and religious prejudices by means of this \_\_\_\_\_ the Bahá'í Movement. All these nations \_\_\_\_\_ working and living in perfect harmony and we find them associating with each other while formerly they were very prejudice against each other and would not associate together. Now they treat each other with the utmost kindness, and they have laid aside all those traditions and creeds and superstitions.

Bahá'u'lláh's life and words have been so wonderful that if you read His life and study it you become immediately inspired with a new light—it is like a pure limpid water that comes down from Heaven to cleanse our hearts from these differences. This has been the aim of all the Prophets, but only in this Age we are enabled to progress and through the Bahá'í Movement, and through it the world has been able to have universal, peace, and be freed from the bonds of ignorance and prejudices.

All the neighbors in the religious field, when you come together in a church, you read the Bible, you Baptize your children, and go through various other religious rights—all these things must increase international love and unity and harmony among us and various members of the community. If they do not, they are just like a tree that will not bear fruit or leaves or branches for the birds of the heavens to perch in, and for man to cool himself under. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who is the present leader of the Bahá'í Movement in Palestine, has instructed His followers to go out and spread in this country and all the countries of the world the love of neighbor, universal brotherhood, and peace.

These superstitions are looked upon, in the Standpoint of God, as the work of the devil or Satan, and the working-out of these

problems is to establish better understanding and unity between the races and nationalities and religions. The only problem of today, the only worship, the only church is kindness toward their fellowmen—it is the truth working-out of the spirit of Christ and this will bring the spirit of God on the Earth and hearts of men, and these are the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh through the world. The Bahá'ís are working day and night so that the national, rational, religious and sexual equality and will be all over the world, and to do away with all prejudices and establish universal peace all over the world so that God will be the shepherd of one flock and we will be the stars of one heaven and [earth]\_\_\_\_\_.

## Talk Given in Bethel

Date Unspecified—Bethel

I am very grateful to Mr. Vetty, who has given us this opportunity of coming here tonight and speaking with you, and to you, who have come here and taken part in this meeting.

When we study the history of mankind, from the beginning of creation to this time, we realize that man has always been prompted by two kinds of deeds, praiseworthy and blameworthy deeds. The book of life of each individual has had two kinds of pages, one kind is white and other kind is black; and generally man has ever the opportunity to do right on these pages with the power of right, but he writes with the power of shame and they disgrace each other. Although God has placed in the heart of man a guide and latter which is a spiritual guide and leads always to the higher and nobler summit of virtue; but man is so constituted that he always tries to do that which is smaller and act according to the laws of nature which are animalistic. In every age and cycle, this animate power within man has been called his angel, in another his spirit, but whatever name you call it, it has always been known to lead him on to that which is the most spiritual goods.

In the soul of this ideal power there is a tendency which is called the power of nature, which certain persons call the devil—or whatever name you wish to call it—is the lower nature of man like the lower preference, which brings him down and forces him all the time to do that which is not good. When a man desires to undertake a work which is God-like, immediately that ideal power and that natural power come together and they begin to fight with each other in the man. In many cases, it is very hard to relate that the lower force gains the ascendancy over the higher, and man becomes the captive of this selfishness, his own egotism, and his inner self. You may liken this power of nature unto the dark night, and the power of the spirit with a bright light. The light is shining within this dark atmosphere and is surrounded by the gloominess of night. For this reason the power of the spirit within man is imprisoned and captured within this cage and surrounded with this gloominess of selfishness and ----- . When man becomes the captive of this power of nature, he is like a sparrow within the claws of the eagle, he cannot do anything except follow the dictates of the lower force,

and he will commit any shame and walk into the darkness of error and will not mind if he becomes so low and degraded under the eyes of all that is sacred and noble. The self within him is like a serpent or a boa constructor, which they say when any animal is brought in contact with it is like a magnet, and it draws them on within its reach and is lost. Man is lost and captured by the low power within him, or that selfish power, and does not realize it. At the time, if the whole world is free, but man is the slave of this power, it does not help him at all. What would freedom benefit a man if he is a captive in his own house of clay? On the other hand, if a man has freed himself from the claws of this force, he may be a prisoner and yet he is as free, as a free man of God and is soaring in the atmosphere of sanctity and purity, and will be a member of the family of God. When a person is free in this manner, his freedom will be so dear to him that he will not follow immediately in the state of disgrace, and he will attain to a high power, and he will be like a king sitting on a throne with the greatest power and majesty.

Now all the Prophets and Messengers of the past have come to free man from the greatest of these selfish powers. The outcome and cardinal aim of reading the holy creeds of the sufferings and trials of the Prophets was to teach us and free man from this force of nature. Here one can draw a line of direction between the Teaching of Christ and the Teachings of those Prophets that came before Him. The laws of Moses are all based on the punishment and reward, of the promise to His followers that, if they lived a good and pure life their flocks will be doubled and their family will be protected and their sheep would all live and multiply, the people followed his directions and these were just material laws. It is true that this outward mean of punishment was not accounted as a hindrance to man they were not in a position to commit evil, but it this time it is an outward law so that man may give-up committing those evil deeds. If we practice the law "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," what would that do if a man blinds me and I go and blind him what would be the result there was only one blind person at first, and when I do this there is another one added to the list. Although this law forces tears from the people that blind or cure him. But through the ideal law of forgiveness that Christ brought has a new consolation for he tried to ruin and history the evil and wrong doing.

Formerly, it has been read that if you commit such an act, you will receive certain punishment but you must never think of committing that deed. The aim of this admonition was that you must so free yourself from this moment of selfishness, and become such a monarch over the lower forces that you will have no room in the mind or in the heart for evil thoughts or desires. Christ said, "I will baptize you with fire and the spirit." What did He mean by this? He meant that I have brought such love of God that it will burn all the thoughts of sin out and will give you freedom of life. Therefore, the

religion and the reality of Jesus Christ was to free man from the cage of selfishness. The religion of the reality of Jesus Christ was that all these creeds, all these teachings, no matter how wonderful and gorgeous in appearance, if your spirit is not beautified by them, they will do you no good, for you'll return to your old superstitions and fanaticisms. The religion and the reality of Christ was this; if your spirit and your mind are not baptized with the fire and spirit of Christ, if they are baptized in the Pacific or the Atlantic Ocean, you will not be clean because it is not the baptism of the spirit and the mind and in this it does not mean the outward washing of the body. This last statement is filled with a world of meaning. When He says unless you are born again you shall not enter into the Kingdom of God does He really mean that man must be born again from the womb of this physical nature into the nature of spiritual life and love and sympathy so that he may gain inner conception of the reality and religion of Christ?

He also said, "You will know a tree by its fruits." The world of humanity is like unto a large garden, which has for trees the individuals; you can know a tree by its fruits, so also can you know a man by his..... He must show by his deeds, which are Christ-like, that he is full of love for humanity, as Christ did and have a universal conscience as Christ did and be ready to embrace in his arms the suffering as Christ did when He suffered and died for us all.

There was once a man who was very sick and the family sent for a doctor, and the doctor came and felt the sick man's pulse and then prescribed a medicine and then went away. The members of the family began to discuss different unimportant things as soon as the doctor went instead of giving the man his medicine. One said, "we should give the patient his medicine in a spoon," another said, "no, that would be better to give it to him in a glass," and one said, "the doctor was a quack doctor," and the next said, "he was a good doctor," and they kept on discussing these matters, and one of the family went in to see how the man was feeling and to his utter astonishment and amazement he found him dead.

That has been the exact situation during the last two thousand years. Instead of taking the medicine which Christ prescribed, we have went about discussing these matters about how we should carry on our ceremonies instead of establishing peace and universality among the nations of the world. Again, it is also said that a very sick man had asked his children to bring him a cup of water because he was burning-up with the fever, and that when the children heard their father speak, they began to talk how he looked and how well he spoke and so on and so forth, and they neglected to bring the water that the father had asked for, and when they brought it the father had fainted away.

There is much struggling among the nations, religions, labor and capital, and races of the world. They have had a great World War, and now there is more hatred and embitterment today in the

European countries than there has ever been before in the world, and this is all because we have not been religious enough to use and drink the medicine that Christ brought. We have played all the time and not used the exact course that was given to us. We have found as a result of this war miles and miles of cemeteries today, and there are millions and millions of children who are starving because we have not applied the Christian principals to civilization.

While I was crossing the Mediterranean and the oceans, I passed scores of towns and all of them were in the state of ruin and devastation, and we could see the mast sticking out of the water of large ocean liners that had been sunk by the German submarines, and while I was in France almost every young man I saw was marred by the World War; one had lost his arm, another his foot, another his ear, another his jaw, and all this destruction was brought about by this World War.

Now, just as in the accident today we have the economic struggles, so do we in the Orient have the religious prejudices and struggles. There are seven kinds of religious prejudices and struggles. There are seven kinds of religions now existing the Christian, the Jewish, the Mohammedans, the Buddhists, the [?]-all of these religions hate and have war against each other. They look upon each other as blood thirsty generals although the prophets had come to teach and save the people. But they go about killing each other and having war continually.

Seventy years ago, a new Movement appeared in the East which is known as the Bahá'í Movement. The spirit of this Movement was so compelling and so spiritual that it has been the cause of the uniting of a large number of these religious enemies, and they are now following the banner of unity, brotherhood, truth and love of humanity. When you read the writings of Christ, His commandments you do not find outward expressions; you must go in the Orient among the Bahá'ís and see how they actually practice, and look into their daily lives and you will see kindness, cooperation, reunion of mind and heart.

Bahá'u'lláh, from 1844 to this day, has been endowed with spiritual power and divine assistance to remove the differences which existed among these nations and these different religions, and He has brought them all together under the banner of universal brotherhood and love.

That international convention was held by His Holiness, Christ, and again by His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh in the Christ. Thousands and thousands of men and women, Jews, Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and practically every nationality and religion in the world, have joined in this Movement and they have done away with their narrow ideas and are now helping to establish universal peace and brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. They also want to establish peace between capital and labor, and then it will be like

one shepherded and the flock, or the stars of one heaven, or the leaves of one tree, or the members of one large family. This Movement will go on indefinitely until it has covered the whole Earth.

Translator, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

## Christ

### Date Unspecified—The Home of Mr. Bauers

The body of Christ was in love with the Spirit, which Spirit was that of God. The Spirit of Christ was the great spirit of Divinity. For a long time the body of Christ was receiving assistance from the Spirit. This body and spirit were like the lover and the beloved. And the lover and the beloved would not like to be separated. So, when the time for separation came, it was this struggle between the lover and the beloved, and they did not want to part. The body, being attached to the spirit, realized that if it could keep that spirit still longer it could suffer for the world of humanity and guide the united ones in the plain of truth. And, that is why the body was crying out, "let this chalice pass from me." Now what was that chalice or cup of tyst. It was the [separation?] between the loved and the beloved, which was very bitter indeed. The spirit was longing to leave this body so that it may ascend to the heavenly court, and there, sit at the right side of the Creator.

Now, some people do not understand the real meaning, and consequently thought that Christ was in a state of fear. We know, however, that the mysteries of God are [missing word]. That person lives in a state of fear who is not assured of himself. But, one who is attached to self desires to live a long time because he wants to satisfy his selfish desires. There are some people who are so attached to this temporal life that they would readily go into all kinds of suffering so that they might live. The Manifestations of God have actually attained to the second [missing word]. They are free from self to long self sacrifice. His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh, writing on the tablet to the king of Persia says, "Whenever I look at a tree I address it." I wish now I were the cross upon which I would be crucified. When a number of Turkish officers came to 'Akká, sent by the Sultan of Turkey to investigate His Holiness, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote to him and said, "Do you think I am afraid to be killed? This is my highest longing in the path of God." In brief, the Manifestations of God have already freed themselves, and from the longing to be here and are longing for the kingdom of God. So, if the body of Christ was longing for this life, it was first because it had become so attached to the ...wanted to live longer in order to save His fellowmen, and to spread the light of Truth, and bring the people nearer to the people of God. In this case, the spirit of God was

speaking in the body before when it said, "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken Me?"

## Theosophist's Meeting

### Date and Location Unspecified

It gives me the greatest pleasure to be in this society whose principals and teachings are identical with the teachings of this Movement. During the last seven months that I have been traveling throughout the United States and Canada, I have found that the minds of the American people are clear from traditions and their hearts are fully ready for the reception of the subtle laws of our truth and reality, especially such societies as these, who have opened their doors to the investigation of thought, no matter if it comes from the East, West, North, or South. The members of this society are lovers of wisdom, and it makes no difference from what climate or country it may come from.

There is no doubt whatsoever that such a society with similar objects tend the [?] of mind and the [?] of thought so that men and women may enter into a higher plane of mental and spiritual activities. In the Orient, for many ages, the conditions were very different from that which we find today in the world. Because every religion and every sect [?] around its doctrines and creeds, and these walls were raised so high so as to prevent the shining of the Sun of Reality, and they were perfectly satisfied with their own ideals and living in the darkness and [?] of their own minds instead of thinking that the sun was shining for all people of the world, and they raised these walls to prevent themselves from the rays and heat of the sun. We are more or less the worshippers of the religions of our forefathers, and very few of us investigate thoroughly the matter and find out why these religions looked upon each other as the highest, and this was the cause that narrowed the minds and hearts within the people and made them look upon the Lord of those other people as the wrong one and called these people infidels and imposters.

A few months ago I was traveling in Persia, and I met a Mohammedan (an Orthodox), who was very strict, and when I met a Jew and we began to talk about Moses and who the Jews worshiped, Jehovah, and the Mohammedan [said], "I never thought the Jews worshiped Jehovah, or God, but I see that the Jews are quite intelligent and their ideals are quite the same as told him at the time when Moses." And, as we talked, we found out that in reality

the religions of Mohammad and Moses were both about the same, they believed in the same God and the same fundamental principals of religion—only the conditions were different. Mohammad [had] to lay down other laws and rules because He was in a different stage of civilization. Moses lived on the desert with the Children of Israel, and could not enforce the same laws because the climate, time and stage of development were different. However, these laws which were laid down in former ages by these Prophets are today all are of tune with the modern conditions; for example, we find in the Old Testament that if a man worked on the Sabbath, he must be stoned, and the old Mohammedan laws say that if a person steals to the amount of a dollar, his hand must be cut off. The laws were made according to the time those laws could not be enforced today because the conditions have changed to such an extent that the people would not practice them. The laws undergo changes and the laws of religion likewise must keep pace with the social and spiritual laws. I started to talk to the Mohammedan from the Christian standpoint and some of the various principals of the Christians. The Mohammedan was sure that the Christian was wrong and were not worshiping the same God that he worshiped because they had too many doctrines and teachings. I explained to this Mohammedan that many of these doctrines were established long after Christ by the Apostles, and other followers have all included something new amongst themselves. The history of the comparison of these religions has clearly pointed-out that these three Semitic religions of the world are the Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans dealing idly with the same principals, the same God, and the same purpose only the Founders of the different ages of religions have appeared, and consequently, they had to deal with entirely different populations.

Therefore, these three Founders of three religions have been teaching the same God of Abraham, but we find that they gave this God different names because we must remember they were speaking to a childish race and had to use words and phrases the real meanings of which we do not know to this day, and we want to understand these things from a twentieth century standpoint and brain or reason.

There are three fundamental principals of these religions which was taught, and these are first, the universal God; second, the mortality of the soul. Although Moses does not reveal directly in His writings, there are instances. A Greek Philosopher traveled to Athens and Palestine to study the moral laws [and] to spread its fame and the principals of mortality. They are both [both in the writings of Christ and in the book of Mohammed. Now, we find the same two principals in the religions of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Buddha, \_\_\_\_\_, all of which go very far to demonstrate that man is a religious being and in the [?] over the world. If now and then, in the [?] Sacred Scriptures [?] of the [?] we find references to evil and to [the] power of evil as though it had a [?] and is [?] in

itself. We find the same reference in the New Testament or when Christ cast away the evil spirit and it took its abode in the swine. And these are all [?] statements that refer to the evil spirit which is in man. Similarly, if we read the book on the reincarnation in the scriptures of India, we find the same thought in the writings of Christ when He said to the coming of Elias back to the world, He meant John, who if you think had the same qualities and personality and loving-kindness that Elias had—only his outward appearance was different, and consequently He called it the return of Elias.

In regards to the divinity, to the immortality, to the reincarnation, all these religions are identical. The first part was from a [?] standpoint, and we found all these religions identical. The second is the historical aspect of religions and we find many similarities in them, and as we find in the study of the seven days, we find in the translation of the Old Scriptures, the same history among the old people and among the [?] the stars, the heavens, constellations and the dwelling place of God, and they are the [?] of this world.

The books of India were sent with the [?] ideas of grasp that when God created this world, it became so heavy that [?] one of the gods had to hold it and it was so heavy for him that his hands fell-off and in the museums to-day we find that God with his hands off.

Many of these teachings are mythical and will not be accepted as the truth by intelligent human beings. From this historical standpoint, religions are likewise identical, and they have been expected to accept the traditions of the universe, in our own childish way, what was in the early stages of humanity. The third aspect of religion [?] statements for the legislation of which all the Prophets have come is moral and ethical. The aim of spirituality and religion is for the development of the soul. The basis of this spiritual civilization is love, cooperation, reciprocity and association between the children of men. So, that through the accordance with the laws of practical ideas, love is brought into the daily association of men all those ethical and moral principals through the application of which mankind will be like the members of one family, the stars of one heaven, and the drops of water, of one ocean of God's love. The fourth aspect of religion is they all [have] the same aim—love, concord—and if we compare the likings of these seven different religions as to their ethical principals, we find that the principals, and problems are all the same, and there was no difference between the people who spoke those languages.

When Moses was in the desert, He taught the people to love their neighbors and relatives. Christ said that we should love our fellowmen to such an extent that if he struck us on the right cheek, we would turn him our left also. Mohammad likewise says if you walk in the street and someone suddenly stands before you and begins to curse you, you should say to him, "peace be unto you." Confucius has the same Golden Rule of love that when He says you must expect others to have what you do not desire for yourself.

Juno took a step farther and says that which is now like unto our Humane Societies, "you must not as much as harm an ant or extinguish his life, for life is sweet." Therefore in this forth aspect which is the Golden Rule, and the highest rule of humanity, these religions have them all only their wording is different, but they all have the same meaning.

You might just as well ask if these religions are [?] historical, identical, and moral in their teachings, and if they are the same, what is the matter with them that they have been fighting with each other and killing people? Are they not human beings? For many thousands of years, the people have insisted in following the Founders of these religions and have been forming sects and these sects have been causing religious war and the people have been shedding blood over these unimportant things.

What would happen if the Founders of these seven different religions would suddenly find themselves on this Earth and were sitting at a large table and they would show us how through ignorance and misunderstanding we have divided and sub-divided these religions and called themselves the children of God. To remove these religious prejudices, and bring about ideal unity between the races [and] nations, this cannot be done by governmental or civic laws. We should try to do away with all these deep rooted prejudices, and disharmony, and disunion amongst the people of the world.

My meaning is that we are in need of a torrent of pure, limpid water that will wash away this hatred and prejudice from our hearts and give us the nation of the sun of reality. I want to give you a great tidings of good news that we have found this torrent of water in the Orient, that seventy years ago Bahá'u'lláh, whose spiritual insight and divine mind have prepared such a removal of these religious prejudices and fanaticisms among the different religions, so that they have changes into the white clothing of the Sun of Truth.

Bahá'u'lláh has brought another religion, but it is the same religion that was taught [by] Christ and the Prophets, and this religion is the religion of unity and the principals of which are reasonable with science and perfectly in tune with the spirit of this age. It is an established fact that the civilized life of the nations of the world cannot run smoothly without religion, for religion works the inner life of man. But we must know what we mean by religion, we do not mean a bundle of creeds and superstitions because that will not influence the people in this age—it only drives away young men and women out of the temples of worship, for this is the age of science, of knowledge, and the century of enlightenment where the dark clouds of superstitions cannot stand before the [?] of light. Even if we find that the influence of traditions and creeds is still manifest in a certain denomination, its life is limited and its death is doomed. But, that religion which is spiritual and which is in accord with reason and science, it will advance civilization, it will give

consolation to the human hearts and engage itself in a [?] but not human service, but now [?] . We are therefore in need of a Divine religion, which is dynamic, and the religion of the Movement of Bahá'u'lláh, whose principals are for universal brotherhood, peace, a universal auxiliary language, and to establish a parliament of men, and for the equality for the men and women, and reestablish capital and labor. All these principals are the very life of this age the enlightenment of this modern civilization, and both you and we in the Orient have to work to meet what we call the realization of these teachings. Our aim is not for the people to call themselves Bahá'ís; that is a very small thing. Our aim is to want to help humanity in a practical way and usher in the era of practice.

When I left Persia a few months ago and traveled throughout the warring countries, I met so many young men who had become cripples as the result of this terrible war and it was a terrific sight to behold. In France I saw very few young men who had all their organs and who had escaped the war without any injury to their limbs. Some had lost their hands, others their feet, and limbs, and jaws, and ears, or some other part of their bodies. We read in the daily papers that as the result of this Great War and catastrophe, there are millions of children starving all over Europe. The Americans are working to restore the health of these children, which was brought as the result of this ignorance, envy, and greed.

Today we are therefore in need of a religion which will be forceful enough and powerful enough to do away with all these differences, and rivalries, and prejudices that are still existing today.

## Talk on History of Persia Location and Date Unspecified

It gives us the greatest joy and happiness to have travelled from the far-off land of the Orient to bring to you the message of love and brotherhood which is as old as the hills. Love is an old theme because it has been taught by all the prophets, all the poets, all the sages, and it is likewise the most joyous theme because in this age we hope it will be put into practice and mankind will live in accord with its law.

You are aware of the fact that Persia has been the cradle of ancient civilization, a civilization which in those days spread to many parts of the world. Universal history, especially the history of Greece and Rome, contains a large part of the chronicles of the life and events which transpired in Persia. At the time when the European inhabitants lived in the trees, and in the forests, and they were in a stage of savagery, and barbarism, the star of the civilization of Persia shone in the horizon of the world, and Persia led in many sciences and arts. Especially that part of the history of Persia recorded in the bible where Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king, took into seven years' captivity the children of Israel.

The two great monarchs of Persia gave the freedom to the Jews, not only to their private citizens, but to their prophets—who returned to the Holy land and built again the temple of the Lord. The king of Persia gave them back all the utensils of the temple which were brought by Nebuchadnezzar and issued an edict to all the governors of Asia Minor to supply the Jews with provisions for the building of the temple. For three thousand years the Jews enjoyed ample prosperity and happiness under the ages of the Persian kings. Many prophets appeared in their midst, wrote their books, prophesied, and had, in fact, one of the most progressive periods in their history.

Herodotus, the father of history, Xenophon, another historian of Greece, gave us the most wonderful pictures of the life of the ancient kings of Persia, their governmental administration and various other parts.

As the subject of the evening was the place of Persia in the family of Nations, these foregoing instances will show to you that at a time when the very word the family of nations was not created by European students of international law, Persia was one of the most

vital and progressive members of the family of nations in those olden days.

In those ages the state religion of Persia was Zoroastrianism a religion which cultivated the highest law of morality, rectitude, and righteousness. Later on these Zoroastrians became known under the common name of fire worshippers, because they sanctified the element of fire, but they looked upon the fire from a symbolic standpoint, believing that just as the fire is an element of warmth, likewise the fire of God, the state of divinity, is the center of all life and activity.

Just as the Christians sanctified or looked upon the cross as a symbol of sanctity similarly the Zoroastrians looked upon the fire as the symbol of light and life. One of the deepest and truest principles of Zoroaster in regard to the conduct of life, was that the salvation of man is dependant upon pure thought, pure word, and pure deeds. Before any humane society was organized in the West to protect the life of the animals, Zoroaster taught the respect for the animal life in teaching his disciples that they must not harm even an ant, because the ant is endowed with life, and life is precious and sacred.

Thus the Persians learned their moral and ethical lessons from these great teachers, were trained in the school of peace, of love, of comity, of conciliation, with all their neighbors and the rest of the world.

From the standpoint of science and philosophy **Abu-Ali-Seew**, was one of the greatest philosophers of Persia, whose book on medicine was translated in the middle ages into Latin, and studied in the universities of Europe, and today those books are found in all the great libraries of the civilized world. The Persian poets are famous throughout the world for the subtlety of their imagination, the beauty of their expression. Some of these poets have been Sadi, another is Hafiz the lyric poet of Persia, and one of the greatest works is that of Omar Kayam, translated by Fitzgerald. For the idealism, the beauty of thought, the depth of meaning contained in the poems of these ancient poets who lived nearly one thousand years ago were so forceful, so vitalizing, so beautiful that when you read them you think they are contemporaneous with your own time and place. Sadi says with regard to the brotherhood of man "all humanity is created from the same substance, because they are originally one. They are similar to the organs and members of one body. When one limb is pained and suffers, then all the other limbs of the body suffer automatically". One of the great kings of ancient Persia had built a most beautiful palace near Bagdad. The remains of this palace is still standing. When the civilization was built, one of the caliphs wanted to build a mansion for himself, but he did not know how to get materials for his own mansion. His minister told him that this building was built so strongly that no human power could destroy it, but the caliph did not believe it. He sent an army of

soldiers and they started to work for a long time, having no success whatever. So the minister said it will be written in the history of the world that the ancient king of Persia built and the Arabians came later on and tried to destroy, but they did not succeed. In brief, these few instances can give you an outline of what Persia was in the ancient time in the family of nations. In the last few ages, however, there entered into the life of Persia an element of weakness and retrogression which is based upon three causes:

1. The internal wars which were waged constantly among the various prophets and tribes, and these wars lead into weakness and retrogression and dilapidation. However, these constant wars eliminated the weak rivals and built a strong organized center, which finally was changed from despotism into limited monarchy: a Parliament was brought into being, the ministers responsible to the Parliament. The laws of the country changed and altogether the elements of constitutional life established.

2. The outside pressure brought against the Persian interests by some neighbors, the interference of those neighbors in the purely internal affairs of the country which led into many rivalries, many dissensions and strifes, but when those neighbors were occupied with their own affairs, the pressure was weakened and Persia gained greater field for the expression of her own ideas and ideals.

3. Religious prejudices, fanaticism and bigots ruling among the various classes and keeping the people apart from one another, thus not giving them a point of contact, but keeping them separate at all times. Although these religious prejudices were not confined to Persia, we find them cropping up in all the wars, but in those days they were intensified in that country. Although the state religion of the country was Mohammedanism we had likewise the Jews and the Christians, and the Zoroastrians, and religious dogmas different from one another and this difference in their creeds led them into tumult and confusion. There is a story about this religious prejudice which illustrates very simply about a priest, a Mohammedan priest, who was very orthodox in his own belief, got very sick and one day his wife went around and brought to him a physician who happened to be a Christian. The sick man noticed the difference in his garb and said "who is this man?", "This is a good physician who is going to give you medicine, and you are to be healed." She replies, "Ask thou not \_\_\_ of the fact that if I take the medicine of an infidel, I will go straight to hell, " \_\_\_ man moaned was interpreted to the physician and he said to tell him that whether he takes the medicine or not he will go to hell anyhow, but if he takes the medicine now he will go only a little later. So the man thought he would take the medicine and postpone his trip.

Inasmuch as the spirit of progress and the will of man are in the realm of spirituality and ethics, when this realm is darkened by the prejudices and misunderstandings you can easily understand how they are hampered and a stumbling block is in their pathway. In the

middle of the last century there appeared in Persia a great and most wonderful movement, spiritual and universal, the aim of which was to remove all these prejudices from amongst the people and establish in their midst order, love, unity and spiritual cooperation. The founder of this universal movement was called Bahá'u'lláh and the followers of this spiritual being are found in all parts of the world. His teachings and principles were so magnetic, so charged with the spiritual power that they had the power to remove, step by step, the darkness of these prejudices and enmities, and bring better relationship and closer affinity between the various parts. These different religions that were in a state of contention and misunderstandings came to realize that they are all the branches of one tree. Bahá'u'lláh explained to them in such a clear and unmistakable language that they must set aside their prejudices and become united in one power of truth. He explained clearly that religion must be made conducive to love and fellowship. If the ideals of religion lead mankind into strife and misunderstandings, then it is better to have no religion whatever, but have love, harmony and unity, because in this case no religion is better than a religion. Likewise He emphasized the matter of the correspondence of science and religion, saying that in the past a religion and science were looked upon as antagonistic, but in this age they must cooperate with one another and bestow their blessing upon the works of humanity, because religion and science are likened unto two wings for the bird of the soul. Bahá'u'lláh spiritualized many social laws of the day in initiating or in bringing within the scope of religion those laws which were looked upon merely as civic or governing. For example in the Bahá'í system of religion you will have the ideal of a universal people, the establishment of a Parliament, the readjustment of the conditions between capital and labor, the international language, all these laws the practice of which will make this world one. With the bringing of these laws by Bahá'u'lláh a new morality, a new movement, a new renaissance in the religions and idealistic life of Bahá'u'lláh was inaugurated. From this standpoint Persia from three points of view is at the dawn of a most glorious day. It is the twilight, the sun of progress, and the greatness of Persia has arisen from its horizon. If certain governments think that that their political situation demands that they must have a great navy or a great army to protect their interests, vital and imaginary, Persia has not that position, and therefore is free from this heavy taxation. In this age in which the world had become an arsenal, filled with the ideals of warfare and nationalism and the protection of national interest, a glorious sun of universal peace and brotherhood has dawned from the horizon of Persia, scattering its rays to all parts of the world. Therefore our concepts in this day revolve around the axes of peace, of love and of amity amongst all the nations of the world.

On one hand we observe science constantly inventing and making such destructive machinery, such infernal inventions which bring

havoc and disorder in their midst. The origin of these implements and destructive inventions is religious prejudices, national prejudices, racial prejudices. From time immemorial the world has been going through these various kinds of prejudices, suffering terribly because mankind could not live above and beyond these prejudices, and realize that they were not essential to the progress and development of humanity. It is a strange commentary on the nature of man that although for thousands of years prophets have come and taught the law of love, poets and philosophers have emphasized the necessity of love, they have written books and made laws, and yet mankind has constantly neglected them and the world is full of war and remorse of war. As long as the root of these prejudices thrives in the hearts of the people we cannot hope for lasting peace and unity. The thought of this age and the ideas of the statesmen of today revolve around the axes for the solution of this problem, how to find means, how to invent certain methods that may extirpate the root of these prejudices. There is a story about a Mohammedan Mullah. This was in Constantinople in the Mosque of Sophia. This Mullah had such a good time in his life that he had developed a very fat and sleek neck. One day he was praying in the mosque, a rich man entered and saw him praying. He looked around and saw the Mullah and thought he would play a little trick on him. He called a faker who was standing near the door of the Mosque, told him to slap the man on the back of the neck and gave him a dollar for doing it. The man took the dollar and gave a big slap on the man's neck. The priest looked back, and asked him why he had done it. He said "You looked so much like an old friend of mine that I thought you were he, and I was so glad to see him that I gave him a friendly tap. You will pardon me. I am sure you do not mind." The faker was going to leave, when the rich man called him back and said: "go do it again". He offered him another dollar and the man hit him hard. The rich man asked him to do it again, but he refused, so he offered him a pound of gold and for the third time he slapped him on the back of the neck. This time the Mullah became very angry and demanded to know why he was being subjected to this kind of treatment. The faker, "You see that man standing over there, well, as long as he has money and you have such a sleek, fat neck, you must submit to this beating. There is no escaping of it."

Now this story illustrated the fact that as long as there are the rulers of religion and national prejudice in the minds of the people, we will have always these strifes and this warfare and these troubles among men. The surest way to uproot these prejudices from the minds of the people is the spread of education. In the schools and colleges and universities, our system of education may be so broad, so all inclusive, that it may teach the oneness of aim and international mind. Thus the students may look upon the globe as their own home and upon the people as members of their own family. When the children are born they are like white pages but later on the teachers come and scrawl on these white pages what

they like or they dye the minds and the hearts of the children just we dye our clothing. In this new ideal movement taught by Bahá'u'lláh it is advised that the children may be so trained with such glorious spiritual truth and beauty and oneness, that when they come out of their university some one asking them what is your country, the answer- the world is my country; what is your religion, the answer – the religion of love, the religion of brotherhood; to what nation do you belong, answer – humanity. When our idealists and teachers realize the importance of such an international system of education, we are assured that in one age all the traces of prejudices, warfare and contention will be removed from the face of the earth.

Having travelled already a good deal, I have come in contact with the spirit of many schools and many educational institutions and have found that unfortunately the teachers are just doing the reverse of what has been proposed a few minutes ago. They are sowing the ideals of racial prejudices, of national pride, of the glory and power of one nation over another, that my nation is most glorious, my country is the most wonderful, my people are the most intelligent, and all the rest of the world if they are intelligent, are just a little below, and if they are educated, they have to come and be educated by us. Thus the seeds of future strife, future troubles are being sown in the minds of these students. We hope and pray that the seeds of this universal idealism may be sown in your hearts and minds and that they may sprout and grow and develop, changing the civilization of the earth, bringing the fruits of higher ideals, making the world one home, and the children of humanity the members of one family.

The lesson that comes out of Persia in this age is indeed the formation of a family of nations in the strictest meaning of the word that we have to look upon the world of humanity as we look upon the individual. Just as the railroads, the steamships, the telephone and telegraph lines, have united the distant parts of the world, likewise these ideal conditions of peace and amity and love bring the spiritual body of humanity so close together, that each member working in its own place for the salvation of the whole, a newer and higher expression of life is found.

## Q&A with Bahá'ís

### Location and Date Unspecified

**Doctor d'Evelyn:** We have the idea that Jináb-i-Fádil is officially opening the Houses of Spirituality.

**Jináb-i-Fádil:** We have not appointed any Houses of Spirituality in any cities. In most of the cities where we have been, they have had a Committee of Consultation. We did not have to appoint them.

**Ahmad Sohrab:** In certain places they came to Jináb-i-Fádil and asked him, what are the duties of the Committee of Consultation, what is the Bahá'í principle about it, and Jináb-i-Fádil explained to them these facts.

**D.D.:** Are there any limitations as to numbers:

**J.F.:** The minimum is 9, but the maximum may be as many as the constituents of the Assembly desires; not less than 9 but if they want to have more, it is all right.

**Mr. Hurlbut:** It is not necessarily in accordance to the Bahá'í numbers, such as 15, 19, or the like?

**J.F.:** It depends upon the number of the Bahá'ís in the city. When the Bahá'ís have reached a number, say, 20, or 30, or 150, or 200, then they will realize that they need to have a Committee of Consultation; then they will appoint 9, but they may increase it according to the desire of the Assembly; they may have, 12, or 13, or 15, or 19, or any number.

In the majority of cases they have more than 9, because we know very well, that it is not possible always for all the members to be present at a certain meeting, and if there is more than 9, then those who may not come, their places may be filled by the others of the Committee of Consultation.

There are one or two ways or lessons of consultation of the 9 or more members. First we try to have a unanimous consensus of opinion, and sifting all the opinions and bringing them down to the one which is most impersonal more general, more universal. Now if we cannot do this, then we abide by the law of the majority. If the majority vote for a certain fact, then the rest must sink their opinion into the majority and abide by that decision.

Suppose a matter needs greater discussion, the Chairman must give the latitude or the broader privilege to the members to expand that discussion so all sides may dwell upon it. However, it is necessary to abide either by the unanimous or the majority opinion.

Suppose, a unanimous vote is unattainable, then the majority vote must gain the ascendancy; then those who have had any view different from that of the majority must forget it in that very meeting and when they go out, they must uphold that majority opinion, saying it is our opinion, because they know the best has been accepted.

**Mr. Hurlbut:** You have traveled around in this country a good deal, Now, do you find any condition here in the conduct of the Assembly work that possibly wouldn't be in accord with the manner of conduct in Persia?

**J.F.:** The spirit is the same, and that is the spirit of love, of oneness, of consideration for the rights of others. There may be various impressions of that spirit according to the customs and manners of the country, but the ? is the same.

The works undertaken and accomplished by the Committees of Consultation in Persia are of different nature than those which you have. They have greater responsibilities. For example, one of the services that the Committees of Consultation in Persia have to deal with is, the matter of education of the children. They have Bahai schools, and must deal with them in a practical concrete way. You do not have that here.

Once a year the Central Committee of Consultation appoints a Special Committee of the Bahá'ís, not of their own members, to attend to the matter of Bahai Schools. This sub-committee send their annual report to this Central Committee and receive instructions from it.

**D.D:** We originally elected 9, and each one of those 9 was appointed Chairman of a sub-committee, and that Chairman had the power to add to the sub-committee from the general body of the Bahá'ís, so that by that means, and not complicating the Committee, each one was put into action.

**J.F.:** Another work of the Committee of Consultation is the matter of spreading the Cause, Teaching, and that is a very important one.

So you see the nature of the work that you have is totally different from that which the Persians have, and therefore, you won't have the exact parallel.

When any of the Bahá'ís fall into difficulties, the Committee of Consultation must attend to their cases, etc.

They have so much business to attend to that meetings are held, every two weeks, or three weeks, or week. We must correspond our Committee in accord with the exigencies of the place.

The Chairman is called the servant of the Committee.

**Mr. Hurlbut:** In this country, we have a complex political situation. Abdul Baha says we must engage in constructive politics, but does it bar any one from entering into politics at all?

J.F. This matter of politics cannot be interpreted from the standpoint of ? ...

The Master means that we must not take part in revolutionary things, those movements which are revolutionary; for example, there may be a Bolshevik movement against the Government; now the Bahá'ís should not interfere with that. Or in Persia, there may be a movement against the established order, the Bahá'ís should hold aloof from it. In brief, the Bahá'ís must cooperate with the Government, the established Government, and not oppose it.

**Mrs. Frankland:** Isn't it possible not to call it 'House of Spirituality, but Consultation Committee –

**J.F.:** You see in Persia they have two names, either Committee of Consultation, or Spiritual Assembly. They do not call it House of Spirituality. This has been a bone of contention in this country, and you need not call your Committee House of Spirituality. In Washington, they call it Assembly of Consultation.

"Committee of Consultation" was adopted.

**D.D.:** Then you approve of this Committee?

**J.F.:** How did you elect this Committee?

**D.D.:** From the body of Bahá'ís at large.

**J.F.:** Then that is the official body of the Assembly. What is the use of another election?

**D.D.:** We wanted to ask you the length of the term of office.

**J.F.:** This again is another exigency of the time. That you should yourselves decide; one year, two years, but do not give them long imprisonments!

**D.D.:** One other point, and that is with regard to the Feast. As an Assembly, we have found from actual experience and from the exigencies of the times, that to have a feast every 19 days was not practical, and we wondered if we would be permitted to have one here, an Official Assembly Feast, once a month, upon a fixed date, so that all the friends would know.

**J.F.:** The Feasts are held in the East every 19 days. Is it difficult for the Friends to come here every 19 days?

**Mr. Ioas:** How should we arouse the interest of the people?

**J.F.:** Make the Feast interesting, so that everyone will come. Have nice talks, music, beautiful singing, etc. We must make the meetings attractive, have good talks, lovely music, and splendid lectures.

**Mrs. Cooper:** How are the Feasts conducted in Persia?

**J.F.:** They hold it differently, according to the conditions of Persia. They do not have it the way you do here. But they give great importance to holding the Great Bahá'í Feasts, like the Feast of Ridván, Birth of the Báb, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Day, etc. They have a special Committee for having the 19 day Feasts.

**D.D.:** Are we then to conform to the 19 day Feast, whether the people come or not?

**J.F.:** Yes.

**Mrs. Cline:** Are the Feasts for the Believers only?

**J.F.:** For the Bahá'ís and the interested ones. Those who already have become interested or attracted, that know something about the Cause. They can come here and become friendly. It is not strictly for died-in-the-wool, Bahá'ís. If you bring outsiders in such meetings who know something of the Cause, it is all right.

If you have the 19-day Feast, part of your Committee should arrange a program for it, and certain people be had to speak, somebody to sing, somebody to do something else. Then you present this program to the friends, which may be attractive and interesting. Everybody may enjoy it. Every 19 days.

The more we have Bahá'í meetings where the Friends come together and associate with one another and enjoy each ones companionship, the closer we become.

**J.F.:** There are three kinds of meetings. One meeting is this Committee of Consultation. Naturally in such a meeting, only the members are present to discuss and consult with one another about the affairs of the Cause. There other Bahá'ís do not come, because the members of the Committee are their representatives.

In such a meeting, naturally, all discussions revolve around the Cause, all about the Movement and we should see to it that nothing else comes in, because that would naturally hinder the work.

Now suppose the Committee of Consultation come together. They talk about the promotion of the Cause, of the MashrakElAzkar, about the inner working of the Movement, but they should establish greater unity and love between the other members of the Assembly, etc. If they know that there are two Bahá'ís who have certain ill-feelings against one another, they will try to remove that, to bring perfect understanding between them.

Again, they should consider raising funds for the Teaching, or for the MashrakElAzkar.

The working of this Committee of Consultation revolve all around the Principles and the Spreading of the Cause.

The second kind of meeting, is Group meetings of the Bahá'ís. They come together to study, to perfect themselves in the Teachings, to read the Communes and Prayers. Some answer questions, or some of the Friends speak. This is not a matter of Teaching the Cause, but it is a meeting of teaching ourselves, to come in closer association with one another, and in that all the Bahá'ís are welcome.

The third kind of meeting is the Public Meeting, the Teaching Meeting, and here is the place where we must give lectures, and our lectures must be so delivered; they must contain those elements that may attract the people.

Suppose we have in the public meeting some one who wants to speak on education, What are the principles of modern education, and should they be applied to our children. We should permit him. He may not mention the Bahá'í Cause, but Education in all its branches is a Bahá'í Principle, and knowing that will give us greater knowledge of the Bahá'í subject. Let us suppose another one would like to speak on the better understanding between the Japanese and the Californians; or on better understanding between the White and the Colored, or the East and the West. He may not mention the name Bahá'í, but he is spreading the spirit of the Bahá'í Cause which is Unity and Love.

Or someone might like to talk on some subject which does not belong to our principles. These are the things the Bahá'ís try to get away from.

Here in this third meeting, if some one wants to give an address on any of these constructive principles of the Bahá'í Movement, in which he is interested, or one speaking on Universal Auxiliary Language, etc., we are very glad to welcome him.

Question. Is this just in this public meeting, or not.

**J.F.:** In this public meeting, which is for the Public, and the Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís. Naturally, it is a public meeting the Bahá'í is the Chairman, and he will also talk about the Bahá'í Cause in ending.

Question. If you open up your Bahai public meeting to the remarks of anyone, you will have the meeting broken up, perhaps.

**J.F.:** We do not invite those who are not in accord with our principles. In New York, Mr. and Mrs. Deuth, have the Library. They wanted to teach, but they wanted to bring in the outsiders. Now as

long as there was only the matter of presenting the Cause, people wouldn't come. The Bahá'í speakers were not known. Mr. So and So. Nobody has heard of him. So they went and invited those speakers who are working along universal lines, universal principles, education, art, etc. So they invited now and then one of these great lecturers, and his name brings crowds to the Bahá'í Library. When he has given his message or lecture, then the Bahá'í speaker gives a lecture, and links the Speakers talk with his talk.

It depends upon the topic in which he deals. Suppose he speaks on Disarmament, or Universal Peace, or a Universal Auxiliary language, or any of these broad principles. This is for the Public meeting. For example, in this Race Convention that the Bahá'ís are going to hold in Washington, they are going to have outside speakers, from both races, but the subject will be along the lines of the Bahá'í principles, and to bring better union. They are not Bahá'ís, but will speak on our subject.

In the last two conventions we had in New York the Committee invited outside speakers and the members were very much pleased.

**J.F.:** We must take hold of the means that will spread the Cause. Now what means will spread the Cause, and do not go to the extremes in any way. Stay in the middle ground. Now we should protect the Cause and not let these substitutes of the facts come into the Cause. On the other hand, make the Cause always attractive, by putting our minds in contact with the minds of the people who are working along our line.

## Qurratu'l-'Ayn

### Date and Location Unspecified

In our last talk we left off where Qurratu'l-'Ayn was taken prisoner to Tíhran. There were two men who accompanied her. One was a believer and the second was interested in the Cause, but not a believer, and both took the greatest care of her until she arrived safely.

Bahá'u'lláh had entrusted a large sum of money to the second escort,-the one who was not a Bahá'í – to be carried in his saddle bag. Bahá'u'lláh gave him gold and silver pieces, and told him to put the silver in the bottom and the gold on top. The man reasoned that it would be better to put the silver on top, in case robbers attacked him, hoping if they did so, they would take the silver and leave the gold. When they reached Tíhran, Qurratu'l-'Ayn thanked him, took the money and placed it under a tree in the garden. Then she expressed great delight for his service and told him to return to Kazvin. She took nine handfuls of the money without looking, and gave it to the man. Of course, it was all silver and the man was very sorry that he had not obeyed what Bahá'u'lláh had told him to do. Qurratu'l-'Ayn sensed his disappointment and said, "Never mind! you will have much prosperity in the future. This money is only for the expense of the trip, and God will bless you."

While he was absent the enemies were fermenting trouble against the Bahá'ís, and knowing this man was friendly to them, sought for him, but it happened miraculously that as soon as he returned, the people ceased searching and troubling the friends, and he realized what Bahá'u'lláh and Qurratu'l-'Ayn told him was true. Later he became very rich and used his wealth for the Cause of God.

Qurratu'l-'Ayn continued to live a number of days in the mansion of Bahá'u'lláh and only a few knew of her presence there. They kept her presence secret because her enemies were searching for her.

During those days there were many meetings of great importance and spirituality in that mansion, the friends sitting at the feet of Bahá'u'lláh and he teaching them new truths. One day there was a meeting at the home of Bahá'u'lláh . They were all gathered there, and there was present a new very learned man. He was discoursing on Philosophy, giving proofs and demonstrations concerning the

validity of the Bahá'í Cause. Qurratu'l-'Ayn listened for a while and then rose with fiery eloquence and said: "This is the day of deeds. If thou art a man, bring forth action. All these things are words, give us some results."

This shows holy practical Qurratu'l-'Ayn always was, and how her mind ran to concrete services, rather than to Theological discussions. Another time the friends of God held a convention on the plains of Badasht in Mazandarani. All the leaders and important friends had gathered, together with Bahá'u'lláh and Qurratu'l-'Ayn. Bahá'u'lláh had called together the spiritually minded men of the Cause, in that early time, in order to consult on the practical methods of putting into practice the new principles.

Of course you must realize that women had up to that time never taken part in meetings. The veil was still worn and it was almost impossible for women to appear in the presence of men. These men, though they accepted the Cause, still clung to their old traditions. While they were consulting, suddenly Qurratu'l-'Ayn entered, and without her veil. It was like a bomb dropped in the midst of these undeveloped, unripe Bahá'ís. They were astonished, thoroughly excited, and some of them even ran out. (This was all before the declaration of Bahá'u'lláh, it was at the dawn of the revelation. The darkness of night was still clinging to their thoughts. Now the sun is in the meridian of the heavens, and the world is aflame.)

When these friends saw Qurratu'l-'Ayn taking such a radical step, there was great confusion and discussion, taking sides for and against her. While their emotions were being swayed back and forth and the meeting was in a turmoil, Bahá'u'lláh whispered to one of the friends, to chant the chapter from the Koran about the Resurrection:

"The old conditions have passed away and the new conditions have been set up. The old ideas have passed away and the new principles have appeared."

When this convention ended, Qurratu'l-'Ayn started on a long teaching tour from city to city. She was always followed by spies hunting for a pretext to accuse her. At last she was taken into custody. She was brought back to Tíhran and imprisoned in a room on top of the house, which one could only reach her climbing a ladder. She had to ascend by the ladder and then it was removed so that no one could reach her. Qurratu'l-'Ayn was a prisoner in this upper cell nearly four years. This house was the home of the Mayor of Tíhran, and his family became interested in Qurratu'l-'Ayn and used to invite her to come down and take part in their social affairs. At one time there was a wedding of the son, and Qurratu'l-'Ayn was invited to appear among the guests. A wedding day is a day of merrymaking and joy, not a religious festival. There was music, dancing, fun, but when Qurratu'l-'Ayn appeared with her majestic

carriage and spiritual face, they looked upon her with awe and asked her to speak. She spoke on the justice of the Cause, inciting the women to come out and assert themselves. They were so entranced by her talk that they forgot the rest of the entertainment.

One of the last incidents of her life was her visit to the Shah of Persia. He was an imposing despot. He had heard the most interesting things of Qurratu'l-'Ayn, of what a magnetic personality she had, that she had some magical powers even, and could win the hearts of her enemies. The Shah was so interested that he sent for her. He sat surrounded with all the pomp and ceremonies of his position. Any man entering his presence had to bow before many people before he reached the Shah. His mother sat at his side. Qurratu'l-'Ayn walked in, straight as an arrow, and bowed to no one. Before she had been presented, she started right in and told him that it was his duty to wake up and emancipate women. He, as the Father of his country should take the lead in these things. The Shah was dumbfounded, he could not speak. His mother feared that he would be converted into a Bahá'í. She called to the guards to remove Qurratu'l-'Ayn, before she would have him converted in five minutes more, and that would be a terrible calamity to the Kingdom.

When she was in prison the jailers could not let her have paper and ink, but she so enthusiastic and so anxious to convey her thoughts to her sisters outside, that she used a stick from the broom and the juice of cheese to write. She wrote stirring poems, divine ideas, eloquent verses, and printed them with blood from her body on linen torn from her clothes, and sent them to the friends.

These poems are today chanted throughout the East. Up to the year 1852 Qurratu'l-'Ayn was held in the hands of the enemy. Her influence was so great that the authorities decided it was better to kill her. On the day appointed, the first man they called, refused to do it. A second man was brought, who was drunk, and he strangled her by forcing a handkerchief in her mouth. She gave up her life and her spirit ascended to the Kingdom. Although her body is turned to dust, her spirit is alive in the millions of women throughout Persia. Her poems, recitations, ideas, are alive, even her enemies are singing verses in their gatherings today.

You have probably read Barney Dreyfus' "God's Heroes". This is a play based on Qurratu'l-'Ayn's life.

This is a symposium of her life, but one could write a very large book on the subject. You will find few equal to her in the history of the world. A woman of culture, a poetess, with beauty and insight, physical charm, of the best heritage, yet willing to sacrifice all this, and her life, for the sake of the truth, and the enlightenment of the world of humanity. She was so intrepid, so firm and courageous, that when she first heard this truth, she left her husband, home and children and entered the broad arena of sacrifice and service.

\*\* on page 5

It is the cycle covenanted by all past prophets in respective times and periods. It is the epoch of the diffusion of the instructions, and the radiant ideals of Bahá'u'lláh . The divine words celestial utterances of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are rays from the sun of reality. When one single ray, one single word is directed to a prayerful heart, and that heart is a clear mirror, it reflects back one thousand rays. His Holiness, Bahá'u'lláh gave to 'Abdu'l-Bahá the title "Mystery of God".

What is the Mystery of God?

The consummation of the ages. For we are living in a day which is the day of the center of the Covenant. \*\*

All believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One of all the sacred books. All the prophets and divine manifestations had fore- told the coming of the Blessed Perfection. Bahá'u'lláh is the promised One of all the Ancient of Days.

'Abdu'l-Bahá has embodied in himself the essences, mysteries and spiritual aroma of Bahá'u'lláh , who was the culmination of the prophetic cycles of all past history. It is for the revelation of this divine Arcana in the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, that the teaching of his Heavenly Father are promulgated throughout the East and West. Often Bahá'u'lláh to impress the friends of the great station of 'Abdu'l-Bahá would say "We are living in a palace, revealing divine tablets, while 'Abdu'l-Bahá toils and moils in the hot town of 'Akká, relieving us of all trouble and hardship, and indeed carrying our loads on his back."

Prayer is founded on reality. When prayer is the utterance of an attracted heart, all the ears of the universe will hear it and answer, and the answer will come from the Kingdom. Especially in 'the case of Bahá'ís, those whose souls and hearts are devoid of all natural and selfish interests. No doubt with so spiritual an estate, prayers will be answered by the Almighty.

The more one concentrates their attention on the life and teaching of Bahá'u'lláh , the greater will be the confirmation and enkindlement. What a great privilege it is to live in this divine age. What a heavenly opportunity it is to live in this celestial period. We must all appreciate it and be thankful. This is the day prophesied by the prophets and gods, who looked to this time with longing, wistful hearts. Many prayed-that they might live at the consummation of the ages. For we are living in a day which is the day of the center of the Covenant. \*\*

All believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One of all the sacred books. All the prophets and divine manifestations had fore- told the coming of the Blessed Perfection. Bahá'u'lláh is the promised One of all the Ancient of Days.

'Abdu'l-Bahá has embodied in himself the essences, mysteries and spiritual aroma of Bahá'u'lláh , who was the culmination of the

prophetic cycles of all past history. It is for the revelation of this divine Arcana in the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, that the teachings of his Heavenly Father are promulgated throughout the East and West. Often Bahá'u'lláh to impress the friends of the great station of 'Abdu'l-Bahá would say "We are living in a palace, revealing divine tablets, while 'Abdu'l-Bahá toils and moils in the hot town of Acca, relieving us of all trouble and hardship, and indeed carrying our loads on his back."

'Abdu'l-Bahá was the target for receiving arrows of all kinds of opposition, behind which target Bahá'u'lláh was safe and secure.

While living in 'Akká, 'Abdu'l-Bahá associated with the Governor, secretaries and the great Turkish authorities. When the people heard 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words, when they witnessed his glory the people said, "If the son is so great, how much greater the father must be." In this way the Cause was spread.

Were it not for 'Abdu'l-Bahá's magnetic powers, his resourcefulness, love, mercy, solicitude for the fallen, the foundation of the Cause would not be established in the world. Bahá'u'lláh called 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Master', and whenever the Bahá'ís called the other sons of Bahá'u'lláh Master, he would stop them and say, "There is only one Master". Those who are well versed in sacred books and read where Christ said "the Father is in me and I in Him", have always wondered at its meaning and have written volumes about it.

Those who have seen Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá together, can get a faint glimpse of this sacred mystery. How the Father and Son are united and harmonize in the essentials of divinity. Not alone were Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá alike in customs, writings and spiritual aspirations, but even their bodies and voices were identical,

One of the marvelous powers of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was that he could attend to many duties at the same time and give the concentrated thought to each that a genius gives to his own line. Sometimes when he would be entertaining guests and speaking on widely different subjects he would keep a half dozen secretaries busy taking dictation on subjects going to all parts of the world, then return to his guests and take up the conversation where he left off and keep this up for hours at a time, till his secretaries were all worn out.

### QURRATU'L-'AYN LECTURE, No.2.

Qurratu'l-'Ayn was an incomparable peerless woman the like of which you will rarely find in the annals of mankind. The name Qurratu'l-'Ayn means Consolation of the Eyes, and was the title which belonged to her because in knowledge, perspicacity and flow of soul and spirit she was unique among the women of her country.

She was, indeed, a great, enlightened woman, who shone in the beginning of the Bahá'í movement, eighty years ago, and dawned upon the horizon of the knowledge of truth at that time.

Our historical review in the last lecture brought us to a point where Qurratu'l-'Ayn took a journey to Karbala, and where she was persecuted by the enemies and then returned home and was persecuted by the family, and somewhat imprisoned in her own home. Her father, uncles and husband belonged to the clerical community of Persia; they were theologians and metaphysicians. Her elder uncle was powerful because of his exalted station in that community. Her great uncle was the center of veneration and respect among the Mohammedan laity because of being a religious leader and holding an important position, and was a great enemy to the Báb, and also to Qurratu'l-'Ayn because she taught and upheld the Bábí principles.

These dramatic events transpired at the time when the Báb, in 1844, was imprisoned in the extreme end of Western Persia, and was held a prisoner away from the people and out of connection with the followers. Although his jailers and custodians were extremely severe, and tried in every way to prevent the followers from seeing him, nevertheless, his friends traveled from every direction, north, east, south and west, to the castle where he was imprisoned, and through many ingenious ways met him, received his blessings and returned. The apostles and disciples of the Báb who belonged to the ranks of the Mohammedan Clergy were busy in every way, heralding the new day and the coming of new ideas. While Qurratu'l-'Ayn was incarcerated in her home by her own family, one of the disciples of the Báb, one of the letters of the living appeared in the city of Qazvin, where he started a class in Bábí teachings, although outwardly teaching the Mohammedan ideas, in reality he was spreading abroad the universal teachings of the Báb. The long-suffering, patience and fortitude of Qurratu'l-'Ayn in teaching the Cause and the spreading by this follower of the Báb of the teachings, the fire of opposition was inflamed by the Mohammedan orthodoxy.

The uncle of Qurratu'l-'Ayn, found this the psychological instant to rise in the mosque and speak against the Báb, and started an increasing opposition. Soon these inflamed speeches created animosity in the hearts against the Bábís, so they were scoffed at and, derided and persecuted wherever they were found. The fanatical mob arose, took the Bábí teacher and a disciple of his, and before the house of Qurratu'l-'Ayn inflicted, punishment on the soles of their feet, (bastinade) and left them. Another Bábí was beaten almost to death and carried to the house of the Governor. And together with another follower one foot of each was placed in logs and beaten mercilessly. You can easily imagine how Qurratu'l-'Ayn in her own home heard these things and how she felt toward her own relatives, when they persecuted friends so cruelly. Although

her relatives tried in every way to prevent her leaving the house, yet she managed to meet friends in another house where the pilgrims to and from the Báb congregated. They enheartened and encouraged each other and thus gained wisdom and strength.

Two difficulties arose for Qurratu'l-'Ayn, one within and one without. The internal difficulty, if one may call it a difficulty, was that Qurratu'l-'Ayn through her perception and acute Divine sense or instinct, felt that the day had come for the end of the old dispensations, dogmas and creeds and although she had no direct instruction from the Báb, she, herself, inaugurated these changes in religion and spread them abroad. This was in the nascent stage of the Bahá'í Cause and the time had not come for the Báb to start the innovation, because the hearts of the children of humanity were not ready, but Qurratu'l-'Ayn felt it instinctively to be the time and started it. One of the pillars of superstition is the veiling of Mohammedan women and the non-association with men, but Qurratu'l-'Ayn with the greatest courage rent asunder the veil and came out heroically to mingle with men. There were many of the friends who were strong and sincere, but having heard and read nothing to this effect from the Báb, they were shocked and exasperated by Qurratu'l-'Ayn, so they arose and blamed her and called her a heretic, and one who had gone against the center of the movement. They excommunicated her and expelled her from their midst. Then it occurred to them to ask the Báb what he thought about it. They sent long petitions against her to the Báb, by a special messenger. On the way the messenger met a great Bábí leader and told him of their great troubles in the movement. The great man said: "I believe Qurratu'l-'Ayn is right though I have no authority for saying so. When the Báb heard of it he wrote a wonderful epistle, praising her for her extraordinary qualities and calling her "the Pure One". In one of her poems about the Báb she says:

"The rays of the sun of thy face are spread throughout the world,  
Why hast thou hidden behind the veils of thy glory? Come out and  
let us worship thee."

When these glorious epistles of the Báb arrived, all thoughts and hesitations of the friends disappeared, and her greatness loomed larger in the estimation of those who had judged her. This was the internal trouble that she had to surmount.

The uncle of Qurratu'l-'Ayn used to curse the Báb and S who was a great forerunner of the Báb in public meetings. In the audience was one of the disciples of this man, and he could not stand it, so one morning when the uncle was in the mosque praying, this disciple decided to kill him. Remember, this man who killed the uncle was not a follower of the Cause but of S but because S had foretold the coming of the Báb, the whole city rose, blaming it on the friends of the Báb and told Qurratu'l-'Ayn it was so. The mob attacked the homes of the Bábis, pillaged and imprisoned them, put

chains around their heads and necks, and decided Qurratu'l-'Ayn must be removed to a stricter prison and greater confinement. The father of Qurratu'l-'Ayn had first held the mob off from his house and tried to save her, but was overcome, the mob rushed in and took her and two other women and carried them before the Governor of the town. The Governor questioned them minutely about the murder. Qurratu'l-'Ayn with greatest persuasion and eloquence explained to him that it was not from their community. The Governor was dissatisfied and branded the women with her, to make her tell a different story. During the branding Qurratu'l-'Ayn turned her face to Heaven and prayed. The Court of the Governor was filled with curious spectators, all looking eagerly at this terrible act and just as the burning iron touched the hand, a tumult arose in the back of the crowd saying the murderer had been found. The murderer had heard what they were going to do with the women, and his conscience made him confess and ask to be taken to the Governor's house. This self-confession seemed to the people so unheard of that they were incredulous, and they said, could it be possible that a murderer would confess, and he said, "If you do not believe it, I will dig up the dagger for you to see." He showed them where to find the dagger and they were convinced, yet the enemies of Qurratu'l-'Ayn were still persecuting her, inwardly and outwardly.

The murderer was not the only one to be taken away, a number of the friends were taken, too —to the Capitol of Persia, for several months, and finally command came from the Court to murder quite a number of them. The relatives and family of Qurratu'l-'Ayn hated her so much that they tried in every way to persecute her and her followers. The Governor set Qurratu'l-'Ayn free, but ordered her to live in her own home, and not go out. In her home she lived a long time, under close guard all the time. They feared the food would be poisoned, so some of the friends in the guise of servants took special food to her. She was in that house in close confinement until released by Bahá'u'lláh.

Bahá'u'lláh wrote a letter to Qurratu'l-'Ayn from Tíhran to Qazvin; sent it by special messenger who brought a horse and left it outside the wall of the town. They entered at sunset and were taken stealthily to Qurratu'l-'Ayn in the middle of the night. She flew like lightning on the horse to the Capitol I had many hairbreadth escapes, getting past the bazaars, the clergy and guard. God protected her from each end she left the town, safe and free. With these two horsemen she traveled day and night until she reached Tíhran. It was with the greatest joy she stood in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and attained the culmination of the desire of her heart.