

Some Answered Questions, Universal Cycles

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Translated. Original Persian



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The Power and Perfections of the Divine Manifestations



Question: How far do the powers and the perfections of those Thrones of truth, the Manifestations of God, extend, and what are the limits of Their influence?

Answer: Consider the world of existence, that is, the material creation. The solar system is wrapped in darkness. Within its circumference, the sun is the centre of all light, and all the associated planets revolve around it and are illumined by the outpourings of its bounty. The sun is the source of life and light, and is the cause of the growth and development of all things within the solar system. Were the bounty of the sun to cease, no living thing could continue to exist therein: All things would grow dark and be reduced to naught. It is therefore clear and evident that the sun is the centre of all light and the source of the life of all things in the solar system.

In like manner, the holy Manifestations of God are the focal Centres of the light of truth, the Wellsprings of the hidden mysteries, and the Source of the effusions of divine love. They cast Their effulgence upon the realm of hearts and minds and bestow grace everlasting upon the world of the spirits. They confer spiritual life and shine with the splendour of inner truths and meanings. The enlightenment of the realm of thought proceeds from those Centres of light and Exponents of mysteries. Were it not for the grace of the revelation and instruction of those sanctified Beings, the world of souls and the realm of thought would become darkness upon darkness. Were it not for the sound and true teachings of those Exponents of mysteries, the human world would become the arena of animal characteristics and qualities, all existence would become a vanishing illusion, and true life would be lost. That is why it is said in the Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word"; that is, it was the source of all life.



TRANSLATION



Now consider the pervasive influence of the sun upon all earthly beings, and behold what visible effects and outcomes result from its proximity or remoteness, its rising or setting. At one time it is autumn, at another it is spring. At one time it is summer, at another it is winter. When the sun crosses the equinox, the life-giving spring appears in all its splendour, and when it reaches the summer solstice, the fruits attain their full maturity, grains and plants yield their produce, and earthly things attain the plenitude of their growth and development.

In like manner, when the holy Manifestation of God, Who is the Sun of the world of creation, casts His splendour upon the world of hearts, minds, and spirits, a spiritual springtime is ushered in and a new life is unveiled. The power of the matchless springtide appears and its marvellous gifts are beheld. Thus you observe that, with the advent of each of the Manifestations of God, astonishing progress was attained in the realm of human minds, thoughts, and spirits. Consider, for example, the progress that has been achieved in this divine age in the world of minds and thoughts—and this is only the beginning of the dawn! Ere long you will witness how these renewed bounties and heavenly teachings have flooded this darksome world with their light and transformed this sorrow-laden realm into the all-highest Paradise.

Were we to fully explain the influence and bounties of each of the Manifestations of God, it would take a very long time. Ponder and reflect upon it yourself in order to grasp the truth of the matter.