

Some Answered Questions, Healing without Medicine

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Translated. Original Persian



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Healing without Medicine

Question: Some heal the sick by spiritual means—that is, without medicine. How is this?

Answer: A detailed explanation of this matter was provided earlier. If you have not fully grasped it, we will repeat it so that you may. Know that there are four kinds of treatment and healing without medicine. Two are due to material causes and two to spiritual ones.

As to the two material kinds, one is due to the fact that in reality both health and sickness are contagious. The contagiousness of disease is rapid and violent, whereas that of health is exceedingly slow and weak. If two bodies are brought into contact with each other, it is certain that microbial particles will be transmitted from one to the other. In the same way that disease is rapidly and violently transmitted from one body to another, the strong health of a healthy person may also alleviate a very slight condition in a sick person. Our meaning is that the contagiousness of disease is rapid and violent, while that of health is very slow and of limited effect, and it is only in minor ills that this modest effect can be felt. In such cases, the strength of the healthy body overcomes the slight weakness of the sick body and brings about its health. This is one kind of healing.

Another kind of healing is through the force of bodily magnetism, where the magnetic force of one body affects another body and brings about the cure. This force, too, has only a slight effect. Thus someone may lay his hand upon the head or stomach of a patient and perchance the latter will benefit from this. Why? Because the effect of the magnetism, and the impression made upon the psyche of the patient, may dispel the disease. But this effect is also very slight and weak.



TRANSLATION

The two other kinds are spiritual; that is, the means of healing is a spiritual power. One is when a healthy person focuses his whole attention upon a sick person, and the latter in turn fully expects to be healed through the spiritual power of the former and is wholly convinced thereof, to such an extent that a strong connection is created between their hearts. Should the healthy individual then bend every effort to heal the sick one, and should the latter have full faith that health will be attained, an excitement may be produced in his nerves from these soul-to-soul influences and bring about the cure. So, for example, when a sick person is suddenly given the good news that his most ardent wish and desire has been realized, a nervous excitement may result that will entirely dispel the ailment. In the same way, when a terrifying event suddenly comes to pass, such an excitement may be produced in the nerves of a healthy person that he immediately falls ill. The cause of the illness is not a material thing, for that person has not ingested or come into contact with anything: The nervous excitement alone has brought about the illness. Likewise, the sudden realization of a most cherished desire may impart such joy as to excite the nerves and restore health.

In brief, a complete and perfect connection between the spiritual physician and the patient—that is, one where the physician concentrates his entire attention on the patient and where the patient likewise concentrates all his attention on the spiritual physician and anticipates healing—causes a nervous excitement whereby health is regained. But this is effective only to a point and not in all cases. For instance, should someone contract a grave illness or be physically injured, these means will neither dispel the illness nor soothe and heal the injury—that is, these means have no sway over grave illnesses unless assisted by the constitution of the patient, for a strong constitution will often ward off an illness. This is the third kind of healing.

But the fourth kind is when healing is brought about through the power of the Holy Spirit. This depends neither upon physical contact, nor upon sight, nor even upon presence: It is not dependent upon any condition. Whether the disease be mild or severe, whether there be contact between the bodies or not, whether a connection be established between patient and physician or not, whether the patient be present or not, this healing takes place through the power of the Holy Spirit.