

# Spiritual Education

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



## Spiritual Education

The following letter was written by the compiler of these notes and narrates the unique incident of 'Abdu'l-Bahá blessing an unborn babe. The letter was written to the baby upon receiving the news of its birth some months later, in the Isle of Corsica. The beautiful and simple incident of the blessing is one of the many personal episodes that happened during 'Abdu'l-Bahá's stay in Paris, that came under the observation of the writer.

The mother of this baby, an American girl, an old-time friend of the writer, had gone abroad to study and had married the Count d'Ornano of Corsica. This letter is published at the request of a number of the friends among the mothers and is of great significance showing the effect of the new creation on the new race.

New York, June 19, 1913.

Dear Baby Ursula: I am glad you arrived in due time and had a safe journey into this world. Wasn't it strange that I heard the fairy flutter of the wings of your arrival? I was in London that night and I suddenly took my pen in hand and wrote your mother that I had a feeling that you were about to make your appearance in the arena of existence. A letter from her, received today, assures me that I was right — you were born that very night. This makes us very good friends, don't you think so, Baby Ursula? But there, how foolish of me to expect you to answer in the



ORIGINAL

crude jargon of words. We will speak in a language of the spirit — the language in which you saluted me that night in London when you were on your way to Corsica.[pg 91]

But how you did surprise us! We were all expecting a boy. In fact, we constantly referred to you a Napoleon IV, on account of your island home being the birthplace of the great general. But my heart leaped with joy when I read this at the end of your mother's letter: "Baby Ursula sends caresses to Aunt Isabel and says you will see her at the head of a greater army than Napoleon ever led."

Ah, how I wish I could look at the world through your eyes! What a blessed privilege is yours. You are the Joan of Arc of a new era, for you were blessed by the prince of peace.

It was about five or six months after your mother first dreamed of you when I met her in Paris whither she had journeyed from Corsica to arrange for your little wardrobe. I had been longing to see her for many years and especially did I desire to meet her at that particular time, for 'Abdu'l-Bahá was there and I longed to take her to him. I knew your mother in the old San Francisco days and my mother loved your mother. The very day she died she spoke of this love.

In Paris I was yearning more than I can tell you to see her, when one day God led me to the American Express and there she sat. The next day we went together to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and he blessed you both.

I wish I could give you a picture of him as he sat in the inner chamber, with his head thrown back, the world-weary look kindling into a fire[pg 92] as we acquainted him with our purpose. He smiled a welcome and seated your mother opposite him.

I do not remember exactly what she said, but it was something to this effect — that she hadn't much hope of the present generation, but that she represented the future generation and she craved a blessing. I copied down what 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, so that you could keep it always. He was so happy when he spoke of you that his face fairly rippled with smiles.

"Your child," he said, "will have extraordinary capacity. It will be a friend of God. Rear it in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Rest assured your child will be assisted by the divine concourse and

through this assistance it will exhibit a universal consciousness — for this cause encompasses the west and the east and children born under these conditions in this day will have the advantages of the universal illumination. Today some children are called prodigies, but the inheritors of this cause will attain to a degree that the others, even though educated in the best schools and with every advantage, know nothing of.

“Children blessed in this way before they are born are of the new race. I was born in Persia and while I nursed with my mother’s milk I received truth. When a little child my first words were, ‘Yá-Bahá’u’l-Abhá!’”

When the master said this, though distanced from him by the veils of flesh and immaturity you heard him, for your mother told me afterwards that you leaped as though in answer to his voice.

[pg 93]

With one of his divine smiles the beloved of the worlds raised his hands in blessing. His parting words were:

“I will pray for you and your child always, of this rest assured!”



Both in Europe and America I have spoken in churches of all denominations, in the Jewish synagogues and universities, even addressing a club of agnostics in San Francisco. Thanks be to God, to Bahá’u’lláh, I have nowhere encountered obstacles. Everywhere I affirmed the message of Christ and to the free thinkers I demonstrated the existence of God. Speaking to them, I said:

There are four means of knowledge. Among scientists and philosophers a method of attaining knowledge is through the senses, principally through observation. Light shows us that light exists. Reality is limited to the perceptible thing; all that is not perceptible is subject to doubt.

Among the ancient philosophers the infallible way to knowledge was through logic. The different schools of logic weighed everything in the scales of cold scholasticism. As to religious people their criterion has ever been the sacred text which must be accepted as final. One is not

allowed the slightest reflection. "The word of God," they say, "is truth." Inspiration is the fourth criterion. Occultists say, "I have had a revelation. This truth has been revealed to me." [pg 94] For them everything outside direct revelation is viewed with doubt. So we have indicated the four criterions: the senses, reason, the sacred text, inspirations. There is no fifth.

Let us speak of the first criterion — that of the senses. Contemporary philosophers say, "We have spent our time in universities and laboratories analyzing composition. We have not encountered the spirituality of God, or any sign of the soul's existence. We are people of truth, intelligent, learned men, but we can find no proof of the existence of a divine being."

The senses mistake a mirage for water; the eyes see the sun move; your train or boat seems immobile and the landscape seems to pass by, planets look like fixed points of light; but they have measurable dimensions. A lighted point set in rotation appears like a circle. These examples show the senses subject to error. How can we put our trust in them?

The test of logic is just as imperfect, for were this criterion perfect there would never have been the continual clash of opinion as to the sacred texts. How can they be interpreted by logic if the means be at fault?

Inspiration, what is it? Whence comes it? Is that which reaches our heart divine or satanic? How can we judge?

It is no proof of intelligence to reject everything which does not strike the senses. Nay, rather, such a one is brother to the animal. The cow has no idea of God; she does not know the [pg 95] soul. So the only difference between her highness the cow and a materialistic philosopher is that the latter takes a great deal of trouble! It is not a special or exclusive privilege to be the prisoner of one's senses; the cow is the example of this theory.

Man has a sacred power beyond the confines of the senses. The power of the rational mind is the power of the soul over the senses. This cycle is radiating love and the bestowals of God are descending like unto rain. Man's glory lies in the difference between him and the animals. In Persia a small child who has been taught to think universally can talk with the learned. The


religious people no longer question the followers of Bahá'u'lláh, being unable to reply to their arguments. The priests and rulers call them necromancers, persecuting and martyring them; and with great joy these disciples give all their worldly goods and gladly lay down their lives for the cause of Bahá'u'lláh. They go to death crying aloud, "Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá!"

I supplicate to God that you may become inspired with a like spirituality. In the West you have not the same prejudices; you have not that fire of oppression, but have complete liberty of belief. Work, pray, day and night, and you will see the splendors of the kingdom of Abhá descending upon you.



Materially, man is the prisoner of nature; the least wind disturbs him, the cold hurts him, the heat incommodes him, a mosquito irritates him;[pg 96] but when we consider the intelligence of man, an elephant is powerless before him, a lion is his prisoner, and a boy of twelve can lead twelve hundred animals. Man dries up the sea, inundates the desert, circumnavigates the globe, discovers what is under the earth, rides upon the air and creates new sciences. These are the signs of the crowning spiritual power of man, — that power which can make nature his prisoner.

Reflect on the divine forces. What has assembled us together? It is not a material but a spiritual force which has created this bond between our hearts, this attraction and affection for one another, — a power stronger than reason, a power which founds nations, creates human unity and makes us renounce the world to discover sciences and organize laws which work through all creatures. Man, the victim of a mosquito, by his spiritual intelligence is conqueror, for by spirit he is completed; he stands upright and gives well-being to humanity. We must care for man's two natures; for as the material man makes certain demands for food and raiment and if not looked after suffers, even so his spiritual reality suffers without care. This is why the divine messengers come to the rescue — to care for the reality, that man's thoughts may unfold and his aims become realized, that he may inherit a new field of progress, for the spiritual side should be cared for as much as the corporeal; the help that comes is through the resuscitating breath of the Holy Spirit.[pg 97]



Each power is localized. Reason has its seat in the brain, sight in the eye, hearing in the ears, speech in the tongue. The force of gravity is localized in the center of the earth. Everything on the surface of the earth is attracted toward the center. Our light is localized in the sun. The heat of the sun transforms minerals, vegetables, animals, and man.


In the world of beings, some have specialized in statesmanship, some in morals, others in commerce, agriculture, art, politics, laboratory work, or industrial activities, for these are the outer expression of spiritual, philosophical and scientific faculties. In brief, each individual expresses himself through some special occupation; but one does not hold the others in condemnation.

Certain religious teachers, however, think only of their creeds. They believe a holy war can conquer the world. They reason thus: "All the other religious teachers are in error and I am obliged to chastise them and show them their mistakes for their own salvation."

The belief of the friends of God is quite different. They believe that one must affiliate with all, love all humanity and seek ever to better its condition. God is one, the true shepherd of all creation. Let us be kind to every one in order to unify the world and spread affection abroad.

Let us be ready to give our lives, our fortunes, positions, achievements, in order that a new state of existence may be diffused throughout the earth.[pg 98] There are fellow-beings who are weaker than we are, let us strengthen them; there are those who are more ignorant, we must teach them; some are as children, help them to develop; many are asleep, awaken them; others are ill, heal them; never despise them. Be kinder to them than to the stronger ones. One must always be kinder to the weak and ill and to the children. Never seek to humiliate your brother.

Bahá'u'lláh is the sun of truth; all humanity will be illumined under his protection and whosoever follows his instructions in this day will feel the potency of his protection.



Man has different ways of approaching God. One man thinks he must make extraordinary efforts in science to arrive at the knowledge of the divine and another thinks that he must train his morals. The prophets teach us that the only way to approach God is by characterizing ourselves with the attributes of divinity.

Some people lay stress on fasting. They affirm that in augmenting the weakness of the body they develop a spiritual sensibility and thus they think to approach God.

Weakening one's self physically does not necessarily contribute to spiritual progress. Humility, kindness, resignation, and all these spiritual attributes emanating from great physical strength are acceptable to God. That an [pg 99] enfeebled man cannot fight is not accounted a virtue. Were physical weakness a virtue the dead would be perfect, for they can do nothing.

If a man be just, kind, humble and merciful and his qualities are acquired through the will-power — this is Godlike. A child cannot kill a man; but a Bonaparte can abstain from war, from shedding blood, from devastating countries. A dumb person will not speak ill of any one, a paralyzed hand cannot strike; but a strong arm can refrain from striking. Justice, love and kindness must be the instruments of strength, not of weakness.

Exaggerated fasting destroys the divine forces. God has created man in a way that cannot be surpassed; we must not try to change his creation. Strive to attain nearness to reality through the acquisition of strength of character, through morality, through good works and helping the poor, through being consumed with the fire of the love of God and in discovering each day new spiritual mysteries. This is the path of intimate approach.



Any soul that enters the kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh will enjoy an eternal communion with God. It is my hope that each of you may enter this kingdom. May you become thirsty for the water of reality. May you become hungry for the bread of the kingdom; for as His Holiness [pg 100] the Christ said, "He that drinketh the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." This means the apprehension of the ideals of the human world and of the heavenly realm. Day by day may you

receive these concepts; day by day may you inherit this new state of consciousness till you become immersed in the sea of divine light.

This station is the ultimate result of human life; this station is the true fruit of existence; this station is the pearl of human consummation, the shining star toward which human destiny points. Practice the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, and day unto day you will draw nearer the supreme horizon.



In this cause we have many principles to which we adhere, the most important is to avoid that which creates discord. We must have the same aspirations and become as one nation. Humanity must feel entirely united. Until this glorious century the power of unity has been ineffectual and the forces of discord have augmented. Men never reflect that they are brothers.

The divine power alone is potent enough to triumph over these religious, racial and patriotic prejudices. Alas! they have lost sight of the divine principles and are in a way to forget them entirely. Had the principles of unity, taught by the Christ, remained in the hearts, men would have refrained from war. Universalism must be [pg 101] retaught. Bahá'u'lláh has brought the force to unite the most antagonistic sects and bring all nations under one flag.



From the beginning the followers of all religions have believed in two seas, — one salt and one fresh; in two trees — the tree of good and the tree of evil. For this men have called one another heretics. Misinterpreting the divine commands, men have acquired prejudices and on these prejudices they have waged religious wars and caused bloodshed. Behold what is happening to-day! Men are killing their brothers, believing this to be the cause of salvation, believing that such work is approved by God, believing that those whom they kill will be sent to hell.

Bahá'u'lláh speaks to humanity in a different tone, declaring humanity to be like the leaves of a single branch, the branches of a single trunk.



For the new day hath dawned — awaken the sleeping ones! Thanks be to God, you are the beloved of the universe that love the whole world. Praise be to God your affection is for all, you are the enemies of none, lovers of humanity, a precious mine for the souls.

Thus will you disperse the heavy clouds of prejudice. The doors of the kingdom are open to you, the divine good news of the ages has come to you. Go further into the teachings and you will arrive at the splendors of divine mysteries.[pg 102]

The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh will give to the hearts the necessary impulse for bestowing eternal life and will cause the breeze of the Holy Spirit to waft upon you, so that with a single heart you will turn toward God.



Until now it has been said that all religions were composed of tenets that had to be accepted, even if they seem contrary to science. Thanks be to God, that in this new cycle the admonition of Bahá'u'lláh is that in the search for truth man must weigh religious questions in the balance of science and reason. God has given us rational minds for this purpose, to penetrate all things, to find truth. If one renounce reason, what remains? The sacred texts? How can we understand God's commands and to what use can we put them without the balance of reason?

The priests are attached to ancient superstitions and when these are not in keeping with science, the priests denounce science. When religion is upheld by science and reason we can believe with assurance and act with conviction, for this rational faculty is the greatest power in the world. Through it industries are established, the past and present are laid bare and the underlying realities are brought to light. Let us make nature our captive, break through all laws of limitation and with deep penetration bring to light that which is hidden. The power to do this[pg 103] is the greatest of divine benefits. Why treat with indifference such a divine spark? Why ignore a faculty so beneficial, a sun so powerful?



I have been asked a question: "How can we know when our actions meet with the approval of God?" Sometimes passion incites us to action; the laws of nature attract us, we obey our senses; the other incentive is the comprehension of the direction of God. We must find out if our actions are divinely inspired and if they do not conform, then it is our sensations which speak. Let us ever weigh our deeds in the scales of the divine teaching.

When we speak let our speech be an outward evidence of the inner light, for we must speak the truth, otherwise we shall not act wisely.

I hope that you will all become eloquent. The greatest gifts of man are reason and eloquence of expression. The perfect man is both intelligent and eloquent. He has knowledge and knows how to express it. Unless man express himself in this day he will remain like a closed casket and one cannot know whether it contain jewels or glass. I desire that all of you may speak on the material and divine sciences with clear and convincing words.



Someone has asked this question, "What are the proofs through which one can establish the existence of God?"[pg 104]

Humanity is divided into two classes: — one is satisfied with the knowledge of divinity through its attributes and the other strives to understand the mysteries of divinity and be informed of the fundamental principles of divine philosophy. I will speak to you of the scientific proofs which establish the existence of God and I will not quote the scriptural proofs from the Old and New Testaments, or the Qur'án, with which you are more or less familiar.

Science teaches us that all forms of creation are the result of composition; for example, certain single atoms are brought together through the inherent law of affinity and the result is the human being. A number of primordial atoms have gone into the make-up of a plant, the result of which is this flower. Again, looking into the mineral kingdom, we observe that this law of attraction is working in the same manner. Many atoms go into the composition of a piece of stone which through purification may reach to the station of a mirror.

When the particles of a given composition are disintegrated, this may be called non-existence in that kingdom; but the original simple elements go back to their primary atoms and are ever existent. When the body of man becomes the subject of decomposition we call that death. That the existence of phenomena depends upon composition, and mortality upon decomposition, is a scientific fact and there is a great difference between facts sustained by science and theories[pg 105] upheld by blind belief which is the result of traditional susceptibility of conscience.

The materialistic state that inasmuch as it is proved by science that the life of phenomena depends upon composition and its destruction upon disintegration, they question the necessity of a creator, the self-subsistent Lord. "For," argue the materialists, "we see with our own eyes that these infinite beings go through myriads of forms of composition and in every combination they bring about certain distinctive characteristics, so we are independent of any divine maker."

Those informed with divine philosophy answer that there are three theories of composition: first, accidental composition; second, involuntary composition; third, voluntary composition.

If we declare that construction is accidental, this is logically a false theory, because then we have to believe in an effect without a cause; our reason refuses to think of an effect without a primal cause.

The second, involuntary composition, means that each element has within it an innate function of this power of composition — certain elements have flowed toward each other, their union being an inherent necessity of their being. But as long as we reason that it is the inherent necessity of those elements to enter into composition there should not be any necessity for decomposition; and inasmuch as we observe that there is a process of decomposition, we conclude that the constituent elements of life enter neither involuntarily nor[pg 106] accidentally, but voluntarily into composition — and this means that the infinite forms of organisms are composed through the superior will, the eternal will, the will of the living and self-subsistent Lord.

This is a rational proof that the will of the Creator is effected through the process of composition. Ponder over this and strive to comprehend its significance, that you may be enabled to convey it to others; the more you think it over, the greater will be your degree of comprehension. Praise be to God that he has endowed you with a power through which you can penetrate mysteries. Verily, as you reflect deeply, ponder deliberately and think continually, the doors of knowledge will be opened unto you.



I have been asked to speak of that which is eternal and that which is contingent. Is creation a manifestation or an emanation of God? There are two kinds of eternities. There is an eternity of essence, that which is without first cause, and an eternity of time, that which has no beginning. When you will understand these subjects all will become clear. Know of a certainty that every visible thing has a cause. For instance, this table is made by a carpenter; its originator is the carpenter.

Therefore as such objects are not self created, they are not in the nature of things eternal; but need an auxiliary-transforming force, although in [pg 107] their essence they are very ancient in time; but their ancient and eternal existence is not due to the temporary form.

For instance, the world of elements cannot be annihilated, because pure existence cannot be annihilated; and what we observe are but transformative modifications in the composition of the essence. The combination of different elements has formed physical man; when the composition is destroyed the elements will return to their component parts. Complete annihilation cannot take place.

The universe has never had a beginning. From the point of view of essence it transforms itself. God is eternal in essence and in time. He is his own existence and cause. This is why the material world is eternal in essence, for the power of God is eternal.

A power is like a kingdom; it needs subjects and armies, for the constituents of a kingdom are rulers and subjects. The power of God is eternal and there have always been beings to manifest

it; that is why we say that the worlds of God are infinite — there has never been a time when they did not exist. One can bring nothing forth from nothing, in the same way that which exists is never destroyed; the apparent annihilation is merely transmutation.

A mineral compared to us may be said to be non-existent, but in its own sphere it lives. When we die our bodies return to the mineral and vegetable world. This example shows the [pg 108] inter-relationship of the different kingdoms which is erroneously called annihilation.

All the wealth of contingencies is misery. If we know not the eternal, we are nothing, and as God is eternal, knowing God is a link to eternity. I pray you to reflect deeply upon this, that you may understand clearly. Many people think that creation is a manifestation of God, that the divine reality like unto the embryo in a seed, has come forth out of the seed and become a trunk, branches, leaves, flowers.

The prophets teach differently. Creation is an emanation from the creator. It is impossible that the eternal should become limited. A tree never becomes a creature: it never acquires sight nor smell; yet both are creations of God — creations in emanation.

Creation is like the sunlight; God is the sun. This light comes forth from the sun; that does not mean that the sun has become the light. The light emanates from the sun. Seek always to prove mysteries in the light of the rational mind. We must all become the light of this sun which is God; the light of the sun, the heat of the sun, the brilliancy of the sun, the bestowals of this sun.



There is a point on which the philosophers and the prophets differ. The philosophers make education the test of knowledge, holding that any man who receives sufficient education can attain a state of perfection. That is to say man possesses the potentiality for every kind of [pg 109] progress and education enables him to bring this into the court of objectivity.

The prophets say that something else is necessary. It is true that education transforms the desert into a rose garden, the virgin forest into an orchard, saplings into trees, and single flowers into double and treble flowers, but there is a fundamental difference in men. You may know ten

children of one country, in the same school, under the same master, treated and fed in the same way. One of these children may make great progress, others may remain stationary. In the innate nature there are differences of memory, perception and intelligence. There is a superior, a middle and an inferior degree which corresponds to the difference in the fundamental estates of creation. While recognizing the influence of education we must also become acquainted with the innate disposition.

The prophets are sent to educate this innate quality in humanity. They are like gardeners who sow the grain which afterward springs up in a thousand forms of advancement. The prophets are therefore the first educators of the world, the head masters of the world. However much man may advance in material civilization, if he remain ignorant of the spiritual civilization, his soul is still defaced.

The prophets are sent to refresh the dead body of the world, to render the dumb, eloquent, to give peace to the troubled, to make illumined the indifferent and to set free from the material world all beings who are its captives. Leave a child to himself and he becomes ill-mannered and thoughtless. He must be shown the path, so that he may become acquainted with the world of the soul — the world of divine gifts.

Existence is like a fruit tree, and man is the fruit. If the fruit be sweet and agreeable, all is well, but if it be bitter it were far better there were none. Every man who has known the celestial bestowals is verily a treasury; if he remain ignorant of them, his non-existence were better than his existence. The tree which does not bring forth fruit is fit only for the fire. Strive night and day to change men into fruitful trees, virgin forests into divine orchards and deserts into rose gardens of significance. Light these lamps, that the dark world may become illumined.

This is why I am come to Paris.



God in his wisdom has created all things. Nothing has been created without a special destiny, for every creature has an innate station of attainment. This flower has been created to mirror forth a

harmonious ensemble of color and perfume. Each kingdom of nature holds potentialities and each must be cultivated in order to reach its fulfillment. The divine teachers desire man to be educated that he may attain to the high rank of his own reality, the deprivation of which is the rank of perdition. The flower needs light that it may achieve its fruitage;[pg 111] man needs the light of the Holy Spirit, and the measure of illumination throughout creation is proportionate to the different kingdoms.

When we come to the estate of man, we find his kingdom is vested with a divine superiority. Compared to the animal, his perfection or his imperfection is superior. In comparison with man the perfection of a flower is insignificant. Yet if man remain content in an undeveloped state viewed from the point of capacity he is the lowest of creatures. If he attains unto his heritage through divine wisdom, then he becomes a clear mirror in which the beauty of God is reflected; he has eternal life and becomes a participator of the sun of truth. This is to show you how considerable are the degrees of human achievement.

The aim of the prophet of God is to raise man to the degree of knowledge of his potentiality and to illumine him through the light of the kingdom, to transform ignorance into wisdom, injustice into justice, error into knowledge, cruelty into affection and incapability into progress. In short, to make all the attainments of existence resplendent in him.

The greatest gift of man is universal love — that magnet which renders existence eternal. It attracts realities and diffuses life with infinite joy. If this love penetrate the heart of man, all the forces of the universe will be realized in him, for it is a divine power which transports him to a divine station and he will make no[pg 112] progress until he is illumined thereby. Strive to increase the love-power of reality, to make your hearts greater centers of attraction and to create new ideals and relationships.

First of all, be ready to sacrifice your lives for one another, to prefer the general well-being to your personal well-being. Create relationships that nothing can shake; form an assembly that nothing can break up; have a mind that never ceases acquiring riches that nothing can destroy. If love did not exist, what of reality would remain? It is the fire of the love of God which renders

man superior to the animal. Strengthen this superior force through which is attained all the progress in the world.

May the light of divine advancement shine upon you. This is the glory and progress of man. This is eternal life.



Brotherhood and sisterhood that is founded on a universal love is precious. It is not like the material kind which is soon forgotten and, perhaps, changed to hatred before this life is over. Material brothers and sisters seldom have lasting affection for each other, but this divine relationship is eternal. In the world of God it will become more clear and manifest.

Here we comprehend according to environment and adaptation. This world is not much of a place for the realization of truth. This world is but the womb of the world of reality. Twins[pg 113] in the matrix may even embrace each other without knowing what they do. They are in darkness and cannot know their relationship to their mother who nourishes them, or their father who cares for them and provides for them. However, when they are born out of the world of darkness and live in this world, they realize each other and become assured that they have a father and a mother. So will you become assured when you enter the world of light and then you will realize how great is my fatherhood for you.



Someone has asked a question on astronomy.

In past ages astronomers accepted the Ptolemaic system. Ptolemy was a philosopher and astronomer of Greek origin and a lecturer in the University of Alexandria which was celebrated as one of the great universities of those times. He wrote a book called the Almagest in which he gathered together the theories held by ancient astronomers, systematizing these laws in a way that represents the knowledge of astronomy of that time. The book became an authority and eastern and western students used it in their colleges as a text-book. Ptolemy founded an



observatory and his observations of the heavens were accepted by all the astronomers of the time.

According to his calculations the heavens were divided into nine circles, because he observed seven planets, calculating seven distant orbits through which they moved. The circle outside of [pg 114] the seventh was thought to be studded with the fixed stars. In order to make this theory clear the ancient astronomers used as an illustration the different layers of an onion — thus the curving surface of each layer adheres to the curve of each succeeding layer. Outside the eighth circle there was thought to be a ninth through which these colossal bodies were given the power to march in their destined course. They further believed this ninth sphere of action to be devoid of any solar bodies and that it moved through an invisible power, thus causing the motion of all the other stars within its radius. A motion of the outward layer of the onion moves all the inside layers with it. This, in brief, was the system of ancient astronomy.

After centuries of scientific deduction it is proved that there is no fixed heaven; that which we see is an infinite space; these stars are hung like luminous lamps in this immeasurable atmosphere. There are neither eight nor nine nor ninety spheres and the stars are numberless. Later astronomers like Kepler and Newton discovered the law of attraction and repulsion which hold these infinite stars in their place. Through this power of attraction and repulsion there is a universal law of interdependence between the stars.

The earth has its inhabitants, the water and the air contain many living beings and all the elements have their nature spirits, then how is it possible to conceive that these stupendous stellar [pg 115] bodies are not inhabited? Verily, they are peopled, but let it be known that the dwellers accord with the elements of their respective spheres. These living beings do not have states of consciousness like unto those who live on the surface of this globe: the power of adaptation and environment moulds their bodies and states of consciousness, just as our bodies and minds are suited to our planet.

For example, we have birds that live in the air, those that live on the earth and those that live in the sea. The sea birds are adapted to their elements, likewise the birds which soar in the air, and those which hover about the earth's surface. Many animals living on the land have their

counterparts in the sea. The domestic horse has his counterpart in the sea-horse which is half horse and half fish.

The components of the sun differ from those of this earth, for there are certain light and life-giving elements radiating from the sun. Exactly the same elements may exist in two bodies, but in varying quantities. For instance, there is fire and air in water, but the allotted measure is small in proportion.

They have discovered that there is a great quantity of radium in the sun; the same element is found on the earth, but in a much smaller degree. Beings who inhabit those distant luminous bodies are attuned to the elements that have gone into the composition of their respective spheres.[pg 116]

May God, the exalted, illumine thy sight and insight!



Although outwardly cataclysms are hard to understand and to endure, yet there lies a great wisdom behind them which appears later. All the visible material events are inter-related with invisible spiritual forces. The infinite phenomena of creation are as interdependent as the links of a chain.

When certain links become rusty, they are broken by unseen forces, to be replaced by newer and better ones. There are certain colossal events which transpire in the world of humanity which are required by the nature of the times. For example, the requirements of winter are cold, snow, hail and rain — but the birds and animals who live for six months, enjoying a short span of life, not realizing the wisdom of winter, chide and make lament and are discontent, saying, “Why this awful frost? Why this hail and storm? Why not the balmy weather? Why not the eternal springtime? Why this injustice on the part of the creator? Why this suffering? What have we done to be meted out with this catastrophe?”

However, those souls who have lived many years and have acquired much experience and have weathered many severe winters realize that in order to enjoy the coming spring they must pass through the cold of winter.[pg 117]

