

Address Delivered By ‘Abdu’l- Bahá

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Original English



Whosoever hath known himself, hath surely known his
Lord. — (Bahá’u’lláh in the Kitáb-i-Íqán)

Chapter VII

Address Delivered By ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

To the Paris Theosophical Society, Theosophical
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According to science, all forms of creation are endowed with life; this element of life and energy depending on environment and adaptations. Life as an attribute of growth is manifest to a



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minute degree in the mineral kingdom. It is more powerfully manifested in the vegetable kingdom and when we study the animal world we observe that the power of life is expressing itself through more capable mediums, showing manifold attributes. Ascending to the human kingdom we find that life, or what is figuratively called spirit, is declaring itself with knowledge in the utmost power and transcendency.

The more man strives along the degrees of attainment, the greater will be the unfoldment. The child born to the mother manifests this element of life in a more abundant degree than the child in the matrix. The display of the forces of life upon the arena of existence is incomparably greater than that of the dark and narrow world[pg 166] in which the babe lived for nine months. But when life attains to the summit of maturity, then its manifestations will be along many paths and cover many fields hitherto undreamed of.

Spirit in the human world is the discoverer of the realities of existence. All the inventions, all the sciences, all the hidden mysteries are brought to light through the activity of the spirit on the plane of life. While living in the Orient it organizes affairs in the Occident; while living on the earth it discovers the heavenly constellations. These examples ought to show you that the spirit of life is omnipotent, especially when it establishes a communication with God and becomes the recipient of the eternal light — then it transforms itself into a ray of the effulgence of the eternal sun.

This station is the greatest of all stations, for this connection of the spirit of man with God is like unto a mirror and the sun of reality is reflected in it. Thus it becomes the collective center of all the virtues; its emanation is the bestowal of the king of bestowers; its radiations are the manifold splendors of the infinite luminary; its sanctity is from the highest summit of divine essence. This station is the station of heavenly inspiration and is called the station of the divine grace. It signifies that the rays of the sun of reality are resplendent in the mirror and the attributes of the sun of reality are reflected therein. This is the ultimate degree of human perfection, for the attainment of which the[pg 167] thinkers and philosophers of all time have longed and poets have dreamed; it is the mystery of mysteries and the light of lights wherein the spirit become eternal, self-subsistent, age-abiding.

When we look upon the world of creation from another standpoint, the analytic, we observe that everything is the result of composition of many single atoms which through the law of affiliation have adhered and according to the shape, order and positions of these atoms, a given being steps forth into the court of objectivity. Every single atom of these aggregate atoms has its myriad transferences as has been proved by science.

Every single atom has its courings throughout all the kingdoms of life. For instance, that which has gone into the composition of a human being was at one time in the mineral kingdom. Along the degrees of the mineral kingdom it journeyed, appearing in various forms and reflecting various images, manifesting a peculiar virtue in each. In the vegetable kingdom, it again partook of many experiences and through each experience became adorned with an added attribute. Having perfected its journeyings here, it entered the animal kingdom and was incarnated throughout multitudes of animal forms and finally, in the human kingdom it traversed endless forms of humanity, in each form of composition showing forth a particular aspect of the one power.[pg 168]

The forms of life are infinite, therefore the transferences of this primordial unit throughout the degrees of creation are infinite.

All phenomena are involved in all phenomena. Consider what a transcendent unity exists, that, from this standpoint, every monad is the expression of all life. This is the harmony which underlies all creation; this is the law and order in the world of existence. What wondrous symmetry! What stupendous organization! What divine completeness! What elysian coordination! What celestial union!

Every single manifestation of the myriad forms of creation is a reflection of the divine emanations, therefore the divine emanations are infinite, unlimited and illimitable. Gaze upward through immeasurable space to the majestic order of the colossal suns. These luminous bodies are numberless. Behind our solar system there are unfathomable stellar systems and above those stellar systems are the remote aggregations of the milky way. Extend your vision beyond the fixed stars and again you shall behold many spheres of light. In brief, the creation of the Almighty is beyond the grasp of the human intellect. When this objective creation is unlimited

and not subject to suspension, is not the subjective creation of His Majesty the Almighty limitless? When the reflection or physical creation is infinite, how is it possible to circumscribe the reality which is the basis of divine creation? The spiritual world is so much greater than the[pg 169] physical that in comparison with it the physical world is non-existent.

Reflect that every human being is limited through his physical body, but his spirit is free. The body of man may travel for a few miles and become fatigued, but the spirit untrammelled may go throughout the immensity of space. While walking on earth man's thoughts may grasp the motions of the heavenly bodies and define their course. This demonstrates how man's spirit transcends his environment.

The divine grace, whether physical or spiritual, is unlimited, yet certain selfish souls desire to circumscribe to their own ideas the outpouring of this heavenly grace. Oh, the ignorant ones! They have declared that the age of this world, for example, is ten thousand years. By this is meant that the descent of the heavenly bestowals has extended only over that period, while in reality it is omnipresent. We cannot state reasonably that this world is ten thousand or one hundred thousand or one hundred million year old, for the divine rays have ever descended upon man.

The world of creation has had no beginning and will have no end, because it is the arena upon which the attributes and qualities of the spirit being manifested. Can we limit God and his power? In the same manner we cannot limit his creations and attributes. Just as the reality of divinity is limitless, likewise his grace and bounties are limitless.[pg 170]

The supreme bestowal is the appearance of the heavenly messengers. How can we ever define or circumscribe this bestowal? If the scientists have proven that a molecule is an aggregate of myriads of atoms and the atom in turn is an aggregate of infinite electrons, how can the sun be comprehended? If the drop is infinite in its particles, how much more the sea! If the material world is infinite with regard to its manifestations of life, can the spiritual world be finite? The prophets of God have ever appeared in the ages of the past and will continue to appear throughout the ages of the future. Where was Adam when God was exercising his divinity? Where was this petty infinitesimal world of ours when God was bestowing his bounties upon

this infinite universe? If we limit the number of his appearances through his prophets, it is equal to limiting God himself.

Man has ever longed for a direct means of communication with his Lord and has ever been in a state of anticipation for the unique advent on this earth of a divine being. The followers of all religions have been expecting the coming of a promised one and have longingly prayed for the dawn of the sun of truth. Alas! A thousand times alas! that when he appeared they remained of the heedless, nor turned their faces toward him. Pitiful indeed is their condition! In lamentation, during the darkness of night they prayed for the light of a new day; but when it dawned from the eastern horizon they cried clamorously: "Where[pg 171] is the sun? We do not see it!" They are of those who are bereft of sight.

Two thousand years ago the Israelites expected the Messiah. Day and night they were praying in the temple, supplicating in the holy of holies, crying, "O God, send to us the true one, our deliverer and redeemer" — thus they lamented the bemoaned his delay. But when His Holiness the Christ appeared they jeeringly turned away; when the orb of reality dawned they could not see it, for their eyes were covered with the veils of traditions and names. These anxious waiting ones did not become the recipients of that bestowal; nor harken to the call of God; nor quaff from the chalice of love; nor behold the rays of the sun of reality. It is now nearly two thousand years since their Messiah appeared and still they await him!

May our eyes be ever awake; may the windows of our minds be flung aside, so that when the messenger appeareth, we may not be deprived of his glory through the veils of preconceived ideas; so that when the heavenly herald shouts the word of God, we may not be deaf; so that when the holy fragrance of the paradise of the Almighty be diffused, our nostrils may not be afflicted with cold. May we be enabled to inhale the perfume, behold the splendor, hearken to the voice and be regenerated with the spirit of the new day.

Then our life will be revived, we shall enjoy eternal existence, be refreshed with the breath of[pg 172] the Holy Spirit and become informed of the mysteries of creation. Then we shall be inspired to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity; we shall take a portion of the divine grace and become resplendent with the rays of the heavenly luminary; then the human race will

mirror forth the attributes of the eternal kingdom and will move like a peaceful sea and each individual will appear as a wave. As we look upon the sea, we will comprehend it as the sea of God; as we look upon the waves, we will realize that they are the souls of humanity. The sun is one; all light is one; the rays are one; it shines on all.

This century is the century of the oneness of the world of humanity, the century of justice; this century is the century of universal peace, the century of the dawn of the sun of reality; this century is the century of the establishment of the kingdom of God upon this earth; therefore let us grasp every means to promote the federation of the world, that we may become the recipients of the divine outpourings.

Today we observe that various means of unity are being brought forward and this in itself is an evidence that the divine confirmations surround us.

One sign of unity is the construction of an international auxiliary language, Esperanto.

Let us strive untiringly to spread this language.

I am most pleased with you and am very grateful to find myself in such a revered gathering.[pg 173] I shall remember your spiritual susceptibilities and pray that they may be directed toward the highest, that your love for your Lord and your attraction toward him may increase day unto day. I hope that this revered society may become conducive to the illumination of the city of Paris, in order that the blind may receive sight; the deaf hearing; the dumb the power of speech; and that into these dead bodies the spirit of life may be infused. Then this Paris will become another Paris and this world another world.

After 'Abdu'l-Bahá had taken his seat, at the request of the friends he again mounted the rostrum and offered the following

Supplication

O God, O my Lord, I supplicate to Thee and implore in Thy presence and invoke Thee with the tongue of my conscience, my soul, my spirit, my mind, to shower down Thy merciful bestowals

upon these holy souls who have gathered in this great assembly. I beg of Thee, o my Lord, to favor them with the glances of Thy power. I entreat Thee, o my Beloved, to pour upon them the rain of Thy favor from the clouds of Thy mercy. Verily these are Thy servants and Thy maidservants. deprive them not of the sunbeams of reality; make them like waves of Thy ocean and leave them not to the darkness of themselves. O Lord, enlighten their hearts with the [pg 174] light of unity; cheer their spirits with the mystic traces of Thy knowledge; illumine their eyes with beholding Thy signs; purify their souls with the wonders of Thy majesty; inspire their consciences with the word of Thy singleness; encircle them with thy heavenly graces. verily Thou art the Omnipotent, the Mighty. O Lord! Thou seest the hearts of humbleness before Thy dominion, the souls rejoiced with Thy proclamations, the spirits attracted by Thy holy fragrances. O Lord, confirm us in Thy good pleasure, assist us in Thy adoration and cause us to become worthy servants turning our faces toward the horizon of Thy singleness illumined with the rays of the sun of Thy reality.

Verily Thou art the Clement, the Bounteous and verily Thou art the Most Merciful of the Merciful!
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