

Theosophical Society

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Original English



3

Theosophical Society

September 30th, 1911

Introduction

ON September 30th, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá met the Theosophical society at their new Headquarters at the express request of their president Mrs. Annie Besant. After a general history of the movement and sympathetic words of welcome by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rose and delivered to the crowded assembly an address upon the distinctive notes of the Bahá’í teaching, warmly commending the eagerness of the Society in its search for Truth.

Discourse of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

O RESPECTED Assembly! O friends of Truth! The inherent nature of fire is to burn, the inherent nature of electricity is to give light, the inherent nature of the sun is to shine, and the inherent nature of the organic earth is the power of growth.

There is no separation between a thing and its inherent qualities.

It is the inherent nature of things on this earth to change, thus we see around us the change of the seasons. Every spring is followed by a summer and every autumn brings a winter — every day a night and every evening a morning. There is a sequence in all things.

Thus when hatred and animosity, fighting, slaughtering, and great coldness of heart were governing this world, and darkness had overcome the nations, Bahá’u’lláh, like a bright star, rose from the horizon of Persia and shone with the great Light of Guidance, giving heavenly radiance and establishing the new Teaching.

He declared the most human virtues; He manifested the Spiritual powers, and put them into practice in the world around Him.

Firstly: He lays stress on the search for Truth. This is most important, because the people are too easily led by tradition. It is because of this that they are often antagonistic to each other, and dispute with one another.



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But the manifesting of Truth discovers the darkness and becomes the cause of Oneness of faith and belief: because Truth cannot be two! That is not possible.

Secondly: Bahá'u'lláh taught the Oneness of humanity; that is to say, all the children of men are under the mercy of the Great God. They are the sons of one God; they are trained by God. He has placed the crown of humanity on the head of every one of the servants of God. Therefore all nations and peoples must consider themselves brethren. They are all descendants from Adam. They are the branches, leaves, flowers and fruits of One Tree. They are pearls from one shell. But the children of men are in need of education and civilization, and they require to be polished, till they become bright and shining.

Man and woman both should be educated equally and equally regarded.

It is racial, patriotic, religious and class prejudice, that has been the cause of the destruction of Humanity.

Thirdly: Bahá'u'lláh taught, that Religion is the chief foundation of Love and Unity and the cause of Oneness. If a religion become the cause of hatred and disharmony, it would be better that it should not exist. To be without such a religion is better than to be with it.

Fourthly: Religion and Science are inter-twined with each other and cannot be separated. These are the two wings with which humanity must fly. One wing is not enough. Every religion which does not concern itself with Science is mere tradition, and that is not the essential. Therefore science, education and civilization are most important necessities for the full religious life.

Fifthly: The Reality of the divine Religions is one, because the Reality is one and cannot be two. All the prophets are united in their message, and unshaken. They are like the sun; in different seasons they ascend from different rising points on the horizon. Therefore every ancient prophet gave the glad tidings of the future, and every future has accepted the past.

Sixthly: Equality and Brotherhood must be established among all members of mankind. This is according to Justice. The general rights of mankind must be guarded and preserved.

All men must be treated equally. This is inherent in the very nature of humanity.

Seventhly: The arrangements of the circumstances of the people must be such that poverty shall disappear, and that every one as far as possible, according to his position and rank, shall be comfortable. Whilst the nobles and others in high rank are in easy circumstances, the poor also should be able to get their daily food and not be brought to the extremities of hunger.

Eighthly: Bahá'u'lláh declared the coming of the Most Great Peace. All the nations and peoples will come under the shadow of the Tent of the Great Peace and Harmony — that is to say, by general election a Great Board of Arbitration shall be established, to settle all differences and quarrels between the Powers; so that disputes shall not end in war.

Ninthly: Bahá'u'lláh taught that hearts must receive the Bounty of the Holy Spirit, so that Spiritual civilization may be established. For material civilization is not adequate for the needs of

mankind and cannot be the cause of its happiness. Material civilization is like the body and spiritual civilization is like the soul. Body without soul cannot live.

This is a short summary of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. To establish this Bahá'u'lláh underwent great difficulties and hardships. He was in constant confinement and He suffered great persecution. But in the fortress ('Akká) He reared a spiritual palace and from the darkness of His prison He sent out a great light to the world.

It is the ardent desire of the Bahá'ís to put these teachings into common practice: and they will strive with soul and heart to give up their lives for this purpose, until the heavenly light brightens the whole world of humanity.

I am very happy that I have been able to talk with you in this gathering: and hope that this deep consciousness of mine is acceptable to you.

I pray for you, that you may succeed in your aspirations and that the bounties of the Kingdom may be yours.

