

A Bahá'í Wedding

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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QUITE an oriental note was struck toward the end of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's London visit, by the marriage of a young Persian couple who had sought his presence for the ceremony, the bride journeying from Baghdád accompanied by her uncle in order to meet her fiance here and be married before 'Abdu'l-Bahá's departure. The bride's father and grandfather had been followers of Bahá'u'lláh during the time of his banishment.

We hesitate to alter the bridegroom's description of the service and therefore print it in his own simple and beautiful language. It will serve to show a side not touched on elsewhere, and without which no idea of his visit is complete. We refer to the attitude of reverence with which people from the East who came to see 'Abdu'l-Bahá regard their great teacher. They invariably rise and stand with bowed heads whenever he enters the room.

Mírzá Dáwúd writes: —

On Sunday morning, the 1st of October, 1911, A.D., equal to the 9th Tishi 5972 (Hebrew Era), Regina Núr Mahal Khánúm, and Mírzá Yuhanna Dáwúd were admitted into the holy presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: may my life be a sacrifice to Him!

After receiving us, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "You are very welcome and it makes me happy to see you here in London."

Looking at me he said, "Never have I united anyone in marriage before, except my own daughters, but as I love you much, and you have rendered a great service to the Kingdom of Abhá, both in this country and in other lands, I will perform your marriage ceremony today. It is my hope that you may both continue in the blessed path of service."

Then, first, 'Abdu'l-Bahá took Núr Mahal Khánúm into the next room and said to her, "Do you love Mírzá Yuhanna Dáwúd with all your heart and soul?" She answered, "Yes, I do."

Then 'Abdu'l-Bahá called me to him and put a similar question, that is to say, "Do you love Núr Mahal Khánúm with all your heart and soul?" I answered "Yes, I do." We re-entered the room together and 'Abdu'l-Bahá took the right hand of the bride and gave it into that of the bridegroom and asked us to say after him, "We do all to please God."



ORIGINAL



AUDIO

We all sat down and 'Abdu'l-Bahá continued; "Marriage is a holy institution and much encouraged in this blessed cause. Now you two are no longer two, but one. Bahá'u'lláh's wish is that all men be of one mind and consider themselves of one great household, that the mind of mankind be not divided against itself."

"It is my wish and hope that you may be blessed in your life. May God help you to render great service to the kingdom of Abhá and may you become a means of its advancement."

"May joy be increased to you as the years go by, and may you become thriving trees bearing delicious and fragrant fruits which are the blessings in the path of service."

When we came out, all the assembled friends both of Persia and London congratulated us on the great honour that had been bestowed upon us, and we were invited to dine by the kind hostess.

After a little while we gathered around the table with him. During the meal one of the friends asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá how he enjoyed his stay in London, and what he thought of the English people. I acted as interpreter. 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied: "I have enjoyed London very much and the bright faces of the friends have delighted my heart. I was drawn here by their unity and love. In the world of existence there is no more powerful magnet than the magnet of love. These few days will pass away, but their import shall be remembered by God's friends in all ages and in all lands."

"There are living nations and dead nations. Syria lost its civilization through lethargy of spirit. The English nation is a living one, and when in this spiritual springtime the divine truth comes forth with renewed vitality, the English will be like fruitful trees, and the Holy Spirit will enable them to flourish in abundance. Then will they gain not only materially, but in that which is far more important, spiritual progress, which will enable them to render a greater service to the world of humanity."

Another asked why the teachings of all religions are expressed largely by parables and metaphors and not in the plain language of the people.

'Abdu'l-Bahá replied: — "Divine things are too deep to be expressed by common words. The heavenly teachings are expressed in parable in order to be understood and preserved for ages to come. When the spiritually minded dive deeply into the ocean of their meaning they bring to the surface the pearls of their inner significance. There is no greater pleasure than to study God's Word with a spiritual mind."

"The object of God's teaching to man is that man may know himself in order to comprehend the greatness of God. The Word of God is for agreement and concord. If you go to Persia where the friends of Abhá are many, you will at once realize the unifying force of God's work. They are doing their utmost to strengthen this bond of amity. There, people of different nationalities gather in one meeting and chant the divine tablets with one accord. It might be supposed that they were all brethren. We do not consider anyone a stranger, for it is said by Bahá'u'lláh 'Ye are all the rays of one sun; the fruits of one tree; and the leaves of one branch.' We desire the true

brotherhood of humanity. This shall be so, and it has already begun. Praise be to God, the Helper, the Pardoner!"

