

On Calumny

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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From the beginning of the world until the present time each “Manifestation”¹ sent from God has been opposed by an embodiment of the “Powers of Darkness.”

This dark power has always endeavoured to extinguish the light. Tyranny has ever sought to overcome justice. Ignorance has persistently tried to trample knowledge underfoot. This has, from the earliest ages, been the method of the material world.

In the time of Moses, Pharaoh set himself to prevent the Mosaic Light being spread abroad.

In the day of Christ, Annas and Caiaphas inflamed the Jewish people against Him and the learned doctors of Israel joined together to resist His Power. All sorts of calumnies were circulated against Him. The Scribes and Pharisees conspired to make the people believe Him to be a liar, an apostate, and a blasphemer. They spread these slanders throughout the whole Eastern world against Christ, and caused Him to be condemned to a shameful death!

In the case of Muḥammad also, the learned doctors of His day determined to extinguish the light of His influence. They tried by the power of the sword to prevent the spread of His teaching.

In spite of all their efforts the Sun of Truth shone forth from the horizon. In every case the army of light vanquished the powers of darkness on the battlefield [pg 103] of the world, and the radiance of the Divine Teaching illumined the earth. Those who accepted the Teaching and worked for the Cause of God became luminous stars in the sky of humanity.

¹ i.e. — Divine Manifestation.



ORIGINAL



AUDIO

Now, in our own day, history repeats itself.

Those who would have men believe that religion is their own private property once more bring their efforts to bear against the Sun of Truth: they resist the Command of God; they invent calumnies, not having arguments against it, neither proofs. They attack with masked faces, not daring to come forth into the light of day.

Our methods are different, we do not attack, neither calumniate; we do not wish to dispute with them; we bring forth proofs and arguments; we invite them to confute our statements. They cannot answer us, but instead, they write all they can think of against the Divine Messenger, Bahá'u'lláh.

Do not let your hearts be troubled by these defamatory writings! Obey the words of Bahá'u'lláh and answer them not. Rejoice, rather, that even these falsehoods will result in the spread of the truth. When these slanders appear inquiries are made, and those who inquire are led into a knowledge of the Faith.

If a man were to declare, "There is a lamp in the next room which gives no light", one hearer might be satisfied with his report, but a wiser man goes into the room to judge for himself, and behold, when he finds the light shining brilliantly in the lamp, he knows the truth!

Again, a man proclaims: "There lies a garden in [pg 104] which there are trees with broken branches bearing no fruit, and the leaves thereof are faded and yellow! In that garden, also, there are flowering plants with no blooms, and rose bushes withered and dying — go not into that garden!" A just man, hearing this account of the garden, would not be content without seeing for himself whether it be true or not. He, therefore, enters the garden, and behold, he finds it well tilled; the branches of the trees are sturdy and strong, being also loaded with the sweetest of ripe fruits amongst the luxuriance of beautiful green leaves. The flowering plants are bright with many-hued blossoms; the rose bushes are covered with fragrant and lovely roses and all is verdant and well tended. When the glory of the garden is spread out before the eyes of the just man, he praises God that, through unworthy calumny, he has been led into a place of such wondrous beauty!

This is the result of the slanderer's work: to be the cause of guiding men to a discovery of the truth.

We know that all the falsehoods spread about Christ and His apostles and all the books written against Him, only led the people to inquire into His doctrine; then, having seen the beauty and inhaled the fragrance, they walked evermore amidst the roses and the fruits of that celestial garden.

Therefore, I say unto you, spread the Divine Truth with all your might that men's intelligence may become enlightened; this is the best answer to those who slander. I do not wish to speak of those people nor to say anything ill of them — only to tell you that slander is of no importance! [pg 105]

Clouds may veil the sun, but, be they never so dense, his rays will penetrate! Nothing can prevent the radiance of the sun descending to warm and vivify the Divine Garden.

Nothing can prevent the fall of the rain from Heaven.

Nothing can prevent the fulfilment of the Word of God!

Therefore when you see books and papers written against the Revelation, be not distressed, but take comfort in the assurance that the cause will thereby gain strength.

No one casts stones at a tree without fruit. No one tries to extinguish a lamp without light!

Regard the former times. Had the calumnies of Pharaoh any effect? He affirmed that Moses was a murderer, that he had slain a man and deserved to be executed! He also declared that Moses and Aaron were fomenters of discord, that they tried to destroy the religion of Egypt and therefore must be put to death. These words of Pharaoh were vainly spoken. The light of Moses shone. The radiance of the Law of God has encircled the world!

When the Pharisees said of Christ that He had broken the Sabbath Day, that He had defied the Law of Moses, that He had threatened to destroy the Temple and the Holy City of Jerusalem, and that He deserved to be crucified — We know that all these slanderous attacks had no result in hindering the spread of the Gospel!

The Sun of Christ shone brilliantly in the sky, and [pg 106] the breath of the Holy Spirit wafted over the whole earth!

And I say unto you that no calumny is able to prevail against the Light of God; it can only result in causing it to be more universally recognized. If a cause were of no significance, who would take the trouble to work against it!

But always the greater the cause the more do enemies arise in larger and larger numbers to attempt its overthrow! The brighter the light the darker the shadow! Our part it is to act in accordance with the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh in humility and firm steadfastness.

