

## Bahá'í Sacred Writings, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #265

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Translated by Committee



To the wise ones of the world who are lovers of the truth it is clear and evident that the purpose of the appearance of the holy and divine Manifestations, the revelation of Books, and the establishment of the religion of God is to foster fellowship and love amongst the members of the human race. Religion is the foundation of spiritual unity, the unity of thought, the unity of perception, the unity of custom. It is the spiritual tie that bindeth all people together so that minds and souls, through divine education, may grow and develop, seek out the truth, and attain unto the highest degrees of human perfection, and that divine civilization may thereby be established. For in the world of being there are two kinds of civilization. One is material civilization, which serveth the world of bodies, and the other is divine civilization, which serveth the world of morality. The founders of material civilization are the wise ones of the world, while the founders of divine civilization are the holy Manifestations of God. Religion is the foundation of divine civilization. Material civilization is like the body, and divine civilization is like the spirit. The body, without spirit, is dead, even should it possess the utmost grace and beauty.

In short, by religion is meant the necessary relationships for the oneness of the world of humanity. This is the foundation of the religion of God! This is eternal grace! This is the teachings and laws of God! This is the light of everlasting life! Alas, a thousand times alas, that this firm foundation hath been abandoned and obscured by the followers of all religions, while they have fabricated imitations that bear no relationship to the foundation of the Faith of God. And as these imitations all differ from one another, the differences lead to dissension, and dissension endeth in war. The blood of the hapless ones is spilled upon the ground, their possessions are looted and pillaged, and their children are orphaned and made captive.

Thus, religion, which should be the source of harmony, bringeth about estrangement. Religion, which should be as pure honey, hath become a deadly poison. Religion, which should be the source of the illumination of the human world, hath become the cause of its darkness. Religion, which is the source of eternal life, hath become the instrument of death. Thus, as long as these imitations persist and these snares of hypocrisy remain, religion will bring naught to humanity save detriment and loss. Therefore must one entirely discard these outworn and mouldering imitations that are practised by the religions and seek out the fundamentals of the religion of God. Because the foundation of all the divine religions is one and is the truth—and truth doth not admit multiplicity and division—therefore will absolute unity and fellowship amongst all religions be attained, and the religion of God will be unveiled in all its beauty and perfection before the assemblage of the world.



TRANSLATION



AUDIO