

Bahá'í Sacred Writings, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #266

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Translated by Shoghi Effendi from Persian



The body of the world can be compared to that of a man, and the Prophets and Messengers of God to able physicians. A human being does not remain always in the same condition: Different ailments occur and each calls for a specific remedy. Thus an able physician does not treat all ailments in the same manner but varies the treatments and remedies in accordance with the requirements of these various ailments and conditions. One person may suffer severely from an ailment caused by an excess of heat: The able physician perforce administers cooling medicines. When, at another time, this person's constitution changes and the heat is supplanted by an excess of cold, the physician, of necessity, sets aside the cooling medicines and prescribes heating ones. This change and alteration is required by the condition of the patient and is an evident proof of the skill of the physician....

In brief, our meaning is that the change and transformation in the conditions and exigencies of the times is the cause of the abrogation of religious laws, for the time comes when those earlier commandments no longer suit the prevailing conditions. Consider how greatly the exigencies of the modern age differ from those of ancient and of medieval times! Is it possible that the commandments of former centuries could be enforced in these latter times? It is clear and evident that this would be entirely impossible. Likewise, after the lapse of many centuries, that which is called for at the present time will no longer be suited to the needs of that future age, and change and transformation will be inevitable.



TRANSLATION



AUDIO