

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard MacNutt

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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Notes by Howard MacNutt

This is a most happy visit. I have crossed the sea from the land of the Orient for the joy of meeting the friends of God. Although I am weary after my long journey, the light of the spirit shining in your faces brings me rest and reward. In this meeting the divine susceptibilities are radiant. This is a spiritual house, the home of the spirit. There is no discord here; all is love and unity. When souls are gathered together in this way, the divine bestowals descend. The purpose of the creation of man is the attainment of the supreme virtues of humanity through the descent of the heavenly bestowals. The purpose of man's creation is, therefore, unity and harmony, not discord and separateness. If the atoms which compose the kingdom of the minerals were without affinity for each other, the earth would never have been formed, the universe could not have been created. Because they have affinity for each other, the power of life is able to manifest itself, and the organisms of the phenomenal world become possible. When this attraction or atomic affinity is destroyed, the power of life ceases to manifest; death and nonexistence result.

It is so, likewise, in the spiritual world. That world is the Kingdom of complete attraction and affinity. It is the Kingdom of the One Divine Spirit, the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the affinity and love manifest in this meeting, the divine susceptibilities witnessed here are not of this world but of the world of the Kingdom. When the souls become separated and selfish, the divine bounties do not descend, and the lights of the



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Supreme Concourse are no longer reflected even though the bodies meet together. A mirror with its back turned to the sun has no power to reflect the sun's effulgence. Praise be to God! The purpose of this assembly is love and unity.[pg 5]

The divine Prophets came to establish the unity of the Kingdom in human hearts. All of them proclaimed the glad tidings of the divine bestowals to the world of mankind. All brought the same message of divine love to the world. Jesus Christ gave His life upon the cross for the unity of mankind. Those who believed in Him likewise sacrificed life, honor, possessions, family, everything, that this human world might be released from the hell of discord, enmity and strife. His foundation was the oneness of humanity. Only a few were attracted to Him. They were not the kings and rulers of His time. They were not rich and important people. Some of them were catchers of fish. Most of them were ignorant men, not trained in the knowledge of this world. One of the greatest of them, Peter, could not remember the days of the week. All of them were men of the least consequence in the eyes of the world. But their hearts were pure and attracted by the fires of the Divine Spirit manifested in Christ. With this small army Christ conquered the world of the East and the West. Kings and nations rose against Him. Philosophers and the greatest men of learning assailed and blasphemed His Cause. All were defeated and overcome, their tongues silenced, their lamps extinguished, their hatred quenched; no trace of them now remains. They have become as nonexistent, while His Kingdom is triumphant and eternal.

The brilliant star of His Cause has ascended to the zenith, while night has enveloped and eclipsed His enemies. His name, beloved and adored by a few disciples, now commands the reverence of kings and nations of the world. His power is eternal; His sovereignty will continue forever, while those who opposed Him are sleeping in the dust, their very names unknown, forgotten. The little army of disciples has become a mighty cohort of millions. The Heavenly Host, the Supreme Concourse are His legions; the Word of God is His sword; the power of God is His victory.

Jesus Christ knew this would come to pass and was content to suffer. His abasement was His glorification; His crown of thorns, a heavenly diadem. When they pressed it upon His blessed head and spat in His beautiful face, they laid the foundation of His everlasting Kingdom. He still reigns, while they and their names have become lost and unknown. He is eternal and glorious; they are nonexistent. They sought to destroy Him, but they destroyed themselves and increased the intensity of His flame by the winds of their opposition.

Through His death and teachings we have entered into His Kingdom. His essential teaching was the unity of mankind and the attainment of supreme human virtues through love. He came to [pg 6] establish the Kingdom of peace and everlasting life. Can you find in His words any justification for discord and enmity? The purpose of His life and the glory of His death were to set mankind free from the sins of strife, war and

bloodshed. The great nations of the world boast that their laws and civilization are based upon the religion of Christ. Why then do they make war upon each other? The Kingdom of Christ cannot be upheld by destroying and disobeying it. The banners of His armies cannot lead the forces of Satan. Consider the sad picture of Italy carrying war into Tripoli. If you should announce that Italy was a barbarous nation and not Christian, this would be vehemently denied. But would Christ sanction what they are doing in Tripoli? Is this destruction of human life obedience to His laws and teachings? Where does He command it? Where does He consent to it? He was killed by His enemies; He did not kill. He even loved and prayed for those who hung Him on the cross. Therefore, these wars and cruelties, this bloodshed and sorrow are Antichrist, not Christ. These are the forces of death and Satan, not the hosts of the Supreme Concourse of heaven.

No less bitter is the conflict between sects and denominations. Christ was a divine Center of unity and love. Whenever discord prevails instead of unity, wherever hatred and antagonism take the place of love and spiritual fellowship, Antichrist reigns instead of Christ. Who is right in these controversies and hatreds between the sects? Did Christ command them to love or to hate each other? He loved even His enemies and prayed in the hour of His crucifixion for those who killed Him. Therefore, to be a Christian is not merely to bear the name of Christ and say, "I belong to a Christian government." To be a real Christian is to be a servant in His Cause and Kingdom, to go forth under His banner of peace and love toward all mankind, to be self-sacrificing and obedient, to become quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit, to be mirrors reflecting the radiance of the divinity of Christ, to be fruitful trees in the garden of His planting, to refresh the world by the water of life of His teachings — in all things to be like Him and filled with the spirit of His love.

Praise be to God! The light of unity and love is shining in these faces. These spiritual susceptibilities are the real fruits of heaven. The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh over sixty years ago proclaimed the glad tidings of universal peace. The Báb was martyred in the Cause of God. Bahá'u'lláh suffered forty years as a prisoner and exile in order that the Kingdom of love might be established in the East and West. He has made it possible for us to meet here in love and unity. Because He suffered imprisonment, we are free to proclaim the oneness of the world of humanity for which He stood so long and faithfully. He was chained in dungeons, He was without food, His companions were thieves and criminals, He was subjected to every kind of abuse and infliction, but throughout it all He never ceased to proclaim the reality of the Word of God and the oneness of humanity. We have been brought together here by the power of His Word — you from America, I from Persia — all in love and unity of spirit. Was this possible in former centuries? If it is possible now after fifty years of sacrifice and teaching, what shall we expect in the wonderful centuries coming?

Therefore, let your faces be more radiant with hope and heavenly determination to serve the Cause of God, to spread the pure fragrances of the divine rose garden of unity, to awaken spiritual susceptibilities in the hearts of mankind, to kindle anew the spirit of humanity with divine fires and to reflect the glory of heaven to this gloomy world of materialism. When you possess these divine susceptibilities, you will be able to awaken and develop them in others. We cannot give of our wealth to the poor unless we possess it. How can the poor give to the poor? How can the soul that is deprived of the heavenly bounties develop in other souls capacity to receive those bounties?

Array yourselves in the perfection of divine virtues. I hope you may be quickened and vivified by the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Then shall ye indeed become the angels of heaven whom Christ promised would appear in this Day to gather the harvest of divine planting. This is my hope. This is my prayer for you.

