

Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

You are welcome this afternoon, most welcome. I am ever happy to see you. I ask God that meeting me may be productive of results; that it may not be like ordinary gatherings, for those who hold meetings where groups of people assemble usually have some interest to further. Praise be to God! I have no personal interests. I have an interest in the Kingdom, and this is a sincere intention. I have perfect love for you; therefore, I have traveled this long distance to meet and greet you. I hope that these gatherings may be productive of great results, and there is no greater result than the love of God. There is no greater result than bonds of service in the divine Kingdom and attainment to the good pleasure of the Lord. Therefore, I desire that your hearts may be directed to the Kingdom of God, that your intentions may be pure and sincere, your purposes turned toward altruistic accomplishment unmindful of your own welfare; nay, rather, may all your intentions center in the welfare of humanity, and may you seek to sacrifice yourselves in the pathway of devotion to mankind. Even as Jesus Christ forfeited His life, may you, likewise, offer yourselves in the threshold of sacrifice for the betterment of the world; and just as Bahá'u'lláh suffered severe ordeals and calamities nearly fifty years for you, may you be willing to undergo difficulties and withstand catastrophes for humanity in general. May you bear these trials and tests most willingly and joyously, for every night is followed by a day, and every day has a night. Every spring has an autumn, and every autumn has its spring. The coming of a Manifestation of God is the season of spiritual spring. For instance, the appearance of Christ was a



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divine springtime. Therefore, it caused a great commotion and vibrant movement in the world of humanity. The Sun of Reality dawned, the cloud of mercy poured down its rain, the breezes of providence moved, the world became a new world, mankind reflected an extraordinary radiance, souls were educated, minds [pg 55] were developed, intelligences became acute, and the human world attained a new freshness of life, like unto the advent of spring. Then gradually that spring was followed by the autumn of death and decay. The teachings of Christ were forgotten. The Christly bounties ceased. Divine moralities disappeared. Day ended in night. The people became negligent and oblivious. Minds weakened until conditions reached such a crisis that material science rose in the ascendant. Knowledge and sciences of the Kingdom became obsolete, the mysteries of God deepened, and the traces of the bounties of Christ were completely obliterated. The nations were enmeshed in superstition and blind imitation. Discord and disagreement arose, culminating in strife, war and bloodshed. Hearts were torn asunder in violence. Various denominations appeared, diverse sects and creeds arose, and the whole world was plunged into darkness.

At such a time as this Bahá'u'lláh dawned from the horizon of Persia. He reformed and renewed the fundamentals and realities of Christ's teachings. He endured the greatest difficulties and underwent the severest ordeals.

Praise be to God that the teachings of God are revoiced, the light of reality has dawned again, the effulgence is increasing daily, and the radiance is shining more gloriously in the zenith. From the cloud of mercy a deluge is descending; the Sun of Reality is brilliant in its eternal station. Again we are hopeful that the same springtime may pitch its tent and that these boundless bestowals may appear once more among us. Through your efforts and sincerity this is made possible. If you arise in the Cause of God with divine power, heavenly grace, the sincerity of the Kingdom, a merciful heart and decisive intention, it is certain that the world of humanity will be entirely illumined, the moralities of mankind will become merciful, the foundations of the Most Great Peace will be laid, and the oneness of the kingdom of man will become a reality. This is the great bounty I desire for you, and I pray and supplicate the divine threshold, imploring in your behalf.

O Thou merciful God! O Thou Who art mighty and powerful! O Thou most kind Father! These servants have gathered together, turning to Thee, supplicating Thy threshold, desiring Thine endless bounties from Thy great assurance. They have no purpose save Thy good pleasure. They have no intention save service to the world of humanity.

O God! Make this assemblage radiant. Make the hearts merciful. Confer the bounties of the Holy Spirit. Endow them with a power from heaven. Bless them with heavenly minds. Increase [pg 56] their sincerity, so that with all humility and contrition they may turn to Thy kingdom and be occupied with service to the world of humanity. May each

one become a radiant candle. May each one become a brilliant star. May each one become beautiful in color and redolent of fragrance in the Kingdom of God.

O kind Father! Confer Thy blessings. Consider not our shortcomings. Shelter us under Thy protection. Remember not our sins. Heal us with Thy mercy. We are weak; Thou art mighty. We are poor; Thou art rich. We are sick; Thou art the Physician. We are needy; Thou art most generous.

O God! Endow us with Thy providence. Thou art the Powerful. Thou art the Giver. Thou art the Beneficent.

