

Talk at Home of Mrs. Corinne True

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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16 September 1912

5338 Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Gertrude Buikema

Alláh-u-Abhá! Praise be to God! I have spent a number of days among you, associating with you in love and fragrance. Praise be to God! Your hearts are pure, your faces radiant, your spirits exhilarated through the glad tidings of God. I pray in your behalf, seeking heavenly confirmations for you that each one may become a radiant candle, shedding light in the world of humanity. May you become the quintessence of love. May you prove to be the effulgence of God, replete with the efficacy of the Holy Spirit and the cause of unity and fellowship in the world of humanity, for today mankind has the greatest need of love and agreement. If the world should remain as it is today, great danger will face it. But if reconciliation and unity are witnessed, if security and confidence be established, if with heart and soul we strive in order that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh may find effective penetration in the realities of humankind, inducing fellowship and accord, binding together the hearts of the various religions and uniting divergent peoples, the world of mankind shall attain peace and composure, the will of God will become the will of man and the earth a veritable habitation of angels. Souls shall be educated, vice be dispelled, the virtues of the world of humanity prevail, materialism pass away, religion be strengthened and prove to be the bond which shall cement together the hearts of men.

In the world of existence there are various bonds which unite human hearts, but not one of these bonds is completely effective. The first and foremost is the bond of family relationship, which is not an efficient unity, for how often it happens that disagreement and divergence rend asunder this close tie of association. The bond of patriotism may



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be a means of fellowship and agreement, but oneness of native land will not completely cement human hearts; for if we review history, we shall find that people of the same race and native land have frequently waged war against each other. Often in civil strife they have shed the same racial blood and destroyed the possessions of their own native kind. Therefore, this bond is not sufficient. Another means of seeming unity is the bond[pg 321] of political association, where governments and rulers have been allied for reasons of intercourse and mutual protection, but which agreement and union afterward became subject to change and violent hatred even to the extreme of war and bloodshed. It is evident that political oneness is not permanently effective.

The source of perfect unity and love in the world of existence is the bond and oneness of reality. When the divine and fundamental reality enters human hearts and lives, it conserves and protects all states and conditions of mankind, establishing that intrinsic oneness of the world of humanity which can only come into being through the efficacy of the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit is like unto the life in the human body, which blends all differences of parts and members in unity and agreement. Consider how numerous are these parts and members, but the oneness of the animating spirit of life unites them all in perfect combination. It establishes such a unity in the bodily organism that if any part is subjected to injury or becomes diseased, all the other parts and functions sympathetically respond and suffer, owing to the perfect oneness existing. Just as the human spirit of life is the cause of coordination among the various parts of the human organism, the Holy Spirit is the controlling cause of the unity and coordination of mankind. That is to say, the bond or oneness of humanity cannot be effectively established save through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the world of humanity is a composite body, and the Holy Spirit is the animating principle of its life.

Therefore, we must strive in order that the power of the Holy Spirit may become effective throughout the world of mankind, that it may confer a new quickening life upon the body politic of the nations and peoples and that all may be guided to the protection and shelter of the Word of God. Then this human world will become angelic, earthly darkness pass away and celestial illumination flood the horizons, human defects be effaced and divine virtues become resplendent. This is possible and real, but only through the power of the Holy Spirit. Today the greatest need of the world is the animating, unifying presence of the Holy Spirit. Until it becomes effective, penetrating and interpenetrating hearts and spirits, and until perfect, reasoning faith shall be implanted in the minds of men, it will be impossible for the social body to be inspired with security and confidence. Nay, on the contrary, enmity and strife will increase day by day, and the differences and divergences of nations will be woefully augmented. Continual additions to the armies and navies of the world will be made, and the fear and certainty of the great pandemic war — the war unparalleled[pg 322] in history — will be intensified; for armament, heretofore limited, is now being increased upon a colossal scale. Conditions are becoming acute, drawing nigh unto the degree of men

warring upon the seas, warring upon the plains, warring in the very atmosphere with a violence unknown in former centuries. With the growth of armament and preparation the dangers are increasingly great.

We must use our utmost endeavors in order that the Holy Spirit may influence minds and hearts toward peace, the bounties of God surround, the divine effulgences become successive, human souls advance, minds expand in wider vision, souls become more holy and the world of humanity be rid of its great menace. For the betterment of the world Bahá'u'lláh endured all the hardships, ordeals and vicissitudes of life, sacrificing His very being and comfort, forfeiting His estates, possessions and honor — all that pertains to human existence — not for one year, nay, rather, for nearly fifty years. During this long period He was subjected to persecution and abuse, was cast into prison, was banished from His native land, underwent severities and humiliation and was exiled four times. He was first exiled from Persia to Baghdád, thence to Constantinople, thence to Rumelia and finally to the great prison-fortress of 'Akká in Syria, where He passed the remainder of His life. Every day a new oppression and abuse was heaped upon Him until He winged His flight from the dungeon to the supreme world and returned to His Lord. He endured these ordeals and difficulties in order that this earthly human world might become heavenly, that the illumination of the divine Kingdom should become a reality in human hearts, that the individual members of mankind might progress, the power of the Holy Spirit increase its efficacy and penetration and the happiness of the world of humanity be assured. He desired for all tranquillity and composure and exercised loving-kindness toward the nations regardless of conditions and differences. He addressed humanity, saying, "O humankind! Verily, ye are all the leaves and fruits of one tree; ye are all one. Therefore, associate in friendship; love one another; abandon prejudices of race; dispel forever this gloomy darkness of human ignorance, for the century of light, the Sun of Reality hath appeared. Now is the time for affiliation, and now is the period of unity and concord. For thousands of years ye have been contending in warfare and strife. It is enough. Now is the time for unity. Lay aside all self-purposes, and know for a certainty that all men are the servants of one God Who will bind them together in love and agreement."

Inasmuch as great differences and divergences of denominational[pg 323] belief had arisen throughout the past, every man with a new idea attributing it to God, Bahá'u'lláh desired that there should not be any ground or reason for disagreement among the Bahá'ís. Therefore, with His own pen He wrote the Book of His Covenant, addressing His relations and all people of the world, saying, "Verily, I have appointed One Who is the Center of My Covenant. All must obey Him; all must turn to Him; He is the Expounder of My Book, and He is informed of My purpose. All must turn to Him. Whatsoever He says is correct, for, verily, He knoweth the texts of My Book. Other than He, no one doth know My Book." The purpose of this statement is that there should never be discord and divergence among the Bahá'ís but that they should always be unified and agreed.

In His prayers Bahá'u'lláh also said, "O God! Whosoever violates My Covenant, O God, humiliate him. Verily, whosoever violates My Covenant, O God, erase and efface him." In all His Tablets, among which is the Tablet of the Branch, He has mentioned and explained the attributes and qualities of the Personage to Whom He referred in the Book of His Covenant. He has fully expounded the function and potency of that Personage, so that no one shall say, "I understand this from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh," for He has appointed the Center, or Expounder, of the Book. He said, "Verily, He is the appointed one; other than He, there is none," intending that no sects or prejudices should be formed, and preventing every man here and there with a new thought from creating dissension and variance. It is as though a king should appoint a governor-general. Whosoever obeys him, obeys the king. Whosoever violates and disobeys him, violates the king. Therefore, whosoever obeys the Center of the Covenant appointed by Bahá'u'lláh has obeyed Bahá'u'lláh, and whosoever disobeys Him has disobeyed Bahá'u'lláh. It has nothing to do with Him ('Abdu'l-Bahá) at all — precisely as the governor-general appointed by the king — whosoever obeys the governor-general obeys the king; whosoever disobeys the governor-general disobeys the king.

Therefore, you must read the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh. You must read the Tablet of the Branch and regard that which He has so clearly stated. Beware! Beware! lest anyone should speak from the authority of his own thoughts or create a new thing out of himself. Beware! Beware! According to the explicit Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh you should care nothing at all for such a person. Bahá'u'lláh shuns such souls. I have expounded these things for you, for the conservation and protection of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, in order that you may be informed, lest any souls shall deceive you and lest any[pg 324] souls shall cause suspicion among you. You must love all people, and yet if any souls put you in doubt, you must know that Bahá'u'lláh is severed from them. Whosoever works for unity and fellowship is a servant of Bahá'u'lláh, and Bahá'u'lláh is his assistant and helper. I ask God that He may cause you to be the very means of agreement and unity, that He may make you radiant, merciful, heavenly children of the divine Kingdom; that you may advance day by day; that you may become as bright as these lamps, bestowing light upon all humanity. Salutations and farewell!![pg 325]

