

Talk at Home of Mrs. Sidney E. Roberts

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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From Stenographic Notes

I have come from distant lands of the East to visit you, crossing the great ocean and traveling a long distance upon this continent. Consider how I have longed to meet you, for my body is frail and weak, incapable of long endurance, yet — praise be to God! — we have at last reached Denver. Such a gathering as this is worthy of thanksgiving; it is peerless and unique among meetings. Other meetings are held from motives of material interests — such as social, political, commercial, educational — but this assemblage has no other purpose than attainment to the divine Kingdom; therefore, it is unique, unequaled. The hearts have turned to God; spirits are exalted through the glad tidings of God; the intentions of all are directed to God. What better meeting could be imagined than this?

Such a gathering is fundamentally spiritual, sincere and most important. But we must arise in the accomplishment of its purposes, for our attention is directed toward the heavenly Kingdom unto which we must render faithful service. Therefore, all individuals present here must be in the attitude of perfect love and fellowship, manifesting the utmost humility and self-sacrifice, turning our thoughts toward the Kingdom of God so that our meeting may be an expression of the glorified hosts of the Supreme Concourse.



ORIGINAL



AUDIO

Praise be to God! We are living in a century of light. Praise be to God! We are upon earth in the day of divine effulgence. Praise be to God! We are alive in this time of the manifestation of divine love. Praise be to God that we live in the day of the outpouring of heavenly bounty. Praise be to God! This is a day wherein the lights and splendors have awakened progress throughout the East and the West. Many holy souls in former times longed to witness this century, lamenting night and day, yearning to be upon the earth in this cycle; but our presence and privilege is the beneficent gift of the Lord. In His divine mercy and absolute virtue He has bestowed this upon us, even as Christ declared, "Many are called but few are chosen." Verily, God has chosen you for His love and knowledge; God has chosen you for the worthy service of unifying mankind; God has chosen you for the purpose of investigating reality and promulgating international peace; God has chosen you for the progress and development of humanity, for spreading and proclaiming true education, for the expression of love toward your fellow creatures and the removal of prejudice; God has chosen you to blend together human hearts and give light to the human world. The doors of His generosity are wide, wide open to us; but we must be attentive, alert and mindful, occupied with service to all mankind, appreciating the bestowals of God and ever conforming to His will.

Observe how darkness has overspread the world. In every corner of the earth there is strife, discord and warfare of some kind. Mankind is submerged in the sea of materialism and occupied with the affairs of this world. They have no thought beyond earthly possessions and manifest no desire save the passions of this fleeting, mortal existence. Their utmost purpose is the attainment of material livelihood, physical comforts and worldly enjoyments such as constitute the happiness of the animal world rather than the world of man.

The honor of man is through the attainment of the knowledge of God; his happiness is from the love of God; his joy is in the glad tidings of God; his greatness is dependent upon his servitude to God. The highest development of man is his entrance into the divine Kingdom, and the outcome of this human existence is the nucleus and essence of eternal life. If man is bereft of the divine bestowals and if his enjoyment and happiness are restricted to his material inclinations, what distinction or difference is there between the animal and himself? In fact, the animal's happiness is greater, for its wants are fewer and its means of livelihood easier to acquire. Although it is necessary for man to strive for material needs and comforts, his real need is the acquisition of the bounties of God. If he is bereft of divine bounties, spiritual susceptibilities and heavenly glad tidings, the life of man in this world has not yielded any worthy fruit. While possessing physical life, he should lay hold of the life spiritual, and together with bodily comforts and happiness, he should enjoy divine pleasures and content. Then is man worthy of the title man; then will he be after the image and likeness of God, for the image of the Merciful consists of the attributes of the heavenly Kingdom. If no fruits of the Kingdom appear in the garden of his soul, man is not in the image and likeness of

God, but if those fruits are forthcoming, he becomes the recipient of ideal bestowals and is enkindled with the fire of the love of God. If his morals become spiritual in character, his aspirations heavenly and his actions conformable to the will of God, man has attained the image and likeness of his Creator; otherwise, he is the image and likeness of Satan. Therefore, Christ hath said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

What are the fruits of the human world? They are the spiritual attributes which appear in man. If man is bereft of those attributes, he is like a fruitless tree. One whose aspiration is lofty and who has developed self-reliance will not be content with a mere animal existence. He will seek the divine Kingdom; he will long to be in heaven although he still walks the earth in his material body, and though his outer visage be physical, his face of inner reflection will become spiritual and heavenly. Until this station is attained by man, his life will be utterly devoid of real outcomes. The span of his existence will pass away in eating, drinking and sleeping, without eternal fruits, heavenly traces or illumination — without spiritual potency, everlasting life or the lofty attainments intended for him during his pilgrimage through the human world. You must thank God that your efforts are high and noble, that your endeavors are worthy, that your intentions are centered upon the Kingdom of God and that your supreme desire is the acquisition of eternal virtues. You must act in accordance with these requirements. A man may be a Bahá'í in name only. If he is a Bahá'í in reality, his deeds and actions will be decisive proofs of it. What are the requirements? Love for mankind, sincerity toward all, reflecting the oneness of the world of humanity, philanthropy, becoming enkindled with the fire of the love of God, attainment to the knowledge of God and that which is conducive to human welfare.

This evening we were speaking of the fellowship and unity of the Persian Bahá'ís. They can truly be called lovers. For example, if one of the friends of God arrived in their city, all the friends would rejoice and assemble together in a meeting with him. If he were ill, they would care for him; if sad, they would comfort him. They would care for him in every way and give unmistakable evidence that there is a spiritual relationship amongst them.

Strangers and outsiders are astonished at this love and radiant affection existing among the Bahá'ís. They inquire about it. They observe the unity and agreement manifest among them. They say, "What a beautiful spirit shines in their faces!" All envy it and wish that such a bond of love might be witnessed everywhere. Therefore, to you my first admonition is this: Associate most kindly with all; be as one family; pursue this same pathway. Let your intentions be one that your love may permeate and affect the hearts of others so that they may grow to love each other and all attain to this condition of oneness.

The world of humanity is filled with darkness; you are its radiant candles. It is very poor; you must be the treasury of the Kingdom. It is exceedingly debased; you must be the

cause of its exaltation. It is bereft of divine graces; you must give it impetus and spiritual quickening. According to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh you must love and cherish each individual member of humanity.

The first sign of faith is love. The message of the holy, divine Manifestations is love; the phenomena of creation are based upon love; the radiance of the world is due to love; the well-being and happiness of the world depend upon it. Therefore, I admonish you that you must strive throughout the human world to diffuse the light of love. The people of this world are thinking of warfare; you must be peacemakers. The nations are self-centered; you must be thoughtful of others rather than yourselves. They are neglectful; you must be mindful. They are asleep; you should be awake and alert. May each one of you be as a shining star in the horizon of eternal glory. This is my wish for you and my highest hope. I have come long distances that you may attain these attributes and divine favors. Praise be to God! I have attended this meeting which has for its purpose the commemoration of God.

