

# Talk at 1901 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

I am greatly pleased with the friends in Washington and experience real happiness in meeting them. Likewise, I am pleased with the friends from Baltimore, for I have observed that their hearts are attracted to the love of Bahá'u'lláh. Their vision is extended toward the Kingdom of Bahá. Their spirits are rejoicing in the glad tidings of Abhá. Verily, they are servants of the Cause of God. All are engaged in service, and the perfection of their desire is to enter into the Kingdom of Abhá and draw near unto God. For that reason I am very happy and well pleased with them. I pray for you all. May the favors of the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, encompass you, and may the lights of the Sun of Reality be your illumination. May you all become united and assured. May you serve the Cause of God as one single, united force. I give you the glad tidings that the confirmations of God will descend upon you. Be ye assured of this. Ye will become illumined. Ye will become conquerors.

But after I leave, some people may arise in opposition, heaping persecutions upon you in their bitterness, and in the newspapers there may be articles published against the Cause. Rest ye in the assurance of firmness. Be well poised and serene, remembering that this is only as the harmless twittering of sparrows and that it will soon pass away. If such things do not happen, the fame of the Cause will not become widespread, and the summons of God will not be heard. Consider the history of the past. Recall, for instance, the days of Christ and the events subsequent thereto. How many were the books written against Him! What calumnies were attributed to Him!



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How violent were the utterances in the temples against Him! How many the accusations! What hatred and persecution! How they scoffed at Him in derision and contempt! Consider the titles and epithets they bestowed upon His majesty! They even designated Him Beelzebub — Satan. They said Beelzebub had been captured and crucified. They placed a crown of thorns upon Beelzebub's head and paraded Him through the streets. This was the name the Jews bestowed upon Christ; it is written in the Gospel. There were many other forms of reviling and persecution, spitting in His beautiful face, cursing and anathematizing, bowing backward toward Him, saying, "Peace be on thee, thou king of the Jews!" "Peace be on thee, thou destroyer of the temple!" "Peace be on thee, thou king and pretender who would restore the temple in three days!" The philosophers of the times, Romans and Greeks, wrote against Christ. Even the kings wrote books of abuse, calumny and contempt. One of these kings was a Caesar. He was also a philosopher. In his book he says, concerning the people of Christ, "The most degraded of people are the Christians. The most immoral of the people of this time are the Christians. Jesus of Nazareth has led them astray. O people! If you wish to know who Jesus is and what Christian means, go and ask his relatives. Go and ask the Jews who know him. See what a bad person he is, how degraded he is." There were many similar accounts. But remember that these statements did not affect the cause of Christianity. On the contrary, Christianity advanced daily in power and potency.

Day by day the majesty of Christ grew in splendor and effulgence. Therefore, my purpose is to warn and strengthen you against accusations, criticisms, revilings and derision in newspaper articles or other publications. Be not disturbed by them. They are the very confirmation of the Cause, the very source of upbuilding to the Movement. May God confirm the day when a score of ministers of the churches may arise and with bared heads cry at the top of their voices that the Bahá'ís are misguided. I would like to see that day, for that is the time when the Cause of God will spread. Bahá'u'lláh has pronounced such as these the couriers of the Cause. They will proclaim from pulpits that the Bahá'ís are fools, that they are a wicked and unrighteous people, but be ye steadfast [pg 430] and unwavering in the Cause of God. They will spread the message of Bahá'u'lláh.

His Honor Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl has written a treatise answering the criticisms of a London preacher. Each one of you should have a copy. [1] Read, memorize and reflect upon it. Then, when accusations and criticisms are advanced by those unfavorable to the Cause, you will be well armed. [pg 431] [1]: Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl Gulpáygán, *The Brilliant Proof* (Chicago: Press of Bahá'í News Service, 1912). The booklet was published under the direction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá while He was in America.

