



Visits with 'Abdu'l-Bahá

— Trust in God

For those who aspire
to lasting change,
His example guides
the way...

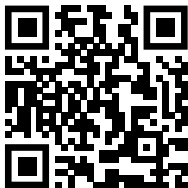
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Learn more about 'Abdu'l-Bahá:



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Introduction

A unique figure in human and religious history, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was the perfect example in word and deed of all His Father, Bahá’u’lláh, taught.

After a lifetime of persecution and imprisonment for His religious beliefs, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá embarked in 1911 from the Holy Land on an extended trip to share His Father’s message in Egypt, Europe and North America, including nine days in Canada.

“The accounts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s travels and of the effect He had on those who met Him are legion. Some went to extraordinary lengths to enter His presence—going by boat, by foot, or even under railway trains—and, by the urgency of their desire to see Him, imprinted themselves on the consciousness of future generations of adults

and children. The testimonies of those who were transformed by even a brief, sometimes near wordless encounter with their beloved Master remain deeply stirring. In the wide array of visitors He received—rich and poor, black and white, indigenous and émigré—the universal embrace of His Father’s Faith was unmistakably in evidence.”¹

November 28, 2021, marks the one hundredth anniversary of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s passing. In His memory, friends the world over are sharing stories of His inspiring life as a gift with their families, neighbours and co-workers, with the conviction they will contribute to a spirit of hope in these turbulent times. As He assured us: “that which is confirmed is the oneness of the world of humanity. Every soul who serveth this oneness will undoubtedly be assisted and confirmed.”

¹ 5 December 2013 message of the Universal House of Justice



Corinne True was a woman who was destined to suffer great losses in her life, such as, sadly, the death of several children, and this story shows how ‘Abdu’l-Bahá helped her to understand and serve humanity despite her deep suffering.

As with all new believers, Corinne was encouraged to write to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Several months passed before she received a Tablet from Him, sent from the Holy Land in October 1900. This Tablet helped her understand the death of her three-year-old son, Nathanael:

“Be not grieved nor troubled because of the loss which hath befallen thee—a loss which caused the tears to flow, sighs to be produced, sorrow to exist and hearts to burn in great agony; but know, this hath reference only to the physical body, and if thou considerest this matter with a discerning and intelligent eye, thou wilt find that it

hath no power whatsoever, for separation belongeth to the characteristics of the body. But concerning the spirit, know that thy pure son shall be with thee in the Kingdom of God and thou shalt witness his smiling face, illumined brow, handsome spirit and real happiness. Accordingly, thou wilt then be comforted and thank God for His favour upon thee.”

A few weeks after the arrival of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tablet, seven-year-old Kenneth contracted diphtheria, and died. Once again, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá comforted Corinne, in another Tablet sent soon after:

“Be not grieved at the calamity which hath unexpectedly come upon thee and for the misfortune which heavily weigheth upon thee. It behoveth one like thee to endure every trial, to be pleased with the decree and to commit all thy affairs to God so that thou mayest be a calm, approved and pleasing

soul before God. Know thou, that thy beloved son hath soared, with the wing of soul, up to the loftiest height which is never-ending in the Kingdom of God. Rejoice at this great prosperity... Truly, I say unto thee, wert thou informed of the position in which is thy son, thy face would be illumined by the lights of happiness.”

In another Tablet that she received from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Corinne found a code for living which she would follow throughout the rest of her life. Among the reassuring words He shared in that Tablet:

“Believe thou in God, and keep thine eyes fixed upon the exalted Kingdom; be thou enamoured of the Abhá Beauty; stand thou firm in the Covenant; yearn thou to ascend into the Heaven of the Universal Light. Be thou severed from this world, and reborn through the sweet scents of holiness that blow from the realm of the All-Highest.

Be thou a summoner to love, and be thou kind to all the human race. Love thou the children of men and share in their sorrows. Be thou of those who foster peace. Offer thy friendship, be worthy of trust. Be thou a balm to every sore, be thou a medicine for every ill. Bind thou the souls together. Recite thou the verses of guidance. Be engaged in the worship of thy Lord, and rise up to lead the people aright. Loose thy tongue and teach, and let thy face be bright with the fire of God's love. Rest thou not for a moment, seek thou to draw no easeful breath. Thus mayest thou become a sign and symbol of God's love, and a banner of His grace."

Corinne's faith was reinforced by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words, and she became calm, patient and steadfast.

—*Lights of Fortitude*, by Barron Harper, pp. 393-395



One day a woman came to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with her sorrows. As she told her story, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá tried to calm her and said, “Don’t be sad now, don’t be sad.” The woman said, “My brother has been in prison for three years. He should not have been imprisoned because it was not his fault. He was weak and followed others. He will be in prison for four more years. My mother and father are full of sorrow all the time. My brother-in-law used to take care of us, but he has just died.”

The Master could see the whole human story. Here was a family which was experiencing every form of misery—they were poor, they were weak, they were sad, disgraced, and without any hope whatsoever. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, “You must trust in God.”

“But,” the woman cried, “the more I trust, the worse things become!”

“You have never trusted,” said ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

“But my mother is reading the Bible all the time,” she said. “She does not deserve that God should leave her so helpless! I read the Bible myself; I say the ninety-first Psalm and the twenty-third Psalm every night before I go to bed. I pray, too.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá looked at her lovingly and said, “To pray is not to read the Bible. To pray is to trust in God and accept His Will. You must be patient and accept the Will of God, then things will change for you. Put your family in God’s hands. Trust in God and love His Will. Strong ships are not conquered by the sea; they ride the waves! Now be a strong ship, not a battered one.”

—*Stories about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, edited by Gloria Faizi, pp. 13-14



One evening, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was walking with a few Bahá’ís in the bright city of London. They strolled along a street lined on both sides with glowing lamps that stretched as far as the eye could see. Those in the company of the beloved Master felt as though their hearts had been carried away to another world.

“I am very much pleased with this scene,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá commented. “Light is good, most good. There was much darkness in the prison at ‘Akká.”

The small group of friends, who loved ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, were saddened at the memory of His confinement in the fortress-city of ‘Akká, where He had spent so many years as a prisoner alongside His Father, Bahá’u’lláh. It was a very unwelcoming place, and the

family suffered great hardship. “We are glad, oh so full of gladness that you are free,” they said.

To this ‘Abdu’l-Bahá responded: “I was happy in that prison, for those days were passed in the path of service.” The greatest prison, He told them, is the prison of self. You see, if we think only of ourselves and not of those around us—that is when we are really imprisoned, when we truly suffer! ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was content at all times, for He walked in the path of service to God and humanity. And so, even during the darkest days as a prisoner in ‘Akká, the light of His indomitable spirit shone forth, giving warmth and comfort to others.

—*Teaching Children’s Classes, Grade 1; Ruhi Institute Book 3,*
p. 110



The demands on ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s time were constant. The English Bahá’ís tried to organize the flow of those seeking interviews and instituted a system of official appointments. One day, a woman appeared at the door and asked if she could see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. When asked if she had an appointment, she admitted that she had not and was promptly told, “I am sorry but He is occupied now with most important people, and cannot be disturbed.” Sadly, the woman slowly turned away, but before she could reach the bottom of the steps, a messenger from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rushed out and breathlessly said, “He wishes to see you, come back!” From the house came the powerful voice of the Master: “A heart has been hurt. Hasten, hasten, bring her to me!”

—‘Abdu’l-Bahá in *Their Midst*, by Earl Redman, p. 36



As the ship that finally brought ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the shores of the American continent passed by the Statue of Liberty, He threw His arms wide open in greeting, saying, “There is the new world’s symbol of liberty and freedom. After being forty years a prisoner I can tell you that freedom is not a matter of place. It is a condition. Unless one accept dire vicissitudes he will not attain. When one is released from the prison of self, that is indeed a release.”

—‘Abdu’l-Bahá in *Their Midst*, by Earl Redman, p. 56



A Prayer by 'Abdu'l-Bahá

O my Lord! Thou knowest that the people are encircled with pain and calamities and are environed with hardships and trouble. Every trial doth attack man and every dire adversity doth assail him like unto the assault of a serpent. There is no shelter and asylum for him except under the wing of Thy protection, preservation, guard and custody.

O Thou the Merciful One! O my Lord! Make Thy protection my armor, Thy preservation my shield, humbleness before the door of Thy oneness my guard, and Thy custody and defense my fortress and my abode. Preserve me from the suggestions of self and desire, and guard me from every sickness, trial, difficulty and ordeal.

Verily, Thou art the Protector, the Guardian, the Preserver, the Sufficer, and verily, Thou art the Merciful of the Most Merciful.

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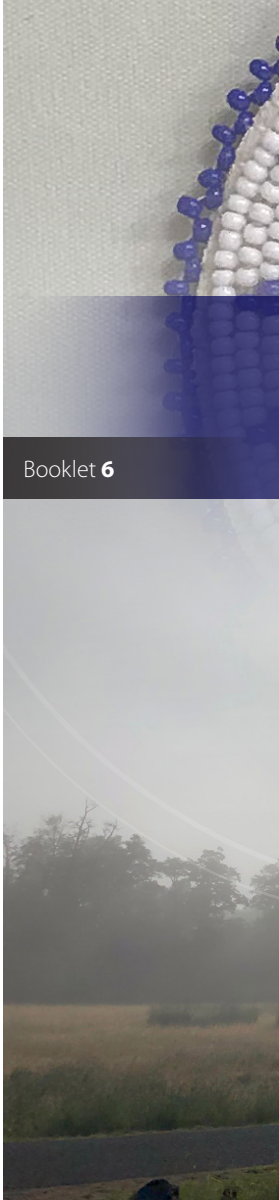
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