

ABDUL - BAHÁ

True Happiness, Wisdom and Progress. The Dawn of Knowledge.

About 600 years ago a society was formed in Persia called the Society of the Friends, who gather for silent communion with the Almighty.

They divided divine philosophy into two parts. There is one kind of philosophy of which the knowledge can be acquired through lectures and study in schools and colleges.

The second kind of philosophy is that of the Illuminati (followers) of the inward light. The schools of this philosophy were held in silence. Meditating and turning their faces to the Source of Light, from that Central Light the mysteries of the kingdom were reflected in their hearts. All the divine problems were solved by this power of illumination.

This Society of Friends increased greatly in Persia and until the present time these societies exist. Many books and epistles were written by their leaders. When they assemble in the meeting house they sit silently and contemplate. Their leader opens with a certain proposition, and says to the audience: "You must meditate on this problem." Then, freeing their minds from everything else, they sit and reflect, and before long the answer is revealed to them. Many abstruse divine questions are solved by this illumination.

Reality of Spirit

Among the great questions unfolding from the rays of the sun of Reality upon the mind of man is the question of the reality of the spirit of man; of the birth of the spirit; of the birth from this world into the World of God; the question of the inner life of the spirit after its ascension from the body.

They likewise meditate upon the scientific questions of the day, and these also are solved. They are called "Followers of the Inner Light." They attain to a superlative degree of power, and are entirely freed from blind dogmas and imitation. Men rely on the statements of these people; by themselves, within themselves, they solve all mysteries.

If they find out a solution with the assistance of the inner light they accept it, and afterward declare it; otherwise they would consider it a matter of blind imitation.

They go so far as to reflect upon the essential nature of the divinity; of divine revelation of the manifestation of the Deity in this world. All the philosophical, divine and scientific questions are solved by them through the power of the spirit.

Bahá'ó'llah says there is a sign (from God) in every phenomenon. The sign of the intellect is contemplation, and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is impossible for men to do two things at the same time; he cannot both speak and meditate.

Man's Special Faculty

It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit. In that state of mind you put certain questions to your spirit, and the spirit answers—the light breaks forth and the reality is revealed.

You cannot apply the name "man" to any being devoid of this faculty of meditation. Without it he would be a mere animal, lower than the beasts.

Through the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life; through it he receives the breath of the Holy Spirit—the bestowal of the spirit is given in reflection and meditation. The spirit of man itself informed and strengthened during meditation; through it affairs of which the man knew nothing are unfolded before his view. Through it one receives divine inspiration; through it one partakes of heavenly food.

Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that state man abstracts himself. In that state man withdraws himself from all outside objects; in that subjective mood he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life and can unfold the secrets of things in themselves. To illustrate this, think of man endowed with two kinds of sight; when the power of insight is being used the outward power of vision does not see.

Free From Animal Nature

This power of meditation frees man from the animal nature, discerns the reality of things, puts man in touch with God. This faculty brings forth from the invisible plane the sciences and arts. Through the meditative faculty inventions are made possible, colossal undertakings are carried out; through it governments can be run smoothly. Through this faculty man enters into the very Kingdom of God.

Nevertheless, some thoughts are useless to man. They are like waves ebbing to and fro in the sea without result.

But if the faculty of meditation is bathed in the inner light, characterized with divine attributes, then the results will be wonderful.

The meditative faculty is akin to the mirror. If you put before it earthly objects it will reflect them. Therefore, if the spirit of man is contemplating earthly subjects he will be informed of these. But if the mirror (of the spirit) be turned heavenward, the heavenly constellations and the rays of the Sun of Reality will be reflected in your hearts and the virtues of the kingdom will be attained.

Therefore, let us keep our hearts rightly directed—turning not only to the Sun and not to the earth, that we may discover the Kingdom of God and comprehend the mysteries of the spirit.