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Visit to 'Akká

Sigurd Russell

April 1904.

Notes of Sigurd Russell taken of the Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá during his Visit to 'Akká,

In speaking of the kings and queens of earth, our Lord ('Abdu'l-Bahá) said:

“Their glory is but temporal and mortal, for they are but rulers of this ophomoral sphere where all things change from day to day and, finally pass away entirely; but, the women and men who in the time of a divine Manifestation come forward to acknowledge and believe in Him, become real kings and queens whose reign, glory and dominion are immortal. For example, Mary Magdalene was the daughter of a farmer and but a peasant, yet, today, name is known and renowned throughout the world, because in His day, she accepted Christ and went forth to serve Him.”

When asked concerning the station of the “Pope” who recently departed this life, 'Abdu'l-Bahá answered:

“His condition, there, in the world of spirit is the same as it was here. While here, his eyes were not opened to the real spiritual light neither did he comprehend the real truth of God. Thus, when he left the earth, his spiritual eyes were not opened – neither his spiritual ears. He occupied a great and exalted station in this world, in as much as he was chosen and selected by men to be a mediator between them and God, Therefore, it was human and not divine.”

“Let us consider a little, the difference between his life and the life of Christ. Jesus, the Son of God, walked barefooted in the wilderness without a place to lay his holy head. His shelter was the canopy of heaven, his lamp, the stars and often his food consisted of the grasses of the field or brooked corn. He was without friends or money, arrested and taken before officials, beaten and spit upon and debased (as far as the opinion of those attested his treatment was concerned) yet his election and calling was of GOD. His glory and dignity consisted not in the opinion of men, but In doing the will of his Father in heaven: and though he was nailed to the cross, his divine head crowned with thorns, today his name is revered, his memory hold sacred, his glory fills the earth divine sonship is acknowledge by the whole world, because he was chosen by God and not by men.

“But the “Pope” while upon this earth, lived in the Palace of the Vatican, surrounded by every comfort and luxury, dressing in the most beautiful garments and softest of raiments, sleeping upon beds of case, partaking of the [??] of food, wearing a crown of gold upon his head and was often carried upon the shoulders of his cardinals.

He was worshipped by the people, and called “Holy Father” but even now, though he has been dead but a short time, the world is already busy with the new “Pope” and he is nearly forgotten and after a little no one [??] mention him at all, for his election was of earth, his appointment was by man, his dominion terrestrial and temporary, his glory earthly and his dignity but the false idea of the people.

“Thus, think of the difference between him and Christ and you will see that the fame of the “Pope” was of short duration, while that of Christ is eternal. As a man, the “Pope” was very good to his people, but he was a human being without divine inspiration, and therein consists the greatest difference between Him whom God called His Son, and the people called “The Holy [??].”

‘Akká, April 14, 1904.

Madame J. said that at times her heart became sad, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá answered:

“Yes, I know and the more you think to know the reason the less you can solve the problem; but I will tell you – God created man after His own image, therefore, He has created His condition to be divine, and his real happiness, cheerfulness, wealth, dominion and power - must all be of divine origin, and if he will always turn to the kingdom, he will be in happiness and contentment. Man erroneously thinks his happiness comes from the world and for that reason, he is always unhappy and in difficulty – for example, a man in poverty thinks if he were rich, he would be happy, but after attaining wealth he still finds himself unhappy and often in the very depths of sadness. Therefore, man thinks his happiness is from this world and what it contains, while God has created him in such manner that his happiness must come from the kingdom – that is, he must find joy from the spiritual world. I have been in prison and chains, and was never happier than at that time, because I knew no happiness can come to me from anything this world has to offer. Therefore when I was in prison for the sake of God, my joy was and is now, beyond words.

“The things of this world are transitory and passing and will soon vanish, but turn to God, and you will receive heavenly joy and blessing which will never become dimmed.

Madame J. Asked - asked our friends see us from the