

... description: Letter by Dr. Falscher to Frau Alice Schwarz-Solivo of Talk by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
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title: Dr. Falscher Notes notes: Online edition provided by Robert Stauffer, 1998, from a copy given by Thellie Lovejoy. Proofread by Lovejoy. Errors from original retained. Regarding Dr. Falscher, see also the “Letter by Frau Anna Grossmann.” (NB: There is uncertainty whether the proper spelling is “Falscher” or “Fallscheer.”) ...

Letter by Dr. Falscher to Frau Alice Schwarz-Solivo of Talk by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Dr. Falscher

March 1910

Foreword

From the Treasury of Remembrances of ‘Abbás Effendi

The following is taken from a letter by Frau Doctor J. F. to Frau Alice Schwarz-Solivo of Stuttgart concerning the interview the Doctor and Miss Stephens had with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the first week in March 1910. It was one of the many enjoyed by this German doctor, who was practicing in Haifa from 1906 to 1911. {{p1}}

Miss Stephens asked: “how does the bulime [sublime? — ed.] message of the Manifestation explain the controversy between predestination and man’s free will? How did it happen for instance, that I was born a female, an English woman, a Christian during the nineteenth century? Why am I not a man, a Chinese, a Confucian born in the year 1000?”

The Master replied: “O my daughter, you are asking so very much that His Holiness, Bahá’u’lláh could teach you all of this only in many days and weeks. Notwithstanding the short time (it is already ten hours — i.e. five o’clock p.m.) I shall try to open the door of understanding to the inquisitive knocker.

“It has pleased the Lord God to endow the child of man with three great mysteries. The complete unveiling of these mysteries takes place when our soul is stripped of the earthly body. The three great mysteries are:

1. The mystery of Good and Evil.
2. The mystery of the suffering of children and of animals (i.e. of the blameless creatures.)
3. The riddle of the human right of self-determination (i.e. free will)

“All of the great Manifestations of God, Moses, Christ, Muḥammad, Bahá’u’lláh and others show that these three different questions are co-related. As the speedily moving sun allows us but scant time to live, we will now in a general manner discuss the riddle of the human will with the hope that God the Lord may present us with a beautiful hour as we delve into the eternal laws of life and death.

“Listen then my children. The human soul is to be compared to a weaver; the human life is the thing woven, the cloth; the human body, principally the brain, is the tool, the instrument with which the weaving is done.

“God the Lord, the Master of the works, prepares the loom, that is the warp for the loom, the human milieu or environment with the ground — threads of fate. Thereby will be forced on the human being, the place, the time, the parents, the religion, nationality, society qualities, that is of gifted persons etc. The human soul then throws across the warp-threads the filling or woof by means of the shuttle that is the five senses, imagination, action, whereby up to the end of life as we say, are developed the masterpieces of the human life.

“The materials for weaving may be of hemp-yarn, wool or silk, or some other mixture — which cannot be chosen by the soul, nor can the soul select the tools, but only the pattern and the method of weaving, insofar as it is not already predestined by the material itself to a certain degree. The material represents the inherited, (that is taken over) body organization. {{p2}}

“What then is ‘freedom of will’, predestination, determination? A human being is absolutely determined by means of inheritance and from instinct. Your modern European philosophers and medical men lately define the instinct, as I am told, by the word subconscious, that is sympathism, Lordsmain. The human being has, however, a relative freedom of will, or even better said, a freedom of choice, a variation of the will. Man is able to resist the insistence of instinct, the thriving impulses which come from knowledge and imagination, etc.

“O ye children of the Occident! I give you also a modern parable. Inheritance or instinct is the solid immovable track on which the train of life must travel. But the engineer, the soul, who directs the engine and steers, may go back and forward; he may go fast or slow, he can switch over to other tracks, stop at main or small stations or skip. And he observes or does not observe the technical, commercial, (that is the traffic and work) regulations.

“There exists in man a harmony, a quiet inner harmony, in brief, the unity between free and not free happenings, between conscious and unconscious will, that is desire. Thus there develops a harmony of human will and divine will, or better said, the unity of the human will of action with the eternal will of God. This results in peace of mind for man, his highest and most valuable treasure on earth.

“Out mission lies between will and duty. God alone can judge and measure the responsibility of our free will, brought about from inheritance or instinct, and

demanded from us as duty. This He will do in His eternal justice. To whom God has given in the cradle much, from him He will demand sometime much.”

(Der Sonner Der Wahrheit, { .sig }

April 1935-Stuttgart. { .date }

Translation by Richard Grosser.) { .noid }

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