

The background of the image is a composite. The top half features a large, vibrant rainbow made of small, multi-colored beads (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) arranged in concentric circles. The bottom half shows a gravel path winding through a lush green field with tall grasses and wildflowers. A semi-transparent dark red banner is overlaid across the middle, containing the text.

Visits with 'Abdu'l-Bahá

— True Friendship

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

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Learn more about 'Abdu'l-Bahá:



English



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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*



‘Abdu’l-Bahá told the pilgrims that on Sunday morning He would meet them on Mount Carmel, under the shade of the trees where Bahá’u’lláh had sat and rested. But one of the pilgrims fell ill, and the Master went to visit her on that Sunday. She recounts what happened on that day:

On Sunday morning we awakened with the joy and hope of the meeting on Mount Carmel. The Master arrived quite early and after looking at me, touching my head and counting my pulse, still holding my hand, He said to the believers present, “There will be no meeting on Mount Carmel today... We could not go and leave one of the beloved of God alone and sick. We could none of us be happy unless all the beloved were happy.” We were astonished. That anything so important as this meeting in that blessed spot should be cancelled because one person was ill and could not go seemed incredible.

It was so contrary to all ordinary habits of thought and action, so different from the life of the world where daily events and material circumstances are supreme in importance that it gave us a genuine shock of surprise, and in that shock the foundations of the old order began to totter and fall. The Master's words had opened wide the door of God's Kingdom and given us a vision of that infinite world whose only law is love.

This was but one of many times that we saw 'Abdu'l-Bahá place above every other consideration the love and kindness, the sympathy and compassion due to every soul. Indeed, as we look back upon that blessed time spent in His presence, we understand that the object of our pilgrimage was to learn for the first time on earth what love is, to witness its light in every face, to feel its burning heat in every heart, and to become ourselves enkindled with this divine

flame from the Sun of Truth, the Essence of whose being is love. So, on that Sunday morning He sat with us for a while and we thought no more of the meeting on Mount Carmel, for in the joy and infinite rest of His presence all else was swallowed up.

—*An Early Pilgrimage*, by May Maxwell, pp. 14-16



Being with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá made a person very happy. It also helped to make one a better person. One of the pilgrims felt that she could never again feel anything but love for another human being. Yet one afternoon, while she was in the Holy Land in her room with two of her friends, she spoke unkindly about another friend.

While they were sitting together, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá returned from visiting the poor and the sick. Immediately He sent for one of the people who had heard the unkind words spoken. He told her that while He was away, someone had spoken unkindly about another person. And He told her it made Him sad that Bahá’ís should not love one another, or that they should speak against anyone. He told her, too, not to speak of it, but to pray.

A little later, everyone went to supper. The friend who had spoken unkindly was not

aware of the wrong she had done until her eyes met those of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, so full of gentleness and kindness. His eyes spoke to her. Suddenly, she was aware that she had done wrong, and she burst into tears. He did not take notice of her for a while. Supper continued while she wept over what she had done.

After a few moments, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá turned and smiled at her and spoke her name several times as though He were calling her to Him. In an instant she was filled with sweet happiness. In her heart she felt sure He would forgive her and help her to become more loving toward others.

—*Stories about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, edited by Gloria Faizi, p. 9



This is a story of a gift to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá from a poor Bahá’í workman of Ishqabad. The man heard that a traveler was passing through his town on the way to London to join ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and he longed to send a gift to his beloved Master. But he had nothing to give, so he begged the traveler to take his simple dinner, which he had tied up in a cotton handkerchief, and to give it to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as a token of his love.

Many days went by before the traveler reached London. He came to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá when He was about to have lunch with some guests and faithfully presented the workman’s gift with the story of how it was sent. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá untied the handkerchief. In it was a piece of dry black bread and a shriveled apple. What did ‘Abdu’l-Bahá do with it? He broke the bread into small pieces and urged the guests to join Him in

eating from the workman's dinner. "Eat with me this gift of humble love," He said. And 'Abdu'l-Bahá left His own lunch untasted.

—*Stories about 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, edited by Gloria Faizi, p. 24

*Be ye sincerely kind,
not in appearance only.*

—*Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*: 1



On the day I arrived at Haifa I was ill with a dysentery which I had picked up in the course of my travels. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá sent His own physician to me and visited me Himself. He said, “I would that I could take your illness upon Myself.” I have never forgotten this. I felt, I knew, that in making this remark ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was not speaking in mere terms of sympathy. He meant just what He said. Such is the great love of the Kingdom, of which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke so often and so much. This is a love that is difficult, almost impossible, for us to acquire—though we may seek to approximate its perfection. It is more than sympathy, more than empathy. It is sacrificial love.

—“Some Warm Memories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá”, by Stanwood Cobb, *Bahá’í News*, March 1989



“Once, when I lived in Baghdad,” He [‘Abdu’l-Bahá] went on, “I was invited to the house of a poor thorn-picker. In Baghdad the heat is greater even than in Syria; and it was a very hot day. But I walked twelve miles to the thorn-picker’s hut. Then his wife made a little cake out of some meal for Me and burnt it in cooking it, so that it was a black, hard lump. Still that was the best reception I ever attended.”

—*The Diary of Juliet Thompson*, p. 171



One day ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was asked how one should live. His reply was, “Be kind to everyone. One must not belittle the thought of another...” To one of the friends, the Master said, “Never let anyone speak of another unkindly in your presence. Should anyone do so, stop them. Tell them it is against the commands of Bahá’u’lláh, that He has commanded: ‘Love one another.’ Never speak an unkind word, yourself, against anyone. If you see something wrong, let your silence be your only comment...”

—*Vignettes from the Life of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, by Annamarie Honnold, pp. 39-40



A Prayer by 'Abdu'l-Bahá

O God, my God! Aid Thou Thy trusted servants to have loving and tender hearts. Help them to spread, amongst all the nations of the earth, the light of guidance that cometh from the Company on high. Verily, Thou art the Strong, the Powerful, the Mighty, the All-Subduing, the Ever-Giving. Verily, Thou art the Generous, the Gentle, the Tender, the Most Bountiful.

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