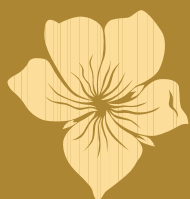


A decorative border in a golden-yellow color frames the entire page. It features stylized, flowing lines that intertwine with various floral motifs, including large five-petaled flowers and smaller buds. The border is set against a solid dark blue background.

Abbas Effendi

The Ambassador of Humanity and Peace

*On the Centenary of His Passing
and in Commemoration of
His Lofty Services to Humanity*



“When thou traversest the regions of the world, thou shalt conclude that all progress is the result of association and cooperation, while ruin is the outcome of animosity and hatred.”



Abbas Effendi 'Abdu'l-Bahá
1844-1921

During the early years of the twentieth century, the Arab and Islamic world knew him as Abbas Effendi, and the Western world knew him as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He was described by many prominent people in the East and West with the most noble attributes, such as “the scholar”, “the great pious sheikh”, “the gem of grace and perfection”, “the wonder of his age”, “the rareness of his age” and “the master of reformers”. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was known for his “presence of mind, knowledge and abundant wisdom” and western intellectuals described him as “an ambassador for humanity and peace”. Abbas Effendi explained to the people of his time that all religions came from one divine source, and that the religion of God is one. He affirmed that love is the only guarantor for achieving unity and success. In one of his talks he says: “When we look at the world of existence, we do not see anything greater than love. Love is the cause of life, and love is the cause of salvation, and love is the cause of entering into the kingdom of God, and love is the cause of eternal life.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá is the perfect exemplar of the teachings revealed by Bahá’u’lláh, and the stories of his life are a testament to those teachings.

Abbas Effendi lived most of the seventy-seven years of his life accompanying his father in the successive exiles that were imposed on them at that time. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá fluently and eloquently mastered the Arabic language and was well acquainted with the Holy Quran and the Arabic literary heritage.

During his life, he was also known as a supporter of people’s dignity and inherent rights, a proponent of religious tolerance, and a living example for the unity of human family.



In the late years of his life, in the year 1910, 'Abdu'l-Bahá travelled to Egypt and then to Europe and America where he was reverently welcomed by many groups of people who raced to meet him and to listen to his talks on meetings the challenges of the age, the future of humanity as well as the unity of religions. His meeting and talks were held both privately and publicly in homes, cultural clubs, places of worship as well as universities. 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave talks in many churches and scientific institutes, and he proved in an eloquent manner the existence of the Divine Essence and the truth of all His messengers with convincing proofs. All his talks have been translated into several languages and published in European and American newspapers amongst others. Abbas Effendi also delivered speeches at peace conferences and large meetings in prestigious universities and participated in conferences on the elimination of racial discrimination and racial prejudice.

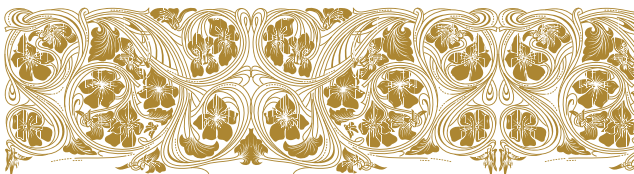
During those meetings and conversations, he spoke about the oneness of God, the unity and harmony of religions, the oneness of humanity, the equality between women and men, universal peace and economic justice, moral principles and spiritual values that seek to create cooperation and harmony and cultivate love and affection in the souls of men. He reinforced the importance of the union of East and West, because in his view it was the gateway to a just, united and peaceful world. He urged people to acquire human perfections and to abide by divine teachings and to abandon sectarian, racial and political fanaticism, and urged them to investigate the truth and remove misunderstandings among nations. He also clarified that the missions of all the messengers of God were one, calling on the peoples of the world to unite under one God, to follow the truth, to seek fellowship and peace among the peoples. He demanded that his meetings be open for all races, classes, and ethnicities. Thus, these visits and conversations became the subject of hundreds of newspaper articles.



The “unity of human spirit” was the pivotal attention of Abbas Effendi’s life and the essence of his message to the twentieth century. His view of this century as one that is filled with contradictions, differed completely from that of others. While others only saw negative aspects and formidable problems afflicting humanity, in the twentieth century; A view that left them with no hopes of salvation, Abbas Effendi saw its positive aspects and declared his faith in man and his ability to overcome his ordeal. This view was not a naive view, rather stemming from a comprehensive, spiritual-based vision, with a world-embracing view, that can harness the capabilities and achievements of the era to serve the highest human goals and avoid the enormous dangers that threaten the entire world. Abbas Effendi did not view the twentieth century as the “century of anxiety” but considered it to be “the century of lights” and “the master of centuries” owing to the great potential available to create a new world.

In the East, and especially in the Arab world between Beirut, Akka, Haifa, Alexandria and Cairo, prominent figures had encounters with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá such as: Imam Sheikh Muhammad Abdo, Prince Shakib Arslan, historian Muhammad Jamil Beyhem, Sheikh Ali Youssef and Salim Qubayan, Abbas Mahmoud Al-Aqqad, Sheikh Muhammad Bakhit, and the Mufti of Haifa Sheikh Muhammad Murad, Prince Muhammad Ali son of Khedive Tawfiq, Khedive Ismail, poet Wadi’ Al-Bustani, writer Emile Zaidan, and Gibran Khalil Gibran. Also, influenced indirectly by the personality of Abbas Effendi were the Lebanese writer Ameen al-Rihani and his colleague Mikhail Naimy, as well as the editors of the most prominent newspapers in Cairo and Alexandria and other prominent figures and representatives of the famous religious bodies even before ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has set his foot on Egypt’s land. With these words, Abdel-Rahman Al-Barquqi, owner of Al-Bayan magazine (Cairo) presented Abbas Effendi to the readers: “Amongst us now, is a genius of the twentieth century, whom we can see and listen to, indeed, a genius unique to the world.”





'Abdu'l-Bahá speaking to a large number of attendees who gathered at Plymouth Congregational Church in Chicago 5 May 1912



Here is a selection of what was said about him:

- **Imam Sheikh Muhammad Abdo:** Several meetings took place between the Imam and Abbas Effendi in Beirut in the year 1887, and since then a spiritual and intellectual friendship developed between the two. The Imam was impressed not only with Abbas Effendi's personality, but also with his bright opinions and ideas and his global religious reform program. He describes him as "the spirit of peace" and "the longing of souls to their perfection".
- **Prince Muhammad Ali Tawfiq:** was in America during Abbas Effendi's visit and described him as a man of knowledge and one of the greats of the East. He cited: "Since I love the East and I am from the East, I felt enormous pride for the great position 'Abdu'l-Bahá had in the United States of America".
- **Sheikh Ali Youssef:** He is the founder of the Modern Islamic Press in Egypt. He said describing Abbas Effendi "whoever sits with him sees a man of great knowledge, sweet talk, a magnet to souls and spirits, one who is wholly inclined to the principle of (Oneness of Humankind) His teachings and instructions revolve around eliminating the differences and prejudice based on religion, sex, country, or any other aspect of worldly life."
- **Armenias Vampari:** The famous orientalist and scholar who met Abbas Effendi in Budapest. His letter, which he sent to Abbas Effendi, has historically become a renowned, prestigious and powerful book, wherein Abbas Effendi was described as "the pole of knowledge that is well-known and beloved by all people".
- **Muhammad Jamil Beyhem:** the historian who visited Abbas Effendi in Haifa, he admired his talents, profound thoughts and his convincing power, and wished to obtain a drawing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.





'Abdu'l-Bahá with a group of Egyptian, Turkish, Indian and British
from Christians, Muslims and Jewish background, standing in the
yard of Woking Mosque at an invitation of the Muslim
Community in Britain
January 1913



- **Ameer Al-Bayan Prince Shakib Arslan:** who was called Ameer Al-Bayan for his eloquence and fluency, wrote about Abbas Effendi saying, “He was one of the signs of God with all the nobilities, authenticity and many other virtues, which people could rarely obtain or fully achieve all together”.
- **Salim Qubayan:** A writer, a brilliant journalist and a translator. Abbas Effendi was closely acquainted with him, so he wrote his book “‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the Baha’i Faith”, which is prominently well-known in the field of religious studies characterized by objectivity and Scientific Integrity.
- **Gibran Khalil Gibran:** The pioneer of Muhajiriya School for literature and founder of the Romantic School for Modern Arabic Poetry. He met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1912 in New York to draw a painting for him. Moreover, Gibran had previously attended three of Abbas Effendi’s meetings and sometimes translated the dialogue into English for the audience. He was impressed with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks about the need for abolition of all forms of religious, racial, political, economical, and national prejudice, and the harmony which must exist between religion and science, achievement of equality between men and women, and the need to create a world based on justice, unity and peace. There is no doubt that any scrutinizing researcher into Gibran’s thoughts will discover the echo of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s ideas in most of his writings.

Gibran Khalil says describing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “He is such a great man, a perfect man. There are unfolding realms in the depth of his soul. How magnificent his face is, and how beautiful that honest and good-looking face is!”

- **Ameen Al-Rihani:** One of the most prominent Arab thinkers in the modern history. Al-Rihani was influenced by the personality and message of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. In his book ‘The Book of Khalid’, Ameen refers to the word Baha’i. He mentioned: “The Bab and Bahá’u’lláh and Baha means splendour. Hence, Baha is love”.





A portrait of 'Abdu'l-Bahá by Gibran Khalil, 1912



There were many views of world-famous people who learned about the Baha'i Faith through the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the West, such as:

- **Dr. August Henri Forel:** One of the most prominent scholars of the first half of the twentieth century. He was born in Switzerland and specialized in psychiatry, neurology, and spinal cord, in addition to being an entomologist who has a distinguished scientific position in this field as well. The Swiss government honoured him by deciding to have his image printed on the Swiss thousand-franc coin from 1978 until 2000. Dr. Forel wrote a private letter to 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, where he said that this religion truly serves the interests and welfare of human society and endeavours to unite the peoples who live on this small planet.
- **Dr. David Starr Jordan:** President of Stanford University. He was famous for his support of the cause of peace in the world and the need to stop wars and conflicts. He was elected President of the World Peace Foundation in 1910, and then President of the World Peace Conference in 1914. It was not surprising that Stanford University invited Abbas Effendi, the ideal advocate of world peace, to visit the university and speak to its professors and students.
- **Leo Tolstoy:** Leo Tolstoy is considered one of the world's most important novelists and story writers. He believed in the unity amongst people and firmly embraced world peace cause. Tolstoy's many statements about the Baha'i Faith were known to everyone at that time, as mentioned in the newspaper "Weekly Budget" in 1912.



- **Thomas Klee Chen:** Chair Professor for the interpretation of Bible verses and collector of the most important Christian religious encyclopaedia materials in addition to his many books, including his book “Reconciliation between Races and Religions”, in which he dedicated a whole chapter about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá titled “Ambassador to Humanity”. Professor Chen organized a visit for Abbas Effendi in 1912 to the University of Oxford, in which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to the audience in Arabic, with such eloquence, spiritual and scientific manner. This event was widely covered by local press.

In his travels to the West, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá warned the public of an imminent conflict that would ignite Europe if world leaders did not act. Unfortunately, the First World War soon broke out, as previously predicted. But he clearly asserted that regardless of the current course of events, “the banner of the unity of human race shall be raised, and the pavilion of world peace will be erected, and the world will become another.”

On his travels to the west, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá delivered his father’s message to the rich and poor, the young and old, in parks and public squares, at receptions and banquets, in slums and palaces. There was a remarkable receptivity of those teachings among many. The press, also wrote in appreciation of the significance of the message that he delivered to people of all origins and backgrounds.

The writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

Abbas Effendi left for the entire human race, a heritage of guidance and authoritative text in the abundant volumes he wrote on different subjects. He mastered Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages. Many Arabic scholars praised his writings as simple and eloquent.



Abbas Effendi's written works can be divided into two categories: the first category of texts were the ones he wrote and the second category were his lectures, speeches, and conversations that have been recorded. Here are some of his writings:

"Know thou of a certainty that Love is the secret of God's holy Dispensation, the manifestation of the All-Merciful, the fountain of spiritual outpourings. Love is heaven's kindly light, the Holy Spirit's eternal breath that vivifieth the human soul. Love is the cause of God's revelation unto man, the vital bond inherent, in accordance with the divine creation, in the realities of things. Love is the one means that ensured true felicity both in this world and the next. Love is the light that guideth in darkness, the living link that uniteth God with man, that assureth the progress of every illumined soul. Love is the most great law that ruleth this mighty and heavenly cycle, the unique power that bindeth together the divers elements of this material world, the supreme magnetic force that directeth the movements of the spheres in the celestial realms. Love revealeth with unfailing and limitless power the mysteries latent in the universe. Love is the spirit of life unto the adorned body of mankind, the establisher of true civilization in this mortal world, and the shedder of imperishable glory upon every high-aiming race and nation.

Whatsoever people are graciously favoured therewith by God, its name shall surely be magnified and extolled by the Concourse from on high, by the company of angels, and the denizens of the Abhá Kingdom.... O ye beloved of the Lord! Strive to become the manifestations of the love of God, the lamps of divine guidance shining amongst the kindreds of the earth with the light of love and concord. All hail to the revealers of this glorious light!"

"When thou traversest the regions of the world, thou shalt conclude that all progress is the result of association and cooperation, while



ruin is the outcome of animosity and hatred. Notwithstanding this, the world of humanity doth not take warning, nor doth it awake from the slumber of heedlessness. Man is still causing differences, quarrels and strife in order to marshal the cohorts of war and, with his legions, rush into the field of bloodshed and slaughter.”

“Be in perfect unity. Never become angry with one another.... Love the creatures for the sake of God and not for themselves. You will never become angry or impatient if you love them for the sake of God. Humanity is not perfect. There are imperfections in every human being, and you will always become unhappy if you look toward the people themselves. But if you look toward God, you will love them and be kind to them, for the world of God is the world of perfection and complete mercy”.

“Cooperation and mutual support are the supreme needs of humanity. The greater the bonds of intimacy and solidarity between human beings, the greater the constructive strength and progress of achievement in all areas of human activity.”

Part of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s speech at Howard University in the United States in 1912:

“Today I am most happy, for I see here a gathering of the servants of God. I see white and black sitting together. There are no whites and blacks before God. All colours are one, and that is the colour of servitude to God. Scent and colour are not important. The heart is important. If the heart is pure, white or black or any colour makes no difference. God does not look at colours; He looks at the hearts. He whose heart is pure is better. He whose character is better is more pleasing. He who turns more to the Abhá kingdom is more advanced. In the realm of existence colours are of no importance. Observe in the mineral kingdom colours are not the cause of discord. In the



vegetable kingdom the colours of multicoloured flowers are not the cause of discord. Rather, colours are the cause of adornment of the garden because a single colour has no appeal; but when you observe many-coloured flowers, there is charm and display.

This world of humanity, too, is like a garden, and humankind are like the many-coloured flowers. Therefore, different colours constitute an adornment.”

Part of Abbas Effendi’s talk at Stanford University:

“The greatest attainment in the world of humanity has ever been scientific in nature. It is the discovery of the realities of things... The highest praise is due to men who devote their energies to science, and the noblest centre is a centre wherein the sciences and arts are taught and studied. Science ever tends to the illumination of the world of humanity. It is the cause of eternal honor to man... May you attain extraordinary progress in this centre of education. May you become radiant lights flooding the dark regions and recesses of ignorance with illumination.”

Part of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at Oxford University:

“Gaze and see the proof revealed by the Most Merciful in the Qur’an: “He created man, taught him clear expression.” Indeed, expression consists of the shining truth and the mysteries latent in the reality of man. Exalted is He the Most Merciful, who created this shining light, and made it endowed with rational soul. Man was chosen than any other created being to worship God and reveal the secrets of nature... Man communicates with the East and the West in a blink of an eye.”



Messages and statements addressed to international bodies and communities:

‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed the Hague Peace Conference held in 1919 under the auspices of the Central Organization for the Establishment of a Permanent Peace.

Abbas Effendi’s contribution to the economic and social development in the region and a model for community empowerment:

During Abbas Effendi’s visit to the West, he endeavoured to advise and warn of the danger of a world war, and when he knew that war would inevitably occur, he prepared lands from the bushes near the Jordan River, and many farmers, by order of Abbas Effendi, began cultivating them. In the year 1917, when World War I intensified, Abbas Effendi (‘Abdu’l-Bahá) told the farmers in Adasiya to make every effort to cultivate the lands with all kinds of grains to be utilised in order to alleviate the hunger that decimated the people of the Levant at the time. At the order of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the grain was transported to Haifa, stored and then distributed to the needy residents of Haifa and ‘Akká, regardless of their religious or ethnic affiliation. This continued until the end of the war.

With this noble act, tens of thousands of people survived from starvation due to the drought that prevailed after the First World War. This work and his other humanitarian works for the people of the region during the war, especially to the orphans, the poor and the sick among them, had a great impact, and won the approval and admiration of the population and officials.

Farmers used to meet and consult among themselves on developing the cultivation method in the region, and they followed advanced agricultural techniques due to their expertise, introduced new varieties



that were not known at the time. Thus, it played its developmental role, and Adasiya farms became one of the prominent landmarks of the country at the time and for many years afterwards.

The passing of Abbas Effendi:

In his seventy-eighth year, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá passed away and his mortal remains were laid to rest on Mount Carmel on November 28, 1921, in the city of Haifa. Palestine has never before witnessed a funeral procession like this, as no less than ten thousand people participated in it, representing every class, religion and race in the country. Muslim chanters recited verses of holy Qur’an, followed by leaders of the Muslims, headed by the Mufti, in addition to some Latin, Greek and Anglican priests.

The funeral procession was attended by senior officials and religious leaders from all sects who gave speeches and expressed their lamentations for the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The most affected people were those poor and needy ones, who knew ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and found in his generosity what relieved them of their pain and relieved their depression.

On this occasion, the Islamic Society of Haifa broadcasted a bulletin announcing the following:

“We belong to God and to Him we shall return - the Islamic Society mourns with great regret the death of the great scholar and philanthropist ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Abbas. His funeral will be held at nine o’clock tomorrow morning on Tuesday, so please consider this as a special invitation to attend the funeral of the deceased. May God bless him with His mercy and acceptance, and bestow upon his family and relatives patience and solace”.





'Abdu'l-Bahá's funeral was attended by no less than ten thousand
people from numerous religious backgrounds
Haifa, 29 November 1921

