

MEMORY AND THE FUNCTIONING OF THE SOUL

Humanity Possesses a Memory That Nature Does Not Have

1. Man is intelligent, instinctively and consciously intelligent; nature is not. Man is fortified with memory; nature does not possess it. Man is the discoverer of the mysteries of nature; nature is not conscious of those mysteries herself. It is evident, therefore, that man is dual in aspect: as an animal he is subject to nature, but in his spiritual or conscious being he transcends the world of material existence. His spiritual powers, being nobler and higher, possess virtues of which nature intrinsically has no evidence; therefore, they triumph over natural conditions. These ideal virtues or powers in man surpass or surround nature, comprehend natural laws and phenomena, penetrate the mysteries of the unknown and invisible and bring them forth into the realm of the known and visible. All the existing arts and sciences were once hidden secrets of nature. By his command and control of nature man took them out of the plane of the invisible and revealed them in the plane of visibility, whereas according to the exigencies of nature these secrets should have remained latent and concealed. According to the exigencies of nature electricity should be a hidden, mysterious power; but the penetrating intellect of man has discovered it, taken it out of the realm of mystery and made it an obedient human servant. In his physical body and its functions man is a captive of nature; for instance, he cannot continue his existence without sleep, an exigency of nature; he must partake of food and drink, which nature demands and requires. But in his spiritual being and intelligence man dominates and controls nature, the ruler of his physical being. Notwithstanding this, contrary opinions and materialistic views are set forth which would relegate man completely to physical subservience to nature's laws. This is equivalent to saying that the comparative degree exceeds the superlative, that the imperfect includes the perfect, that the pupil surpasses the teacher--all of which is illogical and impossible. When it is clearly manifest and evident that the intelligence of man, his constructive faculty, his power of penetration and discovery transcend nature, how can we say he is nature's thrall and captive? This would indicate that man is deprived of the bounties of God, that he is retrograding toward the station of the animal, that his keen superintelligence is without function and that he estimates himself as an animal, without distinction between his own and the animal's kingdom.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 81

Humanity’s Memory is Ideal in Nature

2. Man possesses two types of virtues: One is material, and the other ideal in character. For example, the body of man expresses certain material virtues, but the spirit of man manifests virtues that are ideal. The sense of sight in man is a physical virtue; but insight, the power of inner perception, is ideal in its nature. The sense of hearing is a physical endowment, whereas memory in man is ideal. Among other human forces the power of ideation, or faculty of intellection, is material, but the power of love is spiritual. The acquisition of the realities of phenomena is an ideal virtue; likewise, the emotions of man and his ability to prove the existence of God. Realization of moral standards and the world of discovery involve virtues essentially ideal.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 325

Humanity Shares Some Aspects of Memory With Animals

3. Know that people belong to two categories--that is to say, they constitute two parties. One party deny the spirit and say that man also is a species of animal; for they say: Do we not see that animals and men share the same powers and senses? These simple, single elements which fill space are endlessly combined, and from each of these combinations one of the beings is produced. Among these beings is the possessor of spirit,¹ of the powers and of the senses. The more perfect the combination, the nobler is the being. The combination of the elements in the body of man is more perfect than the composition of any other being; it is mingled in absolute equilibrium; therefore, it is more noble and more perfect. "It is not," they say, "that he has a special power and spirit which the other animals lack: animals possess sensitive bodies, but man in some powers has more sensation, although, in what concerns the outer senses, such as hearing, sight, taste, smell, touch and even in some interior powers like memory, the animal is more richly endowed than man." "The animal, too," they say, "has intelligence and perception." All that they concede is that man's intelligence is greater.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: *Some Answered Questions*, p. 185

Memory of Animals Not Shared With Lower Kingdoms of Plants and Minerals

4. Likewise, the power of memory inherent in the animal does not exist in the lower kingdoms.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 240

Education is Necessary for Ideal Refinement

5. The purport of our subject is that, just as man is in need of outward education, he is likewise in need of ideal refinement; just as the outer sense of sight is necessary to him, he should also possess insight and conscious perception; as he needs hearing, at the same time memory is essential; as a body is indispensable to him, likewise a mind is requisite; one is a material virtue, the other is ideal.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 328

Let Your Companion Be The Remembrance Of God

6. Say: My army is My reliance on God; My people, the force of My confidence in Him. My love is My standard, and My companion the remembrance of God, the Sovereign Lord of all, the Most Powerful, the All-Glorious, the Unconditioned.

Bahá’u’lláh: *Gleanings*, p. 38

The Manifestation Is God’s Remembrance Amongst People

7. Say: O people, praise ye God, for its Manifestation, for verily it is the most great favor upon you and the most perfect blessing upon you; and through Him every moldering bone is quickened. Whosoever turns to Him hath surely turned unto God, and whosoever turneth away

¹ Man.

from Him hath turned away from My beauty, denied My proof and is of those who transgress. Verily, He is the remembrance of God amongst you and His trust within you, and His manifestation unto you and His appearance among the servants who are nigh. Thus have I been commanded to convey to you the message of God, your Creator; and I have delivered to you that of which I was commanded. Whereupon, thereunto testifieth God, then His angels, then His messengers, and then His holy servants.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Bahá'i World Faith*, p. 205

8. Thereupon, a Voice was raised from the direction of Hijaz, calling aloud and saying: "Great is thy blessedness, O 'Akká, in that God hath made thee the dayspring of His Most Sweet Voice, and the dawn of His most mighty signs. Happy art thou in that the Throne of Justice hath been established upon thee, and the Day-Star of God's loving-kindness and bounty hath shone forth above thy horizon. Well is it with every fair-minded person that hath judged fairly Him Who is the Most Great Remembrance, and woe betide him that hath erred and doubted."

Bahá'u'lláh: *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 79

9. The breezes of the Most Merciful have passed over all created things; happy the man that hath discovered their fragrance, and set himself towards them with a sound heart. Attire thy temple with the ornament of My Name, and thy tongue with remembrance of Me, and thine heart with love for Me, the Almighty, the Most High. We have desired for thee naught except that which is better for thee than what thou dost possess and all the treasures of the earth. Thy Lord, verily, is knowing, informed of all. Arise, in My Name, amongst My servants, and say: 'O ye peoples of the earth! Turn yourselves towards Him Who hath turned towards you. He, verily, is the Face of God amongst you, and His Testimony and His Guide unto you. He hath come to you with signs which none can produce.' The voice of the Burning Bush is raised in the midmost heart of the world, and the Holy Spirit calleth aloud among the nations: 'Lo, the Desired One is come with manifest dominion!'

Bahá'u'lláh: *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 48

Quaff Thy Fill In Remembrance Of Him Who Is The Mighty, The Incomparable

10. Exert thyself, O Shaykh, and arise to serve this Cause. The Sealed Wine is disclosed in this day before the faces of men. Seize it in the name of thy Lord, and quaff thy fill in remembrance of Him Who is the Mighty, the Incomparable.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 88

Call To Remembrance The Day Of Supreme Felicity

11. Rejoice with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá, as ye call to remembrance the Day of supreme felicity, the Day whereon the Tongue of the Ancient of Days hath spoken, as He departed from His House, proceeding to the Spot from which He shed upon the whole of creation the splendors of His name, the All-Merciful. God is Our witness. Were We to reveal the hidden secrets of that Day, all they that dwell on earth and in the heavens would swoon away and die, except such as will be preserved by God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, p. 35

Build Houses Of Worship And Remember God In Praise

12. O people of the world! Build ye houses of worship throughout the lands in the name of Him Who is the Lord of all religions. Make them as perfect as is possible in the world of being, and adorn them with that which becometh them, not with images and effigies. Then, with radiance and joy, celebrate therein the praise of your Lord, the Most Compassionate. Verily, by His remembrance the eye is cheered and the heart is filled with light.

Bahá'u'lláh: *The Kitáb-i-Áqdas*, K 31

13. Blessed is he who, at the hour of dawn, centring his thoughts on God, occupied with His remembrance, and supplicating His forgiveness, directeth his steps to the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* and, entering therein, seateth himself in silence to listen to the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Mighty, the All-Praised. Say: The *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* is each and every building which hath been erected in cities and villages for the celebration of My praise. Such is the name by which it hath been designated before the throne of glory, were ye of those who understand.

Bahá'u'lláh: *The Kitáb-i-Áqdas*, K115

14. QUESTION: Concerning the remembrance of God in the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* “at the hour of dawn”.

ANSWER: Although the words “at the hour of dawn” are used in the Book of God, it is acceptable to God at the earliest dawn of day, between dawn and sunrise, or even up to two hours after sunrise.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Áqdas: Questions and Answers*, p. 111

Remember God During Times Of Affliction

15. Lament not in your hours of trial, neither rejoice therein; seek ye the Middle Way which is the remembrance of Me in your afflictions and reflection over that which may befall you in future. Thus informeth you He Who is the Omniscient, He Who is aware.

Bahá'u'lláh: *The Kitáb-i-Áqdas*, K 43

16. Sanctified art Thou, O my God! I beseech Thee by Thy generosity, whereby the portals of Thy bounty and grace were opened wide, whereby the Temple of Thy Holiness was established upon the throne of eternity; and by Thy mercy whereby Thou didst invite all created things unto the table of Thy bounties and bestowals; and by Thy grace whereby Thou didst respond, in Thine own Self with Thy word “Yea!” on behalf of all in heaven and earth, at the hour when Thy sovereignty and Thy grandeur stood revealed, at the dawn-time when the might of Thy dominion was made manifest. And again do I beseech Thee, by these most beautiful names, by these most noble and sublime attributes, and by Thy most Exalted Remembrance, and by Thy pure and spotless Beauty, and by Thy hidden Light in the most hidden pavilion, and by Thy Name, cloaked with the garment of affliction every morn and eve, to protect the bearer of this blessed Tablet, and whoso reciteth it, and whoso cometh upon it, and whoso passeth around the house wherein it is. Heal Thou, then, by it every sick, diseased and poor one, from every tribulation and distress, from every loathsome affliction and sorrow, and guide Thou by it whosoever desireth to enter upon the paths of Thy guidance, and the ways of Thy forgiveness and grace.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Bahá'í Prayers* (US), pp. 97-98

Turn To 'Akká And Remember Bahá'u'lláh

17. O Emperor of Austria! He Who is the Dayspring of God's Light dwelt in the prison of 'Akká at the time when thou didst set forth to visit the Aqsa Mosque. Thou passed Him by, and inquired not about Him by Whom every house is exalted and every lofty gate unlocked. We, verily, made it a place whereunto the world should turn, that they might remember Me, and yet thou hast rejected Him Who is the Object of this remembrance, when He appeared with the Kingdom of God, thy Lord and the Lord of the worlds. We have been with thee at all times, and found thee clinging unto the Branch and heedless of the Root. Thy Lord, verily, is a witness unto what I say. We grieved to see thee circle round Our Name, whilst unaware of Us, though We were before thy face. Open thine eyes, that thou mayest behold this glorious Vision, and recognize Him Whom thou invokest in the daytime and in the night season, and gaze on the Light that shineth above this luminous Horizon.

Bahá'u'lláh: *The Kitáb-i-Áqdas*, K 85

Rulers Should Remember God

18. Harken ye, O Rulers of America and the Presidents of the Republics therein, unto that which the Dove is warbling on the Branch of Eternity: "There is none other God but Me, the Ever-Abiding, the Forgiving, the All-Bountiful." Adorn ye the temple of dominion with the ornament of justice and of the fear of God, and its head with the crown of the remembrance of your Lord, the Creator of the heavens. Thus counselleth you He Who is the Dayspring of Names, as bidden by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. The Promised One hath appeared in this glorified Station, whereat all beings, both seen and unseen, have rejoiced. Take ye advantage of the Day of God. Verily, to meet Him is better for you than all that whereon the sun shineth, could ye but know it. O concourse of rulers! Give ear unto that which hath been raised from the Dayspring of Grandeur: "Verily, there is none other God but Me, the Lord of Utterance, the All-Knowing." Bind ye the broken with the hands of justice, and crush the oppressor who flourisheth with the rod of the commandments of your Lord, the Ordainer, the All-Wise.

Bahá'u'lláh: *The Kitáb-i-Áqdas*, K 88

Remember Bahíyyih Khánum

19. How high is the testimony of the Sadrat'l-Muntahá for its leaf; how exalted the witness of the Tree of Life unto its fruit! Through My remembrance of her a fragrance laden with the perfume of musk hath been diffused; well is it with him that hath inhaled it and exclaimed: 'All praise be to Thee, O God, my Lord the most glorious!' How sweet thy presence before Me; how sweet to gaze upon thy face, to bestow upon thee My loving-kindness, to favour thee with My tender care, to make mention of thee in this, My Tablet--a Tablet which I have ordained as a token of My hidden and manifest grace unto thee.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Bahíyyih Khánum*, pp. 3-4

Recollect Events Of The Early Days Of The Faith

20. Bahá'í Friends,

On behalf of the Guardian I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your beautiful message dated July 8th, and to convey to you his loving thanks and appreciation for the kind sentiments which you have been moved to express to him on the eve of the anniversary of the Báb's martyrdom.

He is, indeed, very much pleased, and feels greatly encouraged, to learn of the beautiful meeting you have organized in order to commemorate this most sad and yet unique event in the history of the Cause, and sincerely trusts that the recollection of these early days of the heroic age of the Faith will have served to fill with fresh enthusiasm and renewed vigour your souls, and that as a result you all now feel the urge to play a more active part in establishing the Cause in Austria.

Shoghi Effendi: *Light of Divine Guidance*, Vol.1, pp. 74-75

Recollect Current Events Of The Faith

21. Soul stirred, heart uplifted by recollection of events signaling the twelve month period preceding the fateful year destined to witness the consummation of series of plans formulated by Bahá'í National Assemblies of five continents, as well as the inauguration of the second, glorious Jubilee of the Bahá'í Dispensation. The irresistible march of the Faith marked simultaneously by the steady consolidation of its administrative institutions and the rapid enlargement of its limits. No less than eighteen countries have been enrolled, raising the total number within its orbit to one hundred twenty-four. Languages in which Bahá'í literature is printed or is being translated are now ninety, including twelve African languages. The vast process of the rise and establishment of the World Center of the Faith has been accelerated. Contingents of Hands of the Cause have been successively appointed in every continent of the globe, five of whom are shouldering responsibilities in the Holy Land. The International Bahá'í Council has been enlarged and officers designated.

Shoghi Effendi: *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, pp 25-26

Beware Of Names And Words That Keep One From Remembering God

22. Beware lest any name debar you from Him Who is the Possessor of all names, or any word shut you out from this Remembrance of God, this Source of Wisdom amongst you. Turn unto God and seek His protection, O concourse of divines, and make not of yourselves a veil between Me and My creatures. Thus doth your Lord admonish you, and command you to be just, lest your works should come to naught and ye yourselves be oblivious of your plight.

Bahá'u'lláh: *The Kitáb-i-Áqdas*, K 167

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