

The Investigation of Truth

Address by JENABI FAZEL MAZANDARANI, delivered at the Fourth Session of the Bahai Congress, New York City, April 28th, 1920.

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WE ARE unusually late this night.

But it is necessary to end in prayer. We ask God for His assistance and confirmation, that He may guide us in His path, and that He may lead the whole of humanity in that path. I see that this meeting is spiritual and I could not keep still. I feel very much as if the spirit is waving all over this place.

There are plenty of meetings of different sorts and everywhere, for different purposes, reunions and dances are held in different places, but there are few meetings which are organized for the sake of God. The Bahai reunions and assemblies are for this aim, that is to say, for the sake of God. This meeting has no other intention except the investigation of truth and to discuss and speak about truth. All the people have been waiting so long that I am sure that they have no other aim except the investigation of truth. The investigation of truth is the first aim and the first principle that BAHÁ'O'LLAH has commanded the people to do—it should be the aim of all the people of the world. BAHÁ'O'LLAH has told the people that every man should investigate truth, because man's opinion is divided into two kinds. One belief and one opinion exists in man because of inheritance and blind imitation. Most of his opinions and beliefs in the world are of this sort. It is not necessary to mention it further and to take more time in explaining it because you know it already. You know all the existent religions of the world are nothing but blind imitation or inheritance. There is no doubt about it, and you know it. When a father is a Christian, the son also becomes a Christian; if the parents are Jews, the son

will become a Jew; if the father is a Zoroastrian, the son will become a Zoroastrian, and if he is a Hindu or a Buddhist or a Mohammedan, the son will accept the religion of his father. We must not expect that the son of a Jew will be anything but a Jew. They are trained in that religion and, of course, when they are grown up they have not been trained in any other religion than that. They perpetuate their own beliefs and opinions in the hearts of their children, and they sow the seeds of animosity in the hearts of their children against other religions. All the existing beliefs are no better than the ones mentioned. These are blind imitations, and I am sure they are not the cause of man's salvation. Belief in blind opinion is the cause of all the dissension in the world. All these differences of religion have sprung from blind opinion. This sort of religion which exists in the world is not praised by God, because they have believed in these opinions without any proof or demonstration. All these beliefs are the sources of dissension and the root of all differences.

There is one sort of belief that has very few followers and that is the belief in the investigation of truth. The unity of the Bahais which has been brought about in the world is from this source; that is to say, they have investigated the truth and have found the truth. There is no doubt that people would not give up their religion unless it were founded on valid proof; beliefs and opinions are something very dear and very precious to humankind, and they have some reason for changing their opinion or else they would not do it. This proof is brought about by knowledge and investigation of the truth;

there is no doubt about that. Now, as I said before, this meeting has assembled to investigate the truth. I want every one of you, if you have any difficulty about the Cause, to come to the Bahai centre and ask me and I will gladly tell you about it. These meetings that you see, and such gatherings as this, they have all over the world.

This is the time of the Rizwan feast of the Bahais and Conventions are held by the Bahais in different parts of the world. At this time, BAHÁ'O'LLAH was exiled from Bagdad at the instigation of the high priests and by the help and support of the governments of Turkey and Persia. Two powerful governments like Turkey and Persia, with the influence of their high priests, leaders and governors, tried to exile BAHÁ'O'LLAH. What did they mean by this banishment? They were not opposing BAHÁ'O'LLAH personally, but they opposed his words and they were inimical to his teachings. At this time of Rizwan, BAHÁ'O'LLAH declared his mission and called the people to perfect unity and to remove dissension; in such a time the banner of the standard of peace was uplifted. At such a time this religion was started. This was why all the people of Persia and Turkey arose against his teachings. They thought by this opposition that they could eradicate his teachings and they would not spread over the world, but they did not know that some purposes and some intentions are supported by God's confirmation.

For instance, a man arranges according to his own ways, and everything outwardly is all right, but he never attains to his aim and objective. He feels from the very beginning that he is not supported by God's confirmation. He appeals to everything to attain to his objective, but he cannot attain it. Some people arise and put

into effect some sacred intention, some holy intention, and it is done. By the outward appearance of things, I can tell from the beginning whether you are assisted by God or not, and whether you are supported by God's confirmation or not. The Manifestations of God were assisted by the confirmations of God. No means and no implements do they possess. Everything and every outward appearance and everything was against them. In spite of this opposition they put into effect their aims and their intentions. Although they undertook to banish—although the Mohammedan priests and kings undertook to banish BAHÁ'O'LLAH—they did not know that they were in reality assisting him in every possible way. It was for his sake that all the glad tidings and the prophecies of the Holy Book were fulfilled. It is written, it is prophesied in the Old Testament, that the greatest Manifestation would manifest himself, and would appear from the Holy Land. You are well informed of the Holy Books and it is unnecessary to remind you of them. The light of God would appear on the Mount of Carmel and Acca should be the place, the destination, the hope of the people, and the Holy Land should be the center of the attraction of the whole world. These prophecies were fulfilled by the enemies of BAHÁ'O'LLAH. Thus, every man who caused his banishment put into effect and fulfilled those promises and those prophecies. That is why those who go to Haifa and Acca see the truth and fulfillment of those prophecies. I have seen with my own eyes how Haifa and Acca are the center of attraction of the people of the world: how people from the east and west and north and south go to the presence of the Master.

(The address was followed by a prayer chanted in Persian.)