



The Power of Kindness

Young LC



During the days that 'Abdu'l-Bahá lived in the prison-city of 'Akká, there was a man named Salim who behaved very badly towards Him. Salim thought that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was not a good man and that God did not care how badly the Bahá'ís were treated.



Salim believed that he was showing love for God by showing hatred to the Bahá'ís. He hated 'Abdu'l-Bahá with all his heart, a hate that grew and festered inside him, spilling out of him the way water spills out of a broken pot.



In the mosque, when people came to pray, Salim would cry out against 'Abdu'l-Bahá and say terrible things about Him. His face would twist with anger as he shouted, his voice echoing through the stone halls of the prayer house.



When Salim passed 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the street, he would hastily cover his face with his robe so that he would not have to see Him. He would turn his head away sharply, refusing to catch even a glimpse of the man he despised.



Despite his pride, Salim was very poor and had neither enough to eat nor warm clothes to wear. He sat in his cold, crumbling house looking sad and depressed, staring at a nearly empty table with only a few scraps of food.



Even though Salim was unkind, 'Abdu'l-Bahá showed him constant kindness, sending him food and clothes to ensure he was taken care of. Salim looked stunned as he opened his door to find a basket of fresh bread and a warm new cloak left for him.



One winter, Salim became very ill and was unable to leave his bed. 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent a doctor to his home, paid for all his medicine, and provided him with nourishing food to help him recover his strength.



Salim accepted the gifts but refused to show any thanks; as the doctor reached out to take his pulse, Salim used his other hand to cover his face. He remained stubborn and silent, refusing to look upon the one who was helping him.



And then, after twenty-four long years, Salim's heart finally changed and he was overcome with emotion. He knelt on the ground with a heavy heart and tears flowing down his face like twin rivers, begging for forgiveness for all the evil he had done.



The bitterness that had lived in Salim for decades finally vanished, replaced by a deep sense of gratitude. His expression became calm, peaceful, and reverent as the great power of love finally triumphed over his hatred.