

Abdu'l-Bahá's Travels to the West

Returning East
27-31 October 1912
The purpose of travelling

Returning East

It took four days for 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His five companions to take the train from California to Chicago

Teaching on the train

Passengers on the train quickly discovered 'Abdu'l-Bahá. To one Jewish lady He said:

It is obvious that you have a pure character, so I want you to become aware of the truth of divine matters. At the time of each Manifestation of God the people were heedless and ignorant of the truth except for a few who investigated and understood the divine words.

The next morning she returned saying that she accepted the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

The purpose of travelling

When asked about His purpose in travelling across America, He said:

I have come to America to raise the standard of universal peace and to promote the unity of mankind. My aim is to create love and harmony among the religions. But some people ask me, “Is your country developed? Is it prosperous and has it good trees, sweet fruits, beautiful animals and swift Arabian horses?” But I speak to them of the trees of the world of existence, of the fruits of human virtues and of heavenly morals and traits and call the people to the Kingdom of God.

Denver, Chicago, Cincinnati

'Abdu'l-Bahá spent the night of 28-29 October in Denver, Colorado, and gave two public talks before boarding the train again for Chicago, arriving early on 31 October. He remained in Chicago until 3 November and gave a few talks. On 5-6 November He stopped in Cincinnati, Ohio, the home of President Taft.



'Abdu'l-Bahá in Ohio

Cincinnati

On 5 November, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá told a group at the Grand Hotel that he had travelled “*from coast to coast... attended many meetings where international peace was discussed*” and was “*happy to witness the results of such meetings*” because Bahá’u’lláh taught the establishment of agreement between all people.

(Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 246)

Universal Peace

The Master said that because His Father had “*proclaimed international unity, summoned the religions of the world to harmony and reconciliation and established fellowship among many races, sects and communities*”, He called for the parliaments of the world “*to send their wisest and best men to an international world conference which should decide all questions between the peoples and establish universal peace. This would be the highest court of appeal, and the parliament of man so long dreamed of by poets and idealists would be realized.*”

(Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 246)