

Abdu'l-Bahá's Travels to the West

New York City

23 November 1912

Purpose of meetings

New York banquet

On 23 November, the Day of the Covenant, the Bahá'ís held a banquet for 'Abdu'l-Bahá at the Great Northern Hotel, 118 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York. More than 300 Bahá'ís gathered from Washington, Philadelphia and Boston as well as New York. He told them the true purpose of such meetings



'Abdu'l-Bahá at banquet

Talk at the banquet

This meeting of yours... is a universal gathering; it is heavenly and divine in purpose because it serves the oneness of the world of humanity and promotes international peace. It is devoted to the solidarity and brotherhood of the human race, the spiritual welfare of mankind, unity of religious belief through knowledge of God and the reconciliation of religious teaching with the principles of science and reason.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, [The Promulgation of Universal Peace](#), 132)

Talk at the banquet

It promotes love and fraternity among all humankind, seeks to abolish and destroy barriers which separate the human family, proclaims the equality of man and woman, instills divine precepts and morals, illumines and quickens minds with heavenly perception, attracts the infinite bestowals of God, removes racial, national and religious prejudices and establishes the foundation of the heavenly Kingdom in the hearts of all nations and peoples.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, [The Promulgation of Universal Peace](#), 132)

Talk at the banquet

The effect of such an assembly as this is conducive to divine fellowship and strengthening of the bond which cements and unifies hearts.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 132)

Acting by the teachings

Unfortunately the hotel had refused to allow the black Bahá'ís to attend because of racial prejudice, so the next day the white Bahá'ís organized an interracial feast at the Kinney's home, where the white ladies served the meal to their black friends. The Master was very pleased, saying *“Today you have carried out the laws of the Blessed Beauty in your actions and have truly acted according to the teachings of the Supreme Pen.”*

(Earl Redman, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 264)



'Abdu'l-Bahá