

'To the blessed animals, however, the utmost kindness should be exercised: the more the better it will be. Man is generally sinful and the animal is innocent. Educate the children in their infancy in such a way that they may become exceedingly kind and merciful to the animals. If an animal is sick they should endeavour to cure it; if it is hungry, they should feed it; if it is thirsty, they should satisfy its thirst; if it is tired, they should give it rest.

Regarding the eating of animal flesh and abstinence therefrom, man is not in need of meat, nor is he obliged to eat it. Even without eating meat he would live with the utmost vigour and energy. ...man's food is intended to be grain and not meat. When mankind is more fully developed, the eating of meat will gradually cease. ...Truly, the killing of animals and the eating of their meat is somewhat contrary to pity and compassion, and if one can content oneself with cereals, fruit, oil and nuts... it would undoubtedly be better and more pleasing.

Briefly, it is not only their fellow human beings that the beloved of God must treat with mercy and compassion, rather must they show forth the utmost loving-kindness to every living creature. For in all physical respects, and where the animal spirit is concerned, the selfsame feelings are shared by animal and man. Man hath not grasped this truth, however, and he believeth that physical sensations are confined to human beings, wherefore is he unjust to the animals, and cruel.

**And yet in truth, what difference is there when it cometh to physical sensations? The feelings are one and the same, whether ye inflict pain on man or on beast. There is no difference here whatever.** And indeed **ye do worse to harm an animal**, for man hath a language, he can lodge a complaint, he can cry out and moan; if injured he can have recourse to the authorities and these will protect him from his aggressor. But the hapless beast is mute, able neither to express its hurt nor take its case to the authorities. If a man inflicts a thousand ills upon a beast, it can neither ward him off with speech nor hale him into court. Therefore is it essential that ye show forth the utmost consideration to the animal, and that ye be even kinder to him than to your fellow man.

Most human beings are sinners, but the beasts are innocent. Surely those without sin should receive the most kindness and love

Bahá'í Faith Writings: