

## CHAPTER NINE DIVINE CIVILIZATION

971. The past age was an age of wondrous achievements. All the inventions were perfected; new discoveries created; new fields of human activity developed; new undertakings gave deeper significance to the law of co-operation; new arts helped to make life more beautiful; and new international laws are now in process of formation to bind all nations of the earth together. The international tribunal of justice will soon be organized in accordance with the principles of Bahá'u'lláh, and then all the differences will be adjusted before the members of that impartial tribunal.

Therefore, as a result of these changes in the outer world, it has become part of the heavenly wisdom in the inner world to create a new spiritual plan for the propagation of the religion of God. Thus the divine believers may obtain a new joy and a new happiness and display an extraordinary effort in the promotion of the reality of the religions of God, to deliver the nations from old, superannuated prejudices and diffuse the fragrances of the flowers of the primal Truth; to unfurl the flag of love, amity, unity and oneness of the world of humanity and remove the international misunderstandings from amongst the nations of the world.

972. To the friends and maid-servants of God in the Northeastern states:

Upon them be greeting and praise!

O ye heavenly heralds!

These are the days of Naw-Rúz. I am always thinking of those kind friends! I beg for each and all of you confirmations and assistance from the threshold of Oneness, so that those gatherings may become ignited like unto candles, in the Republics of America, enkindling the light of the love of God in the hearts; thus the rays of the heavenly teachings may begin and brighten the states of America like the infinitude of immensity with the stars of the most great guidance. The Northeastern states on the shores of the Atlantic—Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York—in some of these believers are found, but in some of the cities of these states up to this date people are not yet illumined with the lights of the Kingdom and are not aware of the heavenly teachings; therefore, whenever it is possible for each one of you, hasten ye to those cities and shine forth like unto the stars with the light of the most great guidance. God says in the glorious Qur'án: "The soil was black and dried. Then we cause the rain to descend upon it and immediately it became green, verdant, and every kind of plant sprouted up luxuriantly." In other words, he says the earth and the soil is black, but when the spring showers descend upon it that black soil is quickened, and variegated flowers are pushed forth. This means the souls of humanity belonging to the world of nature are black like unto the soil. But when the heavenly outpourings descend and the radiant effulgences appear, the hearts are resuscitated, are liberated from the darkness of nature and the flowers of the divine mysteries grow and become luxuriant. Consequently man must become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity and propagate the holy teachings revealed in the sacred books through divine inspiration. It is stated in the blessed Gospel: Travel ye toward the East and toward the West and enlighten the people with the light of the most great guidance, so that they may take a portion and share of the eternal life. Praise be to God, that the Northeastern states are in the utmost capacity. Because the ground is rich, the rain of the divine outpouring is descending. Now you must become heavenly farmers and scatter pure seeds in the prepared soil. The harvest of every other seed is limited, but the bounty and the blessing of the seed of the divine teachings is unlimited. Throughout the coming centuries and cycles many harvests will be gathered. Consider the work of former generations. During the lifetime of His Holiness Christ the believing, firm souls were few and numbered, but the heavenly benedictions descended so plentifully that in a number of years

countless souls entered under the shade of the Gospel. God has said in the Qur'án: "One grain will bring forth seven sheaves, and every sheaf shall contain one hundred grains." In other words, one grain will become seven hundred; and if God so will he will double these also. It has often happened that one blessed soul has become the cause of the guidance of a nation. Now we must not look at our own ability and capacity; nay, rather, we must behold the favors and bounties of God in these days, who has made the drop to find the expression of the sea and the atom the importance of the sun.

Upon you be greeting and praise!

Haifa, Palestine,  
March 26, 1916.

973. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful of the Northeastern states of the United States of America. Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York:

He is God!

O ye real friends!

All the regions in the estimation of the True One are one region and all the cities and villages are ideally equal and similar to each other. Neither holds distinction over another. All of them are the fields of God and the habitation of the souls of men. But through faith and assurance and the precedence of one part over another the dweller imparts holiness and sanctification to the dwelling and some of the countries becoming exceptional, attain to the most great distinction.

For example, notwithstanding that some of the countries of Europe and America are distinguished for the purity of the air, the wholesomeness of the water, and the charm of the mountains, plains and prairies and are preferred above all the rest, yet Palestine became an honor to all other regions of the world: Because all the holy divine Manifestations from the time of His Holiness Abraham to the time of the appearance of the Seal of the Prophets, have been either living in this region or emigrated to or traveled through here.

Likewise Yathrib and Bathá attained to the most great bounty and the light of the Prophets has shone from that horizon. For this reason Palestine and Hijáz are distinguished above all other regions.

Likewise as the Continent of America in the estimation of the True One is the field of the effulgence of light, the Kingdom of the manifestation of mysteries, the home of the righteous ones and the gathering place of the free, therefore every section thereof is blessed; but because these nine states have been favored in faith and assurance, hence through this precedence they have obtained spiritual privilege. They must realize the value of this bounty; because they have obtained such a favor and in order to render thanksgiving for this most great bestowal, they must arise in the diffusion of divine fragrances; so that the blessed verse of the Qur'án:

"God is the light of heaven and earth: the similitude of his light is a niche in a wall, wherein a lamp is placed, and the lamp enclosed in a case of glass; the glass appears as if it were a shining star. It is lighted with the oil of a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West; it waneth little but that the oil thereof would give light, although no fire touched it. This is the light added unto light. God will direct unto his light whom he pleaseth."—may be realized.

He says: "The world of nature is the world of darkness, because it is the origin of a thousand depravities, nay rather, it is darkness upon darkness." The illumination of the world of nature is dependent upon the splendor of the Sun of Reality. The grace of guidance is like unto the candle which is enkindled in the glass of knowledge and wisdom and that glass of knowledge and wisdom is the mirror of the heart of humanity. The oil of that luminous lamp is from the fruits of the Blessed

Tree and that oil is so refined that it will burn without light. When the intensity of the light and the translucency of the glass and the purity of the mirror are brought together, it will become light upon light.

In brief, in these nine blessed States 'Abdu'l-Bahá' journeyed and traveled from place to place, explained the wisdom of the heavenly books and diffused the fragrances. In most of these States he founded the Divine Edifice and opened the door of teaching. In those States he sowed pure seeds and planted blessed trees.

Now the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful must irrigate these fields and with the utmost power engage themselves in the cultivation of these heavenly plantations so that the seeds may grow and develop, prosperity and blessing be realized and many rich and great harvests be gathered in.

The Kingdom of God is like unto a farmer who comes into possession of a piece of pure and virgin soil. Heavenly seeds are scattered therein, the clouds of divine providence pour down and the rays of the Sun of Reality shine forth.

Now all these bounties exist and appear in full in these nine States. The divine Gardener passed by that holy ground and scattered pure seeds from the lordly teachings in that field, the rain of the bounties of God poured down and the heat of the Sun of Reality, that is:—The merciful confirmations—shone with the utmost splendor. It is my hope that each one of those blessed souls may become a peerless and unique irrigator and the East and the West of America may become like unto a delectable paradise—so that all of you may hear from the Supreme Concourse the cry of “Blessed are ye, and again blessed are ye!”

Upon you be greeting and praise!

The following supplication is to be read by the teachers and friends daily:

O Thou Kind Lord! Praise be unto Thee that Thou hast shown unto us the highway of guidance, opened the doors of the Kingdom and manifested Thyself through the Sun of Reality. To the blind Thou hast given sight; to the deaf Thou hast granted hearing; Thou hast resuscitated the dead; Thou hast shown the way to those who have gone astray; Thou hast led those with parched lips to the fountain of guidance; Thou hast suffered the thirsty fish to reach the ocean of reality and Thou hast invited the wandering birds to the rose garden of grace.

O Thou Almighty! We people are Thy servants and Thy poor ones! We are remote, we yearn for Thy presence; we are thirsty for the water of Thy fountain; we are ill, longing for Thy medicine. We are walking in Thy path and have no aim or hope save the diffusion of Thy fragrances—so that the souls may raise the cry of: “O God! Guide us to the straight path!” May they open their eyes by beholding the lights and become freed from the darkness of ignorance! May they walk around the lamp of guidance! May the portionless receive a share! and may the deprived ones become the confidants of the mysteries!

O Almighty! Look upon us with the glance of mercifulness! Grant us heavenly confirmation! Bestow upon us the breaths of the Holy Spirit! So that we may become assisted in service and like unto brilliant stars we may shine in these regions with the light of guidance! Verily! Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and Thou art the Wise and the Seeing!

Haifa, Palestine,  
February 2, 1917.

974. To the friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Southern States:

Upon them be greeting and praise!

O ye heralds of the Kingdom of God!

A few days ago, an epistle was written to those divine believers, but because these days are the days of Naw-Rúz, therefore you have come to my mind and I am sending you this greeting for this

glorious feast. All the days are blessed, but this feast is the national fete of Persia. The Persians have been holding it for several thousand years past. In reality every day which man passes in the mention of God, the diffusion of the fragrances of God and calling the people to the Kingdom of God, that day is his feast. Praise be to God that you are occupied in the service of the Kingdom of God by day and by night. Therefore all you days are feast days. There is no doubt that the assistance and the bestowal of God shall descend upon you.

In the Southern States of the United States, the friends are few, that is, in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Consequently you must either go yourselves or send a number of blessed souls to those States, so that they may guide the people to the Kingdom of Heaven. One of the Holy Manifestations, addressing a believing soul, says: "If a person become the cause of the illumination of one soul, it is better than a boundless treasury." Again He says: "O 'Alí! If God guide, through thee, one soul, it is better for thee than all the riches!" Again He says: "Direct us to the straight path!" that is, Show us the right road. It is also mentioned in the Gospel: "Travel ye to all parts of the world and give ye the glad tidings of the appearance of the Kingdom of God."

In brief, I hope you will display in this respect the greatest effort and magnanimity. It is assured that you will become assisted, and confirmed. A person declaring the glad tidings of the appearance of the realities and significances of the Kingdom is like unto a farmer who scatters pure seeds in the rich soil. The spring cloud will pour upon them the rain of bounty, and unquestionably the station of the farmer will be raised in the estimation of the lord of the village, and many harvests will be gathered.

Therefore, ye friends of God! Appreciate ye the value of this time and be ye engaged in the sowing of the seeds, so that ye may find the heavenly blessing and the lordly bestowal. Upon you be Bahá El-Abhá!

Haifa, Palestine,  
March 27, 1916.

975. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Southern States.

Upon them be Bahá'u'lláh El-Abhá!

He is God!

O ye blessed, respected souls!

The philosophers of the ancients, the thinkers of the Middle Ages and the scientists of this and the former centuries have all agreed upon the fact that the best and most ideal region for the habitation of man is the temperate zone, for in this belt the intellects and thoughts rise to the highest stage of maturity and the capability and ability of civilization manifest themselves in full efflorescence. When you read history critically and with a penetrating eye, it becomes evident that the majority of the famous men have been born, reared and have done their work in the temperate zone, while very, very few have appeared from the torrid and frigid zones.

Now these sixteen Southern States of the United States are situated in the temperate zone, and in these regions the perfections of the world of nature have been fully revealed. For the moderation of the weather, the beauty of the scenery and the geographical configuration of the country display a great effect in the world of minds and thoughts. This fact is well demonstrated through observation and experience.

Even the holy, divine Manifestations have had a nature in the utmost equilibrium, the health and wholesomeness of their bodies most perfect, their constitutions endowed with physical vigor, their powers functioning in perfect order, and the outward sensations linked with the inward perceptions, working together with extraordinary momentum and co-ordination.

Therefore in these sixteen States, because they are contiguous to other States and their climate being in the utmost of moderation, unquestionably the divine teachings must reveal themselves with a brighter effulgence, the breaths of the Holy Spirit must display a penetrating intensity, the ocean of the love of God must be stirred with higher waves, the breezes of the rose garden of the divine love be wafted with higher velocity, and the fragrances of Holiness be diffused with swiftness and rapidity.

Praise be to God that the divine outpourings are infinite, the melody of the lordly principles is in the utmost efficacy, the most great Orb shining with perfect splendor, the cohorts of the Supreme Concourse are attacking with invincible power, the tongues are sharper than the swords, the hearts are more brilliant than the light of electricity, the magnanimity of the friends precedes all the magnanimities of the former and subsequent generations, the souls are divinely attracted, and the fire of the love of God is enkindled.

At this time and at this period we must avail ourselves of this most great opportunity. We must not sit inactive for one moment; we must sever ourselves from composure, rest, tranquillity, goods, property, life and attachment to material things. We must sacrifice everything to His Highness the Possessor of existence; so that the powers of the Kingdom may show greater penetration and the brilliant effulgence in this New Cycle may illumine the worlds of minds and ideals.

It is about 23 years that the fragrances of God have been diffused in America, but no adequate and befitting motion has been realized, and no great acclamation and acceleration has been witnessed. Now it is my hope that through the heavenly power, the fragrances of the Merciful, the attraction of consciousness, the celestial outpourings, the heavenly cohorts and the gushing forth of the fountain of divine love, the believers of God may arise and in a short time the great good may unveil her countenance, the Sun of Reality may shine forth with such intensity that the darkness of the world of nature may become entirely dispelled and driven away; from every corner a most wonderful melody may be raised, the morning birds may break into such a song that the world of humanity may be quickened and moved, the solid bodies may become liquefied and the souls who are like unto adamantine rocks may open their wings and through the heat of the love of god fly heavenward.

Nearly 2,000 years ago, Armenia was enveloped with impenetrable darkness. One blessed soul from among the disciples of Christ hastened to that part, and through his effort, ere long that province became illumined. Thus it has become evident how the power of the Kingdom works!

Therefore, rest ye assured in the confirmations of the Merciful and the assistances of the Most High, become ye sanctified above and purified from this world and the inhabitants thereof, suffer your intention to become for the good of all, cut your attachment to the earth and like unto the essence of the spirit become ye light and delicate. Then with a firm resolution, a pure heart, a rejoiced spirit, and an eloquent tongue, engage your time in the promulgation of the divine principles; so that the oneness of the world of humanity may pitch her canopy in the apex of America and all the nations of the world may follow the divine policy. This is certain, that the divine policy is justice and kindness toward all mankind. For all the nations of the world are the sheep of God, and God is the kind shepherd. He has created these sheep. He has protected them, sustained and trained them. What greater kindness than this? And every moment we must render a hundred thousand thanksgivings that, praise be to God, we are freed from all the ignorant prejudices, are kind to all the sheep of God, and our utmost hope is to serve each and all, and like unto a benevolent father educate every one.

Upon you be greeting and praise!

Every soul who travels through these cities, villages and hamlets of these States and is engaged in the diffusion of the fragrances of God, must peruse this commune every morning:

O God! O God! Behold me! Notwithstanding my lowliness and my lack of capacity and ability, I am bent upon the accomplishment of the greatest works, aiming to promote Thy Word amongst the republics and resolved to spread Thy teachings amongst all mankind. Far be it from me to become confirmed in this work save Thou mayest assist me with the breaths of the Holy Spirit! Make me

victorious through the armies of Thy Supreme Kingdom and encircle me with Thy confirmations, which shall make the moth the eagle, the drop the river and the seas, and the scintillas the suns and the moons!

O Lord! Confirm me with Thy insuperable power and Thy penetrating potency, so that my tongue may speak out Thy praises and glorifications amongst Thy creatures, and my heart become overflowed with the wine of Thy love and knowledge. Verily, Thou art the powerful to do that which Thou willest, and Thou art mighty over all things!

Haifa, Palestine,  
February 3, 1917.

976. To the friends of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Central States:

O ye heavenly souls, O ye spiritual assemblies, O ye lordly meetings!

For some time past correspondence has been delayed, and this has been on account of the difficulty of mailing and receiving letters. But because at present a number of facilities are obtainable, therefore, I am engaged in writing you this brief epistle so that my heart and soul may obtain joy and fragrance through the remembrance of the friends. Continually this wanderer supplicates and entreats at the threshold of His Holiness the One and begs assistance, bounty and heavenly confirmations in behalf of the believers. You are always in my thought. You are not nor shall you ever be forgotten. I hope by the favor of His Holiness the Almighty that day by day you may add to your faith, assurance, firmness and steadfastness, and become instruments for the promotion of the holy fragrances. In the great book, the divine Qur'án, God, addressing His Messenger, His Holiness Muḥammad (upon him be greeting and praise!) says: "Verily, thou dost guide the people to the straight path." In other words; Thou dost show mankind the direct road. Consider how guidance is a matter of infinite importance; for it points to the loftiness of the station of His Holiness the Messenger.

Although in the States of Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan and Minnesota—praise be to God—believers are found, who are associating with each other in the utmost firmness and steadfastness—day and night they have no other intention save the diffusion of the fragrances of God, they have no other hope except the promotion of the heavenly teachings, like the candles they are burning with the light of the love of God, and like thankful birds are singing songs, spirit-imparting, joy-creating, in the rose garden of the knowledge of God,—yet in the States of Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas few of the believers exist. So far the summons of the Kingdom of God and the proclamation of the oneness of the world of humanity has not been made in these States systematically and enthusiastically. Blessed souls and detached teachers have not traveled through these parts repeatedly; therefore these States are still in a state of heedlessness. Through the efforts of the friends of God souls must be likewise enkindled, in these States, with the fire of the love of God and attracted to the Kingdom of God, so that section may also become illumined and the soul-imparting breeze of the rose garden of the Kingdom may perfume the nostrils of the inhabitants. Therefore, if it is possible, send to those parts teachers who are severed from all else save God, sanctified and pure. If these teachers be in the utmost state of attraction, in a short time great results will be forthcoming. The sons and daughters of the kingdom are like unto the real farmers. Through whichever state or country they pass they display self-sacrifice and sow divine seeds. From that seed harvests are produced. On this subject it is revealed in the glorious Gospel: When the pure seeds are scattered in the good ground heavenly blessing and benediction is obtained. I hope that you may become assisted and confirmed, and never lose courage in the promotion of the divine teachings. Day by day may you add to your effort, exertion and magnanimity.

Upon you be greeting and praise!

Haifa, Palestine,  
March 29, 1916.

977. To the believers and the maid-servants of God in the Central States:

Upon them be Bahá'u'lláh El-Abhá!

He is God!

God says in the great Qur'án: "He specializes for His Mercy whomsoever He willeth."

O ye old believers and intimate friends!

These twelve central States of the United States are like unto the heart of America, and the heart is connected with all the organs and parts of man. If the heart is strengthened, all the organs of the body are reinforced, and if the heart is weak all the physical elements are subjected to feebleness.

Now praise be to God that Chicago and its environs from the beginning of the diffusion of the fragrances of God have been a strong heart. Therefore, through divine bounty and providence it has become confirmed in certain great matters.

First: The Call of the Kingdom was in the very beginning raised from Chicago. This is indeed a great privilege, for in future centuries and cycles, it will be as an axis around which the honor of Chicago will revolve.

Second: A number of souls with the utmost firmness and steadfastness arose in that blessed spot in the promotion of the Word of God and even to the present moment, having purified and sanctified the heart from every thought, they are occupied with the promulgation of the teachings of God. Hence the call of praise is raised uninterruptedly from the Supreme Concourse.

Thirdly: During the American journey, 'Abdu'l-Bahá' several times passed through Chicago and associated with the friends of God. For some time he sojourned in that city. Day and night he was occupied with the mention of the True One and summoned the people to the Kingdom of God.

Fourthly: Up to the present time, every movement initiated in Chicago, its effect was spread to all parts and to all directions; just as everything that appears in and manifests from the heart influences all the organs and limbs of the body.

Fifthly: The first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in America was instituted in Chicago, and this honor and distinction is infinite in value. Undoubtedly out of this Mashriqu'l-Adhkár thousands of other Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs will be born.

Likewise the general Annual Conventions, the foundation of the Star of the West, the Publishing Society for the publication of books and Tablets and their circulation in all parts of America, and the preparations now under way for the celebration of the Golden Centenary Anniversary of the Kingdom of God. I hope that this Jubilee and this Exhibition may be celebrated in the utmost perfection; so that the call to the world of unity: "There is no God but One God, and all the Messengers, from the beginning to the Seal of the Prophets (Muhammad) were sent on the part of the True One!" may be raised; the flag of the oneness of the world of humanity be unfurled, the melody of Universal Peace may reach the ears of the East and the West; all the paths may be cleared and straightened, all the hearts may be attracted to the Kingdom of God, the tabernacle of unity be pitched on the apex of America, the song of the love of God may exhilarate and rejoice all the nations and peoples, the surface of the earth may become the eternal paradise, the dark clouds may be dispelled and the Sun of Truth may shine forth with the utmost intensity.

O ye friends of God! Exert ye with heart and soul, so that association, love, unity and agreement be obtained between the hearts, all the aims may be merged into one aim, all the songs become one song and the power of the Holy Spirit may become so overwhelmingly victorious as to overcome all the forces of the world of nature. Work! This is the great Work, should ye become assisted therein: Thus America may become the fulcrum of merciful susceptibilities, and the throne of the Kingdom of God be established upon earth with the greatest joy and majesty.

This phenomenal world will not remain in an unchanging condition even for a short while. Second after second it undergoes change and transformation. Every foundation will finally become collapsed; every glory and splendor will at last vanish and disappear, but the Kingdom of God is eternal and the heavenly sovereignty and majesty will stand firm everlasting. Hence in the

estimation of a wise man the mat of the Kingdom of God is preferable to the throne of the government of the world.

Continually my ear and eye are turned toward the Central States; perchance a melody from some blessed souls may reach my ears, souls who are the dawning places of the love of God, the stars of the horizon of sanctification and holiness—souls who will illumine this dark universe and quicken to life this dead world. The joy of 'Abdu'l-Bahá' depends upon this! I hope that you may become confirmed therein.

Consequently, those souls who are in a condition of the utmost severance, purified from the defects of the world of nature, sanctified from attachment to this earth, vivified with the breaths of eternal life—with luminous hearts, with heavenly spirit, with attraction of consciousness, with celestial magnanimity, with eloquent tongues and with clear explanations—such souls must hasten and travel through all parts of the Central States. In every city and village they must occupy themselves with the diffusion of the divine exhortations and advices, guide the souls and promote the oneness of the world of humanity. They must play the melody of international conciliation with such power that every deaf one may attain hearing, every extinct person may be set aglow, every dead one may obtain new life and every indifferent soul may find ecstasy. It is certain that such will be the consummation.

The spreaders of the fragrances of God may peruse this commune every morning:

O Lord! O Lord! Praise and thanksgiving be unto Thee for Thou hast guided me to the highway of the Kingdom, suffered me to walk in this straight and far-stretching path, illumined my eye by beholding the lights, made me listen to the melodies of the birds of holiness from the Kingdom of Mysteries and attracted my heart with Thy love among the righteous ones.

O Lord! Confirm me with the Holy Spirit, so that I may call in Thy Name amongst the nations and give the glad tidings to the manifestation of Thy Kingdom amongst mankind.

O Lord! I am weak, strengthen me with Thy power and potency. My tongue falters, suffer me to utter Thy commemoration and praise. I am lonely, console me through my entrance in Thy Kingdom. I am remote, cause me to approach to the threshold of Thy Mercifulness.

O Lord! Make me a brilliant lamp, a shining star and a blessed tree, adorned with fruits, its branches overshadowing all these regions! Verily, Thou art the Mighty, the Powerful and Unconstrained!

Haifa, Palestine,  
February 8, 1917.

978. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Western States:

He is God!

O ye sons and daughters of the Kingdom!

Day and night I have no other occupation than the remembrance of the friends, praying from the depth of my heart in their behalf, begging for them confirmation from the Kingdom of God and supplicating the direct effect of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. I am hopeful from the favors of His Highness the Lord of Bestowals, that the friends of God during such a time may become the secret cause of the illumination of the hearts of humanity, breathing the breath of life upon the spirits—whose praiseworthy results may become conducive to the glory and exaltation of humankind throughout all eternity. Although in some of the Western States, like California, Oregon, Washington and Colorado, the fragrances of holiness are diffused, numerous souls have taken a share and a portion from the fountain of everlasting life, they have obtained heavenly benediction, have drunk an overflowing cup from the wine of the love of God and have hearkened to the melody of the Supreme Concourse—yet in the States of New Mexico, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah,

Arizona and Nevada, the lamp of the love of God is not ignited in a befitting and behooving manner, and the call of the Kingdom of God has not been raised. Now, if it is possible, show ye an effort in this direction. Either travel yourselves, personally, throughout those States or choose others and send them, so that they may teach the souls. For the present those States are like unto dead bodies: they must breathe into them the breath of life and bestow upon them a heavenly spirit. Like unto the stars they must shine in that horizon and thus the rays of the Sun of Reality may also illumine those States.

God says in the great Qur'án: "Verily, God is the helper of those who have believed. He will lead them from darkness into light." This means: God loves the believers, consequently He will deliver them from darkness and bring them into the world of light.

It is also recorded in the blessed Gospel: Travel ye throughout the world and call ye the people to the Kingdom of God. Now this is the time that you may arise and perform this most great service and become the cause of the guidance of innumerable souls. Thus through this superhuman service the rays of peace and conciliation may illumine and enlighten all the regions and the world of humanity may find peace and composure.

During my stay in America I cried out in every meeting and summoned the people to the propagation of the ideals of universal peace. I said plainly that the continent of Europe had become like unto an arsenal and its conflagration was dependent upon one spark, and that in the coming years or within two years, all that which is recorded in the Revelation of John and the Book of Daniel would become fulfilled and come to pass. This matter, in all probability, was published in the *San Francisco Bulletin*, October 12, 1912. You may refer to it, so that the truth may become clear and manifest; thus ye may fully realize that this is the time for the diffusion of the fragrances.

The magnanimity of man must be heavenly—or, in other words, it must be assisted by the divine confirmation, so that he may become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity.

Upon you be greeting and praise.

Haifa, Palestine,  
April 1, 1916.

979. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Western States of the United States: New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, California, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Utah. Upon them be Bahá'u'lláh El-Abhá!

He is God!

O ye friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful, the chosen ones of the Kingdom! The blessed State of California bears the utmost similarity to the Holy Land—that is, the country of Palestine. The air is of the utmost temperance, the plain very spacious, and the fruits of Palestine are seen in that State in the utmost freshness and delicacy. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá' was travelling and journeying through those States, he found himself in Palestine, for from every standpoint there was a perfect likeness between this region and that State. Even the shores of the Pacific Ocean, in some instances, show perfect resemblance to the shores of the Holy Land—and even the flora of the Holy Land have grown on those shores—the study of which has led to much speculation and wonder.

Likewise in the State of California and other Western States, wonderful scenes of the world of nature, which bewilder the minds of men, are manifest. Lofty mountains, deep canyons, great and majestic waterfalls, and giant trees are witnessed on all sides, while its soil is in the utmost fertility and richness. That blessed state is similar to the Holy Land and that region and that country like unto a delectable paradise, in many ways identical with Palestine. Now just as there are natural resemblances, heavenly resemblances must also be acquired.

The lights of the divine traces are manifest in Palestine. The majority of the Israelitish Prophets raised the call of the Kingdom of God in this holy ground. Having spread the spiritual teachings, the

nostrils of the spiritually-minded ones became fragrant, the eyes of the illumined souls became brightened, the ears were thrilled through this song, the hearts obtained eternal life from the soul-refreshing breeze of the Kingdom of God and gained supreme illumination from the splendor of the Sun of Reality. Then from this region the light was spread to Europe, America, Asia, Africa and Australia.

Now California and the other Western States must earn an ideal similarity with the Holy Land, and from that state and that region the breaths of the Holy Spirit be diffused to all parts of America and Europe, that the call of the Kingdom of God may exhilarate and rejoice all the ears, the divine principles bestow a new life, the different parties may become one party, the divergent ideas may disappear and revolve around one unique center, the East and the West of America may embrace each other, the anthem of the oneness of the world of humanity may confer a new life upon all the children of men, and the tabernacle of Universal Peace be pitched on the apex of America;—thus Europe and Africa may become vivified with the breaths of the Holy Spirit, this world may become another world, the body politic may attain to a new exhilaration, and just as in the state of California and other Western States the marvelous scenes of the world of nature are evident and manifest, the great signs of the Kingdom of God may also be unveiled;—so that the body may correspond with the spirit, the outward world may become a symbol of the inward world, and the mirror of the earth may become the mirror of the Kingdom, reflecting the ideal virtues of heaven.

During my journey and travelling in those parts, I beheld wonderful scenes and beautiful panoramas of nature, orchards and rivers; national parks and general conclaves; deserts, plains, meadows and prairies, and the grains and fruits of that region greatly attracted my attention; even to the present moment they are in my mind.

Particularly was I greatly pleased with the meetings in San Francisco and Oakland, the gatherings in Los Angeles, and the believers who came from the cities of other states. Whenever their faces cross my memory, immediately infinite happiness is realized.

Therefore I hope that the divine teachings like unto the rays of the sun may be diffused in all the Western States, and the blessed Verse of the Qur'án: "It is a good City and the Lord is the Forgiver!" may become realized. Likewise, the significance of another Qur'ánic Verse: "Do ye not travel through the land and behold the traces of the Mercy of God?" become revealed in the utmost effulgence.

Praise be to God that through the divine bounty and providence, in that region the field of service is vast, the minds are in the utmost degree of intelligence and progress, sciences and arts are being promoted, the hearts like unto mirrors are in the utmost state of purity and translucency, and the friends of God are in perfect attraction. Therefore it is hoped that meetings of teaching will be organized and instituted, and for the diffusion of the fragrances of God wise teachers may be sent to cities, even to villages.

The teachers of the Cause must be heavenly, lordly and radiant. They must be embodied spirit, personified intellect, and arise in service with the utmost firmness, steadfastness and self-sacrifice. In their journeys they must not be attached to food and clothing. They must concentrate their thoughts on the outpourings of the Kingdom of God and beg for the confirmations of the Holy Spirit. With a divine power, with an attraction of consciousness, with heavenly glad tidings and celestial holiness they must perfume the nostrils with the fragrances of the Paradise of 'Abhá.

The following Commune is to be read by them every day:

O God! O God! This is a broken-winged bird and his flight is very slow—assist him so that he may fly toward the apex of prosperity and salvation, wing his way with the utmost joy and happiness throughout the illimitable space, raise his melody in Thy Supreme Name in all the regions, exhilarate the ears with this call, and brighten the eyes by beholding the signs of guidance!

O Lord! I am single, alone and lowly. For me there is no support save Thee, no helper except Thee and no sustainer beside Thee. Confirm me in Thy service, assist me with the cohorts of Thy angels, make me victorious in the promotion of Thy Word and suffer me to speak out Thy wisdom amongst

Thy creatures. Verily, Thou art the custodian of the poor and the defender of the little ones, and verily Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and the Unconstrained!

Haifa, Palestine,  
February 15, 1917.

He is God!

980. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada:

O ye daughters and sons of the Kingdom!

Although in most of the states and cities in the United States—praise be to God—the fragrances of God are diffused and innumerable souls are turning their faces and advancing toward the Kingdom of God, yet in some of the states the flag of oneness is not upraised as it ought to be and must be, and the mysteries of the Holy Books, like the Bible, the Gospel and the Qur'án, are not promulgated. Through the unanimous effort of the friends, the banner of oneness must be unfurled in those states, and the divine teachings be promoted, so that they may also receive a portion and a share of the heavenly bestowals and the most great guidance. Likewise in the Provinces of Canada, such as Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Ungava, Keewatin, Mackenzie, Yukon and the Franklin Islands in the Arctic Circle—the believers of God must become self-sacrificing and like unto the candles of guidance become ignited in the Provinces of Canada. Should they show forth such a magnanimity, it is assured that they will obtain universal divine confirmations, the heavenly cohorts will reinforce them uninterruptedly, and a most great victory will be obtained. Perchance, God willing, the call of the Kingdom may reach the ears of the Eskimos, the inhabitants of the Islands of Franklin in the north of Canada, as well as Greenland. Should in Greenland the fire of the love of God be ignited, all the ices of that continent will be melted and its frigid climate will be changed into a temperate climate—that is, if the hearts will obtain the heat of the love of God, that country and continent will become a divine garden and a lordly orchard, and the souls, like unto the fruitful trees, will obtain the utmost freshness and delicacy. Magnanimity is necessary, heavenly exertion is called for. Should you display an effort, so that the fragrances of God be diffused amongst the Eskimos, its effect will be very great and far-reaching. God says in the great Qur'án: “A day will come wherein the lights of unity will enlighten all the world. The earth will be irradiated with the light of its Lord.” In other words: “The earth will become illumined with the light of God. That light is the light of unity.” “There is no God but God.” The continent and the islands of Eskimos are also parts of this earth. They must similarly receive a portion of the bestowals of the most great guidance.

Upon you be greeting and praise.

Haifa, Palestine,  
April 5, 1916.

981. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Dominion of Canada, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon, Mackenzie, Keewatin, Ungava, Franklin Islands and Greenland:

Upon them be Bahá'u'lláh El-Abhá!

He is God!

O ye kind friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful!

In the great Qur'án, God says: "Thou shalt see no difference in the creatures of God." In other words, He says: From the ideal standpoint, there is no variation between the creatures of God, because they are all created by Him. From the above premise, a conclusion is drawn, that there is even no difference between the various countries; nevertheless the future of the Dominion of Canada is very great, and its historical events infinitely glorious. Thus it shall become the object of the glance of providence and the manifestation of the favors of the Supreme Lord.

'Abdu'l-Bahá' during his journey and sojourn through that Dominion obtained the utmost joy. Before my departure, many souls warned me not to travel to Montreal, saying, the majority of the inhabitants are Catholics, and are in the utmost fanaticism, that they are submerged in the sea of imitations, that they have not the capability to hearken to the call of the Kingdom of God, that the veil of bigotry has so covered the eyes that they have deprived themselves from beholding the signs of the most great guidance, and that the dogmas have taken possession of the hearts entirely, leaving no trace of reality. They asserted that should the Sun of Reality shine with perfect splendor throughout that Dominion, the dark, impenetrable clouds of superstitions have so enveloped the horizon that it would be utterly impossible for any one to behold its rays.

But these stories did not have any effect on the resolution of 'Abdu'l-Bahá'. He, trusting in God, turned his face toward Montreal. When he entered that city he observed all the doors open, he found the hearts in the utmost receptivity and the ideal power of the Kingdom of God removing every obstacle and obstruction. In the churches and meetings of that Dominion he called men to the Kingdom of God with the utmost joy, and scattered such seeds which will be irrigated with the hand of Divine Power. Undoubtedly those seeds will grow, becoming green and verdant, and many rich harvests will be gathered. In the promotion of the divine principles he found no antagonist and no adversary. The believers he met in that city were in the utmost spirituality, and attracted with the fragrances of God. He found that through the effort of the maid-servant of God, Mrs. Maxwell, a number of the sons and daughter of the Kingdom in that Dominion were gathered together and associated with each other, increasing this joyous exhilaration day by day. The time of sojourn was limited to a number of days, but the results in the future are inexhaustible. When a farmer comes into the possession of a virgin soil, in a short time he will bring under cultivation a large field. Therefore I hope that in the future Montreal may become so stirred, that the melody of the Kingdom may travel to all parts of the world from that Dominion and the breaths of the Holy Spirit may spread from that center to the East and the West of America.

O ye believers of God! Do ye not look upon the smallness of your number and the multitudes of the nations. Five grains of wheat will be endued with heavenly blessing, whereas a thousand tons of tares will yield no results or effect. One fruitful tree will be conducive to the life of society, whereas a thousand forests of wild trees offer no fruits. The plain is covered with pebbles, but precious stones are rare. One pearl is better than a thousand wildernesses of sand; especially this pearl of great price, which is endowed with divine blessing. Ere long thousands of other pearls will be born from It. When that pearl associates and becomes the intimate of the pebbles, they also all change into pearls.

Therefore, again I repeat, that the future of Canada, whether from the standpoint of civilization or from the viewpoint of the virtues of the Kingdom is very great. Day by day civilization and freedom shall increase. Likewise the cloud of the Kingdom will water the seeds of guidance sown in that Dominion. Consequently, rest ye not, seek ye no composure, attach not yourselves to the luxuries of this ephemeral world, free yourselves from every attachment, and strive with heart and soul to become fully established in the Kingdom of God. Gain ye the heavenly treasures. Day by day become ye more illumined. Draw ye nearer and nearer unto the threshold of oneness. Become ye the manifestors of spiritual favors and the dawning places of infinite lights! If it is possible, send ye teachers to other portions of Canada, likewise dispatch ye teachers to Greenland and the home of the Eskimos.

As regards the teachers, they must completely divest themselves from the old garments and be invested with a new garment. According to the statement of Christ, they must attain to the station of rebirth:—that is, whereas in the first instance they were born from the womb of the mother, this

time they must be born from the womb of the world of nature. Just as they are now totally unaware of the experiences of the foetal world, they must also forget entirely the defects of the world of nature. They must be baptized with the water of life, the fire of the love of God and the breaths of the Holy Spirit; be satisfied with little food, but take a large portion from the heavenly table. They must disengage themselves from temptation and covetousness, and be filled with the spirit. Through the effect of their pure breath, they must change the stone into the brilliant ruby and the shell into pearl. Like unto the cloud of vernal shower, they must transform the black soil into the rose garden and orchard. They must make the blind seeing, the deaf hearing, the extinguished one enkindled and set aglow, and the dead quickened.

Upon you be Bahá'u'lláh El-Abhá!

The spreaders of the fragrances of God should peruse every morning the following supplication:

Praise be to Thee, O God! Verily, these are Thy servants, who are attracted by the fragrances of Thy Mercifulness, enkindled by the ignited fire in the tree of Thy Singleness and their eyes are brightened by beholding the effulgences of the light in the Sinai of Thy Oneness!

O Lord! Loosen their tongues in Thy commemoration amongst Thy people; suffer them to speak Thy Praise through Thy Favor and Grace, assist them with the cohorts of Thy Angels, strengthen their loins in Thy service and make them the signs of Thy Guidance amongst Thy creatures!

Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Exalted, the Pardoner and the Merciful!

O God! O God! Thou beholdest this weak one begging the strength of Thy Kingdom! This poor one supplicating the treasures of Thy heaven! This thirsty one longing for Thy Fountain of the water of eternal life! This sick one invoking Thy perfect recovery through Thy boundless Mercy, which Thou hast specialized for Thy chosen servants in Thy Supreme Kingdom!

O Lord! I have no other helper save Thee; no other comforter beside Thee, and no other sustainer except Thee! Assist me with Thy Angels in the diffusion of Thy holy fragrances and the dissemination of Thy teachings amongst Thy elected people!

O Lord! Suffer me to sever myself from aught else save Thee, holding fast to the hem of Thy Garment; make me sincere in Thy religion, firm in Thy love and living in accordance with that which Thou hast commanded me in Thy Book.

Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and the Omnipotent!

Haifa, Palestine,  
February 21, 1917.

982. To the Assemblies and Meetings of the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the United States and Canada!

Upon them be Bahá'u'lláh El-Abhá!

He is God!

O ye blessed souls!

I desire for you eternal success and prosperity and beg perfect confirmation for each one in the divine world. My hope for you is that each one may shine forth like unto the morning star from the horizon of the world and in this Garden of God become a blessed tree, producing everlasting fruits and results.

Therefore I direct you to that which is conducive to your heavenly confirmation and illumination in the Kingdom of God!

It is this: Alaska is a vast country; although one of the maid-servants of the Merciful has hastened

to those parts, serving as a librarian in the Public Library, and according to her ability is not failing in teaching the Cause; yet the call of the Kingdom of God is not yet raised through that spacious territory.

His Holiness Christ says: Travel ye to the East and to the West of the world and summon the people to the Kingdom of God. Hence the mercy of God must encompass all humanity. Therefore do ye not think it permissible to leave that region deprived of the breezes of the Morn of Guidance. Consequently, strive as far as ye are able to send to those parts fluent speakers, who are detached from aught else save God, attracted with the fragrances of God, and sanctified and purified from all desires and temptations. Their sustenance and food must consist of the teachings of God. First they must themselves live in accordance with those principles, then guide the people. Perchance, God willing, the lights of the most great guidance may illumine that country and the breezes of the rose garden of the love of God may perfume the nostrils of the inhabitants of Alaska. Should ye become confirmed in thus rendering such a service, rest ye assured that ye shall crown your heads with the diadem of everlasting sovereignty, and at the threshold of oneness you will become the favored and accepted servants.

Likewise the Republic of Mexico is very important. The majority of the inhabitants of that country are devoted Catholics. They are totally unaware of the reality of the Bible, the Gospel and the new divine teachings. They do not know that the basis of the religions of God is one and that the Holy Manifestations are like unto the Sun of Truth, rising from the different dawning places. Those souls are submerged in the sea of dogmas. If one breath of life be blown over them, great results will issue therefrom. But it is better for those who intend to go to Mexico to teach, to be familiar with the Spanish language.

Similarly, the six Central American Republics, situated south of Mexico—Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the seventh country Belize or British Honduras. The teachers going to those parts must also be familiar with the Spanish language.

You must give great importance to teaching the Indians, i.e., the aborigines of America. For these souls are like the ancient inhabitants of Peninsular Arabia, who previous to the Manifestation of His Holiness Muḥammad were treated as savages. But when the Muḥammadic light shone forth in their midst, they became so illumined that they brightened the world. Likewise, should these Indians and aborigines be educated and obtain guidance, there is no doubt that through the divine teachings, they will become so enlightened as in turn to shed light to all regions.

All the above countries have importance, but especially the Republic of Panama, wherein the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans come together through the Panama Canal. It is the center for travel and passage from America to other continents of the world, and in the future it will gain most great importance.

Likewise the Islands of the West Indies, such as Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, the Islands of the Lesser Antilles, Bahama Islands, even the small Watling Island, have great importance; especially the two black Republics, Haiti and Santo Domingo, situated in the cluster of the Greater Antilles. Likewise the cluster of the Islands of Bermuda and the Atlantic Ocean have importance.

In a similar way, the Republics on the Continent of South America,—Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, British Guiana, Dutch Guiana, French Guiana, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Venezuela; also the Islands in the North, East and West of South America, such as Falkland Island, Galapago, Juan Fernandez, Tobago and Trinidad. Likewise the city of Bahia, situated on the eastern shore of Brazil. Because it is some time that it has become known by this name, its efficacy will be most potent.

In short, O ye believers of God! Exalt your effort and magnify your aims. His Holiness Christ says: Blessed are the poor, for theirs shall be the Kingdom of Heaven. In other words: Blessed are the nameless and traceless poor, for they are the leaders of mankind. Likewise it is said in the Qur'án: "We desire to bestow our gifts upon those who have become weak on the face of the earth, and make them a nation and the heirs (of spiritual truth)." Or, we wish to grant a favor to the impotent souls and suffer them to become the inheritors of the Messengers and Prophets.

Therefore, now is the time that you may divest yourselves from the garment of attachment to this phenomenal realm, be wholly severed from the physical world, become angels of heaven and travel and teach through all these regions.

I declare by Him, beside whom there is no one, that each one of you shall become the Israel of Life, blowing the breath of life in the souls of others.

Upon you be greeting and praise!

### Supplication

O Thou Incomparable God! O Thou Lord of the Kingdom! These souls are Thy heavenly army. Assist them and with the cohorts of the Supreme Concourse, make them victorious; so that each one of them may become like unto a regiment and conquer these countries through the love of God and the illumination of divine teachings.

O God! Be Thou their supporter and their helper, and in the wilderness, the mountain, the valley, the forests, the prairies and the seas, be Thou their confidant—so that they may cry out through the power of the Kingdom and the breath of the Holy Spirit!

Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and the Omnipotent, and Thou art the Wise, the Hearing and the Seeing.

Haifa, Palestine,  
April 8, 1916

983. To the Assemblies and meetings of the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the United States and Canada:

Upon them be Bahá'u'lláh El-Abhá!

He is God!

O ye heavenly souls, sons and daughters of the Kingdom!

God says in the Qur'án: "Take ye hold of the Cord of God, all of you, and become ye not disunited."

In the contingent world there are many collective centers which are conducive to association and unity between the children of men. For example, patriotism is a collective center; nationalism is a collective center; the union of ideals is a collective center, and the prosperity of the world of humanity is dependent upon the organization and promotion of the collective centers. Nevertheless, all the above institutions are in reality, the matter and not the substance, accidental and not eternal—temporary and not everlasting. With the appearance of great revolutions and upheavals, all these collective centers are swept away. But the Collective Center of the Kingdom, embodying the Institutes and Divine Teachings, is the eternal Collective Center. It establishes relationship between the East and the West, organizes the oneness of the world of humanity, and destroys the foundation of differences. It overcomes and includes all the other collective centers. Like unto the ray of the sun, it dispels entirely the darkness, encompassing all the regions, bestows ideal life, and causes the effulgence of divine illumination. Through the breaths of the Holy Spirit it performs miracles; the Orient and the Occident embrace each other, the North and South become intimates and associates; conflicting and contending opinions disappear; antagonistic aims are brushed aside, the law of the struggle for existence is abrogated, and the canopy of the oneness of the world of humanity is raised on the apex of the globe, casting its shade over all the races of men. Consequently, the real Collective Center is the body of the divine teachings, which include all the degrees and embrace all the universal relations and necessary laws of humanity.

Consider! The people of the East and the West were in the utmost strangeness. Now to what a high degree they are acquainted with each other and united together! How far are the inhabitants of

Persia from the remotest countries of America! And now observe how great has been the influence of the heavenly power, for the distance of thousands of miles has become identical with one step! How various nations that have had no relations or similarity with each other are now united and agreed through this divine potency! Indeed to God belongs power in the past and in the future! And verily God is powerful over all things!

Consider! When the rain, the heat, the sun and the gentle zephyrs co-operate with each other, what beautiful gardens are produced! How the various kinds of hyacinths, flowers, trees and plants associate with each other and are conducive to the adornment and charm of one another! Hence the oneness of the bounty of the sun, the oneness of rain and the oneness of the breeze have so overcome all other considerations that the variety of hues, fragrances and tastes have increased the adornment, the attraction and sweetness of the whole. In a similar manner, when the divine collective center and the outpouring of the Sun of Reality and the breaths of the Holy Spirit are brought together, the variety of races and the differences existing between countries will become the cause of the embellishment, decoration and elegance of the world of humanity.

Therefore, the believers of God throughout all the Republics of America, through the divine power, must become the cause of the promotion of heavenly teachings and the establishment of the oneness of humanity. Every one of the important souls must arise, blowing over all parts of America the breath of life, conferring upon the people a new spirit, baptizing them with the fire of the love of God, the water of life, and the breaths of the Holy Spirit—so that the second birth may become realized. For it is written in the Gospel: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.”

Therefore, O ye believers of God in the United States and Canada! Select ye important personages, or that they by themselves becoming severed from rest and composure of the world, may arise and travel throughout Alaska, the Republic of Mexico, and south of Mexico, in the Central American Republics, such as Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Belize; and through the great South American Republics, such as Argentine, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, French Guiana, Dutch Guiana, British Guiana, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile; also in the group of the West Indies Islands, such as Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Santo Domingo, and the group of Islands of the Lesser Antilles, the Islands of Bahama and the Islands of Bermuda; likewise to the Islands of the East, West and South of South America, such as Trinidad, Falkland Islands, Galapagos Islands, Juan Fernandez and Tobago. Visit ye especially the city of Bahia, on the eastern shore of Brazil. Because in the past years this city was christened with the name, BAHIA, there is no doubt that it has been through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Consequently, the believers of God must display the utmost effort, upraise the divine melody throughout those regions, promulgate the heavenly teachings and waft over all, the spirit of eternal life; so that those Republics may become so illumined with the splendors and the effulgences of the Sun of Reality that they may become the objects of the praise and commendation of all other countries. Likewise, ye must give great attention to the Republic of Panama, for in that point the Occident and the Orient find each other united through the Panama Canal, and it is also situated between the two great oceans. That place will become very important in the future. The Teachings once established there, they will unite the East and the West, the North and the South.

Hence the intention must be purified, the effort ennobled and exalted, so that ye may establish affinity between the hearts of the world of humanity. This glorious aim will not become realized save through the promotion of divine teachings which are the foundations of the holy religions.

Consider how the religions of God served the world of humanity! How the religion of Torah became conducive to the glory and honor and progress of the Israelitish nation! How the breaths of the Holy Spirit of His Holiness Christ created affinity and unity between divergent communities and quarreling families! How the sacred power of His Holiness Muḥammad became the means of unity and harmonizing the contentious tribes and the different clans of Peninsular Arabia—to such an extent that one thousand tribes were welded into one tribe, strife and discord was done away with, all of them unitedly and with one accord strove in advancing the cause of culture and civilization, and thus were freed from the lowest degree of degradation, soaring toward the height of everlasting

glory! Is it possible to find a great Collective Center in the phenomenal world than this? In comparison to this Divine Collective Center, the national collective center, the patriotic collective center, the political collective center and the cultural and intellectual collective center are like child's play!

Now strive ye that the Collective Center of the sacred religions, for the inculcation of which all the Prophets were manifested and which is no other than the spirit of the Divine Teachings,—be spread in all part of America;—so that each one of you may shine forth from the horizon of Reality like unto the morning star, divine illumination may overcome the darkness of nature, and the world of humanity may become enlightened. This is the most great work! Should ye become confirmed therein, this world will become another world, the surface of the earth will become the delectable Paradise, and eternal Institutions be founded.

Let whosoever travels to different parts to teach, peruse over mountain, desert, land and sea this supplication!

O God! O God! Thou seest my weakness, lowliness and humility amongst Thy creatures; nevertheless I have trusted on Thee and have arisen in the promotion of Thy Teachings amongst Thy strong servants, relying on Thy power and might!

O Lord! I am a broken-winged bird and desire to soar in this Thy space to which there is no limit. How is it possible for me to do this save through Thy providence and grace, Thy confirmation and assistance!

O Lord! Have pity on my weakness and strengthen me with Thy power!

O Lord! Have pity on my impotency and assist me with Thy might and majesty!

O Lord! Should the breaths of the Holy Spirit confirm the weakest of creatures, he shall attain to the highest station of greatness and shall possess anything he desireth. Indeed Thou hast assisted Thy servants in the past, and they were the weakest of Thy creatures, the lowliest of Thy servants and the most insignificant of those who lived upon the earth; but through Thy sanction and potency they took precedence over the most glorious of Thy people and the most noble of Thy mankind. Whereas formerly they were as moths, they became royal falcons and whereas before they were as bubbles they became seas. Through Thy bestowal, Thy mercy and Thy most great favor they became stars shining in the horizon of guidance, birds singing in the rose-gardens of immortality, lions roaring in the forest of knowledge and wisdom and whales swimming in the oceans of life.

Verily, Thou art the Clement, the Powerful, the Mighty, and the Most Merciful of the Merciful!

Haifa, Palestine,  
March 8, 1917.

984. To the believers and the maid-servants of the Merciful of the Bahá'í Assemblies and meetings in the United States and Canada!

He is God!

O ye real Bahá'ís of America!

Praise be to His Highness the Desired One that ye have become confirmed in the promotion of divine teachings in that vast Continent, raised the call of the Kingdom of God in that region and announced the Glad tidings of the manifestation of the Lord of Hosts and His Highness the Promised One. Thanks be unto the Lord that ye have become assisted and confirmed in this aim. This is purely through the confirmations of the Lord of Hosts and the breaths of the Holy Spirit. At present your confirmation is not known and understood. Ere long ye shall observe that each one of you like unto a brilliant and shining star will diffuse the light of guidance from the horizon and that ye have become the cause of eternal life to the inhabitants of America.

Consider! The station and the confirmation of the apostles in the time of Christ was not known,

and no one looked on them with the feeling of importance—nay, rather, they persecuted and ridiculed them. Later on it became evident what crowns studded with the brilliant jewels of guidance were placed on the heads of the apostles, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of John.

Likewise your confirmation is not known at the present time. I hope that ere long it may throw a mighty reverberation through the pillars of the earth. Therefore it is the hope of 'Abdu'l-Bahá' that just as ye are confirmed and assisted on the continent of America, ye may also be confirmed and assisted in other continents of the globe:—that is, ye may carry the fame of the Cause of God to the East and to the West and spread the Glad tidings of the appearance of the Kingdom of the Lord of Hosts throughout the five continents of the world.

When this divine call travels from the continent of America to Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and the Islands of the Pacific, the American believers shall be established on the throne of everlasting Glory, the fame of their illumination and guidance shall reach to all regions and the renown of their greatness become world-wide. Therefore, a party, speaking the languages, severed, holy, sanctified and filled with the love of God, must turn their faces to and travel through the three great island groups of the Pacific Ocean,—Polynesia, Micronesia and Mylanesia, and the islands attached to these groups, such as New Guinea, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Philippine Islands, Solomon Islands, Fiji Islands, New Hebrides, Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia, Bismarck Archipelago, Ceram, Celebes, Friendly Islands, Samoa Islands, Society Islands, Caroline Islands, Low Archipelago, Marquesas, Hawaiian Islands, Gilbert Islands, Moluccas, Marshall Islands, Timor and the other Islands. With hearts overflowing with the love of God, with tongues commemorating the mention of God, with eyes turned to the Kingdom of God, they must deliver the Glad tidings of the manifestation of the Lord of Hosts to all the people. Know ye of a certainty that in whatever meeting ye may enter, in the apex of that meeting the Holy Spirit shall be waving and the heavenly confirmations of the Blessed Perfection shall encompass all.

Consider ye, that Miss Agnes Alexander, the daughter of the Kingdom, the beloved maid-servant of the Blessed Perfection, traveled alone to Hawaii and the Island of Honolulu, and now she is gaining spiritual victories in Japan! She became the cause of the guidance of a gathering of people.

Likewise Miss Knobloch traveled alone to Germany. To what a great extent she became confirmed! Therefore, know ye of a certainty that whosoever arises in this day to diffuse the divine fragrances, the cohorts of the Kingdom of God shall confirm him and the bestowals and the favors of the Blessed Perfection shall encircle him.

O how I long that it could be made possible for me to travel through these parts, even if necessary on foot and with the utmost poverty, and while passing through the cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, cry at the top of my voice: “Yá Bahá'u'l-'Abhá!” and promote the divine teachings. But now this is not feasible for me, therefore I live in great regret; perchance, God willing, ye may become assisted therein.

At this time, in the Islands of Hawaii, through the efforts of Miss Alexander, a number of souls have reached the shore of the sea of faith! Consider ye, what happiness, what joy is this! I declare by the Lord of Hosts that had this respected daughter founded an empire, that empire would not have been so great! For this sovereignty is eternal sovereignty and this glory is everlasting glory.

Likewise, if some teachers go to other islands and other parts, such as the continent of Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, also to Japan, Asiatic Russia, Korea, French Indo-China, Siam, Straits Settlements, India, Ceylon and Afghanistan, most great results will be forthcoming. How good would it be were there any possibility of a commission composed of men and women, to travel together through China and Japan,—so that this bond of love may become strengthened, and through this going and coming they may establish the oneness of the world of humanity, summon the people to the Kingdom of God and spread the teachings.

Similarly, if possible, they should travel to the continent of Africa, Canary Islands, Cape Verde Islands, Madeira Islands, Reunion Islands, St. Helena, Zanzibar, Mauritius, etc., and in those countries summon the people to the Kingdom of God and raise the cry of: “Yá Bahá'u'l-'Abhá!”

They must also upraise the flag of the oneness of the world of humanity in the island of Madagascar.

Books and pamphlets must be either translated or composed in the languages of these countries and Islands, to be circulated in every part and in all directions.

It is said that in South Africa, a diamond mine is discovered. Although this mine is most valuable, yet after all it is stone. Perchance, God willing, the mine of humanity may be discovered and the brilliant pearls of the Kingdom be found.

In brief, this world-consuming war has set such a conflagration to the hearts that no word can describe it. In all the countries of the world the longing for Universal Peace is taking possession of the consciousness of men. There is not a soul who does not yearn for concord and peace. A most wonderful state of receptivity is being realized. This is through the consummate wisdom of God, so that capacity may be created, the standard of the oneness of the world of humanity be upraised, and the fundamentals of Universal Peace and the divine principles be promoted in the East and the West.

Therefore, O ye believers of God! Show ye an effort and after this war spread ye the synopsis of the divine teachings in the British Isles, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, Andora, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Monaco, San Marino, Balearic Isles, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Crete, Malta, Iceland, Faroe Islands, Shetland Islands, Hebrides and Orkney Islands.

In all these countries, like unto the morning stars shine ye forth from the horizon of guidance. Up to this time you have displayed great magnanimity, but after this, ye must add a thousand times to your effort and throughout the above countries, capitals, islands, meetings and churches, invite mankind to the Kingdom of 'Abhá! The circle of your exertion must become widened. The more it is broadened and extended, the greater will be your confirmation.

Ye have observed that while 'Abdu'l-Bahá' was in the utmost bodily weakness and feebleness, while he was indisposed, and had not the power to move—notwithstanding this physical state he traveled through many countries, in Europe and America, and in churches, meetings and conventions was occupied with the promotion of the divine principles and summoned the people to the manifestation of the Kingdom of 'Abhá. Ye have also observed how the confirmations of the Blessed Perfection encompassed all. What result is forthcoming from material rest, tranquillity, luxury and attachment to this corporeal world! It is evident that the man who pursues these things will in the end become afflicted with regret and loss.

Consequently, one must close his eyes wholly to these thoughts, long for eternal life, the sublimity of the world of humanity, the celestial developments, the Holy Spirit, the promotion of the Word of God, the guidance of the inhabitants of the globe, the promulgation of the Universal Peace and the proclamation of the oneness of the world of humanity! This is the work! Otherwise like unto other animals and birds one must occupy himself with the requirements of this physical life, the satisfaction of which is the highest aspiration of the animal kingdom, and one must stalk across the earth like unto the quadrupeds.

Consider ye! No matter how much man gains wealth, riches and opulence in this world, he will not become as independent as a cow. For these fattened cows roam freely over the vast tableland. All the prairies and meadows are theirs for grazing, and all the springs and rivers are theirs for drinking! No matter how much they graze, the fields will not be exhausted! It is evident that they have earned these material bounties with the utmost facility.

Still more ideal than this life is the life of the bird. A bird, on the summit of a mountain, on the high, waving branches, has built for itself a nest more beautiful than the palaces of the kings! The air is in the utmost purity, the water cool and clear as crystal, the panorama charming and enchanting. In such glorious surroundings, he expends his numbered days. All the harvests of the plain are his possessions, having earned all this wealth without the least labor. Hence, no matter how much man may advance in this world, he shall not attain to the station of this bird! Thus it becomes evident that in the matters of this world, however much man may strive and work to the point of death, he will be unable to earn the abundance, the freedom and the independent life of a

small bird. This proves and establishes the fact that man is not created for the life of this ephemeral world:—nay, rather, is he created for the acquirement of infinite perfections, for the attainment to the sublimity of the world of humanity, to be drawn nigh unto the divine threshold, and to sit on the throne of everlasting sovereignty!

Upon you be Bahá El-Abhá!

Supplication.

Any soul starting on a trip of teaching to various parts, and while sojourning in strange countries, may peruse the following supplication:—day and night.

O God! O God! Thou seest me enamored and attracted toward Thy Kingdom, the El Abhá, enkindled with the fire of Thy love amongst mankind, a herald of Thy Kingdom in these vast and spacious countries, severed from aught else save Thee, relying on Thee, abandoning rest and comfort, remote from my native home, a wanderer in these regions, a stranger fallen on the ground, humble before Thy exalted threshold, submissive toward Thy most high realm, supplicating Thee in the middle of nights and in the heart of evenings, entreating and invoking Thee in the morn and eve;—so that Thou mayest assist me in the service of Thy Cause, the promotion of Thy Teachings and the exaltation of Thy Word in the Easts of the earth and the Wests thereof.

O Lord! Strengthen my back and confirm me in Thy servitude with all my powers, and do not leave me alone and by myself in these countries.

O Lord! Associate with me in my loneliness and accompany me in my journeys through these foreign lands.

Verily, Thou art the confirmer of whomsoever Thou willest in that which Thou desirest, and verily Thou art the Powerful, the Omnipotent:

Haifa, Palestine,  
April 11, 1916.

985. To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful of the Bahá'í Assemblies in the United States of America and Canada!

Upon them be Bahá'u'lláh El-Abhá!

He is God!

O ye apostles of Bahá'u'lláh—May my life be a ransom to you!

The blessed Person of the Promised One is interpreted in the Holy Book as the Lord of Hosts, i. e., the heavenly armies: By heavenly armies those souls are intended who are entirely freed from the human world, transformed into celestial spirits and have become divine angels. Such souls are the rays of the Sun of Reality who will illumine all the continents. Each one is holding in his hand a trumpet, blowing the breath of life over all the regions. They are delivered from human qualities and the defects of the world of nature, are characterized with the characteristics of God, and are attracted with the fragrances of the Merciful. Like unto the apostles of Christ, who were filled with Him, these souls also have become filled with His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh, i. e., the love of Bahá'u'lláh has so mastered every organ, part and limb of their bodies, as to leave no effect by the promptings of the human world.

These souls are the armies of God and the conquerors of the East and the West. Should one of them turn his face toward some direction and summon the people to the Kingdom of God, all the ideal forces and lordly confirmations will rush to his support and reinforcement. He will behold all the doors open and all the strong fortifications and impregnable castles razed to the ground. Singly and alone he will attack the armies of the world, defeat the right and left wings of the hosts of all the countries, break through the lines of the legions of all the nations and carry his attack to the very

center of the power of the earth. This is the meaning of the Hosts of God.

Any soul from among the believers of Bahá'u'lláh who attains to this station, will become known as the Apostle of Bahá'u'lláh. Therefore strive ye with heart and soul—so that ye may reach this lofty and exalted position, be established on the throne of everlasting glory, and crown your heads with the shining diadem of the Kingdom, whose brilliant jewels may irradiate upon centuries and cycles.

O ye kind friends! Uplift your magnanimity and soar high toward the apex of heaven—so that your blessed hearts may become illumined more and more, day by day, through the Rays of the Sun of Reality, i.e., His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh; at every moment the spirits may obtain a new life, and the darkness of the world of nature may be entirely dispelled—thus ye may become incarnate light and personified spirit, become entirely unaware of the sordid matters of this world and in touch with the affairs of the divine world.

Consider ye what doors His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh has opened before you, and what a high and exalted station He has destined for you, and what bounties He has prepared for you! Should we become intoxicated with this cup, the sovereignty of this globe of earth will become lower in our estimation than the children's plays. Should they place in the arena the crown of the government of the world, and invite each one of us to accept it, undoubtedly we shall not condescend, and shall refuse to accept it.

To attain to this supreme station is, however, dependent on the realization of certain conditions:

The first condition is firmness in the Covenant of God. For the power of the Covenant will protect the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh from the doubts of the people of error. It is the fortified fortress of the Cause of God and the firm pillar of the religion of God. Today no power can conserve the oneness of the Bahá'í world save the Covenant of God; otherwise differences like unto a most great tempest will encompass the Bahá'í world. It is evident that the axis of the oneness of the world of humanity is the power of the Covenant and nothing else. Had the Covenant not come to pass, had it not been revealed from the Supreme Pen and had not the Book of the Covenant, like unto the ray of the Sun of Reality, illuminated the world the forces of the Cause of God would have been utterly scattered and certain souls who were the prisoners of their own passions and lusts would have taken into their hands an axe, cutting the root of this Blessed Tree. Every person would have pushed forward his own desire and every individual aired his own opinion! Notwithstanding this great Covenant, a few negligent souls galloped with their chargers into the battlefield, thinking perchance they might be able to weaken the foundation of the Cause of God: but praise be to God all of them were afflicted with regret and loss, and ere long they shall see themselves in poignant despair. Therefore, in the beginning one must make his steps firm in the Covenant—so that the confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh may encircle from all sides, the cohorts of the Supreme Concourse may become the supporters and the helpers, and the exhortations and advices of 'Abdu'l-Bahá', like unto the pictures engraved on stone, may remain permanent and ineffaceable in the tablets of the hearts.

The second condition: Fellowship and love amongst the believers. The divine friends must be attracted to and enamored of each other and ever be ready and willing to sacrifice their own lives for each other. Should one soul from amongst the believers meet another, it must be as though a thirst one with parched lips has reached to the fountain of the water of life, or a lover has met his true beloved. For one of the greatest divine wisdoms regarding the appearance of the Holy Manifestations is this: The souls may come to know each other and become intimate with each other; the power of the love of God may make all of them the waves of one sea, the flowers of one rose garden, and the stars of one heaven. This is the wisdom for the appearance of the Holy Manifestations! When the most great bestowal reveals itself in the hearts of the believers, the world of nature will be transformed, the darkness of the contingent being will vanish, and heavenly illumination will be obtained. Then the whole world will become the Paradise of 'Abhá, every one of the believers of God will become a blessed tree, producing wonderful fruits.

O ye friends! Fellowship, fellowship! Love, love! Unity, unity!—So that the power of the Bahá'í Cause may appear and become manifest in the world of existence. Just at this moment I am engaged in your commemoration and this heart is in the utmost glow and excitement! Were ye to realize how

this conscience is attracted with the love of the friends, unquestionably ye would obtain such a degree of joy and fragrance that ye would all become enamored with each other!

The third condition: Teachers must continually travel to all parts of the continent, nay, rather, to all parts of the world, but they must travel like 'Abdu'l-Bahá', who journeyed throughout the cities of America. He was sanctified and free from every attachment and in the utmost severance. Just as His Holiness Christ says: "Shake off the very dust from your feet."

Ye have observed that while in America many souls in the utmost of supplication and entreaty desired to offer some gifts, but this servant, in accord with the exhortations and behests of the Blessed Perfection, never accepted a thing, although on certain occasions we were in most straitened circumstances. But on the other hand, if a soul for the sake of God, voluntarily and out of his pure desire, wishes to offer a contribution (toward the expenses of a teacher) in order to make the contributor happy, the teacher may accept a small sum, but must live with the utmost contentment.

The aim is this: The intention of the teacher must be pure, his heart independent, his spirit attracted, his thought at peace, his resolution firm, his magnanimity exalted and in the love of God a shining torch. Should he become as such, his sanctified breath will even affect the rock; otherwise there will be no result whatsoever. As long as a soul is not perfected, how can he efface the defects of others. Unless he is detached from aught save God, how can he teach severance to others!

In short, O ye believers of God! Endeavor ye; so that ye may take hold of every means in the promulgation of the religion of God and the diffusion of the fragrances of God.

Amongst other things is the holding of the meetings for teaching—so that blessed souls and the old ones from amongst the believers may gather together the youths of the love of God in schools of instruction and teach them all the divine proofs and irrefutable arguments, explain and elucidate the history of the Cause, and interpret also the prophecies and proofs which are recorded and are extant in the divine Books and Epistles regarding the Manifestation of the Promised One, so that the young ones may go in perfect knowledge in all these degrees.

Likewise, whenever it is possible a committee must be organized for the translation of the Tablets. Wise souls who have mastered and studied perfectly the Persian, Arabic and foreign languages, or know one of the foreign languages—must commence translating Tablets and books containing the proofs of this Revelation, and publishing those books, circulate them throughout the five continents of the globe.

Similarly, the Magazine, the Star of the West, must be edited in the utmost regularity, but its contents must be the promulgator of the Cause of God—so that both in the East and the West, they may become informed of the most important events.

In short, in all the meetings, whether public or private, nothing should be discussed save that which is under consideration, and all the articles be centered around the Cause of God. Promiscuous talks must not be dragged in and contention is absolutely forbidden.

The teachers travelling in different directions must know the language of the country in which they appear. For example, a person being proficient in the Japanese language may travel to Japan, or a person knowing the Chinese language may hasten to China, and so forth.

In short, after this universal war, the people have obtained extraordinary capacity to hearken to the divine teachings, for the wisdom of this war is this: That it may become proven to all that the fire of war is world-consuming, whereas the rays of peace are world-enlightening. One is death, the other is life; this is extinction, that is immortality; one is the most great calamity, the other is the most great bounty; this is darkness, that is light; this is eternal humiliation and that is everlasting glory; one is the destroyer of the foundation of man, the other is the founder of the prosperity of the human race.

Consequently, a number of souls may arise and act in accordance with the aforesaid conditions, and hasten to all parts of the world, especially from America to Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia, and travel through Japan and China; in brief, they may travel though all the continents and islands of the globe. Thus in a short space of time, most wonderful results will be produced, the banner of

Universal Peace will be waving on the apex of the world and the lights of the oneness of the world of humanity may illumine the universe.

In brief, O ye believers of God! The text of the Divine Book is this: If two souls quarrel and contend about a question of the Divine questions, differing and disputing, both are wrong. The wisdom of this incontrovertible law of God is this: That between two souls from amongst the believers of God, no contention and dispute might arise; that they should speak with each other with infinite amity and love. Should there appear the least trace of controversy, they must remain silent, and both parties must continue their discussions no longer, but ask the reality of the question from the Interpreter. This is the irrefutable command!

Upon you be Bahá El-Abhá!

#### Supplication.

O God! O God! Thou seest that black darkness hath encompassed all the regions, all the countries are burning with the conflagration of dissension and the fire of war and carnage is ignited in the Easts of the earth and the Wests thereof. The blood is being shed, the corpses are out-stretched and the heads are decapitated and thrown on the ground in the battlefield.

Lord! Lord! Have pity on these ignorant ones, look upon them with the eye of forgiveness and pardon. Extinguish this fire—so that these gloomy clouds covering the horizon may be scattered; the Sun of Reality may shine forth with the rays of conciliation; this darkness be rent asunder and all the countries be illumined with the lights of peace.

Lord! Awaken them from the depths of the sea of animosity, deliver them from these impenetrable darkneses, establish affinity between their hearts and enlighten their eyes with the light of peace and reconciliation.

Lord! Rescue them from the fathomless depths of war and bloodshed! Arouse them out of the gloom of error, render asunder the veil from their eyes, brighten their hearts with the light of guidance, deal with them through Thy favor and mercy and do not treat them according to Thy justice and wrath through which the backs of the mighty ones are shaken!

Lord! Verily, the wars have prolonged, the calamities have increased, and every building hath turned into ruin.

Lord! Verily, the beasts are agitated and the souls are convulsed. Have mercy on these poor ones and do not leave them to do with themselves that which they desire!

Lord! Send forth throughout Thy countries humble and submissive souls, their faces illumined with the rays of guidance, severed from the world, speaking Thy remembrance and praise and diffusing Thy holy fragrances amongst mankind!

Lord! Strengthen their backs, reinforce their loins and dilate their breasts with the signs of Thy most great love.

Lord! Verily, they are weak and Thou art the Powerful and the Mighty, and they are impotent and Thou art the Helper and the Merciful!

Lord! Verily, the sea of transgression is waving high and these hurricanes will not be calmed down save through Thy boundless grace which hath embraced all the regions!

Lord! Verily, the souls are in the deep valleys of lust and nothing will awaken them save Thy most wonderful bounties.

Lord! Dispel these darkneses of temptations and illumine the hearts with the lamp of Thy love, through which all the countries will be enlightened. Confirm those believers who, leaving their countries, their families and their children, travel throughout the regions for the sake of the love of Thy beauty, the diffusion of Thy fragrances and the promulgation of Thy teachings. Be thou their companion in their loneliness, their helper in a strange land, the remover of their sorrow, the comforter in their calamity, their deliverer in their hardship, the satisfier of their thirst, the healer of their malady and the allayer of the fire of their longing.

Verily, Thou art the Clement, the Possessor of Mercy, and Verily, Thou art the Compassionate and the Merciful.

Haifa, Palestine,  
April 19, 20 and 22, 1917.

986. Just as the earth attracts everything to the center of gravity, and every object thrown upward into space will come down, so also material ideas and worldly thoughts attract man to the center of self. Anger, passion, ignorance, prejudice, greed, envy, covetousness, jealousy and suspicion prevent man from ascending to the realms of holiness, imprisoning him in the claws of self and the cage of egotism. The physical man, unassisted by the divine power, trying to escape from one of these invisible enemies, will unconsciously fall into the hands of another. No sooner does he attempt to soar upward than the density of the love of self, like the power of gravity, draws him to the earth. The only power that is capable of delivering man from this captivity is the power of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. The attraction of the power of the Holy Spirit is so effective that it keeps man ever on the path of upward ascension. The malevolent forces of no enemy will touch those sanctified souls who have made this universal power their guide. With tranquil heart and assured spirit they are flying upward day and night, journeying through the illimitable space of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.
987. The Bahá'ís are ordered to establish the oneness of mankind; if they cannot unite around one point how will they be able to bring about the unity of mankind? The purpose of the Blessed Beauty in entering into this Covenant and Testament was to gather all the existing beings around one point so that the thoughtless souls, who in every cycle and generation have been the cause of dissension, may not undermine the Cause. He has, therefore, commanded that whatever emanates from the Center of the Covenant is right, and under His protection and favor, while everything else is error.
988. All previous Books are subordinate to this Book of the Covenant, for it has been revealed subsequent to all the previous ones. He has named it the "Book of the Covenant," therefore consider that if the friends remain firm in the Covenant will there be any misunderstandings among them? No, by God! Except those souls who have an evil intention and are thinking of leadership and of forming a party; those souls, although they have written epistles with their own pen and have execrated the violators, denouncing them as having destroyed the foundation of the monument erected by His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh, and have written that He has written this Covenant with His own pen and that whoever deviated the least from the Center of the Covenant is of the people of treachery and well deserves the wrath of God—these souls are themselves at present among the pioneers of violation. This is because of their personal motives, for they had thought of securing leadership and wealth, but when they considered that in remaining firm in the Covenant their purpose would not be realized, they deviated from it. ... Their lie is now manifest. Notwithstanding this, some souls who are not aware of this fact waver when those people cast the seeds of suspicion. ... The Covenant of God is like unto a vast and fathomless ocean. A billow shall rise and surge therefrom, and all accumulated foam it shall cast ashore.
989. When the foundation of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is laid in America, and that divine edifice is completed, a most wonderful and thrilling motion will appear in the world of existence. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár will become the center around which all these universal Bahá'í activities will be clustered. From that point of light, the spirit of teaching, spreading the Cause of God and promoting the teachings of God, will permeate to all parts of the world.
990. The darkness of this gloomy night shall pass away. Again the Sun of Reality will dawn from the horizon of the hearts. Have patience, wait but do not sit idle; work while you are waiting; smile when you are wearied with monotony; be firm while everything around you is being shaken; be joyous while the ugly face of despair grins at you; speak aloud while the malevolent forces of the nether world try to crush your mind; be valiant and courageous while men all around you are cringing with fear and cowardice. Do not yield to the overwhelming power of tyranny and

despotism. Serve the cause of democracy and freedom. Continue your journey to the end. The bright day is coming. The nucleus of the new race is forming. The harbinger of the new ideals of international justice is appearing. The trees of hope will become verdant; the copper of scorn and derision will be transmuted into the gold of honor and praise; the arid desert of ignorance will be transformed into the luxuriant garden of knowledge; the threatening clouds shall be dispelled and the stars of faith and charity will again twinkle in the clear heaven of consciousness.

991. All the believers, both men and women, in the West and in the East, must consider themselves the spreaders of the contents of these Epistles; so that the rays of the Sun of Truth may ere long illumine all the continents and islands of the globe, and the dark clouds of prejudice and ignorance be dispelled.
992. I desire that every one of the believers may become an ignited candle in the assemblage of the world of humanity, and conducive to others' eternal life. Today the confirmations of the Kingdom of 'Abhá are with those who renounce themselves, forget their own opinions, cast aside personalities and are thinking of the welfare of others. Whosoever has lost himself, has found the universe and the inhabitants thereof! Whosoever is occupied with himself is wandering in the desert of heedlessness and regret! The master-key of self-mastery is self-forgetfulness. The road to the palace of life is through the path of renunciation.
993. To the beloved of the Lord, the friends in truth, and the signs of the All-Merciful throughout the East, throughout the West.

May the Glory of the Lord All-glorious rest upon them all!

HE IS GOD!

O ye faithful friends!

O ye sincere servants of Bahá'u'lláh!

Now, in the mid-watches of the night—when eyes are closed in slumber and men have laid their heads upon the couch of rest and soundly sleep—is 'Abdu'l-Bahá', within the precincts of the hallowed shrine, wakeful; and in the ardor of his invocation utters this, his prayer:

O Thou Kind and Loving Providence! Astir is the East, and the West surgeth even as the eternal billows of the sea. The gentle gales of Holiness are diffused and, from the Unseen Kingdom, shine forth resplendent the rays of the Orb of Truth. The anthems of Divine Unity are chanted, and the ensigns of Celestial Might are waving. The angelic Voice is raised and, even as the roaring of leviathan, is the call to selflessness and evanescence. The triumphal cry: O Thou the Glory of Glories! resounds on every side, and the call: O Thou Most High! rings throughout all regions. No stir save the Glory of the One Heart-Ravisher is raised in the world, and no tumult is there save the surging of the love of Him, the Incomparable, the Well-Beloved!

The beloved of the Lord, with their musk-scented breath, burn brightly as a candle in every clime; and the friends of Him, the All-Merciful, are in all regions even as the unfolding flowers. Not for a moment do they rest; they breathe not, but in remembrance of Thee; and crave not, but to serve Thy Cause. In the meadows of Truth they are as the nightingales of sweet melodies, and in the flower garden of Guidance they are even as the brightly colored bloom. With mystic flowers they adorn the garden walks of Reality; as the swaying cypress they bedeck the riverbanks of Divine Will. Above the Horizon of Being they shine as radiant stars. In the firmament of the world they gleam as resplendent orbs. The manifestations are they of Celestial Grace, and daysprings of the Light of Divine Assistance.

Grant, O thou Loving Lord, that all may stand firm and steadfast and shine with everlasting splendor, that thereby the gentle gales at every breath may blow from the bowers of Thy Loving-kindness, and from the ocean of Thy Grace an emanation may arise, that the kindly showers of Thy Love may bestow freshness, and the zephyr waft to us its perfume from the rose garden of Divine Unity.

Vouchsafe, O Best-Beloved of the world! a ray from Thy Splendor. O Well-Beloved of mankind, shed upon us the Light of Thy Countenance!

O God Omnipotent, do Thou shield us and be our refuge, and, O Lord of Being, show forth Thy Might and Thy Dominion!

O Thou Loving Lord! The movers of sedition are, in some regions, astir and active, and by night and day are inflicting a grievous wrong.

Even as wolves, despots are lying in wait, and the wronged, innocent fold has neither held nor succor. Bloodhounds are on the trail of the gazelles of the fields of Divine Unity, and the Pheasant in the mounts of Heavenly Guidance by the ravens of envy is pursued.

O Thou Divine Providence! Preserve Thou and protect us! O Thou who art our Shield, save us and defend us! Keep us beneath Thy Shelter, and by Thy Help save us from all ill. Thou art indeed the True Protector, the Unseen Guardian, the Celestial Watcher, and the Heavenly Loving Lord!

O ye beloved of the Lord!

On one side is the Standard of the One True God unfurled and the Voice of the Kingdom raised, the Cause of God is spreading, and manifest in splendor are the wonders from on high; illumined is the East and perfumed is the West, fragrant with ambergris is the North and musk-scented is the South.

On the other side, they that are faithless wax in their hate and rancor, and even stir up grievous sedition and mischief. No day passeth but some man raiseth the standard of revolt and spurs his charger into the arena of discord. At every hour the vile adder beareth its fangs and scattereth its deadly venom.

The beloved of the Lord are wrapped in utter sincerity and devotion, unmindful of this rancor and malice. Smooth and insidious are these snakes, these whisperers of evil, artful in their craft and guile. Be ye on your guard, and ever wakeful! Quick-witted and keen of intellect are the faithful, and firm and steadfast are the assured! Act ye with all circumspection!

“Fear ye the sagacity of the faithful, for he seeth with the Light Divine!” (Qur’án)

Beware lest any soul should privily cause disruption or stir up strife. In the Cause of the Impregnable Stronghold be ye brave warriors; and, for the Goodly Mansion, a valiant host. Exercise the utmost care, and day and night be on your guard, that thereby the tyrant may not inflict harm.

Study the Tablet of “The Holy Mariner”<sup>1</sup> that ye may know the Truth, and consider that the Blessed Beauty hath fully foretold future events. Let them who perceive, take warning!

Like dust at the Sacred Threshold, in utter humility and lowliness, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’ is engaged in the promulgation of his Signs through the daytime and the night season; whensoever he findeth time he prayeth ardently, and inspireth, saying:

O Thou Divine Providence! Pitiful are we, grant us Thy Succor; homeless and wanderers, give us Thy Shelter; scattered, do Thou unite us; astray, join us to the Fold; bereft, do Thou bestow upon us a portion and a share; athirst, lead us to the wellspring of Life; frail, strengthen us that we may arise to exalt Thy Cause and present ourselves a living sacrifice in the pathway of Guidance.

The faithless, however, by day and night, openly and privily exert their utmost to shake the foundations of the Cause, to root out the Blessed Tree, to deprive this servant from service, to kindle secretly sedition and strife, and to annihilate ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’! Outwardly they appear as sheep, yet inwardly are naught but ravening wolves. Sweet in words, yet at heart a deadly poison.

O ye beloved ones! Guard the Cause of God! Let no sweetness of tongue beguile you—nay, rather consider the motive of every soul, and ponder the thought he cherisheth. Be ye straightway mindful and on your guard.

Avoid, yet be not aggressive!

Turn away from censure and from slander!

Leave him in the Hand of God!

Upon you rest the Glory of Glories!

994. Consider! The Divine Gardener cuts off the dry or weak branch from the good tree and grafts to it a branch from another tree. He both separates and unites. This is that which His Holiness Christ says: that from all the world they come and enter the Kingdom, and the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out.

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#### FROM THE WILL AND TESTAMENT OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

O ye beloved of the Lord! In this sacred Dispensation, conflict and contention are in nowise permitted. Every aggressor deprives himself of God's grace. It is incumbent upon ever one to show the utmost love, rectitude of conduct, straightforwardness and sincere kindness unto all the peoples and kindreds of the world, whether they be friends or strangers. So intense must be the spirit of love and loving-kindness that the stranger may find himself regarded as a friend, and the enemy as a true brother, no difference whatsoever existing between them. For universality is of God and all limitations are earthly.

Thus man must strive that his reality may manifest virtues and perfections, the light whereof may shine upon all. The light of the sun shineth upon the whole world and the merciful showers of the Divine Providence fall upon all peoples. The vivifying breeze inspireth every living creature, and all beings endowed with life obtain their share and portion at His heavenly board. In like manner, the affections and loving-kindness of the servants of the One True God must be bountifully and universally extended to all mankind. Regarding this, restrictions and limitations are in no wise permitted.

Wherefore, O my loving friend! Consort with all the peoples, kindred and religions of the world with the utmost truthfulness, uprightness, faithfulness, kindness, goodwill and friendliness; that all the world of being may be filled with the holy ecstasy of the grace of Bahá; that ignorance, enmity, hate and rancor may vanish from the world, and the darkness of estrangement amidst the peoples and kindreds of earth may give way to the Light of Unity. Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you, show fidelity unto them; should they be unjust towards you, show justice towards them; should they hold aloof from you, attract them to yourselves; should they disclose enmity, be friendly to them; should they poison your lives, sweeten their souls; should they inflict a wound upon you, be a salve to their hurts. Such are the attributes of the sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful!

O ye beloved of the Lord! Strive with all your heart to shield the Cause of God from the onslaught of the insincere, for such souls as these cause the straight to become crooked and all benevolent efforts to produce contrary results.

O God! my God! Thou seest this wronged servant of thine held fast in the claws of ferocious lions, of ravening wolves, bloodthirsty beasts. Graciously assist me, through my love for Thee that I may drink deep of the chalice that brimmeth over with faithfulness to Thee and is filled with Thy bountiful Grace; so that, fallen upon the dust, I may sink prostrate and senseless whilst my vesture is dyed crimson with my blood. This is my wish, my heart's desire, my hope, my pride, my glory. Grant, O Lord, my God and my Refuge, that in my last hour, my end may even as musk shed its fragrance of glory! I call Thee to witness that no day passeth but that I quaff my fill from this cup, so grievous are the misdeeds wrought by them that have broken the Covenant, kindled discord, showed their malice, stirred sedition in the land and dishonored Thee amidst Thy servants. Lord, shield Thou from these Covenant-breakers the mighty stronghold of Thy Faith, and protect Thy secret Sanctuary from the onslaught of the ungodly.

Thou art in truth the Mighty, the Powerful, the Gracious, the Supreme!

O ye that stand fast in the Covenant! When the hour cometh that this wronged and broken-winged bird shall have taken its flight unto the Celestial Concourse; when it shall have hastened to the realm of the Unseen, and its mortal frame shall have been either lost or hidden beneath the dust; it is incumbent upon the Branches that are steadfast in the Covenant of God and have branched from the Tree of Holiness; the Hands of the Cause of God (the Glory of the Lord rest upon them); and all the friends and loved ones, one and all, to bestir themselves and arise with heart and soul and in one accord to diffuse the sweet savors of God, to teach His Cause and to promote His Faith. It behooveth them not to rest for a moment, nor to seek repose. They must disperse themselves in every land, pass by every clime, and travel throughout all regions. Bestirred, without rest, and steadfast to the end, they must raise in every land the triumphal cry “Yá Bahá'u'l-'Abhá!” (O Thou the Glory of Glories!) must achieve renown in the world wherever they go, must burn brightly even as a torch in every meeting, and must kindle the flame of Divine Love in every assembly; that the Light of Truth may rise resplendent in the midmost heart of the world, that throughout the East and throughout the West a vast concourse may gather under the shadow of the Word of God; that the sweet savors of holiness may be diffused; that faces may radiantly shine; that hearts may be filled with the Divine Spirit, and souls may attain the life of heaven.

The disciples of Christ forgot themselves and all earthly things, forsook all their cares and belongings, purged themselves of self and passion, and with absolute detachment scattered far and wide, calling the peoples of the world to the Divine Guidance, until at last they made the world another world, illumined the surface of the earth, and even to their last hour, proved self-sacrificing in the pathway of the Beloved One of God. Finally in various lands they suffered glorious martyrdom. Let them that are men of action follow in their footsteps.

This is the foundation of the faith of the people of Bahá, may my life be offered up for them! His Holiness the Exalted, the Báb, is the Manifestation of the Unity and Oneness of God and the Forerunner of the Ancient Beauty: the 'Abhá Beauty (may my life be a sacrifice for His steadfast friends!) is the Supreme Manifestation of God and the Dayspring of His Most Divine Essence. All others are servants unto Him and do His bidding. Unto the Most Holy Book every one must turn, and all that is not expressly recorded therein must be referred to the Universal House of Justice. That which this body, whether unanimously or by a majority, doth carry, that is verily the truth and the purpose of God Himself. Whoso deviates therefrom is verily of those that love discord, hath shown forth malice and turned away from the Lord of the Covenant.

O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon you to be submissive to all monarchs that are just, and show your fidelity to every righteous king. Serve ye the sovereigns of the world with utmost truthfulness and loyalty. Show obedience unto them and be their well wishers. Without their leave and permission do not meddle with political affairs; for disloyalty to the just sovereign is disloyalty to God Himself. This is my counsel and the commandment of God unto you. Well is it with them that act accordingly.

O God, my God! I call Thee, Thy Prophets and Thy Messengers, Thy Saints and Thy Holy Ones, to witness that I have declared conclusively Thy proofs unto Thy loved ones, and set forth clearly all things unto them, that they may watch over Thy Faith, guard Thy straight path and protect Thy resplendent Law. Thou art, verily, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise!