

Water as a symbol used in the Sacred Writings

by Bahá'u'lláh, Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi

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O outwardly fair and inwardly faulty! Thy likeness is like unto clear bitter water, wherein outwardly the utmost sweetness and purity is beheld, but when it falleth into the assaying hands of the taste of the [Divine] Unity He doth not accept a single drop thereof.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, A Traveller's Narrative, p. 68)

We are about to shift from this most remote place of banishment¹ unto the prison of 'Akka. And, according to what they say, it is assuredly the most desolate of the cities of the world, the most unsightly of them in appearance, the most detestable in climate, and the foulest in water; it is as though it were the metropolis of the owl; there is not heard from its regions aught save the sound of its hooting.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, A Traveller's Narrative, p. 80; Dr. J.E. Esslemont, Baha'u'llah and the New Era, p. 32)

I hope that the people of the West may be illumined by the light of God; that the Kingdom may come to them, that they may find eternal Life, that the Spirit of God may spread like a fire among them, that they may be baptized with the Water of Life and may find a new birth.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 49)

Know, O thou possessors of insight, that true spirituality is like unto a lake of clear water which reflects the divine.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 107)

We do not need to mention miracles, saying that out of rock water gushed forth, for such miracles and statements may be denied and refused by those who hear them. The deeds of Moses are conclusive evidences of His prophethood. If a man be fair, unbiased and willing to investigate reality he will undoubtedly testify to the fact that Moses was verily a man of God and a great personage.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 274)

Consider the flowers of the rose garden. Although they are of different kinds, various colors and diverse forms and appearances, yet as they drink from one water, are swayed by one breeze and grow by the warmth and light of one sun, this variation and this difference cause each to enhance the beauty and splendor of the others. The differences in manners, in customs, in habits, in thoughts, opinions and in temperaments is the cause of the adornment of the world of mankind. This is praiseworthy. Likewise this difference and this variation, like the difference and variation of the parts and members of the human body, are the cause of the appearance of beauty and perfection. As these different parts and members are under the control of the dominant spirit, and the spirit permeates all the organs and members, and rules all the arteries and veins, this difference and this variation strengthen love and harmony and this multiplicity is the greatest aid to unity.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 295)

The immortality of the spirit is mentioned in the Holy Books; it is the fundamental basis of the divine religions. Now punishments and rewards are said to be of two kinds. Firstly, the rewards and punishments of this life; secondly, those of the other world. But the paradise and hell of existence are found in all the worlds of God, whether in this world or in the spiritual heavenly worlds. Gaining these rewards is the gaining of eternal life. That is why Christ said, "Act in such a way that you may find eternal life, and that you may be born of water and the spirit, so that you may enter into the Kingdom."

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 323)

Cleanliness and sanctity in all conditions are characteristics of pure beings and necessities of free souls.

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The first perfection consists in cleanliness and sanctity and in purity from every defect. When man in all conditions is pure and immaculate, he will become the center of the reflection of the manifest Light. In all his actions and conduct there must first be purity, then beauty and independence. The channel must be cleansed before it is filled with sweet water. The pure eye comprehendeth the sight and the meeting of God; the pure nostril inhaleth the perfumes of the rose-garden of bounty; the pure heart becometh the mirror of the beauty of truth. This is why, in the heavenly Books, the divine counsels and commands have been compared to water. So, in the Qur'an it is said, "and we have caused a pure water to descend from heaven;" and in the Gospel, "Except a man hath received the baptism of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Then it is evident that the divine teachings are the heavenly grace and the showers of the mercy of God, which purify the hearts of men.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 333)

And as we reflect, we observe that man is like unto a tiny organism contained within a fruit; this fruit hath developed out of the blossom, the blossom hath grown out of the tree, the tree is sustained by the sap, and the sap formed out of earth and water. How then can this tiny organism comprehend the nature of the garden, conceive of the gardener and comprehend his being? That is manifestly impossible. Should that organism understand and reflect, it would observe that this garden, this tree, this blossom, this fruit would in nowise have come to exist by themselves in such order and perfection. Similarly the wise and reflecting soul will know of a certainty that this infinite universe with all its grandeur and order could not have come to exist by itself.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 343)

He is the Alpha and Omega. He is the One that will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life, and bestow upon the sick the remedy of true salvation. He whom such grace aideth is verily he that receiveth the most glorious heritage from the prophets of God and His holy ones.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 350)

O ye friends of God! Be kind to all peoples and nations, have love for all of them, exert yourselves to purify the hearts as much as you can, and bestow abundant effort in rejoicing the souls. Be ye a sprinkling of rain to every meadow and a water of life to every tree. Be ye as fragrant musk to every nostril and a soul-refreshing breeze to every invalid. Be ye salutary water to every thirsty one, a wise guide to every one led astray, an affectionate father or mother to every orphan, and, in the utmost joy and fragrance, a son or daughter to every one bent with age. Be ye a rich treasure to every indigent one; consider love and union as a delectable paradise, and count annoyance and hostility as the torment of hell-fire. Exert with your soul; seek no rest in body; supplicate and beseech with your heart and search for divine assistance and favor, in order that ye may make this world the Paradise of Abha and this terrestrial globe the arena of the Supreme Kingdom. If ye make an effort, it is certain that these lights will shine, this cloud of mercy shall rain, this soul-nourishing breeze shall waft, and the scent of this most fragrant musk be diffused.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 356)

O beloved of God! Know ye that the world is like unto a mirage which the thirsty one thinks to be water; its water is a vapor; its mercy a difficulty; its repose hardship and ordeal; leave it to its people and turn unto the Kingdom of your Lord the Merciful. Thus the lights of mercy and beneficence may shine upon you, the heavenly table descend for you, your Lord may bestow upon you the greatest gifts and favors, whereby your breasts may become dilated, your hearts gladdened, your souls purified, and your eyes enlightened.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 386)

The Supper of the Lord which His Highness the Spirit ate with the apostles was a heavenly supper and not one of material bread and water, for material objects have no connection with spiritual objects. As at that time material food was also present, therefore the leaders of the religion of Christ thought that it was material food which was changed into spiritual food.

The proof that it was not material food is this: The apostles upon many occasions partook of material food with His Highness Christ, yet the supper of that night became designated as the "Lord's Supper."

From this designation it is plain and evident that they ate heavenly food at that supper. That heavenly food consisted of the love of God, the knowledge of God, the mysteries of God and the bestowal of God.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 390)

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.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 421)

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 thirsty one with parched lips has reached to the fountain of the water of life, or a lover has met his true beloved.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 426)

Certain weak, capricious, malicious and ignorant souls have been shaken by the earthquake of hatred, of animosity, have striven to efface the Divine Covenant and Testament, and render the clear water muddy so that in it they might fish.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 429)

In another Tablet, He says: “O Kazim, close thine eye to the people of the world; drink the water of knowledge from the heavenly cup bearers, and listen not to the nonsensical utterances of the manifestations of Satan, because the manifestations of Satan are occupying today the observation posts of the glorious path of God, and preventing the people by every means of deception and ruse.”

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 431)

Water extinguishes fire in the same way that religious differences cause annihilation. Reflect on what is taking place today. Men have forgotten the divine principles.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 62)

The senses mistake a mirage for water; the eyes see the sun move; your train or boat seems immobile and the landscape seems to pass by, planets look like fixed points of light; but they have measurable dimensions. A lighted point set in rotation appears like a circle. These examples show the senses subject to error. How can we put our trust in them?

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 94)

Any soul that enters the kingdom of BAHÁ'O'LLAH will enjoy an eternal communion with God. It is my hope that each of you may enter this kingdom. May you become thirsty for the water of reality. May you become hungry for the bread of the kingdom; for as His Holiness the Christ said, “He that drinketh the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.” This means the apprehension of the ideals of the human world and of the heavenly realm.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 99)

The earth has its inhabitants, the water and the air contain many living beings and all the elements have their nature spirits, then how is it possible to conceive that these stupendous stellar bodies are not inhabited? Verily, they are peopled, but let it be known that the dwellers accord with the elements of their respective spheres. These living beings do not have states of consciousness like unto those who live on the surface of this globe: the power of adaptation and environment moulds their bodies and states of consciousness, just as our bodies and minds are suited to our planet.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 114)

The sea of materialism is at flood time and all the nations of the world are immersed in it. It is my hope that the fish will rise to the surface, so that they may behold other wondrous aspects of creation; for the people are like unto the fish swimming in the deep - ignorant of the rest of the universe. May they be transformed into birds of the air and soar in the nether atmosphere! May they break all bonds of limitation, so that they can observe from the height the lordly processions of infinite creatures; they will see the blue heavens studded with luminous stars, rivers flowing with salubrious water, gardens bedecked with fragrant flowers, trees adorned with blossoms and fruits, birds singing songs of light,

humanity ever striving forward, every atom of existence breathing life and force - the universe of God a wonderful theatre upon the stage of which every created thing plays its part.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 138)

The world of existence is like unto an orchard and humanity is like unto the trees. All these trees are planted in the same orchard, reared through the heat of one sun, watered with one rain. We must be the cause of the adornment of this orchard. The world of humanity is like unto a rose garden and the various races, tongues and people are like unto contrasting flowers. The diversity of colors in a rose-garden adds to the charm and beauty of the scene as variety enhances unity. Why should we not look upon the human world with rose-colored vision?

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 183)

The ocean is one body of water but different parts of it have particular designation, Atlantic, Pacific, Mediterranean, Antarctic, etc. If we consider the names, there is differentiation, but the water, the ocean itself is one reality.

Likewise the divine religions of the holy Manifestations of God are in reality one though in name and nomenclature they differ. Man must be a lover of the light no matter from what day-spring it may appear. He must be a lover of the rose no matter in what soil it may be growing.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Foundations of World Unity, p. 15)

We are seekers for water no matter from what rock it may gush forth. We are in need of fruit in whatsoever orchard it may be ripened. We long for rain it matters not which cloud pours it down.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Foundations of World Unity, p. 16)

The holy Manifestations are the ideal gardeners of human souls, the divine cultivators of human hearts. The world of existence is but a jungle of disorder and confusion, a state of nature producing nothing but fruitless, useless trees. The ideal gardeners train these wild uncultivated human trees, cause them to become fruitful, water and cultivate them day by day so that they adorn the world of existence and continue to flourish in the utmost beauty.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Foundations of World Unity, p. 111)

There are many ways of expressing the love principle; there is love for the family, for the country, for the race, there is political enthusiasm, there is also the love of community of interest in service. These are all ways and means of showing the power of love. Without any such means, love would be unseen, unheard, unfelt—altogether unexpressed, unmanifested! Water shows its power in various ways, in quenching thirst, causing seed to grow, etc. Coal expresses one of its principles in gas-light, while one of the powers of electricity is shown in the electric light. If there were neither gas nor electricity, the nights of the world would be darkness! So, it is necessary to have an instrument, a motive for love's manifestation, an object, a mode of expression.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 35)

The power of the Holy Spirit, enlightening man's intelligence, has enabled him to discover means of bending many natural laws to his will. He flies through the air, floats on the sea, and even moves under the waters.

All this proves how man's intelligence has been enabled to free him from the limitations of nature, and to solve many of her mysteries. Man, to a certain extent, has broken the chains of matter.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 37)

Man alone has freedom, and, by his understanding or intellect, has been able to gain control of and adapt some of those natural laws to his own needs. By the power of his intellect he has discovered means by which he not only traverses great continents in express trains and crosses vast oceans in ships, but, like the fish he travels under water in submarines, and, imitating the birds, he flies through the air in airships.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 42)

In the Gospel according to St John, Christ has said: "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."² The priests have interpreted this into meaning that baptism

is necessary for salvation. In another Gospel it is said: “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire”.³

Thus the water of baptism and the fire are one! It cannot mean that the “water” spoken of is physical water, for it is the direct opposite of “fire”, and one destroys the other. When in the Gospels, Christ speaks of “water”, He means that which causes life, for without water no worldly creature can live—mineral, vegetable, animal and man, one and all, depend upon water for their very being. Yes, the latest scientific discoveries prove to us that even mineral has some form of life, and that it also needs water for its existence.

Water is the cause of life, and when Christ speaks of water, He is symbolizing that which is the cause of Everlasting Life.

This life-giving water of which He speaks is like unto fire, for it is none other than the Love of God, and this love means life to our souls.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 81)

Oh, trust in God! for His Bounty is everlasting, and in His Blessings, for they are superb. Oh! put your faith in the Almighty, for He faileth not and His goodness endureth for ever! His Sun giveth Light continually, and the Clouds of His Mercy are full of the Waters of Compassion with which He waters the hearts of all who trust in Him. His refreshing Breeze ever carries healing in its wings to the parched souls of men!

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 108)

The glorious Sun of Truth shines for all alike, the waters of Divine Mercy immerse each one, and His Divine favour is bestowed on all His children.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 120)

In short, it behoves us all to be lovers of truth. Let us seek her in every season and in every country, being careful never to attach ourselves to personalities. Let us see the light wherever it shines, and may we be enabled to recognize the light of truth no matter where it may arise. Let us inhale the perfume of the rose from the midst of thorns which surround it; let us drink the running water from every pure spring.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 133)

In order to find truth we must give up our prejudices, our own small trivial notions; an open receptive mind is essential. If our chalice is full of self, there is no room in it for the water of life. The fact that we imagine ourselves to be right and everybody else wrong is the greatest of all obstacles in the path towards unity, and unity is necessary if we would reach truth, for truth is one.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 136)

The testament of Bahá'u'lláh is a Rain of Goodness, a Sun of Truth, Water of Life, the Holy Spirit. Thus open your hearts to receive the full power of His Beauty, and I will pray for you all that this joy may be yours.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 172)

May they arise to serve Thee and dedicate themselves to the Kingdom of Thy divinity, and set their faces toward the realm of Thy Self-Subsistence, and spread far and wide Thy signs, and be illumined by Thy streaming lights, and unfold Thy hidden mysteries. May they guide Thy servants unto gentle waters and to the fountain of Thy mercy that wellet and leapeth in the midmost heart of the Heaven of Thy oneness.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 5)

O Lord, shower upon them all the outpourings of Thy mercy, rain down upon them all the waters of Thy grace. Make them to grow as beauteous plants in the garden of heaven, and from the full and brimming clouds of Thy bestowals and out of the deep pools of Thine abounding grace make Thou this garden to flower and keep it ever green and lustrous, ever fresh and shimmering and fair.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 25)

O God, my God! This is thy radiant servant, Thy spiritual thrall, who hath drawn nigh unto Thee and approached Thy presence. He hath turned his face unto Thine, acknowledging Thy oneness, confessing Thy singleness, and he hath called out in Thy name among the nations, and led the people to the streaming waters of Thy mercy, O Thou Most generous Lord! To those who asked He hath given to drink from the cup of guidance that brimmeth over with the wine of Thy measureless grace.

O Lord, assist him under all conditions, cause him to learn Thy well-guarded mysteries, and shower down upon him Thy hidden pearls. Make of him a banner rippling from castle summits in the winds of Thy heavenly aid, make of him a wellspring of crystal waters.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 43)

For example, the growth and development of a human being is dependent upon the existence of water, and water is dependent upon the existence of rain, and rain is dependent upon the existence of clouds, and clouds are dependent upon the existence of the sun, which causeth land and sea to produce vapour, the condensation of vapour forming the clouds. Thus each one of these entities exerteth its influence and is likewise influenced in its turn. Inescapably then, the process leadeth to One Who influenceth all, and yet is influenced by none, thus severing the chain. The inner reality of that Being, however, is not known, although His effects are clear and evident.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 49)

Note thou: could these fevers in the world of the mind, these fires of war and hate, of resentment and malice among the nations, this aggression of peoples against peoples, which have destroyed the tranquillity of the whole world ever be made to abate, except through the living waters of the teachings of God? No, never!

And this is clear: a power above and beyond the powers of nature must needs be brought to bear, to change this black darkness into light, and these hatreds and resentments, grudges and spites, these endless wrangles and wars, into fellowship and love amongst all the peoples of the earth. This power is none other than the breathings of the Holy Spirit and the mighty inflow of the Word of God.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 53)

O Thou Provider! The dearest wish of this servant of Thy Threshold is to behold the friends of east and west in close embrace; to see all the members of human society gathered with love in a single great assemblage, even as individual drops of water collected in one mighty sea; to behold them all as birds in one garden of roses, as pearls of one ocean, as leaves of one tree, as rays of one sun.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 75)

Consider the days of Christ, when none but a small band followed Him; then observe what a mighty tree that seed became, behold ye its fruitage. And now shall come to pass even greater things than these, for this is the summons of the Lord of Hosts, this is the trumpet-call of the living Lord, this is the anthem of world peace, this is the standard of righteousness and trust and understanding raised up among all the variegated peoples of the globe; this is the splendour of the Sun of Truth, this is the holiness of the spirit of God Himself. This most powerful of dispensations will encompass all the earth, and beneath its banner will all peoples gather and be sheltered together. Know then the vital import of this tiny seed that the true Husbandman hath, with the hands of His mercy, sown in the ploughed fields of the Lord, and watered with the rain of bestowals and bounties and is now nurturing in the heat and light of the Day-Star of Truth.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 82)

But ye, praise be to God, are at present especially favoured with this bounty, have become of the chosen, have been informed of the heavenly instructions, have gained admittance into the Kingdom of God, have become the recipients of unbounded blessings and have been baptized with the Water of Life, with the fire of the love of God and with the Holy Spirit.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 104)

To promote knowledge is thus an inescapable duty imposed on every one of the friends of God. It is incumbent upon that Spiritual Assembly, that assemblage of God, to exert every effort to educate the children, so that from infancy they will be trained in Bahá'í conduct and the ways of God, and will, even

as young plants, thrive and flourish in the soft-flowing waters that are the counsels and admonitions of the Blessed Beauty.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 126)

O ye friends of God! Because, in this most momentous of ages, the Sun of Truth hath risen at the highest point of the spring equinox, and cast its rays on every clime, it shall kindle such tremulous excitement, it shall release such vibrations in the world of being, it shall stimulate such growth and development, it shall stream out with such a glory of light, and clouds of grace shall pour down such plentiful waters, and fields and plains shall teem with such a galaxy of sweet-smelling plants and blooms, that this lowly earth will become the Abha Kingdom, and this nether world the world above.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 128)

If a child be trained from his infancy, he will, through the loving care of the Holy Gardener, drink in the crystal waters of the spirit and of knowledge, like a young tree amid the rilling brooks. And certainly he will gather to himself the bright rays of the Sun of Truth, and through its light and heat will grow ever fresh and fair in the garden of life.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 129)

O dear one of Abdu'l-Bahá! Be the son of thy father and be the fruit of that tree. Be a son that hath been born of his soul and heart and not only of water and clay. A real son is such a one as hath branched from the spiritual part of man. I ask God that thou mayest be at all times confirmed and strengthened.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 140)

First in a human being's way of life must be purity, then freshness, cleanliness, and independence of spirit. First must the stream bed be cleansed, then may the sweet river waters be led into it. Chaste eyes enjoy the beatific vision of the Lord and know what this encounter meaneth; a pure sense inhaled the fragrances that blow from the rose gardens of His grace; a burnished heart will mirror forth the comely face of truth.

This is why, in Holy Scriptures, the counsels of heaven are likened to water, even as the Qur'an saith: "And pure water send We down from Heaven,"⁴ and the Gospel: "Except a man be baptized of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."⁵ Thus is it clear that the Teachings which come from God are heavenly outpourings of grace; they are rain-showers of divine mercy, and they cleanse the human heart.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 146)

God's grace is like the rain that cometh down from heaven: the water is not bounded by the limitations of form, yet on whatever place it poureth down, it taketh on limitations—dimensions, appearance, shape—according to the characteristics of that place.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 161)

O ye loved ones of God! Know ye that the world is even as a mirage rising over the sands, that the thirsty mistaketh for water. The wine of this world is but a vapour in the desert, its pity and compassion but toil and trouble, the repose it proffereth only weariness and sorrow. Abandon it to those who belong to it, and turn your faces unto the Kingdom of your Lord the All-Merciful, that His grace and bounty may cast their dawning splendours over you, and a heavenly table may be sent down for you, and your Lord may bless you, and shower His riches upon you to gladden your bosoms and fill your hearts with bliss, to attract your minds, and cleanse your souls, and console your eyes.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 186)

I ask of God that thou, His husbandman, shalt plough the hard and stony ground, and water it, and scatter seeds therein—for this will show how skilful is the farmer, while any man can sow and till where the ground is soft, and clear of brambles and thorns.

O thou servant of God! Do not grieve at the afflictions and calamities that have befallen thee. All calamities and afflictions have been created for man so that he may spurn this mortal world—a world to which he is much attached. When he experienceth severe trials and hardships, then his nature will recoil

4 Qur'an 25:50

5 cf. John 3:5

and he will desire the eternal realm—a realm which is sanctified from all afflictions and calamities. Such is the case with the man who is wise. He shall never drink from a cup which is at the end distasteful, but, on the contrary, he will seek the cup of pure and limpid water. He will not taste of the honey that is mixed with poison.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 239)

If the lovers of the Lord are hoping for grace to win as their friends the Company on high, they must do all they can to strengthen this compact, for such an alliance for brotherhood and unity is even as watering the Tree of Life: it is life everlasting.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 243)

O ye lovers of God! Be kind to all peoples; care for every person; do all ye can to purify the hearts and minds of men; strive ye to gladden every soul. To every meadow be a shower of grace, to every tree the water of life; be as sweet musk to the sense of humankind, and to the ailing be a fresh, restoring breeze. Be pleasing waters to all those who thirst, a careful guide to all who have lost their way; be father and mother to the orphan, be loving sons and daughters to the old, be an abundant treasure to the poor. Think ye of love and good fellowship as the delights of heaven, think ye of hostility and hatred as the torments of hell.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 245)

O Thou, my Lord! Kindle the light of Thy love in every heart, breathe into men's souls the spirit of Thy knowledge, gladden their breasts with the verses of Thy oneness. Call Thou to life those who dwell in their tombs, warn Thou the prideful, make happiness world-wide, send down Thy crystal waters, and in the assemblage of manifest splendours, pass round that cup which is “tempered at the camphor fountain.”⁶

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 254)

Wherefore must the loved ones of God, laboriously, with the waters of their striving, tend and nourish and foster this tree of hope. In whatsoever land they dwell, let them with a whole heart befriend and be companions to those who are either close to them, or far removed. Let them, with qualities like unto those of heaven, promote the institutions and the religion of God. Let them never lose heart, never be despondent, never feel afflicted.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 258)

I swear by the Ancient Beauty, that at such a time overwhelming grace will so encircle all, and the sea of grandeur will so overflow its shores, that the narrowest strip of water will grow wide as an endless sea, and every merest drop will be even as the shoreless deep.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 261)

In the darkness of the world be ye radiant flames; in the sands of perdition, be ye well-springs of the water of life, be ye guidance from the Lord God. Now is the time to serve, now is the time to be on fire. Know ye the value of this chance, this favourable juncture that is limitless grace, ere it slip from your hands.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 266)

O ye steadfast loved ones! The grace of God is beating down upon mankind, even as the rains in spring, and the rays of the manifest Light have made this earth to be the envy of heaven. But alas, the blind are deprived of this bounty, the heedless are closed off from it, the withered despair of it, the faded are dying away—so that even as flooding waters, this endless stream of grace passeth back into its primal source in a hidden sea. Only a few receive this grace and take their share of it. Wherefore, let us put our hopes in whatever the strong arm of the Beloved can bring about.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 277)

Consider the flowers of a garden: though differing in kind, colour, form and shape, yet, inasmuch as they are refreshed by the waters of one spring, revived by the breath of one wind, invigorated by the rays of one sun, this diversity increaseth their charm, and addeth unto their beauty. Thus when that unifying force, the penetrating influence of the Word of God, taketh effect, the difference of customs, manners,

habits, ideas, opinions and dispositions embellisheth the world of humanity. This diversity, this difference is like the naturally created dissimilarity and variety of the limbs and organs of the human body, for each one contributeth to the beauty, efficiency and perfection of the whole.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 291)

O my Lord, they thirsted, Thou didst lift to their parched lips the waters of reunion. O Tender One, Bestowing One, Thou didst calm their pain with the balm of Thy bounty and grace, and didst heal their ailments with the sovereign medicine of Thy compassion. O Lord, make firm their feet on Thy straight path, make wide for them the needle's eye, and cause them, dressed in royal robes, to walk in glory for ever and ever.

Verily art Thou the Generous, the Ever-Giving, the Precious, the Most Bountiful. There is none other God but Thee, the Mighty, the Powerful, the Exalted, the Victorious.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 316)

The world is wrapped in the thick darkness of open revolt and swept by a whirlwind of hate. It is the fires of malevolence that have cast up their flames to the clouds of heaven, it is a blood-drenched flood that rolleth across the plains and down the hills, and no one on the face of the earth can find any peace. Therefore must the friends of God engender that tenderness which cometh from Heaven, and bestow love in the spirit upon all humankind. With every soul must they deal according to the Divine counsellings and admonitions; to all must they show forth kindness and good faith; to all must they wish well. They must sacrifice themselves for their friends, and wish good fortune to their foes. They must comfort the ill-natured, and treat their oppressors with loving-kindness. They must be as refreshing water to the thirsty, and to the sick, a swift remedy, a healing balm to those in pain and a solace to every burdened heart. They must be a guiding light to those who have gone astray, a sure leader for the lost. They must be seeing eyes to the blind, hearing ears to the deaf, and to the dead eternal life, and to the despondent joy forever.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 318)

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 thirsty 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.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 52)

O my God! O my God! Thou seest me in my lowliness and weakness, occupied with the greatest undertaking, determined to raise Thy word among the masses and to spread Thy teachings among Thy peoples. How can I succeed unless Thou assist me with the breath of the Holy Spirit, help me to triumph by the hosts of Thy glorious kingdom, and shower upon me Thy confirmations, which alone can change a gnat into an eagle, a drop of water into rivers and seas, and an atom into lights and suns? O my Lord! Assist me with Thy triumphant and effective might, so that my tongue may utter Thy praises and attributes among all people and my soul overflow with the wine of Thy love and knowledge.

Thou art the Omnipotent and the Doer of whatsoever Thou willest.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 72)

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 fetal 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.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 96)

To be a real Christian is to be a servant in His Cause and Kingdom, to go forth under His banner of peace and love toward all mankind, to be self-sacrificing and obedient, to become quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit, to be mirrors reflecting the radiance of the divinity of Christ, to be fruitful trees in the garden of His planting, to refresh the world by the water of life of His teachings—in all things to be like Him and filled with the spirit of His love.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 6)

These are the days of seed sowing. These are the days of tree planting. The bountiful bestowals of God are successive. He who sows a seed in this day will behold his reward in the fruits and harvest of the heavenly Kingdom. This timely seed, when planted in the hearts of the beloved of God, will be watered by showers of divine mercy and warmed by the sunshine of divine love. Its fruitage and flower shall be the solidarity of mankind, the perfection of justice and the praiseworthy attributes of heaven manifest in humanity. All who sow such a seed and plant such a tree according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh shall surely witness this divine outcome in the degrees of its perfection and will attain unto the good pleasure of the Merciful One.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 8)

Divine nearness is dependent upon attainment to the knowledge of God, upon severance from all else save God. It is contingent upon self-sacrifice and to be found only through forfeiting wealth and worldly possessions. It is made possible through the baptism of water and fire revealed in the Gospels. Water symbolizes the water of life, which is knowledge, and fire is the fire of the love of God; therefore, man must be baptized with the water of life, the Holy Spirit and the fire of the love of the Kingdom. Until he attains these three degrees, nearness to God is not possible.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 147)

We are lovers of illumination and not of lamps and candles. We are seekers for water, no matter from what rock it may gush forth. We are in need of fruit in whatsoever orchard it may be ripened. We long for rain; it matters not which cloud pours it down. We must not be fettered.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 153)

The fountain of divine generosity is gushing forth, but we must have thirst for the living waters. Unless there be thirst, the salutary water will not assuage. Unless the soul hungers, the delicious foods of the heavenly table will not give sustenance. Unless the eyes of perception be opened, the lights of the sun will not be witnessed.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 195)

The resuscitation or rebirth of the spirit of man is through the science of the love of God. It is through the efficacy of the water of life. This life and quickening is the regeneration of the phenomenal world. After the coming of the spiritual springtime, the falling of the vernal showers, the shining of the Sun of Reality, the blowing of the breezes of perfection, all phenomena become imbued with the life of a new creation and are reformed in the process of a new genesis.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 277)

He has shown that although individuals may differ in development and capacity, they are essentially and intrinsically equal as human beings, just as the waves of the sea are innumerable and different, but the reality of the sea is one. The plurality of humanity may be likened to the waves, but the reality of humankind is like the sea itself. All the waves are of the same water; all are waves of one ocean.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 284)

Likewise, man, no matter how much he may advance in worldly affairs and make progress in material civilization, is imperfect unless he is quickened by the bounties of the Holy Spirit; for it is evident that until he receives that divine impetus he is ignorant and deprived. For this reason Jesus Christ said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." By this

Christ meant that unless man is released from the material world, freed from the captivity of materialism and receiving a portion of the bounties of the spiritual world, he shall be deprived of the bestowals and favors of the Kingdom of God, and the utmost we can say of him is that he is a perfect animal.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 304)

We must now highly resolve to arise and lay hold of all those instrumentalities that promote the peace and well-being and happiness, the knowledge, culture and industry, the dignity, value and station, of the entire human race. Thus, through the restoring waters of pure intention and unselfish effort, the earth of human potentialities will blossom with its own latent excellence and flower into praiseworthy qualities, and bear and flourish until it comes to rival that rose garden of knowledge which belonged to our forefathers.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization, p. 4)

Observe how those souls who drank the living waters of redemption at the gracious hands of Jesus, the Spirit of God, and came into the sheltering shade of the Gospel, attained to such a high plane of moral conduct that Galen, the celebrated physician, although not himself a Christian, in his summary of Plato's Republic extolled their actions.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization, p. 84)

Universal benefits derive from the grace of the Divine religions, for they lead their true followers to sincerity of intent, to high purpose, to purity and spotless honor, to surpassing kindness and compassion, to the keeping of their covenants when they have covenanted, to concern for the rights of others, to liberality, to justice in every aspect of life, to humanity and philanthropy, to valor and to unflagging efforts in the service of mankind. It is religion, to sum up, which produces all human virtues, and it is these virtues which are the bright candles of civilization. If a man is not characterized by these excellent qualities, it is certain that he has never attained to so much as a drop out of the fathomless river of the waters of life that flows through the teachings of the Holy Books, nor caught the faintest breath of the fragrant breezes that blow from the gardens of God; for nothing on earth can be demonstrated by words alone, and every level of existence is known by its signs and symbols, and every degree in man's development has its identifying mark.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization, p. 98)

Know thou that the ear of man hath been created that it may hearken unto the Divine Voice on this Day that hath been mentioned in all the Books, Scriptures, and Tablets. Purify thou, first, thy soul with the waters of renunciation, and adorn thine head with the crown of the fear of God, and thy temple with the ornament of reliance upon Him.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 2)

Now is the moment in which to cleanse thyself with the waters of detachment that have flowed out from the Supreme Pen, and to ponder, wholly for the sake of God, those things which, time and again, have been sent down or manifested, and then to strive, as much as lieth in thee, to quench, through the power of wisdom and the force of thy utterance, the fire of enmity and hatred which smouldereth in the hearts of the peoples of the world. The Divine Messengers have been sent down, and their Books were revealed, for the purpose of promoting the knowledge of God, and of furthering unity and fellowship amongst men.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 12)

O ye seeming fair yet inwardly foul! Ye are like clear but bitter water, which to outward seeming is crystal pure but of which, when tested by the Divine Assayer, not a drop is accepted. Yea, the sunbeam falls alike upon the dust and the mirror, yet differ they in reflection even as doth the star from the earth: nay, immeasurable is the difference!

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 16)

Fear ye God, and be not of them that have denied Him. Withhold not yourselves from that which hath been revealed through His grace. Seize ye the living waters of immortality in the name of your Lord, the Lord of all names, and drink ye in the remembrance of Him, Who is the Mighty, the Peerless.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 38)

Blessed is he that perceiveth, and speaketh the pure truth. Well is it with him who, aided by the living

waters of the utterance of Him Who is the Desire of all men, hath purified himself from idle fancies and vain imaginings, and torn away, in the name of the All-Possessing, the Most High, the veils of doubt, and renounced the world and all that is therein, and directed himself towards the Most Great Prison.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 42)

Confer with them, and show them what hath flowed out of the Pen of Glory, that haply they may be graciously aided to better the condition of the world, and improve the character of peoples of different nations, and may, through the living waters of God's counsels, quench the hatred and the animosity which lie hid and smolder in the hearts of men. We pray God that thou mayest be assisted therein. And this, verily, would not be hard for Him.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 59)

Purge and sanctify your breasts, and your hearts, and your ears, and your eyes with the living waters of the utterance of the All-Merciful, and set, then, your faces towards Him. By the righteousness of God! Ye shall hear all things proclaim: "Verily, He the True One is come. Blessed are they that judge with fairness, and blessed they that turn towards Him!"

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 65)

This is the day whereon every man endued with perception hath discovered the fragrance of the breeze of the All-Merciful in the world of creation, and every man of insight hath hastened unto the living waters of the mercy of his Lord, the King of Kings.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 101)

We beseech God to bestow upon the superstitious a portion of the living waters of certitude which are streaming from the wellspring of the Most Sublime Pen, that all may attain unto that which becometh these days.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 122)

Our purpose in doing this was that perchance they that have denied Us might attain unto the living waters of acknowledgment, and such as have turned aside be illumined with the light of conversion. God is My witness that this Wronged One hath had no purpose except to convey the Word of God. Blessed are the fair-minded, and woe betide them that have turned aside.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 161)

This is the Day whereon the Ocean of God's mercy hath been manifested unto men, the Day in which the Day Star of His loving-kindness hath shed its radiance upon them, the Day in which the clouds of His bountiful favor have overshadowed the whole of mankind. Now is the time to cheer and refresh the down-cast through the invigorating breeze of love and fellowship, and the living waters of friendliness and charity.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 7)

Meditate upon this, O ye beloved of God, and let your ears be attentive unto His Word, so that ye may, by His grace and mercy, drink your fill from the crystal waters of constancy, and become as steadfast and immovable as the mountain in His Cause.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 13)

From time immemorial even unto this day, all the kindreds and peoples of the earth have clung to such fanciful and unseemly thoughts, and thus have deprived themselves of the clear waters streaming from the springs of purity and holiness....

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 21)

This is the Day whereon He Who is the Revealer of the names of God hath stepped out of the Tabernacle of glory, and proclaimed unto all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth: "Put away the cups of Paradise and all the life-giving waters they contain, for lo, the people of Bahá have entered the blissful abode of the Divine Presence, and quaffed the wine of reunion, from the chalice of the beauty of their Lord, the All-Possessing, the Most High."

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 32)

Every hidden thing hath been manifested through the power of truth. All the favors of God have been sent down, as a token of His grace. The waters of everlasting life have, in their fullness, been proffered

unto men. Every single cup hath been borne round by the hand of the Well-Beloved. Draw near, and tarry not, though it be for one short moment.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 34)

Let thy soul glow with the flame of this undying Fire that burneth in the midmost heart of the world, in such wise that the waters of the universe shall be powerless to cool down its ardor. Make, then, mention of thy Lord, that haply the heedless among Our servants may be admonished through thy words, and the hearts of the righteous be gladdened.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 38)

Drink with healthy relish, O people of Bahá. Ye are indeed they with whom it shall be well. This is what they who have near access to God have attained. This is the flowing water ye were promised in the Qur'an, and later in the Bayan, as a recompense from your Lord, the God of Mercy. Blessed are they that quaff it.

O My servant that hath turned thy face towards Me! Render thanks unto God for having sent down unto thee this Tablet in this Prison, that thou mayest remind the people of the days of thy Lord, the All-Glorious, the All-Knowing. Thus have We established for thee, through the waters of Our wisdom and utterance, the foundations of thy belief. This, verily, is the water whereon the Throne of thy Lord hath been raised. "His Throne had stood upon the waters." Ponder this in thine heart, that thou mayest comprehend its meaning. Say: Praise be to God, the Lord of all worlds.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 46)

O peoples of the earth! God, the Eternal Truth, is My witness that streams of fresh and soft-flowing waters have gushed from the rocks, through the sweetness of the words uttered by your Lord, the Unconstrained; and still ye slumber. Cast away that which ye possess, and, on the wings of detachment, soar beyond all created things. Thus biddeth you the Lord of creation, the movement of Whose Pen hath revolutionized the soul of mankind.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 139)

Some were guided by the Light of God, gained admittance into the court of His presence, and quaffed, from the hand of resignation, the waters of everlasting life, and were accounted of them that have truly recognized and believed in Him. Others rebelled against Him, and rejected the signs of God, the Most Powerful, the Almighty, the All-Wise.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 145)

Ye are the stars of the heaven of understanding, the breeze that stirreth at the break of day, the soft-flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men, the letters inscribed upon His sacred scroll. With the utmost unity, and in a spirit of perfect fellowship, exert yourselves, that ye may be enabled to achieve that which beseemeth this Day of God.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 196)

This is the Day in which He Who held converse with God hath attained the light of the Ancient of Days, and quaffed the pure waters of reunion from this Cup that hath caused the seas to swell. Say: By the one true God! Sinai is circling round the Day Spring of Revelation, while from the heights of the Kingdom the Voice of the Spirit of God is heard proclaiming: "Bestir yourselves, ye proud ones of the earth, and hasten ye unto Him."

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 210)

Incline your ears to the sweet melody of this Prisoner. Arise, and lift up your voices, that haply they that are fast asleep may be awakened. Say: O ye who are as dead! The Hand of Divine bounty proffereth unto you the Water of Life. Hasten and drink your fill. Whoso hath been re-born in this Day, shall never die; whoso remaineth dead, shall never live.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 213)

Say: O friends! Drink your fill from this crystal stream that floweth through the heavenly grace of Him Who is the Lord of Names. Let others partake of its waters in My name, that the leaders of men in every land may fully recognize the purpose for which the Eternal Truth hath been revealed, and the reason for which they themselves have been created.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 215)

Shouldst thou cause rivers of justice to spread their waters amongst thy subjects, God would surely aid thee with the hosts of the unseen and of the seen, and would strengthen thee in thine affairs. No God is there but Him. All creation and its empire are His. Unto Him return the works of the faithful.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 234)

He must purge his breast, which is the sanctuary of the abiding love of the Beloved, of every defilement, and sanctify his soul from all that pertaineth to water and clay, from all shadowy and ephemeral attachments. He must so cleanse his heart that no remnant of either love or hate may linger therein, lest that love blindly incline him to error, or that hate repel him away from the truth.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 264)

The Pen of the Most High hath decreed and imposed upon every one the obligation to teach this Cause.... God will, no doubt, inspire whosoever detacheth himself from all else but Him, and will cause the pure waters of wisdom and utterance to gush out and flow copiously from his heart. Verily, thy Lord, the All-Merciful, is powerful to do as He willeth, and ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 314)

Quench the thirst of heedlessness with the sanctified waters of My grace, and chase the gloom of remoteness through the morning-light of My Divine presence. Suffer not the habitation wherein dwelleth My undying love for thee to be destroyed through the tyranny of covetous desires, and overcloud not the beauty of the heavenly Youth with the dust of self and passion. Clothe thyself with the essence of righteousness, and let thine heart be afraid of none except God. Obstruct not the luminous spring of thy soul with the thorns and brambles of vain and inordinate affections, and impede not the flow of the living waters that stream from the fountain of thine heart. Set all thy hope in God, and cleave tenaciously to His unfailing mercy. Who else but Him can enrich the destitute, and deliver the fallen from his abasement?

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 323)

Ye are even as the bird which soareth, with the full force of its mighty wings and with complete and joyous confidence, through the immensity of the heavens, until, impelled to satisfy its hunger, it turneth longingly to the water and clay of the earth below it, and, having been entrapped in the mesh of its desire, findeth itself impotent to resume its flight to the realms whence it came. Powerless to shake off the burden weighing on its sullied wings, that bird, hitherto an inmate of the heavens, is now forced to seek a dwelling-place upon the dust. Wherefore, O My servants, defile not your wings with the clay of waywardness and vain desires, and suffer them not to be stained with the dust of envy and hate, that ye may not be hindered from soaring in the heavens of My divine knowledge.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 327)

Meditate on this, that thou mayest drink in the waters of everlasting life which flow through the words of the Lord of all mankind, and mayest testify that the one true God hath ever been immeasurably exalted above His creatures. He, verily, is the Incomparable, the Ever-Abiding, the Omniscient, the All-Wise. The station of absolute self-surrender transcendeth, and will ever remain exalted above, every other station.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 338)

Blessed is the man who hath detached himself from all else but Me, hath soared in the atmosphere of My love, hath gained admittance into My Kingdom, gazed upon My realms of glory, quaffed the living waters of My bounty, hath drunk his fill from the heavenly river of My loving providence, acquainted himself with My Cause, apprehended that which I concealed within the treasury of My Words, and hath shone forth from the horizon of divine knowledge engaged in My praise and glorification.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 17)

God, the True One, testifieth and the Revealers of His names and attributes bear witness that Our sole purpose in raising the Call and in proclaiming His sublime Word is that the ear of the entire creation may, through the living waters of divine utterance, be purged from lying tales and become attuned to the holy, the glorious and exalted Word which hath issued forth from the repository of the knowledge of the Maker of the Heavens and the Creator of Names. Happy are they that judge with fairness.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 21)

It is binding and incumbent upon the peoples of the world, one and all, to extend aid unto this momentous Cause which is come from the heaven of the Will of the ever-abiding God, that perchance the fire of animosity which blazeth in the hearts of some of the peoples of the earth may, through the living waters of divine wisdom and by virtue of heavenly counsels and exhortations, be quenched, and the light of unity and concord may shine forth and shed its radiance upon the world.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 23)

O people! Behold ye My fruits and My leaves, incline then your ears unto My rustling. Beware lest the doubts of men debar you from the light of certitude. The Ocean of utterance exclaimeth and saith: “O ye dwellers on the earth! Behold My billowing waters and the pearls of wisdom and utterance which I have poured forth. Fear ye God and be not of the heedless.”

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 78)

Drink thou the life-giving water of blissful joy from the chalice of utterance proffered by the Fountainhead of divine Revelation—He Who hath made mention of thee in this mighty stronghold. Endeavour to the utmost of thy powers to establish the word of truth with eloquence and wisdom and to dispel falsehood from the face of the earth. Thus directeth thee the Dayspring of divine knowledge from this luminous horizon.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 139)

This is the day whereon every man endued with perception hath discovered the fragrance of the breeze of the All-Merciful in the world of creation, and every man of insight hath hastened unto the living waters of the mercy of His Lord, the King of Kings.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 214)

We fain would hope that the people of Bahá may be guided by the blessed words: “Say: all things are of God.” This exalted utterance is like unto water for quenching the fire of hate and enmity which smouldereth within the hearts and breasts of men. By this single utterance contending peoples and kindreds will attain the light of true unity. Verily He speaketh the truth and leadeth the way. He is the All-Powerful, the Exalted, the Gracious.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 222)

Consider the multitude of souls who seemed to be intensely eager and athirst, yet when the Ocean of living waters did surge forth in the world of being, they remained deprived thereof, inasmuch as they failed to relinquish idle fancy and to become consciously aware of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 235)

We desire to mention him who hath set his face towards Us and to let him once again drink deep from the life-giving waters of Our gracious providence that he may be enabled to draw nigh unto My Horizon, be adorned with Mine attributes, soar in Mine atmosphere, be confirmed in that which will cause the sanctity of My Cause to be manifested amongst My people and to celebrate My praise in a manner that will cause every hesitating soul to hasten, every motionless creature to wing its flight, every mortal frame to be consumed, every chilled heart to be stirred with life and every dejected spirit to surge with delight. Thus doth it behove him who hath turned his face to Mine, hath entered beneath the shadow of My loving-kindness and received My verses which have pervaded the whole world.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 262)

“A race of men,” is His written promise, “incomparable in character, shall be raised up which, with the feet of detachment, will tread under all who are in heaven and on earth, and will cast the sleeve of holiness over all that hath been created from water and clay.”

(Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 31)

“Consider the flowers of a garden,” Abdul-Bahá has written, “though differing in kind, color, form, and shape, yet, inasmuch as they are refreshed by the waters of one spring, revived by the breath of one wind, invigorated by the rays of one sun, this diversity increaseth their charm, and addeth unto their beauty.”

(Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 54)

Let their “souls be aglow with the flame of the undying Fire that burneth in the midmost heart of the

world, in such wise that the waters of the universe shall be powerless to cool down its ardor.” Let them be “unrestrained as the wind” which “neither the sight of desolation nor the evidences of prosperity can either pain or please.” Let them “unloose their tongues and proclaim unceasingly His Cause.” Let them “proclaim that which the Most Great Spirit will inspire them to utter in the service of the Cause of their Lord.”

(Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 60)

O wayfarer in the path of God! Take thou thy portion of the ocean of His grace, and deprive not thyself of the things that lie hidden in its depths.... A dewdrop out of this ocean would, if shed upon all that are in the heavens and on earth, suffice to enrich them with the bounty of God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. With the hands of renunciation draw forth from its life-giving waters, and sprinkle therewith all created things, that they may be cleansed from all man-made limitations, and may approach the mighty seat of God, this hallowed and resplendent Spot.

(Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 61)

“He that partaketh of the waters of My Revelation will taste all the incorruptible delights ordained by God from the beginning that hath no beginning to the end that hath no end.” “Every single letter proceeding from Our mouth is endowed with such regenerative power as to enable it to bring into existence a new creation—a creation the magnitude of which is inscrutable to all save God.”

(Shoghi Effendi, The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 107)

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