

## Compilation on Detachment

By Bahá'u'lláh, The Báb, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi

Compiled by Ehsan Bayat

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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 and engaged in calling the peoples of the world to the Divine Guidance, till 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 that Beloved One of God. Finally in various lands they suffered glorious martyrdom. Let them that are men of action follow in their footsteps!

(Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 441)

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Therefore we must be happy and pass our time in praises, appreciating all things. But there is something else: detachment. We can appreciate without attaching ourselves to the things of this world. It sometimes happens that if a man loses his fortune he is so disheartened that he dies or becomes insane. While enjoying the things of this world we must remember that one day we shall have to do without them. Attach not thyself to anything unless in it thou seest the reality of God - this is the first step into the court of eternity. The earth life lasts but a short time, even its benefits are transitory; that which is temporary does not deserve our heart's attachment.

Material favors sometimes deprive us of spiritual favors and material rest of spiritual rest. A rich man said to Christ, "I would fain be thy disciple." "Go and put into practice the ten commandments," replied the Christ. "But I know them by heart and have always practiced them." "Then sell what thou hast and take up thy cross and follow me." The man returned to his home. But the rich who are attracted through their hearts have the spark and are like unto brilliant torches.

BAHA'O'LLAH has spoken of the importance of their station. Certain rich ones have sacrificed their possessions and even their lives for this cause. Riches did not prove an obstacle for them and they are like unto stars in the heaven of both worlds - flames of reality.

Detachment does not consist in setting fire to one's house, or becoming bankrupt or throwing one's fortune out of the window, or even giving away all of one's possessions. Detachment consists in refraining from letting our possessions possess us. A prosperous merchant who is not absorbed in his business knows severance. A banker whose occupation does not prevent him from serving humanity is severed. A poor man can be attached to a small thing.

A rich man and a poor man lived in the same town. One day the poor man said to the rich man, "I want to go to the Holy Land." The rich man replied, "Very good, I will go also," and they started from the town and began their pilgrimage. But night fell and the poor man said, "Let us return to our houses to pass the night." The rich man replied, "We have started for the Holy Land and must not now return." The poor man said, "The Holy Land is a long distance to travel on foot. I have a donkey, I will go and fetch it." "What?" replied the rich man, "are you not ashamed? I leave all my possessions to go on this pilgrimage and you wish to return to get your donkey! I have abandoned with joy my whole fortune. Your whole wealth consists of a donkey and you cannot leave it!" You see that fortune is not necessarily an impediment. The rich man who is thus detached is near to reality. There are many rich people who are severed and many poor who are not.

May our spirit be at rest!

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Divine Philosophy*, p. 135)

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Our greatest efforts must be directed towards detachment from the things of the world; we must strive to become more spiritual, more luminous, to follow the counsel of the Divine Teaching, to serve the cause of unity and true equality, to be merciful, to reflect the love of the Highest on all men, so that the light of the Spirit shall be apparent in all our deeds, to the end that all humanity shall be united, the stormy sea thereof calmed, and all rough waves disappear from off the surface of life's ocean henceforth unruffled and peaceful. Then will the New Jerusalem be seen by mankind, who will enter through its gates and receive the Divine Bounty.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 87)

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Does the soul progress more through sorrow or through the joy in this world?

*'Abdu'l-Bahá.* — The mind and spirit of man advance when he is tried by suffering. The more the ground is ploughed the better the seed will grow, the better the harvest will be. Just as the plough furrows the earth deeply, purifying it of weeds and thistles, so suffering and tribulation free man from the petty affairs of this worldly life until he arrives at a state of complete detachment. His attitude in this world will be that of divine happiness. Man is, so to speak, unripe: the heat of the fire of suffering will mature him. Look back to the times past and you will find that the greatest men have suffered most.

(*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 178*)

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Until a being setteth his foot in the plane of sacrifice, he is bereft of every favour and grace; and this plane of sacrifice is the realm of dying to the self, that the radiance of the living God may then shine forth. The martyr's field is the place of detachment from self, that the anthems of eternity may be upraised. Do all ye can to become wholly weary of self, and bind yourselves to that Countenance of Splendours; and once ye have reached such heights of servitude, ye will find, gathered within your shadow, all created things. This is boundless grace; this is the highest sovereignty; this is the life that dieth not. All else save this is at the last but manifest perdition and great loss.

(*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 76*)

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The prime requisites for them that take counsel together are purity of motive, radiance of spirit, detachment from all else save God, attraction to His Divine Fragrances, humility and lowliness amongst His loved ones, patience and long-suffering in difficulties and servitude to His exalted Threshold. Should they be graciously aided to acquire these attributes, victory from the unseen Kingdom of Bahá shall be vouchsafed to them.

(*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 87*)

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O God, my God! Fill up for me the cup of detachment from all things, and in the assembly of Thy splendours and bestowals, rejoice me with the wine of loving Thee. Free me from the assaults of passion and desire, break off from me the shackles of this nether world, draw me with rapture unto Thy supernal realm, and refresh me amongst the handmaids with the breathings of Thy holiness. O Lord, brighten Thou

my face with the lights of Thy bestowals, light Thou mine eyes with beholding the signs of Thine all-subduing might; delight my heart with the glory of Thy knowledge that encompasseth all things, gladden Thou my soul with Thy soul-reviving tidings of great joy, O Thou King of this world and the Kingdom above, O Thou Lord of dominion and might, that I may spread abroad Thy signs and tokens, and proclaim Thy Cause, and promote Thy Teachings, and serve Thy Law, and exalt Thy Word. Thou art verily the Powerful, the Ever-Giving, the Able, the Omnipotent.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 174)

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O thou who hast approached toward God!

Verily I have received thy letter and my heart was dilated by the content of thy expression, for it indicated the illumination of thy heart, the spirituality of thy soul, thy detachment from all the grades of this nether world and thy yearning after the effulgences of the Realm of Light.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá v2, p. 447)

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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.

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

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And likewise, He saith: “Say to them that are of a fearful heart: be strong, fear not, behold your God.” This blessed verse is a proof of the greatness of the Revelation, and of the greatness of the Cause, inasmuch as the blast of the trumpet must needs spread confusion throughout the world, and fear and trembling amongst all men. Well is it with him who hath been illumined with the light of trust and detachment. The tribulations of that Day will not hinder or alarm him. Thus hath the Tongue of Utterance spoken, as bidden by Him Who is the All-Merciful. He, verily, is the Strong, the All-Powerful, the All-Subduing, the Almighty. It is now incumbent upon them who are endowed with a hearing ear and a seeing eye to ponder these sublime words, in each of which the oceans of inner meaning and explanation are hidden, that haply the words uttered by Him Who is the Lord of Revelation may enable His

servants to attain, with the utmost joy and radiance, unto the Supreme Goal and Most Sublime Summit—the dawning-place of this Voice.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 147)

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Blessed are they that have soared on the wings of detachment and attained the station which, as ordained by God, overshadoweth the entire creation, whom neither the vain imaginations of the learned, nor the multitude of the hosts of the earth have succeeded in deflecting from His Cause. Who is there among you, O people, who will renounce the world, and draw nigh unto God, the Lord of all names? Where is he to be found who, through the power of My name that transcendeth all created things, will cast away the things that men possess, and cling, with all his might, to the things which God, the Knower of the unseen and of the seen, hath bidden him observe? Thus hath His bounty been sent down unto men, His testimony fulfilled, and His proof shone forth above the Horizon of mercy. Rich is the prize that shall be won by him who hath believed and exclaimed: “Lauded art Thou, O Beloved of all worlds! Magnified be Thy name, O Thou the Desire of every understanding heart!”

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

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Arise in the name of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge, and, with absolute detachment from the learning of men, lift up your voices and proclaim His Cause. I swear by the Day Star of Divine Revelation! The very moment ye arise, ye will witness how a flood of Divine knowledge will gush out of your hearts, and will behold the wonders of His heavenly wisdom manifested in all their glory before you. Were ye to taste of the sweetness of the sayings of the All-Merciful, ye would unhesitatingly forsake your selves, and would lay down your lives for the Well-Beloved.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 84)

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The purpose underlying Their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute detachment, to the throne of the Most High. The light which these souls radiate is responsible for the progress of the world and the advancement of its peoples. They are like unto leaven which leaveneth the world of being, and constitute the animating force through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest. Through them the clouds rain their bounty upon men, and the earth bringeth forth

its fruits. All things must needs have a cause, a motive power, an animating principle. These souls and symbols of detachment have provided, and will continue to provide, the supreme moving impulse in the world of being. The world beyond is as different from this world as this world is different from that of the child while still in the womb of its mother. When the soul attaineth the Presence of God, it will assume the form that best befitteth its immortality and is worthy of its celestial habitation. Such an existence is a contingent and not an absolute existence, inasmuch as the former is preceded by a cause, whilst the latter is independent thereof. Absolute existence is strictly confined to God, exalted be His glory. Well is it with them that apprehend this truth. Wert thou to ponder in thine heart the behavior of the Prophets of God thou wouldst assuredly and readily testify that there must needs be other worlds besides this world. The majority of the truly wise and learned have, throughout the ages, as it hath been recorded by the Pen of Glory in the Tablet of Wisdom, borne witness to the truth of that which the holy Writ of God hath revealed. Even the materialists have testified in their writings to the wisdom of these divinely-appointed Messengers, and have regarded the references made by the Prophets to Paradise, to hell fire, to future reward and punishment, to have been actuated by a desire to educate and uplift the souls of men. Consider, therefore, how the generality of mankind, whatever their beliefs or theories, have recognized the excellence, and admitted the superiority, of these Prophets of God. These Gems of Detachment are acclaimed by some as the embodiments of wisdom, while others believe them to be the mouthpiece of God Himself. How could such Souls have consented to surrender themselves unto their enemies if they believed all the worlds of God to have been reduced to this earthly life? Would they have willingly suffered such afflictions and torments as no man hath ever experienced or witnessed?

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 156)

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Our mission is to seize and possess the hearts of men. Upon them the eyes of Bahá are fastened. To this testifieth the Kingdom of Names, could ye but comprehend it. Whoso followeth his Lord, will renounce the world and all that is therein; how much greater, then, must be the detachment of Him Who holdeth so august a station! Forsake your palaces, and haste ye to gain admittance into His Kingdom. This, indeed, will profit you both in this world and in the next. To this testifieth the Lord of the realm on high, did ye but know it.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 212)

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Once again doth the Tongue of the Ancient of Days reveal, while in this Most Great Prison, these words which are recorded in this snow-white Scroll: O ye the beloved of the one true God! Pass beyond the narrow retreats of your evil and corrupt desires, and advance into the vast immensity of the realm of God, and abide ye in the meads of sanctity and of detachment, that the fragrance of your deeds may lead the whole of mankind to the ocean of God's unfading glory. Forbear ye from concerning yourselves with the affairs of this world and all that pertaineth unto it, or from meddling with the activities of those who are its outward leaders.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 241)

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Behold, O Dhabíh, the works which God, the Sovereign Truth, hath wrought. Say thou: How great, how very great, is the power of His might that encompasseth all worlds! Exalted, immeasurably exalted, is His detachment above the reach and ken of the entire creation! Glorified, glorified be His meekness—a meekness that hath melted the hearts of them that have been brought nigh unto God!

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 242)

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Should any man, in this Day, arise and, with absolute detachment from all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, set his affections on Him Who is the Day Spring of God's holy Revelation, he will, verily, be empowered to subdue all created things, through the potency of one of the Names of the Lord, his God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Know thou of a certainty that the Day Star of Truth hath, in this Day, shed upon the world a radiance, the like of which bygone ages have never witnessed. Let the light of His glory, O people, shine upon you, and be not of the negligent.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 318)

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O My servants! Deprive not yourselves of the unfading and resplendent Light that shineth within the Lamp of Divine glory. Let the flame of the love of God burn brightly within your radiant hearts. Feed it with the oil of Divine guidance, and protect it within the shelter of your constancy. Guard it within the globe of trust and detachment from all else but God, so that the evil whisperings of the ungodly may not extinguish its light.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 325)

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I give praise to Thee, O my God, that the fragrance of Thy loving-kindness hath enraptured me, and the gentle winds of Thy mercy have inclined me in the direction of Thy bountiful favors. Make me to quaff, O my Lord, from the fingers of Thy bounteousness the living waters which have enabled every one that hath partaken of them to rid himself of all attachment to any one save Thee, and to soar into the atmosphere of detachment from all Thy creatures, and to fix his gaze upon Thy loving providence and Thy manifold gifts.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, p. 240)

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Lauded be Thy name, O Thou Who art the Goal of my desire! I swear by Thy glory! How great is my wish to attain unto a detachment so complete that were there to appear before me those countenances which are hid within the chambers of chastity, and the beauty of which Thou didst veil from the eyes of the entire creation, and whose faces Thou didst sanctify from the sight of all beings, and were they to unveil themselves in all the glory of the splendors of Thine incomparable beauty, I would refuse to look upon them, and would behold them solely for the purpose of discerning the mysteries of Thy handiwork, which have perplexed the minds of such as have drawn nigh unto Thee, and awed the souls of all them that have recognized Thee. I would, by Thy power and Thy might, soar to such heights that nothing whatsoever would have the power to keep me back from the manifold evidences of Thy transcendent dominion, nor would any earthly scheme shut me out from the manifestations of Thy Divine holiness.

Glorified, immeasurably glorified art Thou, O my God, and my Beloved, and my Master, and my Desire! Shatter not the hopes of this lowly one to attain the shores of Thy glory, and deprive not this wretched creature of the immensities of Thy riches, and cast not away this suppliant from the doors of Thy grace, and Thy bounty, and Thy gifts. Have mercy, then, upon this poor and desolate soul who hath sought no friend but Thee, and no companion except Thee, and no comforter save Thee, and no beloved apart from Thee, nor cherished any desire but Thyself.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, p. 337)

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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.

Know ye from what heights your Lord, the All-Glorious is calling? Think ye that ye have recognized the Pen wherewith your Lord, the Lord of all names, commandeth you? Nay, by My life! Did ye but know it, ye would renounce the world, and would hasten with your whole hearts to the presence of the Well-Beloved. Your spirits would be so transported by His Word as to throw into commotion the Greater World - how much more this small and petty one! Thus have the showers of My bounty been poured down from the heaven of My loving-kindness, as a token of My grace; that ye may be of the thankful.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p. 16)

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O ye the embodiments of justice and equity and the manifestations of uprightness and of heavenly bounties! In tears and lamenting, this Wronged One calleth aloud and saith: O God, my God! Adorn the heads of Thy loved ones with the crown of detachment and attire their temples with the raiment of righteousness.

It behoveth the people of Bahá to render the Lord victorious through the power of their utterance and to admonish the people by their goodly deeds and character, inasmuch as deeds exert greater influence than words.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 57)

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Most of the people in Persia are steeped in deception and idle fancy. How great the difference between the condition of these people and the station of such valiant souls as have passed beyond the sea of names and pitched their tents upon the shores of the ocean of detachment.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 57)

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Say: O God, my God! Thou beholdest me circling round Thy Will with mine eyes turned towards the horizon of Thy bounty, eagerly awaiting the revelation of the effulgent splendours of the sun of Thy favours. I beg of Thee, O Beloved of every understanding heart and the Desire of such as have near access unto Thee, to grant that Thy loved ones may become wholly detached from their own inclinations, holding fast unto that which pleaseth Thee. Attire them, O Lord, with the robe of righteousness and illumine them with the splendours of the light of detachment. Summon then to their assistance the hosts of wisdom and utterance that they may

exalt Thy Word amongst Thy creatures and proclaim Thy Cause amidst Thy servants. Verily, potent art Thou to do what Thou willest, and within Thy grasp lie the reins of all affairs. No God is there but Thee, the Mighty, the Ever-Forgiving.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 59)

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The essence of detachment is for man to turn his face towards the courts of the Lord, to enter His Presence, behold His Countenance, and stand as witness before Him.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 155)

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At one time this sublime Word was heard from the Tongue of Him Who is the Possessor of all being and the Lord of the throne on high and of earth below—exalted is the glory of His utterance—: Piety and detachment are even as two most great luminaries of the heaven of teaching. Blessed the one who hath attained unto this supreme station, this habitation of transcendent holiness and sublimity.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 252)

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In like manner, those words that have streamed forth from the source of power and descended from the heaven of glory are innumerable and beyond the ordinary comprehension of man. To them that are possessed of true understanding and insight the Surah of Hud surely sufficeth. Ponder a while those holy words in your heart, and, with utter detachment, strive to grasp their meaning.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, p. 5)

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Wert thou to cleanse the mirror of thy heart from the dust of malice, thou wouldst apprehend the meaning of the symbolic terms revealed by the all-embracing Word of God made manifest in every Dispensation, and wouldst discover the mysteries of divine knowledge. Not, however, until thou consumest with the flame of utter detachment those veils of idle learning, that are current amongst men, canst thou behold the resplendent morn of true knowledge.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, p. 67)

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Please God, that we avoid the land of denial, and advance into the ocean of acceptance, so that we may perceive, with an eye purged from all conflicting

elements, the worlds of unity and diversity, of variation and oneness, of limitation and detachment, and wing our flight unto the highest and innermost sanctuary of the inner meaning of the Word of God.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqán*, p. 160)

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It hath ever been evident that all these divergences of utterance are attributable to differences of station. Thus, viewed from the standpoint of their oneness and sublime detachment, the attributes of Godhead, Divinity, Supreme Singleness, and Inmost Essence, have been and are applicable to those Essences of being, inasmuch as they all abide on the throne of divine Revelation, and are established upon the seat of divine Concealment. Through their appearance the Revelation of God is made manifest, and by their countenance the Beauty of God is revealed. Thus it is that the accents of God Himself have been heard uttered by these Manifestations of the divine Being.

Viewed in the light of their second station — the station of distinction, differentiation, temporal limitations, characteristics and standards, — they manifest absolute servitude, utter destitution and complete self-effacement. Even as He saith: "I am the servant of God.<sup>1</sup> I am but a man like you."<sup>2</sup> From these incontrovertible and fully demonstrated statements strive thou to apprehend the meaning of the questions thou hast asked, that thou mayest become steadfast in the Faith of God, and not be dismayed by the divergences in the utterances of His Prophets and Chosen Ones.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqán*, p. 177)

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'án 19:31.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'án 18:110.

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Among them is the tradition, "And when the Standard of Truth is made manifest, the people of both the East and the West curse it." The wine of renunciation must needs be quaffed, the lofty heights of detachment must needs be attained, and the meditation referred to in the words "One hour's reflection is preferable to seventy years of pious worship" must needs be observed, so that the secret of the wretched behaviour of the people might be discovered, those people who, despite the love and yearning for truth which they profess, curse the followers of Truth when once He hath been made manifest. To this truth the above-mentioned tradition beareth witness.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqán*, p. 237)

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We foresee that in every city people will arise to suppress the Blessed Beauty, that the companions of that Lord of being and ultimate Desire of all men will flee from the face of the oppressor and seek refuge from him in the wilderness, whilst others will resign themselves and, with absolute detachment, will sacrifice their lives in His path. Methinks We can discern one who is reputed for such devoutness and piety that men deem it an obligation to obey him, and to whose command they consider it necessary to submit, who will arise to assail the very root of the divine Tree, and endeavour to the uttermost of his power to resist and oppose Him.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, p. 248)

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ALAS! ALAS! O LOVERS OF WORLDLY DESIRE!

Even as the swiftness of lightning ye have passed by the Beloved One, and have set your hearts on satanic fancies. Ye bow the knee before your vain imagining, and call it truth. Ye turn your eyes towards the thorn, and name it a flower. Not a pure breath have ye breathed, nor hath the breeze of detachment been wafted from the meadows of your hearts. Ye have cast to the winds the loving counsels of the Beloved and have effaced them utterly from the tablet of your hearts, and even as the beasts of the field, ye move and have your being within the pastures of desire and passion.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Persian Hidden Words*)

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O SON OF PASSION!

Cleanse thyself from the defilement of riches and in perfect peace advance into the realm of poverty; that from the well-spring of detachment thou mayest quaff the wine of immortal life.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Persian Hidden Words*)

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O concourse of divines! It is not yours to boast if ye abstain from drinking wine and from similar transgressions which have been forbidden you in the Book, for should ye commit such deeds, the dignity of your station would then be tainted in the eyes of the people, your affairs would be disrupted, and your name disgraced and dishonoured. Nay, your true and abiding glory resideth in submission to the Word of Him Who is the Eternal Truth, and in your inward and outward detachment from aught else besides God, the All-Compelling, the Almighty. Great is the blessedness of that divine that hath not allowed knowledge to become a veil between him and the

One Who is the Object of all knowledge, and who, when the Self-Subsisting appeared, hath turned with a beaming face towards Him. He, in truth, is numbered with the learned. The inmates of Paradise seek the blessing of his breath, and his lamp sheddeth its radiance over all who are in heaven and on earth. He, verily, is numbered with the inheritors of the Prophets. He that beholdeth him hath, verily, beheld the True One, and he that turneth towards him hath, verily, turned towards God, the Almighty, the All-Wise.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 45)

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Consider a pearl which shineth by virtue of its inherent nature. If it be covered with silk, its luster and beauty will be concealed. Likewise, man's distinction lieth in the excellence of his conduct and in the pursuit of that which beseemeth his station, not in childish play and pastimes. Know that thy true adornment consisteth in the love of God and in thy detachment from all save Him, and not in the luxuries thou dost possess. Abandon them unto those who seek after them and turn unto God, He Who causeth the rivers to flow.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 60)

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Cleanse then thy soul with the waters of detachment. Verily, this is the Remembrance that hath shone forth above the horizon of creation, which shall purge thy soul from the dross of the world. Abandon thy palaces to the people of the graves, and thine empire to whosoever desireth it, and turn, then, unto the Kingdom. This, verily, is what God hath chosen for thee, wert thou of them that turn unto Him. They that have failed to turn unto the Countenance of God in this Revelation are indeed bereft of life. They move as bidden by their own selfish desires, and are in truth accounted among the dead. Shouldst thou desire to bear the weight of thy dominion, bear it then to aid the Cause of thy Lord. Glorified be this station which whoever attaineth thereunto hath attained unto all good that proceedeth from Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 75)

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Suffer me, O my God, to draw nigh unto Thee, and to abide within the precincts of Thy court, for remoteness from Thee hath well-nigh consumed me. Cause me to rest under the shadow of the wings of Thy grace, for the flame of my separation from Thee hath melted my heart within me. Draw me nearer unto the river that is life

indeed, for my soul burneth with thirst in its ceaseless search after Thee. My sighs, O my God, proclaim the bitterness of mine anguish, and the tears I shed attest my love for Thee. I beseech Thee, by the praise wherewith Thou praisest Thyself and the glory wherewith Thou glorifiest Thine own Essence, to grant that we may be numbered among them that have recognized Thee and acknowledged Thy sovereignty in Thy days. Help us then to quaff, O my God, from the fingers of mercy the living waters of Thy loving-kindness, that we may utterly forget all else except Thee, and be occupied only with Thy Self. Powerful art Thou to do what Thou willest. No God is there beside Thee, the Mighty, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

Glorified be Thy name, O Thou Who art the King of all Kings!

(Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 47)

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Glorified art Thou, O my God! I yield Thee thanks that Thou hast made known unto me Him Who is the Dayspring of Thy mercy, and the Dawning-Place of Thy grace, and the Repository of Thy Cause. I beseech Thee by Thy Name, through which the faces of them that are nigh unto Thee have turned white, and the hearts of such as are devoted to Thee have winged their flight towards Thee, to grant that I may, at all times and under all conditions, lay hold on thy cord, and be rid of all attachment to anyone except Thee, and may keep mine eyes directed towards the horizon of Thy Revelation, and may carry out what Thou hast prescribed unto me in Thy Tablets.

Attire, O my Lord, both my inner and outer being with the raiment of Thy favors and Thy loving-kindness. Keep me safe, then, from whatsoever may be abhorrent unto Thee, and graciously assist me and my kindred to obey Thee, and to shun whatsoever may stir up any evil or corrupt desire within me. Thou, truly, art the Lord of all mankind, and the Possessor of this world and of the next. No God is there save Thee, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 49)

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Lauded by Thy name, O my God! I entreat Thee by the fragrances of the Raiment of Thy grace which at Thy bidding and in conformity with Thy desire were diffused throughout the entire creation, and by the Daystar of Thy will that hath shone brightly, through the power of Thy might and of Thy sovereignty, above the horizon of Thy mercy, to blot out from my heart all idle fancies and vain imaginings, that with all my affections I may turn unto Thee, O Thou Lord of all mankind!

I am Thy servant and the son of Thy servant, O my God! I have laid hold on the

handle of Thy grace, and clung to the cord of Thy tender mercy. Ordain for me the good things that are with Thee, and nourish me from the Table Thou didst send down out of the clouds of Thy bounty and the heaven of Thy favor.

Thou, in very truth, art the Lord of the worlds, and the God of all that are in heaven and all that are on earth.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 49)

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Many a chilled heart, O my God, hath been set ablaze with the fire of Thy Cause, and many a slumberer hath been awakened by the sweetness of Thy voice. How many are the strangers who have sought shelter beneath the shadow of the tree of Thy oneness, and how numerous the thirsty ones who have panted after the fountain of Thy living waters in Thy days!

Blessed is he that hath set himself towards Thee, and hastened to attain the Dayspring of the lights of Thy face. Blessed is he who with all his affections hath turned to the Dawning-Place of Thy Revelation and the Fountainhead of Thine inspiration. Blessed is he that hath expended in Thy path what Thou didst bestow upon him through Thy bounty and favor. Blessed is he who, in his sore longing after Thee, hath cast away all else except Thyself. Blessed is he who hath enjoyed intimate communion with Thee, and rid himself of all attachment to anyone save Thee.

I beseech Thee, O my Lord, by Him Who is Thy Name, Who, through the power of thy sovereignty and might, hath risen above the horizon of His prison, to ordain for everyone what becometh Thee and beseemeth Thine exaltation.

Thy might, in truth, is equal to all things.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 50)

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I know not, O my God, what the Fire is which Thou didst kindle in Thy land. Earth can never cloud its splendor, nor water quench its flame. All the peoples of the world are powerless to resist its force. Great is the blessedness of him that hath drawn nigh unto it, and heard its roaring.

Some, O my God, Thou didst, through Thy strengthening grace, enable to approach it, while others Thou didst keep back by reason of what their hands have wrought in Thy days. Whoso hath hastened towards it and attained unto it hath, in his eagerness to gaze on Thy beauty, yielded his life in Thy path, and ascended unto Thee, wholly detached from aught else except Thyself.

I beseech Thee, O my God, by this Fire which blazeth and rageth in the world of creation, to rend asunder the veils that have hindered me from appearing before the throne of Thy majesty, and from standing at the door of Thy gate. Do Thou ordain for me, O my Lord, every good thing Thou didst send down in Thy Book, and suffer me not to be far removed from the shelter of Thy mercy.

Powerful art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou art, verily, the All-Powerful, the Most Generous.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 51)

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Praise be unto Thee, O my God! I am one of Thy servants, who hath believed on Thee and on Thy signs. Thou seest how I have set myself towards the door of Thy mercy, and turned my face in the direction of Thy loving-kindness. I beseech Thee, by Thy most excellent titles and Thy most exalted attributes, to open to my face the portals of Thy bestowals. Aid me, then, to do that which is good, O Thou Who art the Possessor of all names and attributes!

I am poor, O my Lord, and Thou art the Rich. I have set my face towards Thee, and detached myself from all but Thee. Deprive me not, I implore Thee, of the breezes of Thy tender mercy, and withhold not from me what Thou didst ordain for the chosen among Thy servants.

Remove the veil from mine eyes, O my Lord, that I may recognize what Thou hast desired for Thy creatures, and discover, in all the manifestations of Thy handiwork, the revelations of Thine almighty power. Enrapture my soul, O my Lord, with Thy most mighty signs, and draw me out of the depths of my corrupt and evil desires. Write down, then, for me the good of this world and of the world to come. Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. No God is there but Thee, the All-Glorious, Whose help is sought by all men.

I yield Thee thanks, O my Lord, that Thou hast wakened me from my sleep, and stirred me up, and created in me the desire to perceive what most of Thy servants have failed to apprehend. Make me able, therefore, O my Lord, to behold, for love of Thee and for the Sake of Thy pleasure, whatsoever Thou hast desired. Thou art He to the power of Whose might and sovereignty all things testify. There is none other God but Thee, the Almighty, the Beneficent.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 54)

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In the Name of Thy Lord, the Creator, the Sovereign, the All-Sufficing, the Most



Exalted, He Whose help is implored by all men.

Say: O my God! O Thou Who art the Maker of the heavens and of the earth, O Lord of the Kingdom! Thou well knowest the secrets of my heart, while Thy Being is inscrutable to all save Thyself. Thou seest whatsoever is of me, while no one else can do this save Thee. Vouchsafe unto me, through Thy grace, what will enable me to dispense with all except Thee, and destine for me that which will make me independent of everyone else besides Thee. Grant that I may reap the benefit of my life in this world and in the next. Open to my face the portals of Thy grace, and graciously confer upon me Thy tender mercy and bestowals.

O Thou Who art the Lord of grace abounding! Let Thy celestial aid surround those who love Thee, and bestow upon us the gifts and the bounties Thou dost possess. Be Thou sufficient unto us of all things, forgive our sins and have mercy upon us. Thou art Our Lord and the Lord of all created things. No one else do we invoke but Thee, and naught do we beseech but thy favors. Thou art the Lord of bounty and grace, invincible in Thy power and the most skilfull in Thy designs. No god is there but Thee, the All-Possessing, the Most Exalted.

Confer Thy blessings, O my Lord, upon the Messengers, the holy ones and the righteous. Verily, Thou art God, the Peerless, the All-Compelling.

(The Báb, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 54)

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O Lord! Unto Thee I repair for refuge, and toward all Thy signs I set my heart.

O Lord! Whether traveling or at home, and in my occupation or in my work, I place my whole trust in Thee.

Grant me then Thy sufficing help so as to make me independent of all things, O Thou Who art unsurpassed in Thy mercy!

Bestow upon me my portion, O Lord, as Thou pleasest, and cause me to be satisfied with whatsoever thou hast ordained for me.

Thine is the absolute authority to command.

(The Báb, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 55)

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O God, my God! Thou art my Hope and my Beloved, my highest Aim and Desire! With great humbleness and entire devotion I pray to Thee to make me a minaret of Thy love in Thy land, a lamp of Thy knowledge among Thy creatures, and a banner of divine bounty in Thy dominion. Number me with such of Thy servants as have

detached themselves from everything but Thee, have sanctified themselves from the transitory things of this world, and have freed themselves from the promptings of the voicers of idle fancies.

Let my heart be dilated with joy through the spirit of confirmation from Thy kingdom, and brighten my eyes by beholding the hosts of divine assistance descending successively upon me from the kingdom of Thine omnipotent glory.

Thou art, in truth, the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the All-Powerful.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í Prayers, p. 56)

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O God, my God! Fill up for me the cup of detachment from all things, and in the assembly of Thy splendors and bestowals, rejoice me with the wine of loving Thee. Free me from the assaults of passion and desire, break off from me the shackles of this nether world, draw me with rapture unto Thy supernal realm, and refresh me amongst the handmaids with the breathings of Thy holiness.

O Lord, brighten Thou my face with the lights of Thy bestowals, light Thou mine eyes with beholding the signs of Thine all-subduing might; delight my heart with the glory of Thy knowledge that encompasseth all things, gladden Thou my soul with Thy soul-reviving tidings of great joy, O Thou King of this world and the Kingdom above, O Thou Lord of dominion and might, that I may spread abroad Thy signs and tokens, and proclaim Thy Cause, and promote Thy Teachings, and serve Thy Law and exalt Thy Word.

Thou art, verily, the Powerful, the Ever-Giving, the Able, the Omnipotent.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í Prayers, p. 57)

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O Thou kind Lord! From the horizon of detachment Thou hast manifested souls that, even as the shining moon, shed radiance upon the realm of heart and soul, rid themselves from the attributes of the world of existence and hastened forth unto the kingdom of immortality. With a drop from the ocean of Thy loving kindness Thou didst oft-times moisten the gardens of their hearts until they gained incomparable freshness and beauty. The holy fragrance of Thy divine unity was diffused far and wide, shedding its sweet savours over the entire world, causing the regions of the earth to be redolent with perfume. Raise up then, O Spirit of Purity, souls who, like those sanctified beings, will become free and pure, will adorn the world of being with a new raiment and a wondrous robe, will seek no one else but Thee, tread no path except the path of Thy good-pleasure and will speak of naught but the mysteries of

Thy Cause. O Thou kind Lord! Grant that this youth may attain unto that which is the highest aspiration of the holy ones. Endow him with the wings of Thy strengthening grace—wings of detachment and divine aid—that he may soar thereby into the atmosphere of Thy tender mercy, be able to partake of Thy celestial bestowals, may become a sign of divine guidance and a standard of the Concourse on high. Thou art the Potent, the Powerful, the Seeing, the Hearing.

(Fire and Light, p. 20)

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May my life be offered up for the dust of these martyrs; may my entire being be a sacrifice for the blood of the chosen ones of God, they who enjoy near access to His exalted Threshold, who are attracted to the summit of transcendent glory, and established upon the seat of truth in the all-glorious Kingdom. O ye who have suffered martyrdom! O trustees of His Revelation! O distinguished men of virtue! O illustrious and noble ones May my inmost reality, my spirit, my entire being and whatsoever God hath bestowed upon me through His bounty and grace be laid down as a sacrifice for you.

I bear witness that ye are the radiant stars, the gleaming meteors, the resplendent full moons, the brilliant orbs in this wondrous Revelation. Well is it with you, O birds that warble in the gardens of divine unity; blessed are ye, O lions that roar in the forests of detachment; happy are ye. O leviathans that swim in the waters of His oneness. Verily ye are the signs of divine guidance. Ye are the banners that flutter in the field of sacrifice.

I beseech God to bless me, through the breezes of holiness wafted from that glorious centre of sacrifice, and to quicken me with the reviving breath of heavenly communion blowing from that blessed region. I beg you to intercede on my behalf in the presence of the ever-living, sovereign Lord that He may graciously suffer me to quaff my fill from the choice sealed wine, may grant me a portion from the unbounded felicity that ye enjoy and may exhilarate my heart by giving me to drink from your chalice which is tempered at the Camphor Fountain. Verily my Lord is merciful and forgiving. By bestowing the bounty of sacrifice in this realm of existence, He aideth whomsoever He willeth with whatsoever He pleaseth.

And upon you rest the glory of the Most Glorious!

(Fire and Light, p. 30)

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Magnified be Thy Name, O Lord my God! Behold Thou mine eye expectant to gaze

on the wonders of Thy mercy, and mine ear longing to hearken unto Thy sweet melodies, and my heart yearning for the living waters of Thy knowledge. Thou seest Thy handmaiden, O my God, standing before the habitation of Thy mercy, and calling upon Thee by Thy name which Thou hast chosen above all other names and set up over all that are in heaven and on earth. Send down upon her the breaths of Thy mercy, that she may be carried away wholly from herself, and be drawn entirely towards the seat which, resplendent with the glory of Thy face, sheddeth afar the radiance of Thy sovereignty, and is established as Thy throne. Potent art Thou to do what Thou willest. No God is there beside Thee, the All-Glorious, the Most Bountiful.

Cast not out, I entreat Thee, O my Lord, them that have sought Thee, and turn not away such as have directed their steps towards Thee, and deprive not of Thy grace all that love Thee. Thou art He, O my Lord, Who hath called Himself the God of Mercy, the Most Compassionate. Have mercy, then, upon Thy handmaiden who hath sought Thy shelter, and set her face towards Thee.

Thou art, verily, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Handmaidens of God - Bahá'í Prayers for Women)

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Glory to thee, O my God! One of Thy handmaidens, who hath believed in Thee and in Thy signs, hath entered beneath the shadow of the tree of Thy oneness. Give her to quaff, O my God, by Thy Name, the Manifest and the Hidden, of Thy choice sealed Wine that it may take her away from her own self, and make her to be entirely devoted to Thy remembrance, and wholly detached from any one beside Thee. Now that Thou hast revealed unto her the knowledge of Thee, O my Lord, deny her not, by Thy bounty, Thy grace; and now that Thou hast called her unto Thyself, drive her not away from Thee, through Thy favour. Supply her, then, with that which excelleth all that can be found on Thine earth. Thou art, verily, the Most Bountiful, Whose grace is immense.

Wert Thou to bestow on one of Thy creatures what would equal the kingdoms of earth and heaven, it would still not diminish by even as much as an atom the immensity of Thy dominion. Far greater art Thou than the Great One men are wont to call Thee, for such a title is but one of Thy names all of which were created by a mere indication of Thy will. There is no God but Thee, the God of power, the God of glory, the God of knowledge and wisdom.

(Bahá'u'lláh, Handmaidens of God - Bahá'í Prayers for Women)

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O Lord! Help this daughter of the Kingdom to be exalted in both worlds; cause her to turn away from this mortal world of dust and from those who have set their hearts thereon and enable her to have communion and close association with the world of immortality. Give her heavenly power and strengthen her through the breaths of the Holy Spirit that she may arise to serve Thee. Thou art the Mighty One.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Handmaidens of God - Bahá’í Prayers for Women)

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How often the beloved Master was heard to say. Should each one of the friends take upon himself to carry out, in all its integrity and implications, only one of the teachings of the Faith, with devotion, detachment, constancy and perseverance and exemplify it in all his deeds and pursuits of life, the world would become another world and the face of the earth would mirror forth the splendours of the Abhá Paradise. Consider what marvellous changes would be effected if the beloved of the Merciful conducted themselves, both in their individual and collective capacities, in accordance with the counsels and exhortations which have streamed from the Pen of Glory.

(From a letter dated 12 January 1923 written by Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá’ís of Persia - translated from the Persian)

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In one of His Tablets Bahá’u’lláh says that the highest form of detachment in this day is to be occupied with some profession and be self-supporting. A good Bahá’í, therefore, is the one who so arranges his life as to devote time both to his material needs and also to the service of the Cause.

(From a letter dated 26 February 1933 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

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Pure detachment and selfless service, these should be the sole motives of every true believer. And unless each and every one of the friends succeeds in translating such qualities into living action, no hope of further progress can be entertained. It is now that unity of thought and action is most needed. It is now, when the Cause is entering a new phase of development, when its Administration is being gradually consolidated amid the welter and chaos of a tottering civilization, that the friends should present a united front to those forces of internal dissension, which, if not completely wiped out, will bring our work to inevitable destruction.

(From a letter dated 24 September 1933 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

Let us recall His explicit and often repeated assurances that every Assembly elected in that rarefied atmosphere of selflessness and detachment is in truth appointed of God, that its verdict is truly inspired, that one and all should submit to its decision unreservedly and with cheerfulness.

(From a letter dated 23 February 1924 written by Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'ís of America, published in "Bahá'í Administration: Selected Messages 1922-1932" p. 65)  
(The Compilation of Compilations vol II, p. 40)

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The prime requisites for them that take counsel together are purity of motive, radiance of spirit, detachment from all else save God, attraction to His Divine Fragrances, humility and lowliness amongst His loved ones, patience and long-suffering in difficulties and servitude to His exalted Threshold. Should they be graciously aided to acquire these attributes, victory from the unseen Kingdom of Bahá shall be vouchsafed to them. In this day, assemblies of consultation are of the greatest importance and a vital necessity. Obedience unto them is essential and obligatory. The members thereof must take counsel together in such wise that no occasion for ill-feeling or discord may arise. This can be attained when every member expresseth with absolute freedom his own opinion and setteth forth his argument. Should any one oppose, he must on no account feel hurt for not until matters are fully discussed can the right way be revealed. The shining spark of truth cometh forth only after the clash of differing opinions. If after discussion a decision be carried unanimously, well and good; but if, the Lord forbid, differences of opinion should arise, a majority of voices must prevail.<sup>3</sup>

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, cited in a letter dated 5 March 1922 written by Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, published in "Bahá'í Administration: Selected Messages 1922-1932", pp. 21-22)

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<sup>3</sup> "Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá", sections 43 and 44, p. 87

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Let them perform their services with complete sanctity and detachment, and on no account defile themselves by receiving bribes, harbouring unseemly motives, or engaging in noxious practices. Let them be content with their wages, and seek distinction in truthfulness, straightforwardness, and the pursuit of virtue and excellence; for vanity in riches is worthy of none but the base, and pride in possessions besemeth only the foolish. To attain to true glory and honour, man should exercise justice and equity, forbear to act in an oppressive manner, render

service to his government, and work for the good of his fellow-citizens. Were he to seek after aught else but this he would indeed be in manifest loss.

(From a Tablet - translated from the Persian)

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The Bahá'í Writings encourage detachment from "this world and the vanities thereof", since "attachment" distracts the individual from awareness of God. This does not, however, constitute a form of asceticism or imply a rejection of life's pleasures. Bahá'u'lláh explains:

Should a man wish to adorn himself with the ornaments of the earth, to wear its apparels, or partake of the benefits it can bestow, no harm can befall him, if he alloweth nothing whatever to intervene between him and God, for God hath ordained every good thing, whether created in the heavens or in the earth, for such of His servants as truly believe in Him. Eat ye, O people, of the good things which God hath allowed you, and deprive not yourselves from His wondrous bounties. Render thanks and praise unto Him, and be of them that are truly thankful.

The standard is one of moderation:

In all matters moderation is desirable. If a thing is carried to excess, it will prove a source of evil....

(The Compilation of Compilations vol I, p. 78)

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Righteousness and detachment are like unto two most great lights for the heaven of teaching. Blessed is he who attaineth this high station...

(From a previously untranslated Tablet)

(The Individual and Teaching - Raising the Divine Call, p. 3)

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This is not a Cause which may be made a plaything for your idle fancies, nor is it a field for the foolish and faint of heart. By God, this is the arena of insight and detachment, of vision and upliftment, where none may spur on their chargers save the valiant horsemen of the Merciful, who have severed all attachment to the world of being. These, truly, are they that render God victorious on earth, and are the

dawning-places of His sovereign might amidst mankind.

(Unlocking the Power of Action)  
The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 84

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PROMISE “. . . it is the purity of heart, detachment, uprightnes, devotion, and love of the teacher that attracts the Divine confirmations and enables him, however ignorant he be in this world’s learning, to win the hearts of his fellowmen to the Cause of God.”

(Compilations, Victory Promises, p. 23)

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Dr Habib, whose older brother attained martyrdom, was born in 1888 at Kirmánsháh, Persia and was given the name Mu’ayyad (meaning 'confirmed') by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. At the age of twenty-one, when enroute to Beirut to begin his medical studies at the American University, he spent a month in the Holy Land with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá who took a personal interest in his progress. Thereafter he returned each summer to serve the Cause, extending hospitality to visitors and pilgrims, recording daily events, acquiring spiritual knowledge from outstanding Bahá’í scholars and being entrusted with the receipt and dispatch of Tablets. Referring to Habib’s student days, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá extolled the young man’s influence, detachment and sanctity, saying “the fragrance of Beirut” perfumed His nostrils.

(Shoghi Effendi, Arohanui - Letters to New Zealand, p. 97)

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Ours is the duty to strive by day and night to fulfill our own obligations and then trust in His Guidance and never failing Grace. Unity amongst the friends, selflessness in our labors in His Path, detachment from all worldly things, the greatest prudence and caution in every step we take, earnest endeavor to carry out only what is His Holy Will and Pleasure, the constant awareness of His Presence and of the example of His Life, the absolute shunning of whomsoever we feel to be an enemy of the Cause ... these, and foremost among them is the need for unity, appear to me as our most vital duties, should we dedicate our lives for His service. Should we in this spirit arise to serve Him, what surer and greater promise have we than the one His Glorious Father, Bahá’u’lláh, gives us in His Most Holy Book:—“Verily, We behold you from Our Realm of Effulgent Glory, and shall graciously aid whosoever ariseth for the triumph of Our Cause with the hosts of the Celestial Concourse and a company of Our chosen angels.”

(Shoghi Effendi, Bahá’í Administration, p. 16)



Let us recall His explicit and often-repeated assurances that every Assembly elected in that rarefied atmosphere of selflessness and detachment is, in truth, appointed of God, that its verdict is truly inspired, that one and all should submit to its decision unreservedly and with cheerfulness. Let us first strive to fulfill these conditions, difficult yet essential, in our lives, so that, contented and assured, we may make of this new year of activity a year of abundant blessings, of unprecedented achievements.

May this dearest wish be fulfilled!

(Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'í Administration, p. 65)

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Let those whose time, resources and means allow, travel throughout the length and breadth of that vast continent, let them scatter to the most distant regions of the earth and, fired with enthusiasm and detachment, hand on the torch of God's undying flame to the waiting multitudes of a sadly-stricken world.

(Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'í Administration, p. 88)

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“Now is the time,” He no less significantly remarks in another of these Tablets, “for you to divest yourselves of the garment of attachment to this world that perisheth, to be wholly severed from the physical world, become heavenly angels, and travel to these countries. I swear by Him besides Whom there is none other God that each one of you will become an Israfil of Life, and will blow the Breath of Life into the souls of others.” And lastly this glorious promise in another of those immortal Tablets: “Should success crown your enterprise, America will assuredly evolve into a center from which waves of spiritual power will emanate, and the throne of the Kingdom of God, will, in the plenitude of its majesty and glory, be firmly established.”

In one of the earliest Tablets addressed by Him to the American believers these equally significant words have been penned: “If ye be truly united, if ye agree to promote that which is the essential purpose, and to show forth an all-unifying love, I swear by Him Who causeth the seed to split and the breeze to waft, so great a light will shine forth from your faces as to reach the highest heavens, the fame of your glory will be noised abroad, the evidences of your preeminence will spread throughout all regions, your power will penetrate the realities of all things, your aims and purposes will exert their influence upon the great and mighty nations, your spirits will encompass the whole world of being, and ye will discover yourselves to be

kings in the dominions of the Kingdom, and attired with the glorious crowns of the invisible Realm, and become the marshals of the army of peace, and princes of the forces of light, and stars shining from the horizon of perfection, and brilliant lamps shedding their radiance upon men.”

(Shoghi Effendi, Citadel of Faith, p. 29)

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He feels that Mrs. ... and Miss ... , both of whom love their religion and are devoted to its promotion, should be called upon to forget and forgive the past, and concentrate on serving the Faith. These are the ways in which the Bahá'ís can demonstrate true spiritual nobility and detachment. In such delicate and complicated cases, the N.S.A. should appeal to the believers to put the interests of the Cause first, regardless of any personal sacrifice of feelings this may require.

(Shoghi Effendi, Letters from the Guardian to Australia and New Zealand, p. 58)

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O Lord! I am Thy servant and the son of Thy servant and Thy handmaiden. I find myself bewildered by the matchless tokens of Thy Revelation, by the wondrous evidences of Thy dawning forth, and by Thy signs and traces that have encompassed both Thy heaven and Thine earth. I beseech Thee to adorn my head with the crown of detachment, and to bedeck my temple with the robe of humility and lowliness before the revelation of Thy laws and Thy commandments.”<sup>4</sup>

(Shoghi Effendi, Messages to the Indian Subcontinent, p. 433)

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<sup>4</sup> Translation authorized by the Universal House of Justice.

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“Pass beyond the narrow retreats of your evil and corrupt desires, and advance into the vast immensity of the realm of God, and abide ye in the meads of sanctity and of detachment, that the fragrance of your deeds may lead the whole of mankind to the ocean of God’s unfading glory.” “Disencumber yourselves,” He thus commands them, “of all attachment to this world and the vanities thereof. Beware that ye approach them not, inasmuch as they prompt you to walk after your own lusts and covetous desires, and hinder you from entering the straight and glorious Path.” “Eschew all manner of wickedness,” is His commandment, “for such things are forbidden unto you in the Book which none touch except such as God hath cleansed from every taint of guilt, and numbered among the purified.” “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.” “The civilization,” is His grave warning, “so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences, will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men.... If carried to excess, civilization will prove as prolific a source of evil as it had been of goodness when kept within the restraints of moderation.” “He hath chosen out of the whole world the hearts of His servants,” He explains, “and made them each a seat for the revelation of His glory. Wherefore, sanctify them from every defilement, that the things for which they were created may be engraven upon them. This indeed is a token of God’s bountiful favor.” “Say,” He proclaims, “He is not to be numbered with the people of Bahá who followeth his mundane desires, or fixeth his heart on things of the earth. He is My true follower who, if he come to a valley of pure gold will pass straight through it aloof as a cloud, and will neither turn back, nor pause. Such a man is assuredly of Me. From his garment the Concourse on high can inhale the fragrance of sanctity.... And if he met the fairest and most comely of women, he would not feel his heart seduced by the least shadow of desire for her beauty. Such an one indeed is the creation of spotless chastity. Thus instructeth you the Pen of the Ancient of Days, as bidden by your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful.” “They that follow their lusts and corrupt inclinations,” is yet another warning, “have erred and dissipated their efforts. They indeed are of the lost.” “It behooveth the people of Bahá,” He also has written, “to die to the world and all that is therein, to be so detached from all earthly things that the inmates of Paradise may inhale from their garment the sweet smelling savor of sanctity....”

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

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Let them “disencumber themselves of all attachment to this world and the vanities thereof,” and, with that spirit of detachment which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá exemplified and wished them to emulate, bring these diversified peoples and countries to the remembrance of God and His supreme Manifestation. Let His love be a “storehouse of treasure for their souls,” on the day when “every pillar shall tremble, when the very skins of men shall creep, when all eyes shall stare up with terror.” 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.” Let them “beware lest they contend with anyone, nay strive to make him aware of the

truth with kindly manner and most convincing exhortation.” Let them “wholly for the sake of God proclaim His Message, and with that same spirit accept whatever response their words may evoke in their hearers.” Let them not, for one moment, forget that the “Faithful Spirit shall strengthen them through its power,” and that “a company of His chosen angels shall go forth with them, as bidden by Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Wise.” Let them ever bear in mind “how great is the blessedness that awaiteth them that have attained the honor of serving the Almighty,” and remember that “such a service is indeed the prince of all goodly deeds, and the ornament of every goodly act.”

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

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His chief advice to you is perseverance without which, he strongly feels, no success is attainable. The difficulties in your way are undoubtedly manifold and not always easy to overcome. But provided you persevere, and face with courage, full faith and confidence such obstacles you can be sure of attaining the goal you have set yourselves to achieve.

Now is the beginning of your work. And as in the beginning of every task you are bound to meet all sorts of difficulties. The more you strive to overcome these, the greater will be your reward, and the nearer you will get to that glorious success which, as repeatedly promised by Bahá'u'lláh, must needs crown the efforts of all those who, whole-heartedly and with pure detachment, strive to work for the spread and establishment of His Cause.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The Unfolding Destiny of the British Bahá'í Community*, p. 107)

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Quddús, immortalized by Him as Ismú'lláhi'l-Ákhir (the Last Name of God); on whom Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of Kullu'ṭ-Ṭa'ám later conferred the sublime appellation of Nuqṭiy-i-Ukhrá (the Last Point); whom He elevated, in another Tablet, to a rank second to none except that of the Herald of His Revelation; whom He identifies, in still another Tablet, with one of the “Messengers charged with imposture” mentioned in the Qur'án; whom the Persian Bayán extolled as that fellow-pilgrim round whom mirrors to the number of eight Vahíds revolve; on whose “detachment and the sincerity of whose devotion to God's will God prideth Himself amidst the Concourse on high;” whom 'Abdu'l-Bahá designated as the “Moon of Guidance...”

(Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 49)

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The only person who recognized Him and performed pilgrimage with Him is the one round whom revolve eight Vahíds,<sup>5</sup> in whom God hath gloried before the Concourse on high by virtue of his absolute detachment and for his being wholly devoted to the Will of God.

(The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 89)

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<sup>5</sup> This is a reference to Quddús, 'whom the Persian Bayán extolled as that fellow-pilgrim round whom mirrors to the number of eight Vahíds revolve'. (God Passes By, p. 49).

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Every man of perception who hath scaled the noble heights of detachment, and every man of eloquence who hath attained the most sublime station, beareth witness that Thou art God, the Incomparable, and that Thou hast assigned no associate unto Thyself in the kingdom of creation, nor is there anyone to compare with Thee in the realm of invention. Men of wisdom, who had but a notion of the revelation of Thy glory, conceived a likeness of Thee according to their own understanding, and men of erudition, who had gained but a glimpse of the manifold evidences of Thy loving-kindness and glory, have contrived peers for Thee in conformity with their own imaginations.

(The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 207)

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