

Justice: The Best Beloved of All Things

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From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

Say: "O God, my God! Attire mine head with the crown of justice, and my temple with the ornament of equity. Thou, verily, art the Possessor of all gifts and bounties."

Justice and equity are twin Guardians that watch over men. From them are revealed such blessed and perspicuous words as are the cause of the well-being of the world and the protection of the nations.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 12-13)

It is Our hope that thou wilt hear with attentive ears the things We have mentioned unto thee, that perchance thou mayest turn men away from the things they possess to the things that God possesseth. We entreat God to deliver the light of equity and the sun of justice from the thick clouds of waywardness, and cause them to shine forth upon men. No light can compare with the light of justice. The establishment of order in the world and the tranquillity of the nations depend upon it.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 28-29)

We hope that thou wilt cause the light of justice to shine more brightly. By the righteousness of God! Justice is a powerful force. It is, above all else, the conqueror of the citadels of the hearts and souls of men, and the revealer of the secrets of the world of being, and the standard-bearer of love and bounty.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 32)

Know verily that the essence of justice and the source thereof are both embodied in the ordinances prescribed by Him Who is the Manifestation of the Self of God amongst men, if ye be of them that recognize this truth. He doth verily incarnate the highest, the infallible standard of justice unto all creation. Were His law to be such as to strike terror into the hearts of all that are in heaven and on earth, that law is naught but manifest justice. The fears and agitation which the revelation of this law provokes in men's hearts should indeed be likened to the cries of the suckling babe weaned from his mother's milk, if ye be of them that perceive. Were men to discover the motivating purpose of God's Revelation, they would assuredly cast away their fears, and, with hearts filled with gratitude, rejoice with exceeding gladness.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 175)

We cherish the hope that the light of justice may shine upon the world and sanctify it from tyranny. If the rulers and kings of the earth, the symbols of the power of God, exalted be His glory, arise and resolve to dedicate themselves to whatever will promote the highest interests of the whole of humanity, the reign of justice will assuredly be established amongst the children of men, and the effulgence of its light will envelop the whole earth. The Great Being saith: The structure of world stability and order hath been reared upon, and will continue to be sustained by, the twin pillars of reward and punishment.... In another passage He hath written: Take heed, O concourse of the rulers of the world! There is no force on earth that can equal in its conquering power the force of justice and wisdom.... Blessed is the king who marcheth with the ensign of wisdom unfurled before him, and the battalions of justice massed in his rear. He verily is the ornament that adorneth the brow of peace and the countenance of security. There can be no doubt whatever that if the day star of justice, which the clouds of tyranny have obscured, were to shed its light upon men, the face of the earth would be completely transformed.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 218-219)

Beware lest thou be led to connive at injustice. Set thy heart firmly upon justice, and alter not the Cause of God, and be of them whose eyes are directed towards the things that have been revealed in His Book.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 230-231)

Cleave ye to justice and fairness, and turn away from the whisperings of the foolish,

them that are estranged from God, that have decked their heads with the ornament of the learned, and have condemned to death Him Who is the Fountain of wisdom.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 342)

Whoso cleaveth to justice, can, under no circumstances, transgress the limits of moderation. He discerneth the truth in all things, through the guidance of Him Who is the All-Seeing.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 342)

O SON OF SPIRIT!

The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbour. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behoveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 36-37)

(Ed: Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, #2 from the Arabic, pp. 3-4)

In these days truthfulness and sincerity are sorely afflicted in the clutches of falsehood, and justice is tormented by the scourge of injustice. The smoke of corruption hath enveloped the whole world in such wise that naught can be seen in any direction save regiments of soldiers and nothing is heard from any land but the clashing of swords. We beseech God, the True One, to strengthen the wielders of His power in that which will rehabilitate the world and bring tranquillity to the nations.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 39)

Judge thou fairly and be not of the unjust. Take fast hold of justice and adhere unto equity that perchance thou mayest not, for selfish motives, use religion as a snare, nor disregard the truth for the sake of gold.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 42)

O son of man! If thine eyes be turned towards mercy, forsake the things that profit thee and cleave unto that which will profit mankind. And if thine eyes be turned towards

justice, choose thou for thy neighbour that which thou chooseth for thyself. Humility exalteth man to the heaven of glory and power, whilst pride abaseth him to the depths of wretchedness and degradation.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 64)

The word of God which the Supreme Pen hath recorded on the sixth leaf of the Most Exalted Paradise is the following: The light of men is Justice. Quench it not with the contrary winds of oppression and tyranny. The purpose of justice is the appearance of unity among men. The ocean of divine wisdom surgeth within this exalted word, while the books of the world cannot contain its inner significance. Were mankind to be adorned with this raiment, they would behold the day-star of the utterance, “On that day God will satisfy everyone out of His abundance,”¹ shining resplendent above the horizon of the world. Appreciate ye the value of this utterance; it is a noble fruit that the Tree of the Pen of Glory hath yielded. Happy is the man that giveth ear unto it and observeth its precepts. Verily I say, whatever is sent down from the heaven of the Will of God is the means for the establishment of order in the world and the instrument for promoting unity and fellowship among its peoples. Thus hath the Tongue of this Wronged One spoken from His Most Great Prison.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 66–67)

¹ cf. Qur'án 4:130.

Moreover We counsel them to observe justice, equity, honesty, piety and that whereby both the Word of God and their own station will be exalted amongst men. Verily I am the One Who exhorteth with justice. Unto this beareth witness He from Whose Pen rivers of mercy have flowed and from Whose utterance fountains of living waters have streamed forth unto all created things. Immeasurably exalted is this boundless grace; immensely blessed is this resplendent favour.

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

Once again We exhort all believers to observe justice and fairness and to show forth love and contentment. They are indeed the people of Bahá', the companions of the Crimson Ark. Upon them be the peace of God, the Lord of all Names, the Creator of the heavens.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 134)

The Great Being saith: The heaven of statesmanship is made luminous and resplendent by the brightness of the light of these blessed words which hath dawned from the dayspring of the Will of God: It behoveth every ruler to weigh his own being every day in the balance of equity and justice and then to judge between men and counsel them to do that which would direct their steps unto the path of wisdom and understanding. This is the cornerstone of statesmanship and the essence thereof. From these words every enlightened man of wisdom will readily perceive that which will foster such aims as the welfare, security and protection of mankind and the safety of human lives. Were men of insight to quaff their fill from the ocean of inner meanings which lie enshrined in these words and become acquainted therewith, they would bear witness to the sublimity and the excellence of this utterance. If this lowly one were to set forth that which he perceiveth, all would testify unto God's consummate wisdom. The secrets of statesmanship and that of which the people are in need lie enfolded within these words. This lowly servant earnestly entreateth the One true God—exalted be His glory—to illumine the eyes of the people of the world with the splendour of the light of wisdom that they, one and all, may recognize that which is indispensable in this day.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 166-167)

It is incumbent upon everyone to aid those daysprings of authority and sources of command who are adorned with the ornament of equity and justice. Blessed are the rulers and the learned among the people of Bahá'. They are My trustees among My servants and the manifestations of My commandments amidst My people. Upon them rest My glory, My blessings and My grace which have pervaded the world of being. In this connection the utterances revealed in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* are such that from the horizon of their words the light of divine grace shineth luminous and resplendent.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 221)

Tread ye the path of justice and equity in all things. Thus biddeth you He Who is the Dawning-place of Revelation, would that ye might comprehend.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 40)

He hath come for your salvation, and hath borne tribulations that ye may ascend, by the ladder of utterance, unto the summit of understanding.... Peruse, with fairness and justice, that which hath been sent down. It will, verily, exalt you through the truth, and will cause you to behold the things from which ye have been withheld, and will

enable you to quaff His sparkling Wine.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 78)

O King! I adjure thee by thy Lord, the All-Merciful, to look upon thy servants with the glances of the eye of thy favour, and to treat them with justice, that God may treat thee with mercy. Potent is thy Lord to do as He pleaseth. The world, with all its abasement and glory, shall pass away, and the kingdom will remain unto God, the Most Exalted, the All-Knowing.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts* p. 97)

From the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Well is it with that learned man whose head is adorned with the crown of justice, and whose body glorieth in the ornament of honesty. The Pen of Admonition exhorteth the friends and enjoineeth on them charity, pity, wisdom, and gentleness.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, *A Traveller's Narrative*, p. 45)

In the *Hidden Words* Bahá'u'lláh says, "Justice is to be loved above all." Praise be to God, in this country the standard of justice has been raised; a great effort is being made to give all souls an equal and a true place. This is the desire of all noble natures; this is today the teaching for the East and for the West; therefore the East and the West will understand each other and reverence each other, and embrace like long-parted lovers who have found each other.

There is one God; mankind is one; the foundations of religion are one. Let us worship Him, and give praise for all His great Prophets and Messengers who have manifested His brightness and glory.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*, p. 20)

Equality and Brotherhood must be established among all members of mankind. This is according to Justice. The general rights of mankind must be guarded and preserved.

All men must be treated equally. This is inherent in the very nature of humanity.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*, p. 29)

“There is a great spiritual light in London. The effort made for justice is real and in this country the law is the same for the poor as for the rich.” He took great interest in hearing of the care that is taken of prisoners as they leave jail, and spoke of the land being happy where the magistrates are as fathers to the people.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London*, pp. 109-110)

I counsel them that they may day by day strengthen the bond of love and amity to this end,—that they may become the sympathetic embodiment of one nation,—that they may extend themselves to a Universal Brotherhood to guard and protect the interests and rights of all the nations of the East,—that they may unfurl the Divine Banner of justice,—that they may treat each nation as a family composed of the individual children of God and may know that before the sight of God the rights of all are equal. For all of us are the children of one Father. God is at peace with all his children; why should they engage in strife and warfare among themselves? God is showering down kindness; why should the inhabitants of this world exchange unkindness and cruelty?”

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London*, pp. 122-123)

Until all nations and peoples become united by the bonds of the Holy Spirit in this real fraternity, until national and international prejudices are effaced in the reality of this spiritual brotherhood, true progress, prosperity and lasting happiness will not be attained by man. This is the century of new and universal nationhood. Sciences have advanced, industries have progressed, politics have been reformed, liberty has been proclaimed, justice is awakening. This is the century of motion, divine stimulus and accomplishment; the century of human solidarity and altruistic service; the century of Universal Peace and the reality of the divine kingdom.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í World Faith* - ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Section, p. 227)

Bahá’u’lláh teaches that an equal standard of human rights must be recognized and adopted. In the estimation of God all men are equal; there is no distinction or preferment for any soul in the dominion of His justice and equity.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í World Faith* - ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Section, p. 240)

All the divine Manifestations have proclaimed the oneness of God and the unity of mankind. They have taught that men should love and mutually help each other in

order that they might progress. Now if this conception of religion be true, its essential principle is the oneness of humanity. The fundamental truth of the Manifestations is peace. This underlies all religion, all justice. The divine purpose is that men should live in unity, concord and agreement and should love one another.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í World Faith* - ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Section, p. 245)

Consort with all the peoples, kindreds and religions of the world with the utmost truthfulness, uprightness, faithfulness, kindness, good-will and friendliness; that all the world of being may be filled with the holy ecstasy of the grace of Bahá’, that ignorance, enmity, hate and rancor may vanish from the world and the darkness of estrangement amidst the peoples and kindreds of the world may give way to the Light of Unity. Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you show your fidelity unto them, should they be unjust toward you show justice towards them, should they keep aloof from you attract them to yourself, should they show their enmity be friendly towards them, should they poison your lives sweeten their souls, should they inflict a wound upon you be a salve to their sores. Such are the attributes of the sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í World Faith* - ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Section, p. 445)

If a man be just, kind, humble and merciful and his qualities are acquired through the will-power—this is Godlike. A child cannot kill a man; but a Bonaparte can abstain from war, from shedding blood, from devastating countries. A dumb person will not speak ill of any one, a paralyzed hand cannot strike; but a strong arm can refrain from striking. Justice, love and kindness must be the instruments of strength, not of weakness.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Divine Philosophy*, p. 98)

The aim of the prophet of God is to raise man to the degree of knowledge of his potentiality and to illumine him through the light of the kingdom, to transform ignorance into wisdom, injustice into justice, error into knowledge, cruelty into affection and incapability into progress. In short, to make all the attainments of existence resplendent in him.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Divine Philosophy*, p. 111)

If the soul identifies itself with the material world it remains dark, for in the natural world there is corruption, aggression, struggles for existence, greed, darkness, transgression and vice. If the soul remains in this station and moves along these paths it will be the recipient of this darkness; but if it becomes the recipient of the graces of the world of mind, its darkness will be transformed into light, its tyranny into justice, its ignorance into wisdom, its aggression into loving kindness; until it reach the apex. Then there will not remain any struggle for existence. Man will become free from egotism; he will be released from the material world; he will become the personification of justice and virtue, for a sanctified soul illumines humanity and is an honor to mankind, conferring life upon the children of men and suffering all nations to attain to the station of perfect unity. Therefore, we can apply the name "holy soul" to such a one.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Divine Philosophy*, p. 120)

It is evident and clear to the wise men of nations - those wise men who are the wooers of absolute reality - that the purpose of the divine messengers and the revelation of the heavenly books and the establishment of the religion of God has been none other than to create amity and justice between the children of the races. True religion is the foundation of spiritual union, the union of thought, the union of susceptibilities, the unity of customs and the ideal chain binding together all the children of men. Through its practical realization, the minds and souls will receive development by divine instruction; they will become assisted to investigate reality, attain to a lofty station of wisdom and establish the basis of a divine civilization.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Divine Philosophy*, p. 160)

This century is the century of the oneness of the world of humanity, the century of justice; this century is the century of universal peace, the century of the dawn of the sun or reality; this century is the century of the establishment of the kingdom of God upon this earth; therefore let us grasp every means to promote the federation of the world, that we may become the recipients of the divine outpourings.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Divine Philosophy*, p. 172)

The first link which creates love and justice is the family bond, the second is the patriotic bond, the third is the racial bond, and the fourth is the civic bond. These, although useful in their own limited spheres, are not potent enough to bring about the unification of the entire race. Have we not learned often and with much sorrow that

there has been a quarrel between the members of a family, or the inhabitants of one land, or the denizens of various states, or the individuals of different cities?

A permanent peace in the world of existence can be established only through the power of the spirit. Spirit is the ruler over the body. If the people are emancipated through one spirit, there is not a trace of doubt but that the greatest bond of union and harmony will be established amongst them.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Divine Philosophy*, p. 175)

We all know and admit that justice is good but there is need of volition and action to carry out and manifest it. For example, we might think it good to build a church but simply thinking of it as a good thing will not help its erection. The ways and means must be provided; we must will to build it and then proceed with the construction.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 26)

And among the teachings of His Holiness Bahá’u’lláh are justice and right. Until these are realized on the plane of existence, all things will be in disorder and remain imperfect. The world of mankind is a world of oppression and cruelty, and a realm of aggression and error.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 31)

We ask God to endow human souls with justice so that they may be fair, and may strive to provide for the comfort of all, that each member of humanity may pass his life in the utmost comfort and welfare. Then this material world will become the very paradise of the Kingdom, this elemental earth will be in a heavenly state and all the servants of God will live in the utmost joy, happiness and gladness. We must all strive and concentrate all our thoughts in order that such happiness may accrue to the world of humanity.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 43)

The attributes of his Divine nature are shown forth in love, mercy, kindness, truth and justice, one and all being expressions of his higher nature. Every good habit, every noble quality belongs to man’s spiritual nature, whereas all his imperfections and sinful actions are born of his material nature. If a man’s Divine nature dominates his human nature, we have a saint.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 60)

Saints are men who have freed themselves from the world of matter and who have overcome sin. They live in the world but are not of it, their thoughts being continually in the world of the spirit. Their lives are spent in holiness, and their deeds show forth love, justice and godliness. They are illumined from on high; they are as bright and shining lamps in the dark places of the earth. These are the saints of God. The apostles, who were the disciples of Jesus Christ, were just as other men are; they, like their fellows, were attracted by the things of the world, and each thought only of his own advantage. They knew little of justice, nor were the Divine perfections found in their midst. But when they followed Christ and believed in Him, their ignorance gave place to understanding, cruelty was changed to justice, falsehood to truth, darkness into light. They had been worldly, they became spiritual and divine. They had been children of darkness, they became sons of God, they became saints! Strive therefore to follow in their steps, leaving all worldly things behind, and striving to attain to the Spiritual Kingdom.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 60-61)

Kings must rule with wisdom and justice; prince, peer and peasant alike have equal rights to just treatment, there must be no favour shown to individuals. A judge must be no “respector of persons”, but administer the law with strict impartiality in every case brought before him.

If a person commit a crime against you, you have not the right to forgive him; but the law must punish him in order to prevent a repetition of that same crime by others, as the pain of the individual is unimportant beside the general welfare of the people.

When perfect justice reigns in every country of the Eastern and Western World, then will the earth become a place of beauty. The dignity and equality of every servant of God will be acknowledged; the ideal of the solidarity of the human race, the true brotherhood of man, will be realized; and the glorious light of the Sun of Truth will illumine the souls of all men.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 154-155)

When a ruler knows that his judgments will be weighed in a balance by the Divine Judge, and that if he be not found wanting he will come into the Celestial Kingdom and that the light of the Heavenly Bounty will shine upon him, then will he surely act

with justice and equity. Behold how important it is that Ministers of State should be enlightened by religion!

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 158)

Oh, friends of God, be living examples of justice! So that by the Mercy of God, the world may see in your actions that you manifest the attributes of justice and mercy.

Justice is not limited, it is a universal quality. Its operation must be carried out in all classes, from the highest to the lowest. Justice must be sacred, and the rights of all the people must be considered. Desire for others only that which you desire for yourselves. Then shall we rejoice in the Sun of Justice, which shines from the Horizon of God.

Each man has been placed in a post of honour, which he must not desert. A humble workman who commits an injustice is as much to blame as a renowned tyrant. Thus we all have our choice between justice and injustice.

I hope that each one of you will become just, and direct your thoughts towards the unity of mankind; that you will never harm your neighbours nor speak ill of any one; that you will respect the rights of all men, and be more concerned for the interests of others than for your own. Thus will you become torches of Divine justice, acting in accordance with the Teaching of Bahá’u’lláh, who, during His life, bore innumerable trials and persecutions in order to show forth to the world of mankind the virtues of the World of Divinity, making it possible for you to realize the supremacy of the spirit, and to rejoice in the Justice of God.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 159-160)

O ye beloved of the Lord! The Kingdom of God is founded upon equity and justice, and also upon mercy, compassion, and kindness to every living soul. Strive ye then with all your heart to treat compassionately all humankind—except for those who have some selfish, private motive, or some disease of the soul. Kindness cannot be shown the tyrant, the deceiver, or the thief, because, far from awakening them to the error of their ways, it maketh them to continue in their perversity as before. No matter how much kindness ye may expend upon the liar, he will but lie the more, for he believeth you to be deceived, while ye understand him but too well, and only remain silent out of your extreme compassion.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 166-167)

Regarding one's lack of capacity and one's undeserving on the Day of Resurrection, this does not cause one to be shut out from gifts and bounties; for this is not the Day of Justice but the Day of Grace, while justice is allotting to each whatever is his due. Then look thou not at the degree of thy capacity, look thou at the boundless favour of Bahá'u'lláh; all-encompassing is His bounty, and consummate His grace.

(‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 188)

The Almighty hath not created in man the claws and teeth of ferocious animals, nay rather hath the human form been fashioned and set with the most comely attributes and adorned with the most perfect virtues. The honour of this creation and the worthiness of this garment therefore require man to have love and affinity for his own kind, nay rather, to act towards all living creatures with justice and equity.

(‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 300)

Can any power withstand the penetrative influence of the Word of God? Nay, by God! The proof is clear and the evidence is complete! If anyone looketh with the eyes of justice he shall be struck with wonder and amazement and will testify that all the peoples, sects and races of the world should be glad, content and grateful for the teachings and admonitions of Bahá'u'lláh. For these divine injunctions tame every ferocious beast, transform the creeping insect into a soaring bird, cause human souls to become angels of the Kingdom, and make the human world a focus for the qualities of mercy.

(‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 306)

And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are justice and right. Until these are realized on the plane of existence, all things shall be in disorder and remain imperfect. The world of mankind is a world of oppression and cruelty, and a realm of aggression and error.

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

As forgiveness is one of the attributes of the Merciful One, so also justice is one of the attributes of the Lord. The tent of existence is upheld upon the pillar of justice and not upon forgiveness. The continuance of mankind depends upon justice and not upon forgiveness. So if, at present, the law of pardon were practiced in all countries, in a

short time the world would be disordered, and the foundations of human life would crumble. For example, if the governments of Europe had not withstood the notorious Attila, he would not have left a single living man.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 270)

Why should man, who is endowed with the sense of justice and sensibilities of conscience, be willing that one of the members of the human family should be rated and considered as subordinate? Such differentiation is neither intelligent nor conscientious; therefore, the principle of religion has been revealed by Bahá’u’lláh that woman must be given the privilege of equal education with man and full right to his prerogatives. That is to say, there must be no difference in the education of male and female in order that womankind may develop equal capacity and importance with man in the social and economic equation. Then the world will attain unity and harmony.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 108)

The essence of the matter is that divine justice will become manifest in human conditions and affairs, and all mankind will find comfort and enjoyment in life. It is not meant that all will be equal, for inequality in degree and capacity is a property of nature. Necessarily there will be rich people and also those who will be in want of their livelihood, but in the aggregate community there will be equalization and readjustment of values and interests. In the future there will be no very rich nor extremely poor. There will be an equilibrium of interests, and a condition will be established which will make both rich and poor comfortable and content. This will be an eternal and blessed outcome of the glorious twentieth century which will be realized universally. The significance of it is that the glad tidings of great joy revealed in the promises of the Holy Books will be fulfilled.

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

Man possesses two kinds of susceptibilities: the natural emotions, which are like dust upon the mirror, and spiritual susceptibilities, which are merciful and heavenly characteristics.

There is a power which purifies the mirror from dust and transforms its reflection into intense brilliancy and radiance so that spiritual susceptibilities may chasten the hearts and heavenly bestowals sanctify them. What is the dust which obscures the mirror? It is attachment to the world, avarice, envy, love of luxury and comfort,

haughtiness and self-desire; this is the dust which prevents reflection of the rays of the Sun of Reality in the mirror. The natural emotions are blameworthy and are like rust which deprives the heart of the bounties of God. But sincerity, justice, humility, severance, and love for the believers of God will purify the mirror and make it radiant with reflected rays from the Sun of Truth.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 244)

It has been shown conclusively, therefore, that the foundation of the religion of God remains permanent and unchanging. It is that fixed foundation which ensures the progress and stability of the body politic and the illumination of humanity. It has ever been the cause of love and justice amongst men. It works for the true fellowship and unification of all mankind, for it never changes and is not subject to supersedure. The accidental, or nonessential, laws which regulate the transactions of the social body and everyday affairs of life are changeable and subject to abrogation.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 404-405)

We should continually be establishing new bases for human happiness and creating and promoting new instrumentalities toward this end. How excellent, how honorable is man if he arises to fulfil his responsibilities; how wretched and contemptible, if he shuts his eyes to the welfare of society and wastes his precious life in pursuing his own selfish interests and personal advantages. Supreme happiness is man’s, and he beholds the signs of God in the world and in the human soul, if he urges on the steed of high endeavor in the arena of civilization and justice.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, pp. 3-4)

Close investigation will show that the primary cause of oppression and injustice, of unrighteousness, irregularity and disorder, is the people’s lack of religious faith and the fact that they are uneducated. When, for example, the people are genuinely religious and are literate and well-schooled, and a difficulty presents itself, they can apply to the local authorities; if they do not meet with justice and secure their rights and if they see that the conduct of the local government is incompatible with the Divine good pleasure and the king’s justice, they can then take their case to higher courts and describe the deviation of the local administration from the spiritual law. Those courts can then send for the local records of the case and in this way justice will be done. At present, however, because of their inadequate schooling, most of the population lack even the

vocabulary to explain what they want.

As to those persons who, here and there, are considered leaders of the people: because this is only the beginning of the new administrative process, they are not yet sufficiently advanced in their education to have experienced the delights of dispensing justice or to have tasted the exhilaration of promoting righteousness or to have drunk from the springs of a clear conscience and a sincere intent. They have not properly understood that man's supreme honor and real happiness lie in self-respect, in high resolves and noble purposes, in integrity and moral quality, in immaculacy of mind. They have, rather, imagined that their greatness consists in the accumulation, by whatever means may offer, of worldly goods.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, pp. 18-19)

It is unquestionable that the object in establishing parliaments is to bring about justice and righteousness, but everything hinges on the efforts of the elected representatives. If their intention is sincere, desirable results and unforeseen improvements will be forthcoming; if not, it is certain that the whole thing will be meaningless, the country will come to a standstill and public affairs will continuously deteriorate. "I see a thousand builders unequal to one subverter; what then of the one builder who is followed by a thousand subverters?"

(Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 23)

In the present writer's view it would be preferable if the election of nonpermanent members of consultative assemblies in sovereign states should be dependent on the will and choice of the people. For elected representatives will on this account be somewhat inclined to exercise justice, lest their reputation suffer and they fall into disfavor with the public.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 24)

The second attribute of perfection is justice and impartiality. This means to have no regard for one's own personal benefits and selfish advantages, and to carry out the laws of God without the slightest concern for anything else. It means to see one's self as only one of the servants of God, the All-Possessing, and except for aspiring to spiritual distinction, never attempting to be singled out from the others. It means to consider the welfare of the community as one's own. It means, in brief, to regard humanity as a single individual, and one's own self as a member of that corporeal form, and to know

of a certainty that if pain or injury afflicts any member of that body, it must inevitably result in suffering for all the rest.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 39)

Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you show your fidelity unto them, should they be unjust toward you show justice towards them, should they keep aloof from you attract them to yourselves, should they show their enmity be friendly towards them, should they poison your lives, sweeten their souls, should they inflict a wound upon you, be a salve to their sores. Such are the attributes of the sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Will and Testament*, p. 14)

From the writings of Shoghi Effendi

Justice He extols as “the light of men” and their “guardian,” as “the revealer of the secrets of the world of being, and the standard-bearer of love and bounty”; declares its radiance to be incomparable; affirms that upon it must depend “the organization of the world and the tranquillity of mankind.” He characterizes its “two pillars”—“reward and punishment”—as “the sources of life” to the human race; warns the peoples of the world to bestir themselves in anticipation of its advent; and prophesies that, after an interval of great turmoil and grievous injustice, its day-star will shine in its full splendor and glory.

(Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 217)

Tread ye the path of justice, for this, verily, is the straight path. Compose your differences, and reduce your armaments, that the burden of your expenditures may be lightened, and that your minds and hearts may be tranquilized. Heal the dissensions that divide you, and ye will no longer be in need of any armaments except what the protection of your cities and territories demandeth. Fear ye God, and take heed not to outstrip the bounds of moderation, and be numbered among the extravagant. We have learned that you are increasing your outlay every year, and are laying the burden thereof on your subjects. This, verily, is more than they can bear, and is a grievous injustice. Decide justly between men, and be ye the emblems of justice amongst them. This, if ye judge fairly, is the thing that behooveth you, and beseemeth your station.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 22)

Though aware of most of Our afflictions, ye, nevertheless, have failed to stay the hand of the aggressor. For is it not your clear duty to restrain the tyranny of the oppressor, and to deal equitably with your subjects, that your high sense of justice may be fully demonstrated to all mankind?

God hath committed into your hands the reins of the government of the people, that ye may rule with justice over them, safeguard the rights of the downtrodden, and punish the wrongdoers. If ye neglect the duty prescribed unto you by God in His Book, your names shall be numbered with those of the unjust in His sight. Grievous, indeed, will be your error.

(Shoghi Effendi, quoting Bahá'u'lláh in *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 24)

“Know thou,” He, in yet another connection, has written, “that they who are truly wise have likened the world unto the human temple. As the body of man needeth a garment to clothe it, so the body of mankind must needs be adorned with the mantle of justice and wisdom. Its robe is the Revelation vouchsafed unto it by God.”

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 186)

“Be united, O concourse of the sovereigns of the world, for thereby will the tempest of discord be stilled amongst you, and your peoples find rest. Should any one among you take up arms against another, rise ye all against him, for this is naught but manifest justice.” “The time must come,” He, foreshadowing the tentative efforts that are now being made, has written, “when the imperative necessity for the holding of a vast, an all-embracing assemblage of men will be universally realized. The rulers and kings of the earth must needs attend it, and, participating in its deliberations, must consider such ways and means as will lay the foundations of the world’s Great Peace among men... Should any king take up arms against another, all should unitedly arise and prevent him.”

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 192)
