

The Bahá'í Daily Readings

January 1 (2 Sharaf/Honor)

O ye beloved of the Lord! Commit not that which defileth the limpid stream of love or destroyeth the sweet fragrance of friendship. By the righteousness of the Lord! Ye were created to show love one to another and not perversity and rancour. Take pride not in love for yourselves but in love for your fellow-creatures. Glory not in love for your country, but in love for all mankind. Let your eye be chaste, your hand faithful, your tongue truthful and your heart enlightened. Abase not the station of the learned in Bahá and belittle not the rank of such rulers as administer justice amidst you. Set your reliance on the army of justice, put on the armour of wisdom, let your adorning be forgiveness and mercy and that which cheereth the hearts of the well-favoured of God.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 138-139

January 02 (03 Sharaf/Honor)

The first principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

The Search for Truth

Man must cut himself free from all prejudice and from the result of his own imagination, so that he may be able to search for truth unhindered. Truth is one in all religions, and by means of it the unity of the world can be realized.

All the peoples have a fundamental belief in common. Being one, truth cannot be divided, and the differences that appear to exist among the nations only result from their attachment to prejudice. If only men would search out truth, they would find themselves united.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 131

January 03 (04 Sharaf/Honor)

The second principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

The Unity of Mankind

The one all-loving God bestows His divine Grace and Favour on all mankind; one and all are servants of the Most High, and His Goodness, Mercy and loving Kindness are showered upon all His creatures. The glory of humanity is the heritage of each one.

All men are the leaves and fruit of one same tree, they are all branches of the tree of Adam, they all have the same origin. The same rain has fallen upon them all, the same warm sun makes them grow, they are all refreshed by the same breeze. The only differences that exist and that keep them apart are these: there are the children who need guidance, the ignorant to be instructed, the sick to be tended and healed; thus, I say that the whole of humanity is enveloped by the Mercy and Grace of God. As the Holy Writings tell us: All men are equal before God. He is no respecter of persons.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 131 - 132

January 04 (05 Sharaf/Honor)

The third principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

Religion should be the Cause of Love and Affection

Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the earth, give birth to spirituality, and bring life and light to each heart. If religion becomes a cause of dislike, hatred and division, it were better to be without it, and to withdraw from such a religion would be a truly religious act. For it is clear that the purpose of a remedy is to cure; but if the remedy should only aggravate the complaint it had better be left alone. Any religion which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion. All the holy prophets were as doctors to the soul; they gave prescriptions for the healing of mankind; thus any remedy that causes disease does not come from the great and supreme Physician.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 132 - 133

January 05 (06 Sharaf/Honor)

The fourth principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

The Unity of Religion and Science

We may think of science as one wing and religion as the other; a bird needs two wings for flight, one alone would be useless. Any religion that contradicts science or that is opposed to it, is only ignorance -- for ignorance is the opposite of knowledge.

Religion which consists only of rites and ceremonies of prejudice is not the truth. Let us earnestly endeavour to be the means of uniting religion and science.

'Ali, the son-in-law of Muhammad, said: 'That which is in conformity with science is also in conformity with religion'. Whatever the intelligence of man cannot understand, religion ought not to accept. Religion and science walk hand in hand, and any religion contrary to science is not the truth.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 133

January 06 (07 Sharaf/Honor)

The fifth principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

Prejudices of Religion, Race or Sect destroy the foundation of Humanity

All the divisions in the world, hatred, war and bloodshed, are caused by one or other of these prejudices.

The whole world must be looked upon as one single country, all the nations as one nation, all men as belonging to one race. Religions, races, and nations are all divisions of man's making only, and are necessary only in his thought; before God there are neither Persians, Arabs, French nor English; God is God for all, and to Him all creation is one. We must obey God, and strive to follow Him by leaving all our prejudices and bringing about peace on earth.

January 07 (08 Sharaf/Honor)

The sixth principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

Equal opportunity of the means of Existence

Every human being has the right to live; they have a right to rest, and to a certain amount of well-being. As a rich man is able to live in his palace surrounded by luxury and the greatest comfort, so should a poor man be able to have the necessities of life. Nobody should die of hunger; everybody should have sufficient clothing; one man should not live in excess while another has no possible means of existence.

Let us try with all the strength we have to bring about happier conditions, so that no single soul may be destitute.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 134 - 135

January 08 (09 Sharaf/Honor)

The seventh principle of Bahá'u'lláh is:

The Equality of Men -- equality before the Law

The Law must reign, and not the individual; thus will the world become a place of beauty and true brotherhood will be realized. Having attained solidarity, men will have found truth.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 135

January 09 (10 Sharaf/Honor)

The stages that mark the wayfarer's journey from the abode of dust to the heavenly homeland are said to be seven. Some have called these Seven Valleys, and others, Seven Cities. And they say that until the wayfarer taketh leave of self, and traverseth these stages, he shall never reach to the ocean of nearness and union, nor drink of the peerless wine. The first is THE VALLEY OF SEARCH.

The steed of this Valley is patience; without patience the wayfarer on this journey will reach nowhere and attain no goal. Nor should he ever be downhearted; if he strive for a hundred thousand years and yet fail to behold the beauty of the Friend, he should not falter. For those who seek the Ka'bih [1] of "for Us" rejoice in the tidings: "In Our ways will We guide them." [2] In their search, they have stoutly girded up the loins of service, and seek at every moment to journey from the plane of heedlessness into the realm of being. No bond shall hold them back, and no counsel shall deter them.

[1 The holy Sanctuary at Mecca. Here the word means "goal."]

[2 Qur'an 29:69: "And whoso maketh efforts for Us, in Our ways will We guide them."]

January 10 (11 Sharaf/Honor)

Say: This is the Day when every ear must needs be attentive to His voice. Hearken ye to the Call of this wronged One, and magnify ye the name of the one true God, and adorn yourselves with the ornament of His remembrance, and illumine your hearts with the light of His love. This is the key that unlocketh the hearts of men, the burnish that shall cleanse the souls of all beings. He that is careless of what hath poured out from the finger of the Will of God liveth in manifest error. Amity and rectitude of conduct, rather than dissension and mischief, are the marks of true faith.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 205

January 11 (12 Sharaf/Honor)

O ye loved ones of God! In this, the Bahá'í dispensation, God's Cause is spirit unalloyed. His Cause belongeth not to the material world. It cometh neither for strife nor war, nor for acts of mischief or of shame; it is neither for quarrelling with other Faiths, nor for conflicts with the nations. Its only army is the love of God, its only joy the clear wine of His knowledge, its only battle the expounding of the Truth; its one crusade is against the insistent self, the evil promptings of the human heart. Its victory is to submit and yield, and to be selfless is its everlasting glory. In brief, it is spirit upon spirit:

Unless ye must, Bruise not the serpent in the dust, How much less wound a man. And if ye can, No ant should ye alarm, Much less a brother harm.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 256

January 12 (13 Sharaf/Honor)

In considering the effect of obedience to the laws on individual lives, one must remember that the purpose of this life is to prepare the soul for the next. Here one must learn to control and direct one's animal impulses, not to be a slave to them. Life in this world is a succession of tests and achievements, of falling short and of making new spiritual advances. Sometimes the course may seem very hard, but one can witness, again and again, that the soul who steadfastly obeys the law of Bahá'u'lláh, however hard it may seem, grows spiritually, while the one who compromises with the law for the sake of his own apparent happiness is seen to have been following a chimera: he does not attain the happiness he sought, he retards his spiritual advance and often brings new problems upon himself.

-- From a letter dated 6 February 1973 written by the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies, published in "Messages from the Universal House of Justice 1968-1973, p. 106

January 13 (14 Sharaf/Honor)

Happy are those who spend their days in gaining knowledge, in discovering the secrets of nature, and in penetrating the subtleties of pure truth! Woe to those who are contented with ignorance, whose hearts are gladdened by thoughtless imitation, who have fallen into the lowest depths of ignorance and foolishness, and who have wasted their lives!

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 136

January 14 (15 Sharaf/Honor)

O SON OF BOUNTY!

Out of the wastes of nothingness, with the clay of My command I made thee to appear, and have ordained for thy training every atom in existence and the essence of all created things. Thus, ere thou didst issue from thy mother's womb, I destined for thee two founts of gleaming milk, eyes to watch over thee, and hearts to love thee. Out of My loving-kindness, 'neath the shade of My mercy I Nurtured thee, and guarded thee by the essence of My grace and favor. And My purpose in all this was that thou mightest attain My everlasting dominion and become worthy of My invisible bestowals. And yet heedless thou didst remain, and when fully grown, thou didst neglect all My bounties and occupied thyself with thine idle imaginings, in such wise that thou didst become wholly forgetful, and, turning away from the portals of the Friend didst abide within the courts of My enemy.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Persian Hidden Words # 29

January 15 (16 Sharaf/Honor)

The heart must needs therefore be cleansed from the idle sayings of men, and sanctified from every earthly affection, so that it may discover the hidden meaning of divine inspiration, and become the treasury of the mysteries of divine knowledge. Thus hath it been said: "He that treadeth the snow-white Path, and followeth in the footsteps of the Crimson Pillar, shall never attain unto his abode unless his hands are empty of those worldly things cherished by men." This is the prime requisite of whosoever treadeth this path. Ponder thereon, that, with eyes unveiled, thou mayest perceive the truth of these words.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 69

January 16 (17 Sharaf/Honor)

The existence of the Divine Being hath been clearly established, on the basis of logical proofs, but the reality of the Godhead is beyond the grasp of the mind. When thou dost carefully consider this matter, thou wilt see that a lower plane can never comprehend a higher. The mineral kingdom, for example, which is lower, is precluded from comprehending the vegetable kingdom; for the mineral, any such understanding would be utterly impossible. In the same way, no matter how far the vegetable kingdom may develop, it will achieve no conception of the animal kingdom, and any such comprehension at its level would be unthinkable, for the animal occupieth a plane higher than that of the vegetable: this tree cannot conceive of hearing and sight. And the animal kingdom, no matter how far it may evolve, can never become aware of the reality of the intellect, which discovereth the inner essence of all things, and comprehendeth those realities which cannot be seen; for the human plane as compared with that of the animal is \hat{A} very high. And although these beings all co-exist in the contingent world, in each case the difference in their stations precludeth their grasp of the whole; for no lower degree can understand a higher, such comprehension being impossible.

The higher plane, however, understandeth the lower. The animal, for instance, comprehendeth the mineral and vegetable, the human understandeth the planes of the animal, vegetable and mineral. But the mineral cannot possibly understand the realms of man. And notwithstanding the fact that all these entities co-exist in the phenomenal world, even so, no lower degree can ever comprehend a higher.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 46-47

January 17 (18 Sharaf/Honor)

Then how could it be possible for a contingent reality, that is, man, to understand the nature of that pre-existent Essence, the Divine Being? The difference in station between man and the Divine Reality is thousands upon thousands of times greater than the difference between vegetable and animal. And that which a human being would conjure up in his mind is but the fanciful image of his human condition, it doth not encompass God's reality but rather is encompassed by it. That is, man graspeth his own illusory conceptions, but the Reality of Divinity can never be grasped: It, Itself, encompasseth all created things, and all created things are in Its grasp. That Divinity which man doth imagine for himself existeth only in his mind, not in truth. Man, however, existeth both in his mind and in truth; thus man is greater than that fanciful reality which he is able to imagine.

The furthestmost limits of this bird of clay are these: he can flutter along for some short distance, into the endless vast; but he can never soar upward to the Sun in the high heavens. We must, nevertheless, set forth reasoned or inspired proofs as to the existence of the Divine Being, that is, proofs commensurate with the understanding of man.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 47-4

January 18 (19 Sharaf/Honor)

It is obvious that all created things are connected one to another by a linkage complete and perfect, even, for example, as are the members of the human body. Note how all the members and component parts of the human body are connected one to another. In the same way, all the members of this endless universe are linked one to another. The foot and the step, for example, are connected to the ear and the eye; the eye must look ahead before the step is taken. The ear must hear before the eye will carefully observe. And whatever member of the human body is deficient, produceth a deficiency in the other members. The brain is connected with the heart and stomach, the lungs are connected with all the members. So is it with the other members of the body.

And each one of these members hath its own special function. The mind force -- whether we call it pre-existent or contingent -- doth direct and co-ordinate all the members of the human body, seeing to it that each part or member duly performeth its own special function. If, however, there be some interruption in the power of the mind, all the members will fail to carry out their essential functions, deficiencies will appear in the body and the functioning of its members, and the power will prove ineffective.

Likewise, look into this endless universe: a universal power inevitably existeth, which encompasseth all, directing and regulating all the parts of this infinite creation; and were it not for this Director, this Co-ordinator, the universe would be flawed and deficient. It would be even as a madman; whereas ye can see that this endless creation carrieth out its functions in perfect order, every separate part of it performing its own task with complete reliability, nor is there any flaw to be found in all its workings. Thus it is clear that a Universal Power existeth, directing and regulating this infinite universe. Every rational mind can grasp this fact.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 48-49

January 19 (1 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

Furthermore, although all created things grow and develop, yet are they subjected to influences from without. For instance, the sun giveth heat, the rain nourisheth, the wind bringeth life, so that man can develop and grow. Thus it is clear that the human body is under influences from the outside, and that without those influences man could not grow. And likewise, those outside influences are subjected to other influences in their turn. For example, the growth and development of a human being is dependent upon the existence of water, and water is dependent upon the existence of rain, and rain is dependent upon the existence of clouds, and clouds are dependent upon the existence of the sun, which causeth land and sea to produce vapour, the condensation of vapour forming the clouds. Thus each one of these entities exerteth its influence and is likewise influenced in its turn. Inescapably then, the process leadeth to One Who influenceth all, and yet is influenced by none, thus severing the chain. The inner reality of that Being, however, is not known, although His effects are clear and evident.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 49

January 20 (2 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

Great is the station of man. Great must also be his endeavours for the rehabilitation of the world and the well-being of nations. I beseech the One true God to graciously confirm thee in that which beseemeth man’s station.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, p. 174

January 21 (3 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

Far be it from us to despair at any time of the incalculable favours of God, for if it were His wish He could cause a mere atom to be transformed into a sun and a single drop into an ocean. He unlocketh thousands of doors, while man is incapable of conceiving even a single one.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, p. 175

January 22 (4 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

No matter how complete human policy and foresight may appear, they are imperfect. If we do not seek the counsel of God or if we refuse to follow His dictates, it is presumptive evidence that we are knowing and wise, whereas God is ignorant; that we are sagacious and God is not. God forbid! We seek shelter in His mercy for this suggestion! No matter how far the human intelligence may advance, it is still but a drop, while divine omniscience is the ocean. Shall we say that a drop is imbued or endowed with qualities of which the ocean is devoid? Shall we believe that the policy and plan of this atom of a human soul are superior to the wisdom of the Omniscient? There is no greater ignorance than this.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 65

January 23 (5 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: “Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the foot-stool of thy God, and been chosen as the seat of His mighty throne.” The realm of glory exclaimeth: “Would that my life could be sacrificed for thee, for He Who is the Beloved of the All-Merciful hath established His sovereignty upon thee, through the power of His Name that hath been promised unto all things, whether of the past or of the future.” This is the Day whereon every sweet smelling thing hath derived its fragrance from the smell of My garment -- a garment that hath shed its perfume upon the whole of creation. This is the Day whereon the rushing

waters of everlasting life have gushed out of the Will of the All-Merciful. Haste ye, with your hearts and souls, and quaff your fill, O Concourse of the realms above!

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

January 24 (6 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

In His [Bahá'u'lláh] Suratu'l-Haykal (the Surih of the Temple) He thus describes those breathless moments when the Maiden, symbolizing the "Most Great Spirit" proclaimed His mission to the entire creation: "While engulfed in tribulations I heard a most wondrous, a most sweet voice, calling above My head. Turning My face, I beheld a Maiden -- the embodiment of the remembrance of the name of My Lord -- suspended in the air before Me. So rejoiced was she in her very soul that her countenance shone with the ornament of the good-pleasure of God, and her cheeks glowed with the brightness of the All-Merciful. Betwixt earth and heaven she was raising a call which captivated the hearts and minds of men. She was imparting to both My inward and outer being tidings which rejoiced My soul, and the souls of God's honored servants. Pointing with her finger unto My head, she addressed all who are in heaven and all who are on earth, saying: 'By God! This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not. This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive.'"

-- Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By

January 25 (7 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

Our teachings, as outlined in the Advent of Divine Justice, on the subject of living a chaste life, should be emphasized, but certainly no ruling what-so-ever should be laid down in this matter. The Bahá'ís have certainly not yet reached that stage of moral perfection where they are in a position to too harshly scrutinize the private lives of other souls, and each individual should be accepted on the basis of his faith, and sincere willingness to try to live up to the Divine Standards; further than this we cannot go at present.

-- Shoghi Effendi, Messages to Canada

January 26 (8 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

Briefly; the Blessed Perfection bore all these ordeals and calamities in order that our hearts might become enkindled and radiant, our spirits be glorified, our faults become virtues, our ignorance transformed into knowledge; in order that we might attain the real fruits of humanity and acquire heavenly graces; although pilgrims upon earth we should travel the road of the heavenly kingdom; although needy and poor we might receive the treasures of life eternal. For this has He borne these difficulties and sorrows.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith

January 27 (9 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

Behold, how immeasurably exalted is the Lord your God above all created things! Witness the majesty of His sovereignty, His ascendancy, and supreme power. If the things which have been created by Him -- magnified be His glory -- and ordained to be the manifestations of His names and attributes, stand, by virtue of the grace with which they have been endowed, exalted beyond all proximity and remoteness, how much loftier must be that Divine Essence that hath called them into being?...

Meditate on what the poet hath written: “Wonder not, if my Best-Beloved be closer to me than mine own self; wonder at this, that I, despite such nearness, should still be so far from Him.”... Considering what God hath revealed, that “We are closer to man than his life-vein,” the poet hath, in allusion to this verse, stated that, though the revelation of my Best-Beloved hath so permeated my being that He is closer to me than my life-vein, yet, notwithstanding my certitude of its reality and my recognition of my station, I am still so far removed from Him. By this he meaneth that his heart, which is the seat of the All-Merciful and the throne wherein abideth the splendor of His revelation, is forgetful of its Creator, hath strayed from His path, hath shut out itself from His glory, and is stained with the defilement of earthly desires.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

January 28 (10 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

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

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace

January 29 (11 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

If a man is successful in his business, art, or profession he is thereby enabled to increase his physical wellbeing and to give his body the amount of ease and comfort in which it delights. All around us today we see how man surrounds himself with every modern convenience and luxury, and denies nothing to the physical and material side of his nature. But, take heed, lest in thinking too earnestly of the things of the body you forget the things of the soul: for material advantages do not elevate the spirit of a man. Perfection in worldly things is a joy to the body of a man but in no wise does it glorify his soul.

It may be that a man who has every material benefit, and who lives surrounded by all the greatest comfort modern civilization can give him, is denied the all important gift of the Holy Spirit.

It is indeed a good and praiseworthy thing to progress materially, but in so doing, let us not neglect the more important spiritual progress, and close our eyes to the Divine light shining in our midst.

Only by improving spiritually as well as materially can we make any real progress, and become perfect beings. It was in order to bring this spiritual life and light into the world that all the great Teachers have appeared. They came so that the Sun of Truth might be manifested, and shine in the hearts of men, and that through its wondrous power men might attain unto Everlasting Light.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 62 - 63

January 30 (12 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

Man's spirit comprehends the realities of kingdoms which have no knowledge of him, even as the child in the womb has no knowledge of exterior existence; nevertheless, the mother comprehends the child's existence. The superior kingdom understands the inferior, but that the inferior comprehends it is no proof of the non-existence of the superior kingdom. In the human world, if we do not understand the divine world, is that a proof that the world of God does not exist? When we view the universe we see it as endless space, for we cannot restrict the universe to the lower kingdoms and to man who is here for a few days only, then vanishes.

This physical universe is infinite, and if material existence is endless, how much more so are the worlds of God! When we think of the visible worlds as infinite, how can we think that the worlds of God are limited? There is no beginning and no end to the material or spiritual worlds. Man passes through different phases and when in a lower consciousness he cannot comprehend the consciousness above. When we were in the state of the unborn child we had no knowledge of the world of man. If the vegetable kingdom could speak it would cry out, "Where is the world of man?" We cry out, "Where is the kingdom of the spirit?"

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, pp. 117 - 118

January 31 (13 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

WHENEVER the faithful hear the verses of this Book being recited, their eyes will overflow with tears and their hearts will be deeply touched by Him Who is the Most Great Remembrance for the love they cherish for God, the All-Praised. He is God, the All-Knowing, the Eternal. They are indeed the inmates of the all-highest Paradise wherein they will abide for ever. Verily they will see naught therein save that which hath proceeded from God, nothing that will lie beyond the compass of their understanding. There they will meet the believers in Paradise, who will address them with the words 'Peace, Peace' lingering on their lips...

O concourse of the faithful! Incline your ears to My Voice, proclaimed by this Remembrance of God. Verily God hath revealed unto Me that the Path of the Remembrance which is set forth by Me is, in very truth, the straight Path of God, and that whoever professeth any religion other than this upright Faith, will, when called to account on the Day of Judgement, discover that as recorded in the Book no benefit hath he reaped out of God's Religion...

Fear ye God, O concourse of kings, lest ye remain afar from Him Who is His Remembrance [the Báb], after the Truth hath come unto you with a Book and signs from God, as spoken through the wondrous tongue of Him Who is His Remembrance. Seek ye grace from God, for God hath ordained for you, after ye have believed in Him, a Garden the vastness of which is as the vastness of the whole of Paradise. Therein ye shall find naught save the gifts and favours which the Almighty hath graciously bestowed by virtue of this momentous Cause, as decreed in the Mother Book.

-- Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 62-3

February 1 (14 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

"The whole world," is Bahá'u'lláh's matchless testimony in the Kitáb-i-Iqán, "marveled at the manner of their sacrifice.... The mind is bewildered at their deeds, and the soul marveleth at their

fortitude and bodily endurance.... Hath any age witnessed such momentous happenings?" And again: "Hath the world, since the days of Adam, witnessed such tumult, such violent commotion?... Methinks, patience was revealed only by virtue of their fortitude, and faithfulness itself was begotten only by their deeds." "Through the blood which they shed," He, in a prayer, referring more specifically to the martyrs of the Faith, has significantly affirmed, "the earth hath been impregnated with the wondrous revelations of Thy might and the gem-like signs of Thy glorious sovereignty. Ere-long shall she tell out her tidings, when the set time is come."

-- Shoghi Effendi -- God Passes By

This light of the intellect is the highest light that exists, for it is born of the Light Divine.

The light of the intellect enables us to understand and realize all that exists, but it is only the Divine Light that can give us sight for the invisible things, and which enables us to see truths that will only be visible to the world thousands of years hence.

It was the Divine Light which enabled the prophets to see two thousand years in advance what was going to take place and today we see the realization of their vision. Thus it is this Light which we must strive to seek, for it is greater than any other.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 69

February 2 (15 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

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

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

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan, pp. 70-71

February 3 (16 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

97 Cadogan Gardens, London,
December 26th, 1912

'Should Prayer take the form of action?'

'Abdu'l-Bahá:

'Yes: In the Bahá'í Cause arts, sciences and all crafts are (counted as) worship. The man who makes a piece of notepaper to the best of his ability, conscientiously, concentrating all his forces on perfecting it, is giving praise to God. Briefly, all effort and exertion put forth by man from the

fullness of his heart is worship, if it is prompted by the highest motives and the will to do service to humanity. This is worship: to serve mankind and to minister to the needs of the people. Service is prayer. A physician ministering to the sick, gently, tenderly, free from prejudice and believing in the solidarity of the human race, he is giving praise’.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 189

February 4 (17 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

A clear proof of validity lies in the achievements and here we are confronted by certain irrefutable facts. The prophets have come from the lowliest and most humiliated of the nations and in each age the prophet has raised his downtrodden nation to the highest zenith of prosperity and success among the nations of the earth. For instance, His Holiness Christ was quite alone. He was a Jew from among the Jews. He came at a time when the Israelites were under the yoke of the Romans. He revived the people till they were transferred from one state of existence into a higher state of existence.

At a time when the East was enshrouded with superstition and hatred, Baha’o’llah flooded these regions with his glorious light. Under the chains he unfurled the flag of the oneness of the world of humanity; in the prisons he spread the principles of universal peace and brotherhood; from behind the barracks he wrote his famous epistles to the kings and rulers of the world, arraigning the oppressors of the earth and calling upon them in the name of God the exalted not to place their sovereignty above that of His Highness the Almighty. He admonished them on the part of the wronged ones to listen to the call of the new day else their kingdoms would pass out of their hands and would fall into the hands of others. “Know that brotherhood hath been proclaimed - even so hath this matter been recorded upon a mighty tablet with the strong pen of God.”[1]
[1 Many of the events which Baha’o’llah prophesied are taking place today and many are yet to come.]

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, pp. 44-45

February 5 (18 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

His Holiness Christ says: Travel ye to the East and to the West of the world and summon the people to the Kingdom of God.[1] Hence the mercy of God must encompass all humanity. Therefore do ye not think it permissible to leave that region deprived of the breezes of the Morn of Guidance. Consequently, strive as far as ye are able to send to those parts fluent speakers, who are detached from aught else save God, attracted with the fragrances of God, and sanctified and purified from all desires and temptations. Their sustenance and food must consist of the teachings of God. First they must themselves live in accordance with those principles, then guide the people. Perchance, God willing, the lights of the Most Great Guidance will illuminate that country, and the breezes of the rose garden of the love of God will perfume the nostrils of the inhabitants of Alaska. Should you be aided to render such a service, rest ye assured that your heads shall be crowned with the diadem of everlasting sovereignty, and at the threshold of oneness you will become the favored and accepted servants.

[1 Cf. Mark 16:15.]

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan, pp. 31-32

February 6 (19 Sulṭán/Sovereignty)

We behold the generality of mankind worshipping names and exposing themselves, as thou dost witness, to dire perils in the mere hope of perpetuating their names, whilst every perceiving soul testifieth that after death one's name shall avail him nothing except insofar as it beareth a relationship unto God, the Almighty, the All-Praised. Thus have their vain imaginings taken hold of them in requital for that which their hands have wrought. Consider the pettiness of men's minds. They seek with utmost exertion that which profiteth them not, and yet wert thou to ask of them: "Is there any advantage in that which ye desire?", thou wouldst find them sorely perplexed. Were a fair-minded soul to be found, he would reply: "Nay, by the Lord of the worlds!" Such is the condition of the people and of that which they possess. Leave them in their folly and turn thy sight unto God. This is in truth that which beseemeth thee. Harken then unto the counsel of thy Lord, and say: Lauded art Thou, O God of all who are in heaven and on earth!

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 82-83

February 7 (1 Mulk/Dominion)

A distinguishing characteristic of Bahá'í life is the spirit of servitude to God. To labour in the arena of service, the individual draws upon his love for Bahá'u'lláh, the power of the Covenant, the dynamics of prayer, the inspiration and education derived from regular study of the Holy Texts, and the transformative forces that operate upon his soul as he strives to behave in accordance with the divine laws and principles.

-- *The Universal House of Justice, The Institution of the Counsellors*, p. 11

February 8 (2 Mulk/Dominion)

How pathetic indeed are the efforts of those leaders of human institutions who, in utter disregard of the spirit of the age, are striving to adjust national processes, suited to the ancient days of self-contained nations, to an age which must either achieve the unity of the world, as adumbrated by Bahá'u'lláh, or perish. At so critical an hour in the history of civilization it behooves the leaders of all the nations of the world, great and small, whether in the East or in the West, whether victors or vanquished, to give heed to the clarion call of Bahá'u'lláh and, thoroughly imbued with a sense of world solidarity, the sine qua non of loyalty to His Cause, arise manfully to carry out in its entirety the one remedial scheme He, the Divine Physician, has prescribed for an ailing humanity. Let them discard, once for all, every preconceived idea, every national prejudice, and give heed to the sublime counsel of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the authorized Expounder of His teachings. You can best serve your country, was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's rejoinder to a high official in the service of the federal government of the United States of America, who had questioned Him as to the best manner in which he could promote the interests of his government and people, if you strive, in your capacity as a citizen of the world, to assist in the eventual application of the principle of federalism underlying the government of your own country to the relationships now existing between the peoples and nations of the world.

-- Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 36-37

February 9 (3 Mulk/Dominion)

THE All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy. Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require. Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and centre your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.

February 10 (4 Mulk/Dominion)

All the Manifestations of God came with the same purpose, and they have all sought to lead men into the paths of virtue. Yet we, their servants, still dispute among ourselves! Why is it thus? Why do we not love one another and live in unity?

It is because we have shut our eyes to the underlying principle of all religions, that God is one, that He is the Father of us all, that we are all immersed in the ocean of His mercy and sheltered and protected by His loving care.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 120

February 11 (5 Mulk/Dominion)

Say: My creatures are even as the fish of the deep. Their life dependeth upon the water, and yet they remain unaware of that which, by the grace of an omniscient and omnipotent Lord, sustaineth their very existence. Indeed, their heedlessness is such that were they asked concerning the water and its properties, they would prove entirely ignorant. Thus do We set forth comparisons and similitudes, that perchance the people may turn unto Him Who is the Object of the adoration of the entire creation.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, p. 39

February 12 (6 Mulk/Dominion)

Although to outward seeming the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is a material structure, yet it hath a spiritual effect. It forgoeth bonds of unity from heart to heart; it is a collective centre for men's souls. Every city in which, during the days of the Manifestation, a temple was raised up, hath created security and constancy and peace, for such buildings were given over to the perpetual glorification of God, and only in the remembrance of God can the heart find rest.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 95-96

February 13 (7 Mulk/Dominion)

I ask you all, each one of you, to follow well the light of truth, in the Holy Teachings, and God will strengthen you by His Holy Spirit so that you will be enabled to overcome the difficulties, and to destroy the prejudices which cause separation and hatred amongst the people. Let your hearts be filled with the great love of God, let it be felt by all; for every man is a servant of God, and all are entitled to a share of the Divine Bounty.

Especially to those whose thoughts are material and retrograde show the utmost love and patience, thereby winning them into the unity of fellowship by the radiance of your kindness.

If you are faithful to your great work, following the Holy Sun of Truth without swerving, then will the blessed day of universal brotherhood dawn on this beautiful city.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 26

February 14 (8 Mulk/Dominion)

I charge you all that each one of you concentrate all the thoughts of your heart on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must

be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love. Thoughts of war bring destruction to all harmony, well-being, restfulness and content.

Thoughts of love are constructive of brotherhood, peace, friendship, and happiness.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 29

February 15 (9 Mulk/Dominion)

The basis of the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the Unity of Mankind, and his greatest desire was that love and goodwill should live in the heart of men.

As He exhorted the people to do away with strife and discord, so I wish to explain to you the principal reason of the unrest among nations. The chief cause is the misrepresentation of religion by the religious leaders and teachers. They teach their followers to believe that their own form of religion is the only one pleasing to God, and that followers of any other persuasion are condemned by the All-Loving Father and deprived of His Mercy and Grace. Hence arise among the peoples, disapproval, contempt, disputes and hatred. If these religious prejudices could be swept away, the nations would soon enjoy peace and concord.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 45-46

February 16 (10 Mulk/Dominion)

There are four kinds of love. The first is the love that flows from God to man; it consists of the inexhaustible graces, the Divine effulgence and heavenly illumination. Through this love the world of being receives life. Through this love man is endowed with physical existence, until, through the breath of the Holy Spirit -- this same love -- he receives eternal life and becomes the image of the Living God. This love is the origin of all the love in the world of creation.

The second is the love that flows from man to God. This is faith, attraction to the Divine, enkindlement, progress, entrance into the Kingdom of God, receiving the Bounties of God, illumination with the lights of the Kingdom. This love is the origin of all philanthropy; this love causes the hearts of men to reflect the rays of the Sun of Reality.

The third is the love of God towards the Self or Identity of God. This is the transfiguration of His Beauty, the reflection of Himself in the mirror of His Creation. This is the reality of love, the Ancient Love, the Eternal Love. Through one ray of this Love all other love exists.

The fourth is the love of man for man. The love which exists between the hearts of believers is prompted by the ideal of the unity of spirits. This love is attained through the knowledge of God, so that men see the Divine Love reflected in the heart. Each sees in the other the Beauty of God reflected in the soul, and finding this point of similarity, they are attracted to one another in love. This love will make all men the waves of one sea, this love will make them all the stars of one heaven and the fruits of one tree. This love will bring the realization of true accord, the foundation of real unity.

But the love which sometimes exists between friends is not (true) love, because it is subject to transmutation; this is merely fascination. As the breeze blows, the slender trees yield. If the wind is

in the East the tree leans to the West, and if the wind turns to the West the tree leans to the East. This kind of love is originated by the accidental conditions of life. This is not love, it is merely acquaintanceship; it is subject to change.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks p. 180-181

February 17 (11 Mulk/Dominion)

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

February 18 (12 Mulk/Dominion)

All down the ages the prophets of God have been sent into the world to serve the cause of truth -- Moses brought the law of truth, and all the prophets of Israel after him sought to spread it.

When Jesus came He lighted the flaming torch of truth, and carried it aloft so that the whole world might be illumined thereby. After Him came His chosen apostles, and they went far and wide, carrying the light of their Master's teaching into a dark world -- and, in their turn, passed on.

Then came Muhammad, who in His time and way spread the knowledge of truth among a savage people; for this has always been the mission of God's elect.

So, at last, when Bahá'u'lláh arose in Persia, this was His most ardent desire, to rekindle the waning light of truth in all lands. All the holy ones of God have tried with heart and soul to spread the light of love and unity throughout the world, so that the darkness of materiality might disappear and the light of spirituality might shine forth among the children of men. Then would hate, slander and murder disappear, and in their stead love, unity and peace would reign.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 119-120

February 19 (13 Mulk/Dominion)

Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the earth, give birth to spirituality, and bring life and light to each heart. If religion becomes a cause of dislike, hatred and division, it were better to be without it, and to withdraw from such a religion would be a truly religious act. For it is clear that the purpose of a remedy is to cure; but if the remedy should only aggravate the complaint it had better be left alone. Any religion which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion. All the holy prophets were as doctors to the soul; they gave prescriptions for the healing of mankind; thus any remedy that causes disease does not come from the great and supreme Physician.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 130

February 20 (14 Mulk/Dominion)

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

February 21 (15 Mulk/Dominion)

This is the Day of Bounty! Bestir yourselves that I may make you monarchs in the realms of My Kingdom. If ye follow Me, ye shall behold that which ye were promised, and I will make you My companions in the dominion of My majesty and the intimates of My beauty in the heaven of My power forevermore. If ye rebel against Me, I will in My clemency endure it patiently, that haply ye may awaken and rise up from the couch of heedlessness. Thus hath My mercy encompassed you. Fear ye God and follow not in the ways of those who have turned away from His face, though they invoke His name in the daytime and in the night season.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts

February 22 (16 Mulk/Dominion)

In memorable passages addressed to “the Rulers of America and the Presidents of the Republics therein” He [Bahá’u’lláh], in His Kitab-i-Aqdas, calls upon them to “adorn the temple of dominion with the ornament of justice and of the fear of God, and its head with the crown of remembrance” of their Lord; declares that “the Promised One” has been made manifest; counsels them to avail themselves of the “Day of God”; and bids them “bind with the hands of justice the broken” and “crush” the “oppressor” with “the rod of the commandments of their Lord, the Ordainer, the All-Wise.”

-- Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By

February 23 (17 Mulk/Dominion)

Know thou that all the powers combined have not the power to establish universal peace, nor to withstand the overmastering dominion, at every time and season, of these endless wars. Ere long, however, shall the power of heaven, the dominion of the Holy Spirit, hoist on the high summits the banners of love and peace, and there above the castles of majesty and might shall those banners wave in the rushing winds that blow out of the tender mercy of God.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

February 24 (18 Mulk/Dominion)

I can but, at this juncture, touch upon certain outstanding episodes which, viewed in their proper perspective, may well be regarded as landmarks in the rise and development of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh throughout the Americas. I am particularly reminded of the holding of the World Parliament of Religions of Chicago in September 1893; of the arrival of the first American Bahá’í pilgrims in the Holy Land in December 1898; of the inception of the Temple enterprise in June 1903; of the opening of the first American Bahá’í Convention in March 1909; of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s arrival in America in April 1912; of the laying by Him of the cornerstone of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkar in May 1912; of the unveiling of the Tablets of the Divine Plan in April 1919; of the birth and rise

of the Bahá'í Administrative Order on the morrow of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ascension; of the official inauguration of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Plan through the launching of the first seven-year teaching enterprise in April 1937; of the completion of the exterior ornamentation of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, on the eve of the centenary celebrations of the Founding of the Faith, in May 1944; of the inception of the Second Seven-Year Plan in April 1946; of the formation of an independent National Spiritual Assembly in the Dominion of Canada in April 1948; of the establishment of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Central and South America in April 1951; and of the completion of the interior ornamentation of the Temple in October 1952.

-- Shoghi Effendi, Messages to the Bahá'í World - 1950-1957

February 25 (19 Mulk/Dominion)

O NOBLE friends; seekers after God! Praise be to God! Today the light of Truth is shining upon the world in its abundance; the breezes of the heavenly garden are blowing throughout all regions; the call of the Kingdom is heard in all lands, and the breath of the Holy Spirit is felt in all hearts that are faithful. The Spirit of God is giving eternal life. In this wonderful age the East is enlightened, the West is fragrant, and everywhere the soul inhales the holy perfume. The sea of the unity of mankind is lifting up its waves with joy, for there is real communication between the hearts and minds of men. The banner of the Holy Spirit is uplifted, and men see it, and are assured with the knowledge that this is a new day.

This is a new cycle of human power. All the horizons of the world are luminous, and the world will become indeed as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of unity of the sons of men and of the drawing together of all races and all classes. You are loosed from ancient superstitions which have kept men ignorant, destroying the foundation of true humanity.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 19

February 26 (1st day of Ayyám-i-Há/Intercalary Days)

(The Intercalary Days, February 26 to March 1, inclusive, should be days of preparation for the Fast, days of hospitality, charity and the giving of presents.)

My God, my Fire and my Light! The days which Thou hast named the Ayyám-i-Há (the Days of Ha, Intercalary days) in Thy Book have begun, O Thou Who art the King of names, and the fast which Thy most exalted Pen hath enjoined unto all who are in the kingdom of Thy creation to observe is approaching.

I entreat Thee, O my Lord, by these days and by all such as have during that period clung to the cord of Thy commandments, and laid hold on the handle of Thy precepts, to grant that unto every soul may be assigned a place within the precincts of Thy court, and a seat at the revelation of the splendors of the light of Thy countenance.

These, O my Lord, are Thy servants whom no corrupt inclination hath kept back from what Thou didst send down in Thy Book. They have bowed themselves before Thy Cause, and received Thy Book with such resolve as is born of Thee, and observed what Thou hadst prescribed unto them, and chosen to follow that which had been sent down by Thee. Thou seest, O my Lord, how they have recognized and confessed whatsoever Thou hast revealed in Thy Scriptures. Give them to drink, O my Lord, from the hands of Thy graciousness the waters of Thine eternity. Write down,

then, for them the recompense ordained for him that hath immersed himself in the ocean of Thy presence, and attained unto the choice wine of Thy meeting.

I implore Thee, O Thou the King of kings and the Pitier of the downtrodden, to ordain for them the good of this world and of the world to come. Write down for them, moreover, what none of Thy creatures hath discovered, and number them with those who have circled round Thee, and who move about Thy throne in every world of Thy worlds. Thou, truly, art the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

-- Bahá'u'lláh

February 27 (2nd day of Ayyám-i-Há/Intercalary Days)

That the Manifestations of Divine justice, the Day Springs of heavenly grace, have when they appeared amongst men always been destitute of all earthly dominion and shorn of the means of worldly ascendancy, should be attributed to this same principle of separation and distinction which animateth the Divine Purpose. Were the Eternal Essence to manifest all that is latent within Him, were He to shine in the plentitude of His glory, none would be found to question His power or repudiate His truth. Nay, all created things would be so dazzled and 72 thunderstruck by the evidences of His light as to be reduced to utter nothingness. How, then, can the godly be differentiated under such circumstances from the froward?

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

February 28 (3rd day of Ayyám-i-Há/Intercalary Days)

The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men will live as brothers.

In the days of old an instinct for warfare was developed in the struggle with wild animals; this is no longer necessary; nay, rather, co-operation and mutual understanding are seen to produce the greatest welfare of mankind. Enmity is now the result of prejudice only.

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, pp. 19 - 20

February 29 (4th day of Ayyám-i-Há/Intercalary Days)

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. BAHÁ'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.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, pp. 135-136

March 1 (5th day of Ayyám-i-Há/Intercalary Days)

In one of the earliest Tablets addressed by Him ['Abdu'l-Bahá] 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

March 2 (1 'Alá/Loftiness)

Exaggerated fasting destroys the divine forces. God has created man in a way that cannot be surpassed; we must not try to change his creation. Strive to attain nearness to reality through the acquisition of strength of character, through morality, through good works and helping the poor, through being consumed with the fire of the love of God and in discovering each day new spiritual mysteries. This is the path of intimate approach.

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

By God, the True One, verily, the gifts of God are in such profusion as to rush like a torrent, overflow as a sea, and shower as rain. Gird up thy loins, strengthen thy back, make firm thy feet, and exert thyself in quickening souls, dilating breasts, illumining insights, giving hearing to ears, and attracting hearts. Unseal the jars of the choice wine of the love of God, and give the craving ones to drink from this cup which is overflowing with the knowledge of God.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v1, p. 163

March 3 (2 'Alá/Loftiness)

O ye [1] Cohorts of God!

A letter which was signed by you in general was received. Its content was of the utmost beauty, sweetness, eloquence and perfection. While reading it the utmost happiness was produced. It spoke of fasting during the month of the Fast. Happy is your condition for you have executed the divine command; and have arisen to fast in these blessed days. For this physical fasting is a symbol of the spiritual fasting, that is, abstaining from all carnal desires, becoming characterized with the attributes of the spiritual ones, attracted to the heavenly fragrances and enkindled with the fire of the love of God.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v1, p. 40

[1 Revealed in response to a supplication signed by 489 believers in America during the period of the 19-day fast in 1906.]

March 4 (3 'Alá/Loftiness)

They that immerse themselves in the ocean of His utterances should at all times have the utmost regard for the divinely-revealed ordinances and prohibitions. Indeed His ordinances constitute the mightiest stronghold for the protection of the world and the safeguarding of its peoples -- a light upon those who acknowledge and recognize the truth, and a fire unto such as turn away and deny.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 50

March 5 (4 'Alá/Loftiness)

Moreover, in the traditions the terms "sun" and "moon" have been applied to prayer and fasting, even as it is said: "Fasting is illumination, prayer is light." One day, a well-known divine came to visit Us. While We were conversing with him, he referred to the above-quoted tradition. He said: "Inasmuch as fasting causeth the heat of the body to increase, it hath therefore been likened unto the light of the sun; and as the prayer of the night-season refresheth man, it hath been compared unto the radiance of the moon." Thereupon We realized that that poor man had not been favoured with a single drop of the ocean of true understanding, and had strayed far from the burning Bush of divine wisdom. We then politely observed to him saying: "The interpretation your honour hath given to this tradition is the one current amongst the people. Could it not be interpreted differently?" He asked Us: "What could it be?" We made reply: "Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, and the most distinguished of God's chosen Ones, hath likened the Dispensation of the Qur'an unto heaven, by reason of its loftiness, its paramount influence, its majesty, and the fact that it comprehendeth all religions. And as the sun and moon constitute the brightest and most prominent luminaries in the heavens, similarly in the heaven of the religion of God two shining orbs have been ordained -- fasting and prayer. 'Islam is heaven; fasting is its sun, prayer, its moon.'"

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Iqan, pp. 39 - 41

March 6 (5 'Alá/Loftiness)

God grant that all men may be graciously aided to observe that which the Tongue of the One true God hath uttered. And if they put into practice what We have set forth, God -- exalted be His glory -- will assuredly double their portion through the heaven of His bounty. Verily He is the Generous, the Forgiving, the Compassionate. Praise be unto God, the Most Exalted, the Most Great.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 133

March 7 (6 'Alá/Loftiness)

Fear God, ye inhabitants of the City, and sow not the seeds of dissension amongst men. Walk not in the paths of the Evil One. Walk ye, during the few remaining days of your life, in the ways of the one true God. Your days shall pass away as have the days of them who were before you. To dust shall ye return, even as your fathers of old did return.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, p. 200-201

March 8 (7 'Alá/Loftiness)

The purpose of the foregoing statements is to demonstrate at least this, that the happiness and greatness, the rank and station, the pleasure and peace, of an individual have never consisted in his personal wealth, but rather in his excellent character, his high resolve, the breadth of his learning, and his ability to solve difficult problems.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization, p. 23-24

March 9 (8 'Alá/Loftiness)

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.

--Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitab-i-Aqdas P. 70

March 10 (9 'Alá/Loftiness)

I magnify Thy Name, O my God, and offer thanksgiving unto Thee, O my Desire, inasmuch as Thou hast enabled me to clearly perceive Thy straight Path, hast unveiled Thy Great Announcement before mine eyes and hast aided me to set my face towards the Dayspring of Thy Revelation and the Fountainhead of Thy Cause, whilst Thy servants and Thy people turned away from Thee. I entreat Thee, O Lord of the Kingdom of eternity, by the shrill voice of the Pen of Glory, and by the Burning Fire which calleth aloud from the verdant Tree, and by the Ark which Thou hast specially chosen for the people of Bahá, to grant that I may remain steadfast in my love for Thee, be well pleased with whatsoever Thou hast prescribed for me in Thy Book and may stand firm in Thy service and in the service of Thy loved ones. Graciously assist then Thy servants, O my God, to do that which will serve to exalt Thy Cause and will enable them to observe whatsoever Thou hast revealed in Thy Book.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 116-117

March 11 (10 'Alá/Loftiness)

Every existence, whether seen or unseen, O my Lord, testifieth that Thy mercy hath surpassed all created things, and Thy loving-kindness embraced the entire creation.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, p. 113-114

March 12 (11 'Alá/Loftiness)

To one who spoke of the people's desire to possess the land, and of the strong under-current of rebellion on the part of the labouring classes, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said: " Fighting, and the employment of force, even for the right cause, will not bring about good results. The oppressed who have right on their side, must not take that right by force; the evil would continue. Hearts must be changed. The rich must wish to give!"

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 91

March 13 (12 'Alá/Loftiness)

In the Prayer of Fasting We have revealed: "Should Thy Will decree that out of Thy mouth these words proceed and be addressed unto them, 'Observe, for My Beauty's sake, the fast, O people, and set no limit to its duration,' I swear by the majesty of Thy glory, that every one of them will faithfully observe it, will abstain from whatsoever will violate Thy law, and will continue to do so until they yield up their souls unto Thee." In this consisteth the complete surrender of one's will to the Will of God. Meditate on this, that thou mayest drink in the waters of everlasting life which flow through the words of the Lord of all mankind, and mayest testify that the one true God hath ever been immeasurably exalted above His creatures. He, verily, is the Incomparable, the Ever-Abiding, the Omniscient, the All-Wise. The station of absolute self-surrender transcendeth, and will ever remain exalted above, every other station.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 337-338

March 14 (13 'Alá/Loftiness)

Thou seest, O God of Mercy, Thou Whose power pervadeth all created things, these servants of Thine, Thy thralls, who, according to the good-pleasure of Thy Will, observe in the daytime the fast prescribed by Thee, who arise, at the earliest dawn of day, to make mention of Thy Name, and to celebrate Thy praise, in the hope of obtaining their share of the goodly things that are treasured up within the treasuries of Thy grace and bounty. I beseech Thee, O Thou that holdest in Thine hands the reins of the entire creation, in Whose grasp is the whole kingdom of Thy names and of Thine attributes, not to deprive, in Thy Day, Thy servants from the showers pouring from the clouds of Thy mercy, nor to hinder them from taking their portion of the ocean of Thy good-pleasure.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 299-300

March 15 (14 'Alá/Loftiness)

Ye had written of the fasting month. Fortunate are ye to have obeyed the commandment of God, and kept this fast during the holy season. For this material fast is an outer token of the spiritual fast; it is a symbol of self-restraint, the withholding of oneself from all appetites of the self, taking on the characteristics of the spirit, being carried away by the breathings of heaven and catching fire from the love of God.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 69-70

March 16 (15 'Alá/Loftiness)

Glory be to Thee, O Lord my God! These are the days whereon Thou hast bidden all men to observe the fast, that through it they may purify their souls and rid themselves of all attachment to any one but Thee, and that out of their hearts may ascend that which will be worthy of the court of Thy majesty and may well beseem the seat of the revelation of Thy oneness. Grant, O my Lord, that this fast may become a river of life-giving waters and may yield the virtue wherewith Thou hast endowed it. Cleanse Thou by its means the hearts of Thy servants whom the evils of the world have failed to hinder from turning towards Thine all-glorious Name, and who have remained unmoved by the noise and tumult of such as have repudiated Thy most resplendent signs which have accompanied the advent of Thy Manifestation Whom Thou hast invested with Thy sovereignty, Thy power, Thy majesty and glory. These are the servants who, as soon as Thy call reached them, hastened in the direction of Thy mercy and were not kept back from Thee by the changes and chances of this world or by any human limitations.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, p. 79-80

March 17 (16 'Alá/Loftiness)

In the beginning of the eleventh chapter of the Revelation of St. John it is said:

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. ...

This reed is a Perfect Man Who is likened to a reed, and the manner of its likeness is this: when the interior of a reed is empty and free from all matter, it will produce beautiful melodies; and as the sound and melodies do not come from the reed, but from the flute player who blows upon it, so the sanctified heart of that blessed Being is free and emptied from all save God, pure and exempt from the attachments of all human conditions, and is the companion of the Divine Spirit. Whatever He utters is not from Himself, but from the real flute player, and it is a divine inspiration. That is why He is likened to a reed; and that reed is like a rod -- that is to say, it is the helper of every impotent one, and the support of human beings. It is the rod of the Divine Shepherd by which He guards His flock and leads them about the pastures of the Kingdom.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 45

March 18 (17 'Alá/Loftiness)

Therefore, let your faces be more radiant with hope and heavenly determination to serve the Cause of God, to spread the pure fragrances of the divine rose garden of unity, to awaken spiritual susceptibilities in the hearts of mankind, to kindle anew the spirit of humanity with divine fires and to reflect the glory of heaven to this gloomy world of materialism. When you possess these divine susceptibilities, you will be able to awaken and develop them in others. We cannot give of our wealth to the poor unless we possess it. How can the poor give to the poor? How can the soul that is deprived of the heavenly bounties develop in other souls capacity to receive those bounties?

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 7

March 19 (18 'Alá/Loftiness)

Nearness to God is dependent upon purity of the heart and exhilaration of the spirit through the glad tidings of the Kingdom. Consider how a pure, well-polished mirror fully reflects the effulgence of the sun, no matter how distant the sun may be. As soon as the mirror is cleaned and purified, the sun will manifest itself. The more pure and sanctified the heart of man becomes, the nearer it draws to God, and the light of the Sun of Reality is revealed within it. This light sets hearts aglow with the fire of the love of God, opens in them the doors of knowledge and unseals the divine mysteries so that spiritual discoveries are made possible. All the Prophets have drawn near to God through severance. We must emulate those Holy Souls and renounce our own wishes and desires. We must purify ourselves from the mire and soil of earthly contact until our hearts become as mirrors in clearness and the light of the most great guidance reveals itself in them.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 147-148

March 20 (19 'Alá/Loftiness)

Whosoever and whatsoever meeting becometh a hindrance to the diffusion of the Light of Faith, let the loved ones give them counsel and say: “Of all the gifts of God the greatest is the gift of Teaching. It draweth unto us the Grace of God and is our first obligation. Of such a gift how can we deprive ourselves? Nay, our lives, our goods, our comforts, our rest, we offer them all as a sacrifice for the Abhá Beauty and teach the Cause of God.” Caution and prudence, however, must be

observed even as recorded in the Book. The veil must in no wise be suddenly rent asunder. The Glory of Glories rest upon you.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Bahá'í World Faith. [1943] 1976: 448-449

March 21 (1 Bahá/Splendor)

This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: "Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the foot-stool of thy God, and been chosen as the seat of His mighty throne." The realm of glory exclaimeth: "Would that my life could be sacrificed for thee, for He Who is the Beloved of the All-Merciful hath established His sovereignty upon thee, through the power of His Name that hath been promised unto all things, whether of the past or of the future." This is the Day whereon every sweet smelling thing hath derived its fragrance from the smell of My garment -- a garment that hath shed its perfume upon the whole of creation. This is the Day whereon the rushing waters of everlasting life have gushed out of the Will of the All-Merciful. Haste ye, with your hearts and souls, and quaff your fill, O Concourse of the realms above!

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

March 22 (2 Bahá/Splendor)

Service to humanity is service to God. Let the love and light of the Kingdom radiate through you until all who look upon you shall be illumined by its reflection. Be as stars, brilliant and sparkling in the loftiness of their heavenly station. Do you appreciate the Day in which you live?

This is the century of the Blessed Perfection!

This is the cycle of the light of His beauty!

This is the consummate day of all the Prophets!

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

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace

March 23 (3 Bahá/Splendor)

Let nothing grieve thee, O Land of Ta (Tihiran), for God hath chosen thee to be the source of the joy of all mankind. He shall, if it be His Will, bless thy throne with one who will rule with justice, who will gather together the flock of God which the wolves have scattered. Such a ruler will, with joy and gladness, turn his face towards, and extend his favors unto, the people of Bahá. He indeed is accounted in the sight of God as a jewel among men. Upon him rest forever the glory of God, and the glory of all that dwell in the kingdom of His revelation.

Rejoice with great joy, for God hath made thee "the Day Spring of His light," inasmuch as within thee was born the Manifestation of His Glory. Be thou glad for this name that hath been conferred

upon thee -- a name through which the Day Star of grace hath shed its splendor, through which both earth and heaven have been illumined.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

March 24 (4 Bahá/Splendor)

Let nothing grieve thee, O Land of Ta (Tihiran), for God hath chosen thee to be the source of the joy of all mankind. He shall, if it be His Will, bless thy throne with one who will rule with justice, who will gather together the flock of God which the wolves have scattered. Such a ruler will, with joy and gladness, turn his face towards, and extend his favors unto, the people of Bahá. He indeed is accounted in the sight of God as a jewel among men. Upon him rest forever the glory of God, and the glory of all that dwell in the kingdom of His revelation.

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-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

March 25 (5 Bahá/Splendor)

The shame I was made to bear hath uncovered the glory with which the whole of creation had been invested, and through the cruelties I have endured, the Day Star of Justice hath manifested itself, and shed its splendor upon men.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

March 26 (6 Bahá/Splendor)

1. O SON OF SPIRIT!

My first counsel is this: Possess a pure, kindly and radiant heart, that thine may be a sovereignty ancient, imperishable and everlasting.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh (From Arabic #1)

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

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan

March 27 (7 Bahá/Splendor)

O God, my God! Be Thou not far from me, for tribulation upon tribulation hath gathered about me. O God, my God! Leave me not to myself, for the extreme of adversity hath come upon me. Out of the pure milk, drawn from the breast of Thy loving-kindness, give me to drink, for my thirst hath utterly consumed me. Beneath the shadow of the wings of Thy mercy shelter me, for all mine adversaries with one consent have fallen upon me. Keep me near to the throne of Thy majesty, face

to face with the revelation of the signs of Thy glory, for wretchedness hath grievously touched me. With the fruits of the tree of Thine eternity nourish me, for uttermost weakness hath overtaken me. From the cups of joy, proffered by the hands of Thy tender mercies, feed me, for manifold sorrows have laid mighty hold upon me. With the brodered robe of Thine omnipotent sovereignty attire me, for poverty hath altogether despoiled me. Lulled by the cooing of the dove of Thine eternity, suffer me to sleep, for woes at their blackest hath befallen me. Before the throne of Thy oneness, amid the blaze of the beauty of Thy countenance, cause me to abide, for fear and trembling have violently crushed me. Beneath the ocean of Thy forgiveness, faced with the restlessness of the leviathan of glory, immerse me, for my sins have utterly doomed me.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

Prosperity, contentment, and freedom, however much desired and conducive to the gladness of the human heart, can in no wise compare with the trials of homelessness and adversity in the pathway of God; for such exile and banishment are blessed by the divine favour, and are surely followed by the mercy of Providence.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections From the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá p.280

March 28 (8 Bahá/Splendor)

We have made it lawful for you to listen to music and singing. Take heed, however, lest listening thereto should cause you to overstep the bounds of propriety and dignity. Let your joy be the joy born of My Most Great Name, a Name that bringeth rapture to the heart, and filleth with ecstasy the minds of all who have drawn nigh unto God. We, verily, have made music as a ladder for your souls, a means whereby they may be lifted up unto the realm on high; make it not, therefore, as wings to self and passion. Truly, We are loath to see you numbered with the foolish.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p. 37

Service of the friends is service to the Kingdom of God, and consideration shown to the poor is one of the greatest teachings of God.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 27

March 29 (9 Bahá/Splendor)

A king whom the pride of authority and independence does not withhold from being just, and whom benefits, opulence, glory, hosts and legions do not deprive of the splendors of the orb of equity -- such a king shall possess a lofty station and an exalted rank in the Supreme Concourse: it is incumbent on all to assist and love such a blessed being. Blessed is the ruler who controls the reins of the ego, and overcomes his wrath; who prefers justice to oppression and equity to tyranny!

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í World Faith

Among the greatest of all services that can possibly be rendered by man to Almighty God is the education and training of children, young plants of the Abhá Paradise, so that these children, fostered by grace in the way of salvation, growing like pearls of divine bounty in the shell of education, will one day bejewel the crown of abiding glory. It is, however, very difficult to undertake this service, even harder to succeed in it. I hope that thou wilt acquit thyself well in this most important of tasks, and successfully carry the day, and become an ensign of God's abounding grace; that these children, reared one and all in the holy Teachings, will develop natures like unto

the sweet airs that blow across the gardens of the All-Glorious, and will waft their fragrance around the world.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 133-134

March 30 (10 Bahá/Splendor)

Teach your children the verses revealed from the heaven of majesty and power, so that, in most melodious tones, they may recite the Tablets of the All-Merciful in the alcoves within the Mashriqu'l-Adhkars. Whoever hath been transported by the rapture born of adoration for My Name, the Most Compassionate, will recite the verses of God in such wise as to captivate the hearts of those yet wrapped in slumber. Well is it with him who hath quaffed the Mystic Wine of everlasting life from the utterance of his merciful Lord in My Name - a Name through which every lofty and majestic mountain hath been reduced to dust.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, No. 150 p. 74

The teacher, when teaching, must be himself fully enkindled, so that his utterance, like unto a flame of fire, may exert influence and consume the veil of self, and passion. He must also be utterly humble and lowly so that others may be edified, and be totally self-effaced and evanescent so that he may teach with the melody of the Concourse on high -- otherwise his teaching will have no effect.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 270

March 31 (11 Bahá/Splendor)

O God, my God! Be Thou not far from me, for tribulation upon tribulation hath gathered about me. O God, my God! Leave me not to myself, for the extreme of adversity hath come upon me. Out of the pure milk, drawn from the breast of Thy loving-kindness, give me to drink, for my thirst hath utterly consumed me. Beneath the shadow of the wings of Thy mercy shelter me, for all mine adversaries with one consent have fallen upon me. Keep me near to the throne of Thy majesty, face to face with the revelation of the signs of Thy glory, for wretchedness hath grievously touched me. With the fruits of the tree of Thine eternity nourish me, for uttermost weakness hath overtaken me. From the cups of joy, proffered by the hands of Thy tender mercies, feed me, for manifold sorrows have laid mighty hold upon me. With the brodered robe of Thine omnipotent sovereignty attire me, for poverty hath altogether despoiled me. Lulled by the cooing of the dove of Thine eternity, suffer me to sleep, for woes at their blackest hath befallen me. Before the throne of Thy oneness, amid the blaze of the beauty of Thy countenance, cause me to abide, for fear and trembling have violently crushed me. Beneath the ocean of Thy forgiveness, faced with the restlessness of the leviathan of glory, immerse me, for my sins have utterly doomed me.

-- Bahá'u'lláh

April 1 (12 Bahá/Splendor)

Blessed is he who, at the hour of dawn, centring his thoughts on God, occupied with His remembrance, and supplicating His forgiveness, directeth his steps to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar and, entering therein, seateth himself in silence to listen to the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Mighty, the All-Praised. Say: The Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is each and every building which hath been erected in cities and villages for the celebration of My praise. Such is the name by which it hath been designated before the throne of glory, were ye of those who understand.

They who recite the verses of the All-Merciful in the most melodious of tones will perceive in them that with which the sovereignty of earth and heaven can never be compared. From them they will inhale the divine fragrance of My worlds—worlds which today none can discern save those who have been endowed with vision through this sublime, this beautiful Revelation. Say: These verses draw hearts that are pure unto those spiritual worlds that can neither be expressed in words nor intimated by allusion. Blessed be those who hearken.

Assist ye, O My people, My chosen servants who have arisen to make mention of Me among My creatures and to exalt My Word throughout My realm. These, truly, are the stars of the heaven of My loving providence and the lamps of My guidance unto all mankind. But he whose words conflict with that which hath been sent down in My Holy Tablets is not of Me. Beware lest ye follow any impious pretender. These Tablets are embellished with the seal of Him Who causeth the dawn to appear, Who lifteth up His voice between the heavens and the earth. Lay hold on this Sure Handle and on the Cord of My mighty and unassailable Cause.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, No.115-117 p. 61

April 2 (13 Bahá/Splendor)

Ye have been prohibited from making use of pulpits. Whoso wisheth to recite unto you the verses of his Lord, let him sit on a chair placed upon a dais, that he may make mention of God, his Lord, and the Lord of all mankind. It is pleasing to God that ye should seat yourselves on chairs and benches as a mark of honour for the love ye bear for Him and for the Manifestation of His glorious and resplendent Cause.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, No. 154, p. 75

Endeavour your utmost to compose beautiful poems to be chanted with heavenly music; thus may their beauty affect the minds and impress the hearts of those who listen.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, vol. I, p. 59

April 3 (14 Bahá/Splendor)

Say: Take heed lest your devotions withhold you from Him Who is the object of all devotion, or your worship debar you from Him Who is the object of all worship. Rend asunder the veils of your idle fancies! This is your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, Who hath come to quicken the world and unite all who dwell on earth. Turn unto the Dayspring of Revelation, O people, and tarry not, be it for less than the twinkling of an eye. Read ye the Evangel and yet refuse to acknowledge the All-Glorious Lord? This indeed beseemeth you not, O concourse of learned men!

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Suriy-i-Haykal, Summons of the Lord of Hosts No. 109

O thou who art attracted by the Fragrances of God!

Verily, I chanted thy poem. Its significance was beautiful, its composition eloquent and its words excellent. It was like the melody of the birds of holiness in the paradise of El-ABHA. The breasts of the maid-servants of the Merciful were exhilarated by its chanting. Blessed art thou for uttering forth such an excellent poem and brilliant pearl.

Verily, these verse shall be sung in the divine meetings and in the assemblages of the spiritual in the course of ages and centuries to come, for thou hast uttered the praise of thy Lord and expressed significant meanings in eulogy of thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement. All poems shall be forgotten in the course of time save those that are extraordinary; thy poem shall be chanted with melody and best voices in the Center of Worship (or Mashrak-el-Azcar) forevermore.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v1, p. 57

April 4 (15 Bahá/Splendor)

They who are the beloved of God, in whatever place they gather and whomsoever they may meet, must evince, in their attitude towards God, and in the manner of their celebration of His praise and glory, such humility and submissiveness that every atom of the dust beneath their feet may attest the depth of their devotion. The conversation carried by these holy souls should be informed with such power that these same atoms of dust will be thrilled by its influence. They should conduct themselves in such manner that the earth upon which they tread may never be allowed to address to them such words as these: "I am to be preferred above you. For witness, how patient I am in bearing the burden which the husbandman layeth upon me. I am the instrument that continually imparteth unto all beings the blessings with which He Who is the Source of all grace hath entrusted me. Notwithstanding the honor conferred upon me, and the unnumbered evidences of my wealth - a wealth that supplieth the needs of all creation - behold the measure of my humility, witness with what absolute submissiveness I allow myself to be trodden beneath the feet of men..."

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

Regarding arrangements for the Bahá'í Sunday meeting for the purpose of worship, this is very suitable. But, in a meeting for worship, first, prayer should be chanted and supplication made until all gather; then communion should be made. After praying, sacred readings with melodious voices should be read by all together. As this is the commencement of holding meetings, this is sufficient.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v1, p. 15

April 5 (16 Bahá/Splendor)

O people of God! I admonish you to observe courtesy, for above all else it is the prince of virtues. Well is it with him who is illumined with the light of courtesy and is attired with the vesture of uprightness. Whoso is endued with courtesy hath indeed attained a sublime station. It is hoped that this Wronged One and everyone else may be enabled to acquire it, hold fast unto it, observe it, and fix our gaze upon it. This is a binding command which hath streamed forth from the Pen of the Most Great Name.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 88

The teaching work should under all conditions be actively pursued by the believers because divine confirmations are dependent upon it. Should a Bahá'í refrain from being fully, vigorously and wholeheartedly involved in the teaching work he will undoubtedly be deprived of the blessings of the Abhá Kingdom. Even so, this activity should be tempered with wisdom -- not that wisdom which requireth one to be silent and forgetful of such an obligation, but rather that which requireth one to display holy divine tolerance, love, kindness, patience, a goodly character, and holy deeds. In brief, encourage the friends individually to teach the Cause of God and draw their attention to this meaning of wisdom mentioned in the Writings, which is itself the essence of teaching the Faith

-- but all this to be done with the greatest tolerance, so that heavenly assistance and divine confirmation may aid the friends.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 269

April 6 (17 Bahá/Splendor)

O living flame of heavenly love! Thine heart hath been so fired with the love of God that from ten thousand leagues afar its warmth and radiance may be felt and seen. The fire lit by mortal hand imparteth light and warmth to but a little space, whereas that sacred flame which the Hand of God hath kindled, though burning in the east, will set aflame the west and give warmth to both the north and the south; nay, it shall rise from this world to glow with the hottest flame in the realms on high, flooding with light the Kingdom of eternal glory.

Happy art thou to have obtained so heavenly a gift. Blessed art thou to be favoured with His divine bestowals. The glory of God rest upon thee and upon them that hold fast unto the sure handle of His Will and holy Covenant.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 205

April 7 (18 Bahá/Splendor)

Mortal charm shall fade away, roses shall give way to thorns, and beauty and youth shall live their day and be no more. But that which eternally endureth is the Beauty of the True One, for its splendour perisheth not and its glory lasteth for ever; its charm is all-powerful and its attraction infinite. Well is it then with that countenance that reflecteth the splendour of the Light of the Beloved One! The Lord be praised, thou hast been illumined with this Light, hast acquired the pearl of true knowledge, and hast spoken the Word of Truth.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 204

April 8 (19 Bahá/Splendor)

Man has two powers, and his development two aspects. One power is connected with the material world and by it he is capable of material advancement. The other power is spiritual and through its development his inner, potential nature is awakened. These powers are like two wings. Both must be developed, for flight is impossible with one wing.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 262

April 9 (1 Jalál/Glory)

The beginning of all things is the knowledge of God, and the end of all things is strict observance of whatsoever hath been sent down from the empyrean of the Divine Will that pervadeth all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 3

You have asked whether it is permissible for the friends to recite prayers other than those revealed by the Central Figures of our Faith, prefacing your query by citing an instance when a prayer from a different source was chanted at a Bahá'í public meeting. No prohibition has been found in the Bahá'í Writings against the recitation at public gatherings of prayers other than those provided in Bahá'í Scriptures. You are no doubt aware that in devotional programs at Bahá'í Houses of Worship it is permissible to include scriptures from other revealed religions, which may include prayers. You did not specifically mention whether your concern was about prayers originating from

other sacred scriptures or from compositions by individuals. Bahá'ís are generally encouraged to use the Creative Word, including those prayers and Tablets revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Bab and 'Abdu'l-Bahá which are authenticated and published in our Bahá'í literature. A letter dated 8 August 1942, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to a National Spiritual Assembly, indicates that while spontaneous prayer is permitted, the revealed verses are preferred because "the revealed Word is endowed with a power of its own". The friends, therefore, must use them in their own supplications with radiant joy. This does not mean, however, that in addition to such prayers, they may not, in private, use their own words whenever they feel the inclination to do so.

-- (27 June 2001, written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

April 10 (2 Jalál/Glory)

The light that is shed from the heaven of bounty, and the benediction that shineth from the dawning-place of the will of God, the Lord of the Kingdom of Names, rest upon Him Who is the Supreme Mediator, the Most Exalted Pen, Him Whom God hath made the Dawning-Place of His most excellent names and the Dayspring of His most exalted attributes. Through Him the light of unity hath shone forth above the horizon of the world, and the law of oneness hath been revealed amidst the nations, who, with radiant faces, have turned towards the Supreme Horizon, and acknowledged that which the Tongue of Utterance hath spoken in the kingdom of His knowledge: "Earth and heaven, glory and dominion, are God's, the Omnipotent, the Almighty, the Lord of grace abounding!"

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 1

The House of Justice has not prescribed any set forms to be adopted in a Holy Shrine, whether it be in prayer, meditation or reading of the Holy Scriptures, as long as the practices followed do not disturb the devotions of others who are in the Shrine. It does not favour the adoption of the practice of songs being sung with musical accompaniment in close proximity to the Shrines. As you can well understand, such singing could well disturb those who, within the Shrines, are engaged in their devotions.

There are, of course, special occasions, such as the commemoration of Holy Days at the Bahá'í World Centre, when prayers and devotional readings are recited at a gathering held near a Shrine, and the Tablet of Visitation chanted. A devotional programme, with soloists and orchestral accompaniment, is also planned at the entrance to the Terraces adjoining the Shrine of the Bab, in May 2001.

-- (6 November 2000, written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a Local Spiritual Assembly)

April 11 (3 Jalál/Glory)

Arise and, armed with the power of faith, shatter to pieces the gods of your vain imaginings, the sowers of dissension amongst you. Cleave unto that which draweth you together and uniteth you.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 217

...the flourishing of the community, especially at the local level, demands a significant enhancement in patterns of behaviour: those patterns by which the collective expression of the virtues of the individual members and the functioning of the Spiritual Assembly are manifest in the

unity and fellowship of the community and the dynamism of its activity and growth. This calls for the integration of the component elements - adults, youth and children - in spiritual, social, educational and administrative activities; and their engagement in local plans of teaching and development. It implies a collective will and sense of purpose to perpetuate the Spiritual Assembly through annual elections. It involves the practice of collective worship of God. Hence, it is essential to the spiritual life of the community that the friends hold regular devotional meetings in local Bahá'í centres, where available, or elsewhere, including the homes of believers.

-- (Ridvan 1996, from the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the World)

April 12 (4 Jalál/Glory)

A person declaring the glad tidings of the appearance of the realities and significances of the Kingdom is like unto a farmer who scatters pure seeds in the rich soil. The spring cloud will pour upon them the rain of bounty, and unquestionably the station of the farmer will be raised in the estimation of the lord of the village, and many harvests will be gathered.

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

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 12

Bahá'ís have the bounty of having the prayers revealed by the Manifestations of God, the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh, as well as by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which guide us in our devotions, but there is no prohibition of the reading of prayers or selections from the Sacred Writings of other religions. However, the Guardian stated, "It would be wiser for the Bahá'ís to use the meditations given by Bahá'u'lláh and not use any set form of meditation given by someone else."

-- (14 September 1982, written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

April 13 (5 Jalál/Glory)

Music is one of the important arts. It has a great effect upon the human spirit. Musical melodies are a certain something which prove to be accidental upon etheric vibrations, for voice is nothing but the expression of vibrations, which, reaching the tympanum, affect the nerves of hearing. Musical melodies are, therefore, those peculiar effects produced by, or from, vibration. However, they have the keenest effect upon the spirit. In sooth, although music is a material affair, yet its tremendous effect is spiritual, and its greatest attachment is to the realm of the spirit. If a person desires to deliver a discourse, it will prove more effectual after musical melodies. The ancient Greeks, as well as Persian philosophers, were in the habit of delivering their discourses in the following manner: First, playing a few musical melodies, and when their audience attained a certain receptivity thereby they would leave their instruments at once and begin their discourse. Among the most renowned musicians of Persia was one named Barbod, who, whenever a great question had been pleaded for at the court of the King, and the Ministry had failed to persuade the King, they would at once refer the matter to Barbod, whereupon he would go with his instrument to the court and play the most appropriate and touching music, the end being at once attained, because the King was immediately affected by the touching musical melodies, certain feelings of generosity would swell

up in his heart, and he would give way. You may try this: If you have a great desire and wish to attain your end, try to do so on a large audience after a great solo has been rendered, but it must be on an audience on which music is effective, for there are some people who are like stones, and music cannot affect stones.

Music is an important means to the education and development of humanity, but the only true way is through the Teachings of God. Music is like this glass, which is perfectly pure and polished. It is precisely like this pure chalice before us, and the Teachings of God, the utterances of God, are like the water. When the glass or chalice is absolutely pure and clear, and the water is perfectly fresh and limpid, then it will confer Life; wherefore, the Teachings of God, whether they be in the form of anthems or communes or prayers, when they are melodiously sung, are most impressive. It was for this reason that His Holiness David sang the psalms in the Holy of Holies at Jerusalem with sweet melodies. In this Cause the art of music is of paramount importance. The Blessed Perfection, when He first came to the barracks (Akka) repeated this statement: "If among the immediate followers there had been those who could have played some musical instrument, i.e., flute or harp, or could have sung, it would have charmed every one." In short, musical melodies form an important role in the associations, or outward and inward characteristics, or qualities of man, for it is the inspirer or motive power of both the material and spiritual susceptibilities. What a motive power it is in all feelings of love! When man is attached to the Love of God, music has a great effect upon him.

-- (Table Talk Akka, July 1909, quoted in "Herald of the South" (January 13, 1933), pp. 2-3)

When one is praying in private, one may do what one's heart prompts in such matters. However when prayers are read at meetings, care should be taken not to develop rigid practices and rituals.

-- (8 April 1982, written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

April 14 (6 Jalál/Glory)

O concourse of divines! When My verses were sent down, and My clear tokens were revealed, We found you behind the veils. This, verily, is a strange thing. Ye glory in My Name, yet ye recognized Me not at the time your Lord, the All-Merciful, appeared amongst you with proof and testimony. We have rent the veils asunder. Beware lest ye shut out the people by yet another veil. Pluck asunder the chains of vain imaginings, in the name of the Lord of all men, and be not of the deceitful. Should ye turn unto God and embrace His Cause, spread not disorder within it, and measure not the Book of God with your selfish desires. This, verily, is the counsel of God aforesaid and hereafter, and to this God's witnesses and chosen ones, yea, each and every one of Us, do solemnly attest.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 79

What a wonderful meeting this is! These are the children of the Kingdom. The song we have just listened to was very beautiful in melody and words. The art of music is divine and effective. It is the food of the soul and spirit. Through the power and charm of music the spirit of man is uplifted. It has wonderful sway and effect in the hearts of children, for their hearts are pure, and melodies have great influence in them. The latent talents with which the hearts of these children are endowed will find expression through the medium of music. Therefore, you must exert yourselves to make them proficient; teach them to sing with excellence and effect. It is incumbent upon each child to

know something of music, for without knowledge of this art the melodies of instrument and voice cannot be rightly enjoyed. Likewise, it is necessary that the schools teach it in order that the souls and hearts of the pupils may become vivified and exhilarated and their lives be brightened with enjoyment.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 52

April 15 (7 Jalál/Glory)

Beware lest ye scatter the pearls of inner significance before every barren, dumb one. Verily, the blind are deprived of witnessing the lights and are unable to distinguish between the stone and the holy, precious pearl.

Verily, wert thou to read the most mighty, wonderful verses to the stone for a thousand years, will it understand, or will they take any effect therein? No! by thy Lord, the merciful, the clement! If thou readest all the verses of God unto the deaf, will he hear a single letter? No! Verily, by the beauty, the mighty, the ancient!

Thus have We delivered unto thee some of the jewels of wisdom and utterance, in order that thou mayest gaze unto the direction of thy Lord and be severed from all the creatures. May the spirit and glory rest upon thee, and upon those who dwell upon the plain of holiness and who remain in the Cause of their Lord in manifest steadfastness!

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Tablet of the Branch excerpted from The Bahá'í World Faith

O nightingale of the rose-garden of God! Singing melodies will bring animation and happiness to the world of humanity, the hearers will be delighted and joyful and their deeper emotions stirred. But this gladness, this sense of emotion is transitory and will be forgotten within a short time. However, praise be to God, thou hast blended thy tunes with the melodies of the Kingdom, wilt impart solace to the world of the spirit and wilt everlastingly stimulate spiritual feelings. This will last forever and endure the revolution of ages and centuries.

-- Translated from the Persian, Compilations, The Importance of the Arts in Promoting the Faith
From the Addresses of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

April 16 (8 Jalál/Glory)

Every unbiased observer will readily admit that, ever since the dawn of His Revelation, this wronged One hath invited all mankind to turn their faces towards the Day Spring of Glory, and hath forbidden corruption, hatred, oppression, and wickedness. And yet, behold what the hand of the oppressor hath wrought! No pen dare describe his tyranny. Though the purpose of Him Who is the Eternal Truth hath been to confer everlasting life upon all men, and ensure their security and peace, yet witness how they have arisen to shed the blood of His loved ones, and have pronounced on Him the sentence of death.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

O servant of Bahá! Music is regarded as a praiseworthy science at the Threshold of the Almighty, so that thou mayest chant verses at large gatherings and congregations in a most wondrous melody and raise such hymns of praise at the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar as to enrapture the Concourse on High.

By virtue of this, consider how much the art of music is admired and praised. Try, if thou canst, to use spiritual melodies, songs and tunes, and to bring the earthly music into harmony with the celestial melody. Then thou wilt notice what a great influence music hath and what heavenly joy and life it conferreth. Strike up such a melody and tune as to cause the nightingales of divine mysteries to be filled with joy and ecstasy.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í Writings on Music, a compilation of the Universal House of Justice

April 17 (9 Jalál/Glory)

O CHILDREN OF ADAM!

Holy words and pure and goodly deeds ascend unto the heaven of celestial glory. Strive that your deeds may be cleansed from the dust of self and hypocrisy and find favour at the court of glory; for ere long the assayers of mankind shall, in the holy presence of the Adored One, accept naught but absolute virtue and deeds of stainless purity. This is the daystar of wisdom and of divine mystery that hath shone above the horizon of the divine will. Blessed are they that turn thereunto.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Persian Hidden Words, No. 69

Praised be God, ye two have demonstrated the truth of your words by your deeds, and have won the confirmations of the Lord God. Every day at first light, ye gather the Bahá'í children together and teach them the communions and prayers. This is a most praiseworthy act, and bringeth joy to the children's hearts: that they should, at every morn, turn their faces toward the Kingdom and make mention of the Lord and praise His Name, and in the sweetest of voices, chant and recite.

These children are even as young plants, and teaching them the prayers is as letting the rain pour down upon them, that they may wax tender and fresh, and the soft breezes of the love of God may blow over them, making them to tremble with joy.

Blessedness awaiteth you, and a fair haven.

--'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 139

April 18 (10 Jalál/Glory)

Verily We have sounded the Trumpet which is none other than My Pen of Glory, and lo, mankind hath swooned away before it, save them whom God pleaseth to deliver as a token of His grace. He is the Lord of bounty, the Ancient of Days.

-- Bahá'u'lláh -- Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh

O bird that singeth sweetly of the Abhá Beauty! In this new and wondrous dispensation the veils of superstition have been torn asunder and the prejudices of eastern peoples stand condemned. Among certain nations of the East, music was considered reprehensible, but in this new age the Manifest Light hath, in His holy Tablets, specifically proclaimed that music, sung or played, is spiritual food for soul and heart.

The musician's art is among those arts worthy of the highest praise, and it moveth the hearts of all who grieve. Wherefore, O thou Shahnaz, play and sing out the holy words of God with wondrous

tones in the gatherings of the friends, that the listener may be freed from chains of care and sorrow, and his soul may leap for joy and humble itself in prayer to the realm of Glory.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 112

April 19 (11 Jalál/Glory)

Beware lest ye be hindered by the veils of glory from partaking of the crystal waters of this living Fountain. Seize ye the chalice of salvation at this dawning in the name of Him Who causeth the day to break, and drink your fill in praise of Him Who is the All-Glorious, the Incomparable. We have made it lawful for you to listen to music and singing. Take heed, however, lest listening thereto should cause you to overstep the bounds of propriety and dignity. Let your joy be the joy born of My Most Great Name, a Name that bringeth rapture to the heart, and filleth with ecstasy the minds of all who have drawn nigh unto God. We, verily, have made music as a ladder for your souls, a means whereby they may be lifted up unto the realm on high; make it not, therefore, as wings to self and passion.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p. 38

It befitteth the friends to hold a gathering, a meeting, where they shall glorify God and fix their hearts upon Him, and read and recite the Holy Writings of the Blessed Beauty, may my soul be the ransom of His lovers! The lights of the All-Glorious Realm, the rays of the Supreme Horizon, will be cast upon such bright assemblages, for these are none other than the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, the Dawning-Points of God's Remembrance, which must, at the direction of the most Exalted Pen, be established in every hamlet and city... These spiritual gatherings must be held with the utmost purity and consecration, so that from the site itself, and its earth and the air about it, one will inhale the fragrant breathings of the Holy Spirit.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá [rev. ed.], sec. 55, pp. 93-94

April 20 (12 Jalál/Glory)

Dispel my grief by Thy bounty and Thy generosity, O God, my God, and banish mine anguish through Thy sovereignty and Thy might. Thou seest me, O my God, with my face set towards Thee at a time when sorrows have compassed me on every side. I implore Thee, O Thou Who art the Lord of all being, and overshadowest all things visible and invisible, by Thy Name whereby Thou hast subdued the hearts and the souls of men, and by the billows of the Ocean of Thy mercy and the splendors of the Daystar of Thy bounty, to number me with them whom nothing whatsoever hath deterred from setting their faces toward Thee, O Thou Lord of all names and Maker of the heavens!

Thou beholdest, O my Lord, the things which have befallen me in Thy days. I entreat Thee, by Him Who is the Dayspring of Thy names and the Dawning-Place of Thine attributes, to ordain for me what will enable me to arise to serve Thee and to extol Thy virtues. Thou art, verily, the Almighty, the Most Powerful, Who art wont to answer the prayers of all men!

And, finally, I beg of Thee by the light of Thy countenance to bless my affairs, and redeem my debts, and satisfy my needs. Thou art He to Whose power and to Whose dominion every tongue hath testified, and Whose majesty and Whose sovereignty every understanding heart hath acknowledged. No God is there but Thee, Who hearest and art ready to answer.

The responsibility of the Bahá'ís to teach the Faith is very great. The contraction of the world and the onward rush of events require us to seize every chance open to us to touch the hearts and minds of our fellowmen. The Message of Bahá'u'lláh is God's guidance for mankind to overcome the difficulties of this age of transition and move forward into the next stage of its evolution, and human beings have the right to hear it. Those who accept it incur the duty of passing it on to their fellowman. The slowness of the response of the world has caused and is causing great suffering; hence the historical pressure upon Bahá'ís is to exert every effort to teach the Faith for the sake of their fellowmen. They should teach with enthusiasm, conviction, wisdom and courtesy, but without pressing their hearer, bearing in mind the words of Bahá'u'lláh: "Beware lest ye contend with any one, nay, strive to make him aware of the truth with kindly manner and most convincing exhortation. If your hearer respond, he will have responded to his own behoof, and if not, turn ye away from him, and set your faces towards God's sacred Court, the seat of resplendent holiness." (Gleanings CXXVIII)

-- Letters of The Universal House of Justice, 1982 Jan 03, Teaching vs. Proselytizing

April 21 (13 Jalál/Glory)

God hath, likewise, as a bounty from His presence, abolished the concept of "uncleanness", whereby divers things and peoples have been held to be impure. He, of a certainty, is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous. Verily, all created things were immersed in the sea of purification when, on that first day of Ridvan, We shed upon the whole of creation the splendours of Our most excellent Names and Our most exalted Attributes. This, verily, is a token of My loving providence, which hath encompassed all the worlds. Consort ye then with the followers of all religions, and proclaim ye the Cause of your Lord, the Most Compassionate; this is the very crown of deeds, if ye be of them who understand.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas.

Heralds of His Name

O phoenix of that immortal flame kindled in the sacred Tree!

Bahá'u'lláh (may my life, my soul, my spirit, be offered up as a sacrifice unto His lowly servants) hath, during His last days on earth, given the most emphatic promise that, through the outpourings of the grace of God and the aid and assistance vouchsafed from His Kingdom on high, souls will arise and holy beings appear who, as stars, would adorn the firmament of divine Guidance; illumine the dayspring of loving kindness and bounty; manifest the signs of the unity of God; shine with the light of sanctity and purity; receive their full measure of divine inspiration; raise high the sacred torch of faith; stand firm as the rock and immovable as the mountain; and grow to become luminaries in the heavens of His Revelation, mighty channels of His grace, means for the bestowals of God's bountiful care, heralds calling forth the name of the one true God, and establishers of the world's supreme foundation.

These shall labor ceaselessly by day and by night, shall heed neither trial nor woe, shall suffer no respite in their efforts, shall seek no repose, shall disregard all ease and comfort and, detached and unsullied, shall consecrate every fleeting moment of their life to the diffusion of the divine

fragrance and the exaltation of God's holy Word. Their face will radiate heavenly gladness, and their hearts be filled with joy. Their souls will be inspired, and their foundation stand secure. They shall scatter in the world, and travel throughout all regions. They shall raise their voice in every assembly, and adorn and revive every gathering. They shall speak in every tongue, and interpret every hidden meaning. They shall reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom, and manifest unto every one the signs of God. They shall burn brightly even as a candle in the heart of every assembly, and beam forth as a star upon every horizon. The gentle breeze wafted from the garden of their hearts shall perfume and revive the souls of men, and the revelations of their minds, even as showers, reinvigorate the peoples and nations of the world.

I am waiting, eagerly waiting for these holy ones to appear; and yet, how long will they delay their coming? My prayer and ardent supplication, at eventide and at dawn, is that these shining stars may soon shed their radiance upon the world, that their sacred countenance may be unveiled to mortal eyes, and the billows of grace, rising from His oceans above, may flow upon all mankind. Pray ye also and supplicate unto Him that through the bountiful aid of the Ancient Beauty these souls may be unveiled to the eyes of the world.

The glory of God rest upon thee, and upon him whose face is illumined with that everlasting light that shineth from His Kingdom of Glory.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 354

April 22 (14 Jalál/Glory)

Unto every father hath been enjoined the instruction of his son and daughter in the art of reading and writing and in all that hath been laid down in the Holy Tablet. He that putteth away that which is commanded unto him, the Trustees are then to take from him that which is required for their instruction if he be wealthy and, if not, the matter devolveth upon the House of Justice. Verily have We made it a shelter for the poor and needy. He that bringeth up his son or the son of another, it is as though he hath brought up a son of Mine; upon him rest My glory, My loving-kindness, My mercy, that have compassed the world.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 37

However, it should be recognized that the ultimate solution to the problems of humanity lies not in penalties and punishments, but rather in spiritual education and illumination. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has written:

It is incumbent upon human society to expend all its forces on the education of the people, and to copiously water men's hearts with the sacred streams that pour down from the Realm of the All-Merciful, and to teach them the manners of Heaven and spiritual ways of life, until every member of the community of man will be schooled, refined, and exalted to such a degree of perfection that the very committing of a shameful act will seem in itself the direst infliction and most agonizing of punishments, and man will fly in terror and seek refuge in his God from the very idea of crime, as something far harsher and more grievous than the punishment assigned to it.

It is toward this goal that the community of the Greatest Name is striving, aided and reinforced by the limitless power of the Holy Spirit.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, qtd. in Letters of The Universal House of Justice Violence and Sexual Abuse of Women and Children, 1992

April 23 (15 Jalál/Glory)

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 the knowledge of thy neighbour. Ponder this in thy heart how it behoveth they 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, The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

And last but not least is 'Abdu'l-Bahá's own tribute to the transcendent character of the Revelation identified with His Father: "Centuries, nay ages, must pass away, ere the Day-Star of Truth shineth again in its mid-summer splendor, or appeareth once more in the radiance of its vernal glory." "The mere contemplation of the Dispensation inaugurated by the Blessed Beauty," He furthermore affirms, "would have sufficed to overwhelm the saints of bygone ages -- saints who longed to partake for one moment of its great glory." "Concerning the Manifestations that will come down in the future 'in the shadows of the clouds,' know verily," is His significant statement, "that in so far as their relation to the source of their inspiration is concerned they are under the shadow of the Ancient Beauty. In their relation, however, to the age in which they appear, each and every one of them 'doeth whatsoever He willeth.'" And finally stands this, His illuminating explanation, setting forth conclusively the true relationship between the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh and that of the Bab: "The Revelation of the Bab may be likened to the sun, its station corresponding to the first sign of the Zodiac -- the sign Aries -- which the sun enters at the vernal equinox. The station of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation, on the other hand, is represented by the sign Leo, the sun's mid-summer and highest station. By this is meant that this holy Dispensation is illumined with the light of the Sun of Truth shining from its most exalted station, and in the plenitude of its resplendency, its heat and glory."

-- Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By

April 24 (16 Jalál/Glory)

O SON OF MAN!

Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee: therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words

Without doubt each being is the center of the shining forth of the glory of God -- that is to say, the perfections of God appear from it and are resplendent in it. It is like the sun, which is resplendent in the desert, upon the sea, in the trees, in the fruits and blossoms, and in all earthly things. The world, indeed each existing being, proclaims to us one of the names of God, but the reality of man is the collective reality, the general reality, and is the center where the glory of all the perfections of God

shine forth -- that is to say, for each name, each attribute, each perfection which we affirm of God there exists a sign in man.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions

April 25 (17 Jalál/Glory)

O SON OF MAN!

I loved thy creation, hence I created thee. Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may name thy name and fill thy soul with the spirit of life.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words

O thou who seekest the Kingdom of heaven! This world is even as the body of man, and the Kingdom of God is as the spirit of life. See how dark and narrow is the physical world of man's body, and what a prey it is to diseases and ills. On the other hand, how fresh and bright is the realm of the human spirit. Judge thou from this metaphor how the world of the Kingdom hath shone down, and how its laws have been made to work in this nether realm. Although the spirit is hidden from view, still its commandments shine out like rays of light upon the world of the human body. In the same way, although the Kingdom of heaven is hidden from the sight of this unwitting people, still, to him who seeth with the inner eye, it is plain as day.

Wherefore dwell thou ever in the Kingdom, and be thou oblivious of this world below. Be thou so wholly absorbed in the emanations of the spirit that nothing in the world of man will distract thee.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 19

April 26 (18 Jalál/Glory)

O SON OF BEING!

Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O servant.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words

You have written concerning the spiritual meetings. The foundation of the spiritual meetings must be the teaching and delivering of the Cause of God. In these meetings the believers and mace servants of the Merciful must proclaim the proofs and arguments and explain the signs of the appearance of the Beauty of ABHA May my life be a sacrifice to the beloved ones! Meanwhile they may read some Tablets and Communes, and at the end of the meetings, if they desire to sing with the utmost supplication and meekness, it is acceptable. But the fundamental principle of the establishment of special meeting is for the sake of teaching and delivering tile Truth so that those souls who are present may become informed of the Divine Evidences and Proofs.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, From a tablet cited, Star of the West Magazine, Vol 2. No. 6 p.5

April 27 (19 Jalál/Glory)

O SON OF BEING! Thy Paradise is My love; thy heavenly home, reunion with Me. Enter therein and tarry not. This is that which hath been destined for thee in Our kingdom above and Our exalted dominion.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words

Thou didst write as to the question of spiritual discoveries. The spirit of man is circumambient power that encompasseth the realities of all things. Whatsoever thou dost see about thee -- wondrous products of human workmanship, inventions, discoveries and like evidences -- each one of these was once a secret hidden away in the realm of the unknown. The human spirit laid that secret bare, and drew it forth from the unseen into the visible world. There is, for example, the power of steam, and photography and the phonograph, and wireless telegraphy, and advances in mathematics: each and every one of these was once a mystery, a closely guarded secret, yet the human spirit unravelled these secrets and brought them out of the invisible into the light of day. Thus is it clear that the human spirit is an all-encompassing power that exerteth its dominion over the inner essences of all created things, uncovering the well kept mysteries of the phenomenal world.

The divine spirit, however, doth unveil divine realities and universal mysteries that lie within the spiritual world. It is my hope that thou wilt attain unto this divine spirit, so that thou mayest uncover the secrets of the other world, as well as the mysteries of the world below.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 169 - 170

April 28 (1 Jamál/Beauty)

O SON OF MAN!

If thou lovest Me, turn away from thyself; and if thou seekest My pleasure, regard not thine own; that thou mayest die in Me and I may eternally live in thee.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words

O ye beloved, and ye handmaids of the Merciful! This is the day when the Day-Star of Truth rose over the horizon of life, and its glory spread, and its brightness shone out with such power that it clove the dense and high-piled clouds and mounted the skies of the world in all its splendour. Hence do ye witness a new stirring throughout all created things.

See how, in this day, the scope of sciences and arts hath widened out, and what wondrous technical advances have been made, and to what a high degree the mind's powers have increased, and what stupendous inventions have appeared.

This age is indeed as a hundred other ages: should ye gather the yield of a hundred ages, and set that against the accumulated product of our times, the yield of this one era will prove greater than that of a hundred gone before. Take ye, for an example, the sum total of all the books that were ever written in ages past, and compare that with the books and treatises that our era hath produced: these books, written in our day alone, far and away exceed the total number of volumes that have

been written down the ages. See how powerful is the influence exerted by the Day-Star of the world upon the inner essence of all created things!

But alas, a thousand times alas! The eyes see it not, the ears are deaf, and the hearts and minds are oblivious of this supreme bestowal. Strive ye then, with all your hearts and souls, to awaken those who slumber, to cause the blind to see, and the dead to rise.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

April 29 (2 Jamál/Beauty)

Hear Me, ye mortal birds! In the Rose Garden of changeless splendor a Flower hath begun to bloom, compared to which every other flower is but a thorn, and before the brightness of Whose glory the very essence of beauty must pale and wither. Arise, therefore, and, with the whole enthusiasm of your hearts, with all the eagerness of your souls, the full fervor of your will, and the concentrated efforts of your entire being, strive to attain the paradise of His presence, and endeavor to inhale the fragrance of the incorruptible Flower, to breathe the sweet savors of holiness, and to obtain a portion of this perfume of celestial glory. Whoso followeth this counsel will break his chains asunder, will taste the abandonment of enraptured love, will attain unto his heart's desire, and will surrender his soul into the hands of his Beloved. Bursting through his cage, he will, even as the bird of the spirit, wing his flight to his holy and everlasting est.

-- Bahá'u'lláh

Small wonder, therefore, that the Author of the Bahá'í Revelation should have chosen to associate the name and title of that House, which is to be the crowning glory of His administrative institutions, not with forgiveness but with justice, to have made justice the only basis and the permanent foundation of His Most Great Peace, and to have proclaimed it in His Hidden Words as "the best beloved of all things" in His sight. It is to the American believers, particularly, that I feel urged to direct this fervent plea to ponder in their hearts the implications of this moral rectitude, and to uphold, with heart and soul and uncompromisingly, both individually and collectively, this sublime standard -- a standard of which justice is so essential and potent an element.

-- Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice. No Date: 28-29

April 30 (3 Jamál/Beauty)

O thou who art standing before My Throne and yet remain unaware thereof! Know thou that whoso seeketh to scale the summits of the divine mysteries must needs strive to the utmost of his power and capacity for his Faith, that the pathway of guidance may be made clear unto him. And should he encounter One Who layeth claim to a Cause from God, and Who holdeth from His Lord a testimony beyond the power of men to produce, he must needs follow Him in all that He pleaseth to proclaim, command and ordain, even were He to decree the sea to be land, or to pronounce earth to be heaven, or that the former lieth above the latter or below it, or to ordain any change or transformation, for He, verily, is aware of the celestial mysteries, the unseen subtleties, and the ordinances of God.

Were the peoples of every nation to observe that which hath been mentioned, the matter would be made simple unto them, and such words and allusions would not withhold them from the Ocean of the names and attributes of God. And had the people known this truth, they would not have denied

God's favours, nor would they have risen against, contended with, and rejected His Prophets. Similar passages are also to be found in the Qur'an, should the matter be carefully examined.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, pp. 24 - 25

Meetings organized with the utmost holiness and piety, wherein those who are present engage in the mention and thought of God, and wherein the verses of Oneness are chanted and the prayers of the Threshold of the Lord of Verses are offered and the exhortations and counsels of the Blessed Beauty recited, such meetings are illumined, spiritual, divine and heavenly. They are the means of training the world of humanity.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v3, p. 675

May 1 (4 Jamál/Beauty)

It is incumbent upon every man of insight and understanding to strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action....

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 250

The Sun of Truth is the Word of God upon which dependeth the education of those who are endowed with the power of understanding and of utterance. It is the true spirit and the heavenly water, through whose aid and gracious providence all things have been and will be quickened. Its appearance in every mirror is conditioned by the colour of that mirror. For instance, when its light is cast upon the mirrors of the hearts of the wise, it bringeth forth wisdom. In like manner when it manifesteth itself in the mirrors of the hearts of craftsmen, it unfoldeth new and unique arts, and when reflected in the hearts of those that apprehend the truth it revealeth wondrous tokens of true knowledge and discloseth the verities of God's utterance.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

According to what is heard and is evident, you have arranged an assembly in the utmost beauty and a number of you present yourselves in that meeting with all love and unity and engage in communion (i.e., reading of the communes), chanting of the verses, spiritual conversation and utterance of the Kingdom. Blessed are ye for having adorned such a meeting and for having prepared such a feast! That gathering receiveth bounty from the Supreme Concourse and that nucleus is under the protection of the Bounty of ABHA.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v3, p. 632

May 2 (5 Jamál/Beauty)

Rejoice with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá, as ye call to remembrance the Day of supreme felicity, the Day whereon the Tongue of the Ancient of Days hath spoken, as He departed from His House, proceeding to the Spot from which He shed upon the whole of creation the splendors of His name, the All-Merciful.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 35

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, Who 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, Compilations, Bahá'í Prayers, pp. 52 - 54

Hold meetings and read and chant the heavenly teachings, so that city may be illumined with the light of reality and that country become a veritable paradise by the strength of the Holy Spirit, for this cycle is the cycle of the Glorious Lord and the melody of oneness and solidarity of the world of mankind must reach the ears of the East and West.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v3, p. 631

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v2, p. 464

May 3 (6 Jamál/Beauty)

Say: O people, praise ye God, for its Manifestation, for verily it is the most great favor upon you and the most perfect blessing upon you; and through Him every moldering bone is quickened. Whosoever turns to Him hath surely turned unto God, and whosoever turneth away from Him hath turned away from My beauty, denied My proof and is of those who transgress. Verily, He is the remembrance of God amongst you and His trust within you, and His manifestation unto you and His appearance among the servants who are nigh. Thus have I been commanded to convey to you the message of God, your Creator; and I have delivered to you that of which I was commanded. Whereupon, thereunto testifieth God, then His angels, then His messengers, and then His holy servants.

Inhale the fragrances of the Ridvan from His roses and be not of those who are deprived. Appreciate the bounty of God upon you and be not veiled therefrom - and, verily, We have sent Him forth in the temple of man. Thus praise ye the Lord, the Originator of whatsoever He willeth through His wise and inviolable Command!

O thou honorable one!

Thank thou God that thou art instructed in music and melody, singing with pleasant voice the glorification and praise of the eternal, the Living. I pray to God that thou mayest employ this talent in prayer and supplication, in order that the souls may become quickened, the hearts may become attracted and all may become inflamed with the fire of the love of God!

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v3, p. 512

May 4 (7 Jamál/Beauty)

The soul that hath remained faithful to the Cause of God, and stood unwaveringly firm in His Path shall, after his ascension, be possessed of such power that all the worlds which the Almighty hath created can benefit through him. Such a soul provideth, at the bidding of the Ideal King and Divine Educator, the pure leaven that leaveneth the world of being, and furnisheth the power through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 161

As to the obligatory prayer (to be said three times a day): Each one must say his prayer alone by himself, and this is not conditional on a private place; that is, both at home and in the worshipping-place, which is a gathering-place, it is allowable for one to say his prayer; but each person must say his prayer by himself (i.e., not in company with others who might recite the same words and continue the same postures together at the same time). But if they chant supplications (communes, etc.) together (and in company), in a good and effective voice, that is very good.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v2, p. 464

May 5 (8 Jamál/Beauty)

Immerse yourselves in the ocean of My words, that ye may unravel its secrets, and discover all the pearls of wisdom that lie hid in its depths. Take heed that ye do not vacillate in your determination to embrace the truth of this Cause -- a Cause through which the potentialities of the might of God have been revealed, and His sovereignty established. With faces beaming with joy, hasten ye unto Him. This is the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future. Let him that seeketh, attain it; and as to him that hath refused to seek it -- verily, God is Self-Sufficient, above any need of His creatures.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 136

O thou maid-servant of the Blessed Perfection!

Thy letter was received. It was written in Persian. I was very much pleased. I hope thou wilt memorize all the poetry of the Blessed Perfection and chant with wonderful melody in the assemblages and gatherings. These verses will soon be translated into English poetical form and then this Divine Song will rise from those lands and reach the ABHA Kingdom in utmost joy and happiness.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v1, p. 211

May 6 (9 Jamál/Beauty)

Verily, those who withhold themselves from the shelter of the Branch are indeed lost in the wilderness of perplexity; and are consumed by the heat of self-desire, and are of those who perish.

Hasten, O people, unto the shelter of God, in order that He may protect you from the heat of the Day whereon none shall find for himself any refuge or shelter except beneath the shelter of His Name, the clement, the forgiving! Clothe yourselves, O people, with the garment of assurance, in order that He may protect you from the dart of doubts and superstitions, and that ye may be of those who are assured in those days wherein none shall ever be assured and none shall be firmly established in the Cause, except by severing himself from all that is possessed by the people and turning unto the holy and radiant Outlook.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Tablet of the Branch

O thou at whose mention I am rejoiced!

By God, the True One, verily pure hearts are as clear and brilliant mirrors which imprint the one on the other, and hearts discover the secrets of hearts. Therefore, they (hearts) chant the verses of longing and recite the odes of glorification and praise. Consequently, the recourse is to pages of hearts, not pages filled with written lines.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v1, p. 121

May 7 (10 Jamál/Beauty)

Strain every nerve to acquire both inner and outer perfections, for the fruit of the human tree hath ever been and will ever be perfections both within and without. It is not desirable that a man be left without knowledge or skills, for he is then but a barren tree. Then, so much as capacity and capability allow, ye needs must deck the tree of being with fruits such as knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception and eloquent speech.

From a Tablet - translated from the Persian

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Compilation of Compilations vol. I, p. 367

The utmost joy was attained, for "praise be to God!" the friends of the Merciful passed some time on that day joyous and singing in the land of the Mashrak-el-Azcar and enjoyed commemorating the Lord of the verses with the greatest joy.

That melody was heard by the Supreme Concourse and that rose-song of the nightingale of faithfulness gladdened the people of the rose-garden of ABHA. I am hopeful that, during the coming of Rid Van, a great feast shall be held in the land of the Mashrak-el-Azcar, a spiritual celebration prepared and the melodies of the violin and the mandolin and hymns in praise and glorification of the Lord of Hosts make all the audience joyous and ecstatic.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v1, p. 101

May 8 (11 Jamál/Beauty)

We cherish the hope that through the loving-kindness of the All-Wise, the All-Knowing, obscuring dust may be dispelled and the power of perception enhanced, that the people may discover the purpose for which they have been called into being. In this Day whatsoever serveth to reduce blindness and to increase vision is worthy of consideration. This vision acteth as the agent and guide for true knowledge. Indeed in the estimation of men of wisdom keenness of understanding is due to keenness of vision. The people of Bahá must under all circumstances observe that which is meet and seemly and exhort the people accordingly.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 35

O thou who art attracted by the Fragrances of God!

Verily, I read thy poem, which contained new significances and beautiful words. My heart was dilated by its eloquent sense. I prayed God to make thee utter more beautiful compositions than this. Thus thou mayest be the first to praise the Beauty of El-ABHA and the first utterer of His Name among the women.

Chant the verses of guidance among the people and commence [the composition of] melodies of great beauty and effect in praise and glorification of the Generous Lord.

We sent those poems to all countries, so that the friends of God may remember thee and pray for confirmation and aid in this great Cause in thy behalf.

O maid-servant of God! Warble as birds in the garden of joy and pray to thy forgiving Lord, so that the souls may rejoice through the psalms of the descendant of David.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v1, p. 58

May 9 (12 Jamál/Beauty)

O SON OF BEING!

Thy Paradise is My love; thy heavenly home, reunion with Me. Enter therein and tarry not. This is that which hath been destined for thee in Our kingdom above and Our exalted dominion.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

The Faith of the Blessed Beauty is summoning mankind to safety and love, to amity and peace; it hath raised up its tabernacle on the heights of the earth, and directeth its call to all nations. Wherefore, O ye who are God's lovers, know ye the value of this precious Faith, obey its teachings, walk in this road that is drawn straight, and show ye this way to the people. Lift up your voices and sing out the song of the Kingdom. Spread far and wide the precepts and counsels of the loving Lord, so that this world will change into another world, and this darksome earth will be flooded with light, and the dead body of mankind will arise and live; so that every soul will ask for immortality, through the holy breaths of God.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 3-4

May 10 (13 Jamál/Beauty)

O SON OF MAN!

If thou lovest Me, turn away from thyself; and if thou seekest My pleasure, regard not thine own; that thou mayest die in Me and I may eternally live in thee.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

Today let every soul desire to attain the highest station. He must not regard what is in him, but what is in God. It is not for him to regard what shall advantage himself, but that whereby the Word of God which must be obeyed shall be upraised. The heart must be sanctified from every form of selfishness and lust, for the weapons of the unitarians and the saints were and are the fear of God. That is the buckler which guardeth man from the arrows of hatred and abomination. Unceasingly hath the standard of piety been victorious, and accounted amongst the most puissant hosts of the world. Thereby do the saints subdue the cities of [men's] hearts by the permission of God, the Lord of hosts. Darkness hath encompassed the earth: the lamp which giveth light was and is wisdom. The dictates thereof must be observed under all circumstances. And of wisdom is the regard of place and the utterance of discourse according to measure and state. And of wisdom is decision; for man should not accept whatsoever anyone sayeth.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, A Traveller's Narrative, p. 46-47

May 11 (14 Jamál/Beauty)

Center your energies in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation...

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings. p. 334

O SON OF SPIRIT!

There is no peace for thee save by renouncing thyself and turning unto Me; for it behoveth thee to glory in My name, not thine own; to put thy trust in Me and not in thyself, since I desire to be loved alone and above all that is.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

Reflect upon the inner realities of the universe, the secret wisdoms involved, the enigmas, the inter-relationships, the rules that govern all. For every part of the universe is connected with every other part by ties that are very powerful and admit of no imbalance, nor any slackening whatever.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 157

May 12 (15 Jamál/Beauty)

O SON OF BEING!

My love is My stronghold; he that entereth therein is safe and secure, and he that turneth away shall surely stray and perish.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

This is a brilliant century. Eyes are now open to the beauty of the oneness of humanity, of love and of brotherhood. The darkness of suppression will disappear and the light of unity will shine. We cannot bring love and unity to pass merely by talking of it. Knowledge is not enough. Wealth, science, education are good, we know: but we must also work and study to bring to maturity the fruit of knowledge.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 54

May 13 (16 Jamál/Beauty)

O SON OF UTTERANCE!

Thou art My stronghold; enter therein that thou mayest abide in safety. My love is in thee, know it, that thou mayest find Me near unto thee.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

...just as the solar cycle has its four seasons the cycle of the Sun of Reality has its distinct and successive periods. Each brings its vernal season or springtime. When the Sun of Reality returns to quicken the world of mankind a divine bounty descends from the heaven of generosity. The realm of thoughts and ideals is set in motion and blessed with new life. Minds are developed, hopes brighten, aspirations become spiritual, the virtues of the human world appear with freshened power of growth and the image and likeness of God become visible in man. It is the springtime of the inner world. After the spring, summer comes with its fullness and fruitage spiritual; autumn follows with its withering winds which chill the soul; the Sun seems to be going away until at last the mantle of winter overspreads and only faint traces of the effulgence of that divine Sun remain. Just as the surface of the material world becomes dark and dreary, the soil dormant, the trees naked and bare and no beauty or freshness remain to cheer the darkness and desolation, so the winter of the spiritual cycle witnesses the death and disappearance of divine growth and extinction of the light and love of God. But again the cycle begins and a new springtime appears. In it the former springtime has returned, the world is resuscitated, illumined and attains spirituality; religion is renewed and reorganized, hearts are turned to God, the summons of God is heard and life is again bestowed upon man. For a long time the religious world had been weakened and materialism had advanced; the spiritual forces of life were waning, moralities were becoming degraded, composure and peace had vanished from souls and satanic qualities were dominating hearts; strife and hatred overshadowed humanity, bloodshed and violence prevailed. God was neglected; the Sun of Reality seemed to have gone completely; deprivation of the bounties of heaven was a fact; and so the season of winter fell upon mankind. But in the generosity of God a new springtime dawned, the lights of God shone forth, the effulgent Sun of Reality returned and became manifest, the realm of thoughts and kingdom of hearts became exhilarated, a new spirit of life breathed into the body of the world and continuous advancement became apparent.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, pp. 255 - 256

May 14 (17 Jamál/Beauty)

O SON OF SPIRIT!

Ask not of Me that which We desire not for thee, then be content with what We have ordained for thy sake, for this is that which profiteth thee, if therewith thou dost content thyself.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

O friends of God! Experience hath shown how much the renouncing of tobacco, wine and opium, giveth health, strength and intellectual enjoyments, penetration of judgment and physical vigor. There exists today a tribe which refrains and abstains from tobacco, alcohol and opium and it completely excels all others in power, in bravery, in health, beauty and grace. A single one of these men can withstand ten men of other tribes, and this hath been universally proved; that is to say, generally, the individuals of this tribe are superior to the individuals of the other tribes.

Therefore strive that the greatest cleanliness and sanctity, which is the great desire of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, should be resplendent among the Bahá'ís, and that the companions of God should surpass the rest of mankind in all conditions and perfections; that they may be physically and morally superior to others; that through cleanliness and purity, refinement and health, they may be the chief of wise men, and that by their affranchisement, their prudence, and the control of their desires, they may be the princes of the pure, the free and the wise.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 336

May 15 (18 Jamál/Beauty)

O SON OF MAN!

Be thou content with Me and seek no other helper. For none but Me can ever suffice thee.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

When man in all conditions is pure and immaculate, he will become the center of the reflection of the manifest Light. In all his actions and conduct there must first be purity, then beauty and independence. The channel must be cleansed before it is filled with sweet water. The pure eye comprehendeth the sight and the meeting of God; the pure nostril inhaleth the perfumes of the rose-garden of bounty; the pure heart becometh the mirror of the beauty of truth. This is why, in the heavenly Books, the divine counsels and commands have been compared to water.

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

May 16 (19 Jamál/Beauty)

O SON OF LIGHT!

Forget all save Me and commune with My spirit. This is of the essence of My command, therefore turn unto it.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

I hope that the lights of the Sun of Reality will illumine the whole world so that no strife and warfare, no battles and bloodshed remain. May fanaticism and religious bigotry be unknown, all humanity enter the bond of brotherhood, souls consort in perfect agreement, the nations of earth at

last hoist the banner of truth and the religions of the world enter the divine temple of oneness, for the foundations of the heavenly religions are one reality. Reality is not divisible; it does not admit multiplicity. All the holy Manifestations of God have proclaimed and promulgated the same reality. They have summoned mankind to reality itself and reality is one. The clouds and mists of imitations have obscured the Sun of Truth. We must forsake these imitations, dispel these clouds and mists and free the Sun from the darkness of superstition. Then will the Sun of Truth shine most gloriously; then all the inhabitants of the world will be united, the religions will be one, sects and denominations will reconcile, all nationalities will flow together in the recognition of one Fatherhood and all degrees of humankind gather in the shelter of the same tabernacle, under the same banner.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í World Faith, pp. 256 - 257

May 17 (1 ‘Azamat/Grandeur)

Consider, moreover, how the fruit, ere it is formed, lieth potentially within the tree. Were the tree to be cut into pieces, no sign nor any part of the fruit, however small, could be detected. When it appeareth, however, it manifesteth itself, as thou hast observed, in its wondrous beauty and glorious perfection. Certain fruits, indeed, attain their fullest development only after being severed from the tree.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh

He talked earnestly to them upon the sacredness of marriage, the beauty of a real union, and the importance of the little child and its education. Before they left he blessed them, and touched their hair and foreheads with a Persian perfume.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, pp. 90-91

May 18 (2 ‘Azamat/Grandeur)

O SON OF UTTERANCE!

Turn thy face unto Mine and renounce all save Me; for My sovereignty endureth and My dominion perisheth not. If thou seekest another than Me, yea, if thou searchest the universe for evermore, thy quest will be in vain.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá’u’lláh

I IMPLORÉ Thee by the splendour of the light of Thy glorious face, the majesty of Thine ancient grandeur and the power of Thy transcendent sovereignty to ordain for us at this moment every measure of that which is good and seemly and to destine for us every portion of the outpourings of Thy grace. For granting of gifts doth not cause Thee loss, nor doth the bestowing of favours diminish Thy wealth.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, pp. 186-187

May 19 (3 ‘Azamat/Grandeur)

And when He purposed to manifest His beauty in the kingdom of names and to reveal His glory in the realm of attributes, He brought forth His Prophets from the invisible plane to the visible, that His name “the Manifest” might be distinguished from “the Hidden” and His name “the Last” might

be discerned from “the First”, and that there may be fulfilled the words: “He is the First and the Last; the Seen and the Hidden; and He knoweth all things!” Thus hath He revealed these most excellent names and most exalted words in the Manifestations of His Self and the Mirrors of His Being.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *Gems of Divine Mysteries*, pp. 35

This is the difference between philosophers who are Spiritual Teachers, and those who are mere philosophers: the Spiritual Teacher is the first to follow His own teaching; He brings down into the world of action His spiritual conceptions and ideals. His Divine thoughts are made manifest to the world. His thought is Himself, from which He is inseparable. When we find a philosopher emphasizing the importance and grandeur of justice, and then encouraging a rapacious monarch in his oppression and tyranny, we quickly realize that he belongs to the first class: for he thinks heavenly thoughts and does not practise the corresponding heavenly virtues.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 18-19

May 20 (4 ‘Azamat/Grandeur)

SON OF MAN!

Thou art My dominion and My dominion perisheth not, wherefore fearest thou thy perishing? Thou art My light and My light shall never be extinguished, why dost thou dread extinction? Thou art My glory and My glory fadeth not; thou art My robe and My robe shall never be outworn. Abide then in thy love for Me, that thou mayest find Me in the realm of glory.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*

O Thou Who art the Ruler of earth and heaven and the Author of all names! Thou hearest the voice of my lamentation which from the fortress-town of Akka ascendeth towards Thee, and beholdest how my captive friends have fallen into the hands of the workers of iniquity.

We render Thee thanks, O our Lord, for all the troubles which have touched us in Thy path. Oh, that the span of my earthly life could be so extended as to embrace the lives of the former and the latter generations, or could even be so lengthened that no man on the face of the earth could measure it, and be afflicted every day and every moment with a fresh tribulation for love of Thee and for Thy pleasure's sake!

Thou well knowest, however, O my God, that my wish is wholly dissolved in Thy wish, and that Thou hast irrevocably decreed that my soul should ascend unto the loftiest mansions of Thy Kingdom, and pass into the presence of my all-glorious Companion.

Hasten, by Thy grace and bounty, my passing, O my Lord, and pour forth upon all them that are dear to Thee what will preserve them from fear and trembling after me. Powerful art Thou to do whatsoever may please Thee. No God is there except Thee, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise.

Thou seest, O my Lord, how Thy servants have left their homes in their longing to meet Thee, and how they have been hindered by the ungodly from looking upon Thy face, and from

circumambulating the sanctuary of Thy grandeur. Pour out Thy steadfastness and send down Thy calm upon them, O my Lord! Thou art, in truth, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Compassionate.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations, pp. 17-18

May 21 (5 'Azamat/Grandeur)

Know, moreover, that should one who hath attained unto these stations and embarked upon these journeys fall prey to pride and vainglory, he would at that very moment come to naught and return to the first step without realizing it. Indeed, they that seek and yearn after Him in these journeys are known by this sign, that they humbly defer to those who have believed in God and in His verses, that they are lowly before those who have drawn nigh unto Him and unto the Manifestations of His Beauty, and that they bow in submission to them that are firmly established upon the lofty heights of the Cause of God and before its majesty.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, p. 73

The Blessed Beauty said: "All are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch." He likened the world of existence to one tree and all the souls to leaves, blossoms and fruits. Therefore all the branches, leaves, blossoms and fruits must be in the utmost of freshness, and the bringing about of this delicacy and sweetness depends upon union and fellowship. Therefore they must assist each other with all their power and seek everlasting life. Thus the friends of God must manifest the mercy of the Compassionate Lord in the world of existence and must show forth the bounty of the visible and invisible King. They must purify their sight, and look upon mankind as the leaves, blossoms and fruits of the tree of creation, and must always be thinking of doing good to someone, of love, consideration, affection and assistance to somebody. They must see no enemy and count no one as an ill wisher. They must consider every one on the earth as a friend; regard the stranger as an intimate, and the alien as a companion. They must not be bound by any tie, nay, rather, they should be free from every bond. In this day the one who is favored in the threshold of grandeur is the one who offers the cup of faithfulness and bestows the pearl of gift to the enemies, even to the fallen oppressor, lends a helping hand, and considers every bitter foe as an affectionate friend.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, pp. 215 - 216

May 22 (6 'Azamat/Grandeur)

O SON OF SPIRIT!

I created thee rich, why dost thou bring thyself down to poverty? Noble I made thee, wherewith dost thou abase thyself? Out of the essence of knowledge I gave thee being, why seekest thou enlightenment from anyone beside Me? Out of the clay of love I created thee, how dost thou busy thyself, with another? Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, mighty, powerful and self-subsisting.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

HOW great the number of people who deck themselves with robes of silk all their lives, while clad in the garb of fire, inasmuch as they have divested themselves of the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness; and how numerous are those who wear clothes made of cotton or coarse wool throughout their lives, and yet by reason of their being endowed with the vesture of divine guidance

and righteousness, are truly attired with the raiment of Paradise and take delight in the good-pleasure of God. Indeed it would be better in the sight of God were ye to combine the two, adorning yourselves with the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness and wearing exquisite silk, if ye can afford to do so. If not, at least act ye not unrighteously, but rather observe piety and virtue...

But for the sole reason of His being present amongst this people, We would have neither prescribed any law nor laid down any prohibition. It is only for the glorification of His Name and the exaltation of His Cause that We have enunciated certain laws at Our behest, or forbidden the acts to which We are averse, so that at the hour of His manifestation ye may attain through Him the good-pleasure of God and abstain from the things that are abhorrent unto Him.

Say, verily, the good-pleasure of Him Whom God shall make manifest is the good-pleasure of God, while the displeasure of Him Whom God shall make manifest is none other than the displeasure of God. Avoid ye His displeasure, and flee for refuge unto His good-pleasure. Say, the living guides to His good-pleasure are such as truly believe in Him and are well-assured in their faith, while the living testimonies of His displeasure are those who, when they hear the verses of God sent forth from His presence, or read the divine words revealed by Him, do not instantly embrace the Faith and attain unto certitude.

-- The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 217

May 23 (7 'Azamat/Grandeur)

O SON OF BEING!

With the hands of power I made thee and with the fingers of strength I created thee; and within thee have I placed the essence of My light. Be thou content with it and seek naught else, for My work is perfect and My command is binding. Question it not, nor have a doubt thereof.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

“Today is the anniversary of the declaration of the Bab - Peace be upon thee! Today the Bab declared this cause in Shirza, Persia. The appearance of the Bab resembles the dawn, for the dawn holds the promise of the sun. The dawn of the Bab promised the rising of the sun of truth that is to envelop the whole world.”

He said, “O my glorious Lord, I sacrifice myself entirely to thee. My only desire is to be martyred for thy love. Thou dost suffice me!” The Bab’s desire was to be realized, for the glorious crown of martyrdom was placed upon his head. The gems light the whole world.

He was imprisoned at Shiraz, then went to Isfahan, was afterward confined in a fortress at Makow and finally executed in a public square of Tabriz. This supreme martyrdom raised his banner yet higher and heightened the power of divine manifestation on earth, for the reality which is reflected is the same from the beginning. The Christ was the word of God from the beginning - in the same way Mohammed says, “I was a prophet before the existence of Adam,” and Baha’o’llah says, “In the beginning which has no beginning I loved thee.”

May 24 (8 'Azamat/Grandeur)

How wondrous is the unity of the Living, the Ever-Abiding God -- a unity which is exalted above all limitations, that transcendeth the comprehension of all created things! He hath, from everlasting, dwelt in His inaccessible habitation of holiness and glory, and will unto everlasting continue to be enthroned upon the heights of His independent sovereignty and grandeur.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 261

Some men and women glory in their exalted thoughts, but if these thoughts never reach the plane of action they remain useless: the power of thought is dependent on its manifestation in deeds. A philosopher's thought may, however, in the world of progress and evolution, translate itself into the actions of other people, even when they themselves are unable or unwilling to show forth their grand ideals in their own lives. To this class the majority of philosophers belong, their teachings being high above their actions. This is the difference between philosophers who are Spiritual Teachers, and those who are mere philosophers: the Spiritual Teacher is the first to follow His own teaching; He brings down into the world of action His spiritual conceptions and ideals. His Divine thoughts are made manifest to the world. His thought is Himself, from which He is inseparable. When we find a philosopher emphasizing the importance and grandeur of justice, and then encouraging a rapacious monarch in his oppression and tyranny, we quickly realize that he belongs to the first class: for he thinks heavenly thoughts and does not practise the corresponding heavenly virtues.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 18 - 19

May 25 (9 'Azamat/Grandeur)

Quaff then, O My brother, from the living waters that We have caused to flow in the oceans of these words. Methinks the seas of grandeur are surging within them, and the gems of divine virtue are shining within and upon them. Divest then thyself of that which debarreth thee from this fathomless crimson sea, and to the cry of "In the name of God and by His grace!" immerse thyself therein. Let the fear of no one dismay thee. Trust in the Lord, thy God, for He is sufficient unto whosoever trusteth in Him. He, verily, shall protect thee, and in Him shalt thou abide in safety.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, pp. 60 - 61

Know thou of a certainty that Love is the secret of God's holy Dispensation, the manifestation of the All-Merciful, the fountain of spiritual outpourings. Love is heaven's kindly light, the Holy Spirit's eternal breath that vivifieth the human soul. Love is the cause of God's revelation unto man, the vital bond inherent, in accordance with the divine creation, in the realities of things. Love is the one means that ensureth true felicity both in this world and the next. Love is the light that guideth in darkness, the living link that uniteth God with man, that assureth the progress of every illumined soul. Love is the most great law that ruleth this mighty and heavenly cycle, the unique power that bindeth together the divers elements of this material world, the supreme magnetic force that directeth the movements of the spheres in the celestial realms. Love revealeth with unfailing and limitless power the mysteries latent in the universe. Love is the spirit of life unto the adorned body of mankind, the establisher of true civilization in this mortal world, and the shedder of imperishable glory upon every high-aiming race and nation.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 27

May 26 (10 ‘Azamat/Grandeur)

Sanctified be the Lord of all mankind, at the mention of Whose name all the atoms of the earth have been made to vibrate, and the Tongue of Grandeur hath been moved to disclose that which had been wrapt in His knowledge and lay concealed within the treasury of His might. He, verily, through the potency of His name, the Mighty, the All-Powerful, the Most High, is the ruler of all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, p. 5

May 27 (11 ‘Azamat/Grandeur)

O SON OF BEING!

Thou art My lamp and My light is in thee. Get thou from it thy radiance and seek none other than Me. For I have created thee rich and have bountifully shed My favour upon thee.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Hidden Words of Bahá’u’lláh

May 28 (12 ‘Azamat/Grandeur)

I testify that through Thee the sovereignty of God and His dominion, and the majesty of God and His grandeur, were revealed, and the Day-Stars of ancient splendor have shed their radiance in the heaven of Thine irrevocable decree, and the Beauty of the Unseen hath shone forth above the horizon of creation

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Prayers and Meditations by Bahá’u’lláh, pp. 310-311

Religion is the outer expression of the divine reality. Therefore it must be living, vitalized, moving and progressive. If it be without motion and non-progressive it is without the divine life; it is dead. The divine institutes are continuously active and evolutionary; therefore the revelation of them must be progressive and continuous. All things are subject to reformation.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í World Faith-Selected Writings of Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 224

May 29 (13 ‘Azamat/Grandeur)

The praise which hath dawned from Thy most august Self, and the glory which hath shone forth from Thy most effulgent Beauty, rest upon Thee, O Thou Who art the Manifestation of Grandeur, and the King of Eternity, and the Lord of all who are in heaven and on earth! I testify that through Thee the sovereignty of God and His dominion, and the majesty of God and His grandeur, were revealed, and the Daystars of ancient splendour have shed their radiance in the heaven of Thine irrevocable decree, and the Beauty of the Unseen hath shone forth above the horizon of creation. I testify, moreover, that with but a movement of Thy Pen Thine injunction “Be Thou” hath been enforced, and God’s hidden Secret hath been divulged, and all created things have been called into being, and all the Revelations have been sent down.

I bear witness, moreover, that through Thy beauty the beauty of the Adored One hath been unveiled, and through Thy face the face of the Desired One hath shone forth, and that through a word from Thee Thou hast decided between all created things, caused them who are devoted to Thee to ascend unto the summit of glory, and the infidels to fall into the lowest abyss.

I bear witness that he who hath known Thee hath known God, and he who hath attained unto Thy presence hath attained unto the presence of God. Great, therefore, is the blessedness of him who hath believed in Thee, and in Thy signs, and hath humbled himself before Thy sovereignty, and hath been honoured with meeting Thee, and hath attained the good pleasure of Thy will, and circled around Thee, and stood before Thy throne. Woe betide him that hath transgressed against Thee, and hath denied Thee, and repudiated Thy signs, and gainsaid Thy sovereignty, and risen up against Thee, and waxed proud before Thy face, and hath disputed Thy testimonies, and fled from Thy rule and Thy dominion, and been numbered with the infidels whose names have been inscribed by the fingers of Thy behest upon Thy holy Tablets.

Waft, then, unto me, O my God and my Beloved, from the right hand of Thy mercy and Thy loving-kindness, the holy breaths of Thy favours, that they may draw me away from myself and from the world unto the courts of Thy nearness and Thy presence. Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou, truly, hast been supreme over all things.

The remembrance of God and His praise, and the glory of God and His splendour, rest upon Thee, O Thou Who art His Beauty! I bear witness that the eye of creation hath never gazed upon one wronged like Thee. Thou wast immersed all the days of Thy life beneath an ocean of tribulations. At one time Thou wast in chains and fetters; at another Thou wast threatened by the sword of Thine enemies. Yet despite all this, Thou didst enjoin upon all men to observe what had been prescribed unto Thee by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

May my spirit be a sacrifice to the wrongs Thou didst suffer, and my soul be a ransom for the adversities Thou didst sustain. I beseech God, by Thee and by them whose faces have been illumined with the splendours of the light of Thy countenance, and who, for love of Thee, have observed all whereunto they were bidden, to remove the veils that have come in between Thee and Thy creatures, and to supply me with the good of this world and the world to come. Thou art, in truth, the Almighty, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Compassionate.

Bless Thou, O Lord my Lord, the Divine Lote-Tree and its leaves, and its boughs, and its branches, and its stems, and its offshoots, as long as Thy most excellent titles will endure and Thy most august attributes will last. Protect it, then, from the mischief of the aggressor and the hosts of tyranny. Thou art, in truth, the Almighty, the Most Powerful. Bless Thou, also, O Lord my God, Thy servants and Thy handmaidens who have attained unto Thee, Thou, truly, art the All-Bountiful, Whose grace is infinite. No God is there save Thee, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.

-- Bahá'u'lláh

May 30 (14 'Azamat/Grandeur)

Veiled as they remain within their own selves, the generality of the people have failed to perceive the sweet accents of holiness, inhale the fragrance of mercy, or seek guidance, as bidden by God, from those who are the custodians of the Scriptures. He proclaimeth, and His word, verily, is the truth: "Ask ye, therefore, of them that have the custody of the Scriptures, if ye know it not." Nay rather, they have turned aside from them and followed instead the Samiri of their own idle fancies. Thus have they strayed far from the mercy of their Lord and failed to attain unto His Beauty in the day of His presence. For no sooner had He come unto them with a sign and a testimony from God

than the same people who had eagerly awaited the day of His Revelation, who had called upon Him in the daytime and in the night season, who had implored Him to gather them together in His presence and to grant that they may lay down their lives in His path, be led aright by His guidance and illumined by His light - this very people condemned and reviled Him, and inflicted upon Him such cruelties as transcend both My capacity to tell and thine ability to hear them. My very pen crieth out at this moment and the ink weepeth sore and groaneth. By God! Wert thou to hearken with thine inner ear, thou wouldst in truth hear the lamentations of the denizens of heaven; and wert thou to remove the veil from before thine eyes, thou wouldst behold the Maids of Heaven overcome and the holy souls overwhelmed, beating upon their faces and fallen upon the dust.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, pp. 20 - 21

O thou who dost believe in the Unity of God!

Know verily nothing will benefit a person save the love of the Merciful One. Nothing illuminates a man's heart save the radiance which shines forth from the Kingdom of God! Put away every thought and doubtful mentioning and keep thy thoughts entirely on that which uplifts man to the heaven of the gift of God and that which causes every bird that belongs to the Kingdom to soar unto the incomparable realms, the center of everlasting grandeur in this world.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Volume I, p. 52

May 31 (15 'Azamat/Grandeur)

After journeying through the planes of pure contentment, the traveler cometh to THE VALLEY OF WONDERMENT and is tossed in the oceans of grandeur, and at every moment his wonder groweth. Now he seeth the shape of wealth as poverty itself, and the essence of freedom as sheer impotence.

Now is he struck dumb with the beauty of the All-Glorious; again is he wearied out with his own life. How many a mystic tree hath this whirlwind of wonderment snatched by the roots, how many a soul hath it exhausted. For in this Valley the traveler is flung into confusion, albeit, in the eye of him who hath attained, such marvels are esteemed and well beloved. At every moment he beholdeth a wondrous world, a new creation, and goeth from astonishment to astonishment, and is lost in awe at the works of the Lord of Oneness.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Seven Valleys, pp. 31- 32

O ye servants of the Blessed Beauty!... It is clear that in this day, confirmations from the unseen world are encompassing all those who deliver the divine Message. Should the work of teaching lapse, these confirmations would be entirely cut off, since it is impossible for the loved ones of God to receive assistance unless they teach.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp264-265

June 1 (16 'Azamat/Grandeur)

The first word which the Abhá Pen hath revealed and inscribed on the first leaf of Paradise is this: "Verily I say: The fear of God hath ever been a sure defence and a safe stronghold for all the peoples of the world. It is the chief cause of the protection of mankind, and the supreme instrument

for its preservation. Indeed, there existeth in man a faculty which deterreth him from, and guardeth him against, whatever is unworthy and unseemly, and which is known as his sense of shame. This, however, is confined to but a few; all have not possessed, and do not possess, it. It is incumbent upon the kings and the spiritual leaders of the world to lay fast hold on religion, inasmuch as through it the fear of God is instilled in all else but Him.”

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 27-28

The most acceptable prayer is the one offered with the utmost spirituality and radiance; its prolongation hath not been and is not beloved by God. The more detached and the purer the prayer, the more acceptable is it in the presence of God.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 78

June 2 (17 'Azamat/Grandeur)

Only when the lamp of search, of earnest striving, of longing desire, of passionate devotion, of fervid love, of rapture, and ecstasy, is kindled within the seeker's heart, and the breeze of His loving-kindness is wafted upon his soul, will the darkness of error be dispelled, the mists of doubts and misgivings be dissipated, and the lights of knowledge and certitude envelop his being. At that hour will the mystic Herald, bearing the joyful tidings of the Spirit, shine forth from the City of God resplendent as the morn, and, through the trumpet-blast of knowledge, will awaken the heart, the soul, and the spirit from the slumber of negligence. Then will the manifold favours and outpouring grace of the holy and everlasting Spirit confer such new life upon the seeker that he will find himself endowed with a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, and a new mind. He will contemplate the manifest signs of the universe, and will penetrate the hidden mysteries of the soul. Gazing with the eye of God, he will perceive within every atom a door that leadeth him to the stations of absolute certitude. He will discover in all things the mysteries of divine Revelation and the evidences of an everlasting manifestation.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Kitáb-i-Iqán pp. 195-196

June 3 (18 'Azamat/Grandeur)

Throughout history, the primary agents of spiritual development have been the great religions. For the majority of the earth's people, the scriptures of each of these systems of belief have served, in Bahá'u'lláh's words, as “the City of God”, a source of a knowledge that totally embraces consciousness, one so compelling as to endow the sincere with “a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, and a new mind”.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Íqán, paragraph 216

June 4 (19 'Azamat/Grandeur)

Humanity, torn with dissension and burning with hate, is crying at this hour for a fuller measure of that love which is born of God, that love which in the last resort will prove the one solvent of its incalculable difficulties and problems. Is it not incumbent upon us, whose hearts are aglow with love for Him, to make still greater effort, to manifest that love in all its purity and power in our dealings with our fellow-men? May our love of our beloved Master, so ardent, so disinterested in all its aspects, find its true expression in love for our fellow-brethren and sisters in the faith as well as for all mankind. I assure you, dear friends, that progress in such matters as these is limitless and infinite, and that upon the extent of our achievements along this line will ultimately depend the success of our mission in life.

June 5 (1 Núr/Light)

Problems arise where followers of one of the world's faiths prove unable to distinguish between its eternal and transitory features, and attempt to impose on society rules of behaviour that have long since accomplished their purpose. The principle is fundamental to an understanding of religion's social role: "The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require", Bahá'u'lláh points out. "Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and centre your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements."

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings, section CVI

June 6 (2 Núr/Light)

In the religion of Bahá'u'lláh all are servants and maidservants, brothers and sisters. As soon as one feels a little better than, a little superior to, the rest, he is in a dangerous position, and unless he casts away the seed of such an evil thought, he is not a fit instrument for the service of the Kingdom.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá cited in Esselmont, J. E. , Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, (Wilmette: US Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980 edition) p. 84

June 7 (3 Núr/Light)

O peoples of the world! Whatsoever ye have offered up in the way of the One True God, ye shall indeed find preserved by God, the Preserver, intact at God's Holy Gate. O peoples of the earth! Bear ye allegiance unto this resplendent light wherewith God hath graciously invested Me through the power of infallible Truth, and walk not in the footsteps of the Evil One, 2 inasmuch as he prompteth you to disbelieve in God, your Lord, and verily God will not forgive disbelief in Himself, though He will forgive other sins to whomsoever He pleaseth. 3 Indeed His knowledge embraceth all things... Chapter XVII.

1. cf. Qur'án 8:45
2. cf. Qur'án 2:204
3. cf. Qur'án 4:51

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 48

June 8 (4 Núr/Light)

Every child is potentially the light of the world-and at the same time its darkness; wherefore must the question of education be accounted as of primary importance. From his infancy, the child must be Núrsed at the breast of God's love, and Núrtured in the embrace of His knowledge, that he may radiate light, grow in spirituality, be filled with wisdom and learning, and take on the characteristics of the angelic host.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdul'-Bahá, pp 130-131

June 9 (5 Núr/Light)

Contemplate with thine inward eye the chain of successive Revelations that hath linked the Manifestation of Adam with that of the Báb. I testify before God that each one of these Manifestations hath been sent down through the operation of the Divine Will and Purpose, that each hath been the bearer of a specific Message, that each hath been entrusted with a divinely-revealed Book and been commissioned to unravel the mysteries of a mighty Tablet.

June 10 (6 Núr/Light)

We bear witness that thou didst firmly adhere unto seemly patience during the days when the Pen was held back from movement and the Tongue hesitated to set forth an explanation regarding the wondrous sign, the Most Great Infallibility. Thou hast asked this Wronged One to remove for thee its veils and coverings, to elucidate its mystery and character, its state and position, its excellence, sublimity and exaltation. By the life of God! Were We to unveil the pearls of testimony which lie hid within the shells of the ocean of knowledge and assurance or to let the beauties of divine mystery which are hidden within the chambers of utterance in the Paradise of true understanding, step out of their habitation, then from every direction violent commotion would arise among the leaders of religion and thou wouldst witness the people of God held fast in the teeth of such wolves as have denied God both in the beginning and in the end. Therefore We restrained the Pen for a considerable lapse of time in accordance with divine wisdom and for the sake of protecting the faithful from those who have bartered away heavenly blessings for disbelief and have chosen for their people the abode of perdition.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 106

June 11 (7 Núr/Light)

The All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy. Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require. Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.

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

June 12 (8 Núr/Light)

O ye friends of God! Because, in this most momentous of ages, the Sun of Truth hath risen at the highest point of the spring equinox, and cast its rays on every clime, it shall kindle such tremulous excitement, it shall release such vibrations in the world of being, it shall stimulate such growth and development, it shall stream out with such a glory of light, and clouds of grace shall pour down such plentiful waters, and fields and plains shall teem with such a galaxy of sweet-smelling plants and blooms, that this lowly earth will become the Abhá Kingdom, and this nether world the world above. Then will this fleck of dust be as the vast circle of the skies, this human place the palace-court of God, this spot of clay the dayspring of the endless favours of the Lord of Lords.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 128-129

June 13 (9 Núr/Light)

And now, O seeker, it behooveth us firmly to cling unto the Urvatu'l-Vuthqa, that perchance we may leave behind the darksome night of error, and embrace the dawning light of divine guidance. Shall we not flee from the face of denial, and seek the sheltering shadow of certitude? Shall we not free ourselves from the horror of satanic gloom, and hasten towards the rising light of the heavenly Beauty? In such wise, we bestow upon you the fruit of the Tree of divine knowledge, that ye may gladly and joyously abide in the Ridvan of divine wisdom.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 38

June 14 (10 Núr/Light)

“Verily, the words which have descended from the heaven of the Will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness.” “We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations,” He proclaims, “...that all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled.” “Bahá’u’lláh hath said,” writes ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “that the various races of humankind lend a composite harmony and beauty of color to the whole. Let all associate, therefore, in this great human garden even as flowers grow and blend together side by side without discord or disagreement between them.” “Bahá’u’lláh,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá moreover has said, “once compared the colored people to the black pupil of the eye surrounded by the white. In this black pupil is seen the reflection of that which is before it, and through it the light of the spirit shineth forth.”

-- The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 37

June 15 (11 Núr/Light)

Justice He [Bahá’u’lláh] 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. 218

June 16 (12 Núr/Light)

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

June 17 (13 Núr/Light)

CXXIII.

The generations that have gone on before you -- whither are they fled? And those round whom in life circled the fairest and the loveliest of the land, where now are they? Profit by their example, O people, and be not of them that are gone astray.

Others ere long will lay hands on what ye possess, and enter into your habitations. Incline your ears to My words, and be not numbered among the foolish.

For every one of you his paramount duty is to choose for himself that on which no other may infringe and none usurp from him. Such a thing -- and to this the Almighty is My witness -- is the love of God, could ye but perceive it.

Build ye for yourselves such houses as the rain and floods can never destroy, which shall protect you from the changes and chances of this life. This is the instruction of Him Whom the world hath wronged and forsaken.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 261

June 18 (14 Núr/Light)

CXXX.

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer of the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 285

June 19 (15 Núr/Light)

CXXXIII.

The ordinances of God have been sent down from the heaven of His most august Revelation. All must diligently observe them. Man's supreme distinction, his real advancement, his final victory, have always depended, and will continue to depend, upon them. Whoso keepeth the commandments of God shall attain everlasting felicity.

A twofold obligation resteth upon him who hath recognized the Day Spring of the Unity of God, and acknowledged the truth of Him Who is the Manifestation of His oneness. The first is steadfastness in His love, such steadfastness that neither the clamor of the enemy nor the claims of the idle pretender can deter him from cleaving unto Him Who is the Eternal Truth, a steadfastness that taketh no account of them whatever. The second is strict observance of the laws He hath prescribed -- laws which He hath always ordained, and will continue to ordain, unto men, and through which the truth may be distinguished and separated from falsehood.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 289-290

June 20 (16 Núr/Light)

I entreat Thee by this great, this wondrous splendour and by the glory of Thine exalted sovereignty, O Thou Who art the Lord of indomitable power, to transform us through Thy bounty into that which Thou Thyself dost possess and enable us to become fountains of Thy light, and graciously vouchsafe unto us that which beseemeth the majesty of Thy transcendent dominion.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 180

June 21 (17 Núr/Light)

Justice He [Bahá'u'lláh] 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. 218

June 22 (18 Núr/Light)

CL.

When the victory arriveth, every man shall profess himself as believer and shall hasten to the shelter of God's Faith. Happy are they who in the days of world-encompassing trials have stood fast in the Cause and refused to swerve from its truth.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 319

June 23 (19 Núr/Light)

CLXV.

Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation direct from God, ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying impostor. We pray God that He may graciously assist him to retract and repudiate such claim. Should he repent, God will, no doubt, forgive him. If, however, he persisteth in his error, God will, assuredly, send down one who will deal mercilessly with him. Terrible, indeed, is God in punishing! Whosoever interpreteth this verse otherwise than its obvious meaning is deprived of the Spirit of God and of His mercy which encompasseth all created things. Fear God, and follow not your idle fancies. Nay, rather follow the bidding of your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Wise.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 346

June 24 (1 Rahmat/Mercy)

CLI. (first half)

Release yourselves, O nightingales of God, from the thorns and brambles of wretchedness and misery, and wing your flight to the rose-garden of unfading splendor. O My friends that dwell upon the dust! Haste forth unto your celestial habitation. Announce unto yourselves the joyful tidings: “He Who is the Best-Beloved is come! He hath crowned Himself with the glory of God's Revelation, and hath unlocked to the face of men the doors of His ancient Paradise.” Let all eyes rejoice, and let every ear be gladdened, for now is the time to gaze on His beauty, now is the fit time to hearken to His voice. Proclaim unto every longing lover: “Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!” and to the messengers of the Monarch of love impart the tidings: “Lo, the Adored One hath appeared arrayed in the fullness of His glory!” O lovers of His beauty! Turn the anguish of your separation from Him into the joy of an everlasting reunion, and let the sweetness of His presence dissolve the bitterness of your remoteness from His court.

Behold how the manifold grace of God, which is being showered from the clouds of Divine glory, hath, in this day, encompassed the world. For whereas in days past every lover besought and searched after his Beloved, it is the Beloved Himself Who now is calling His lovers and is inviting them to attain His presence. Take heed lest ye forfeit so precious a favor; beware lest ye belittle so

remarkable a token of His grace. Abandon not the incorruptible benefits, and be not content with that which perisheth. Lift up the veil that obscureth your vision, and dispel the darkness with which it is enveloped, that ye may gaze on the naked beauty of the Beloved's face, may behold that which no eye hath beheld, and hear that which no ear hath heard.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 319-321

June 25 (2 Rahmat/Mercy)

CLI. (second half)

Hear Me, ye mortal birds! In the Rose Garden of changeless splendor a Flower hath begun to bloom, compared to which every other flower is but a thorn, and before the brightness of Whose glory the very essence of beauty must pale and wither. Arise, therefore, and, with the whole enthusiasm of your hearts, with all the eagerness of your souls, the full fervor of your will, and the concentrated efforts of your entire being, strive to attain the paradise of His presence, and endeavor to inhale the fragrance of the incorruptible Flower, to breathe the sweet savors of holiness, and to obtain a portion of this perfume of celestial glory. Whoso followeth this counsel will break his chains asunder, will taste the abandonment of enraptured love, will attain unto his heart's desire, and will surrender his soul into the hands of his Beloved. Bursting through his cage, he will, even as the bird of the spirit, wing his flight to his holy and everlasting nest.

Night hath succeeded day, and day hath succeeded night, and the hours and moments of your lives have come and gone, and yet none of you hath, for one instant, consented to detach himself from that which perisheth. Bestir yourselves, that the brief moments that are still yours may not be dissipated and lost. Even as the swiftness of lightning your days shall pass, and your bodies shall be laid to rest beneath a canopy of dust. What can ye then achieve? How can ye atone for your past failure?

The everlasting Candle shineth in its naked glory. Behold how it hath consumed every mortal veil. O ye moth-like lovers of His light! Brave every danger, and consecrate your souls to its consuming flame. O ye that thirst after Him! Strip yourselves of every earthly affection, and hasten to embrace your Beloved. With a zest that none can equal make haste to attain unto Him. The Flower, thus far hidden from the sight of men, is unveiled to your eyes. In the open radiance of His glory He standeth before you. His voice summoneth all the holy and sanctified beings to come and be united with Him. Happy is he that turneth thereunto; well is it with him that hath attained, and gazed on the light of so wondrous a countenance.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 320-322

June 26 (3 Rahmat/Mercy)

Consider the lamp which is hidden under a bushel. Though its light be shining, yet its radiance is concealed from men. Likewise, consider the sun which hath been obscured by the clouds. Observe how its splendor appeareth to have diminished, when in reality the source of that light hath remained unchanged. The soul of man should be likened unto this sun, and all things on earth should be regarded as his body. So long as no external impediment interveneth between them, the body will, in its entirety, continue to reflect the light of the soul, and to be sustained by its power. As soon as, however, a veil interposeth itself between them, the brightness of that light seemeth to lessen.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp 154-155

June 27 (4 Rahmat/Mercy)

We behold you, O children of the Kingdom, in darkness. This, verily, beseemeth you not. Are ye, in the face of the Light, fearful because of your deeds? Direct yourselves towards Him. Your All-Glorious Lord hath blessed His lands with His footsteps. Thus do We make plain unto you the path of Him Whom the Spirit prophesied. I, verily, bear witness unto Him, even as He hath borne witness unto Me. Verily, He said: "Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." In this day, however, We say: "Come ye after Me, that We may make you to become quickeners of mankind." Thus hath the decree been inscribed in this Tablet by the Pen of Revelation.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, pp 66-67, para 129

June 28 (5 Rahmat/Mercy)

Because free will is an inherent endowment of the soul, each person who is drawn to explore Bahá'u'lláh's teachings will need to find his own place in the never-ending continuum of spiritual search. He will need to determine, in the privacy of his own conscience and without pressure, the spiritual responsibility this discovery entails. In order to exercise this autonomy intelligently, however, he must gain both a perspective on the processes of change in which he, like the rest of the earth's population, is caught up and a clear understanding of the implications for his own life.

-- Bahá'í World Centre, One Common Faith, p. 52

June 29 (6 Rahmat/Mercy)

O SON OF LOVE!

Thou art but one step away from the glorious heights above and from the celestial tree of love. Take thou one pace and with the next advance into the immortal realm and enter the pavilion of eternity. Give ear then to that which hath been revealed by the pen of glory.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Persian Hidden Words #7

June 30 (7 Rahmat/Mercy)

I adjure Thee by Thy might, O my God! Let no harm beset me in times of tests, and in moments of heedlessness guide my steps aright through Thine inspiration. Thou art God, potent art Thou to do what Thou desirest. No one can withstand Thy Will or thwart Thy Purpose.

-- The Bab, Bahá'í Prayers: A Selection of Prayers by Bahá'u'lláh, the Bab, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p.

28

July 01 (8 Rahmat/Mercy)

For Bahá'u'lláh, we should readily recognize, has not only imbued mankind with a new and regenerating Spirit. He has not merely enunciated certain universal principles, or propounded a particular philosophy, however potent, sound and universal these may be. In addition to these He, as well as 'Abdu'l-Bahá after Him, has, unlike the Dispensations of the past, clearly and specifically laid down a set of Laws, established definite institutions, and provided for the essentials of a Divine Economy. These are destined to be a pattern for future society, a supreme instrument for the establishment of the Most Great Peace, and the one agency for the unification of the world, and the proclamation of the reign of righteousness and justice upon the earth. Not only have they revealed all the directions required for the practical realization of those ideals which the Prophets of God have visualized, and which from time immemorial have inflamed the imagination of seers and poets in every age. They have also, in unequivocal and emphatic language, appointed

those twin institutions of the House of Justice and of the Guardianship as their chosen Successors, destined to apply the principles, promulgate the laws, protect the institutions, adapt loyally and intelligently the Faith to the requirements of progressive society, and consummate the incorruptible inheritance which the Founders of the Faith have bequeathed to the world.

-- Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 19-20

July 02 (9 Rahmat/Mercy)

It has now by the above irrefutable proofs been fully established that the Faith of God must be propagated through human perfections, through qualities that are excellent and pleasing, and spiritual behavior. If a soul of his own accord advances toward God he will be accepted at the Threshold of Oneness, for such a one is free of personal considerations, of greed and selfish interests, and he has taken refuge within the sheltering protection of his Lord. He will become known among men as trustworthy and truthful, temperate and scrupulous, high-minded and loyal, incorruptible and God-fearing. In this way the primary purpose in revealing the Divine Law—which is to bring about happiness in the after life and civilization and the refinement of character in this—will be realized. As for the sword, it will only produce a man who is outwardly a believer, and inwardly a traitor and apostate.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Secrets of Divine Civilization, p46

July 03 (10 Rahmat/Mercy)

In the name of God, the One, the Incomparable, the All-Powerful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

Praise be to God, the Eternal that perisheth not, the Everlasting that declineth not, the Self-Subsisting that altereth not. He it is Who is transcendent in His sovereignty, Who is manifest through His signs, and is hidden through His mysteries. He it is at Whose bidding the standard of the Most Exalted Word hath been lifted up in the world of creation, and the banner of “He doeth whatsoever He willeth” raised amidst all peoples. He it is Who hath revealed His Cause for the guidance of His creatures, and sent down His verses to demonstrate His Proof and His Testimony, and embellished the preface of the Book of Man with the ornament of utterance through His saying: “The God of Mercy hath taught the Quran, hath created man, and taught him articulate speech.” No God is there but Him, the One, the Peerless, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Beneficent.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 1

July 04 (11 Rahmat/Mercy)

The light that is shed from the heaven of bounty, and the benediction that shineth from the dawning-place of the will of God, the Lord of the Kingdom of Names, rest upon Him Who is the Supreme Mediator, the Most Exalted Pen, Him Whom God hath made the Dawning-Place of His most excellent names and the Dayspring of His most exalted attributes. Through Him the light of unity hath shone forth above the horizon of the world, and the law of oneness hath been revealed amidst the nations, who, with radiant faces, have turned towards the Supreme Horizon, and acknowledged that which the Tongue of Utterance hath spoken in the kingdom of His knowledge: “Earth and heaven, glory and dominion, are God’s, the Omnipotent, the Almighty, the Lord of grace abounding!”

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 1-2

July 05 (12 Rahmat/Mercy)

Give ear, O distinguished divine, unto the voice of this Wronged One. He verily, counselleth thee for the sake of God, and exhorteth thee unto that which will cause thee to draw nigh unto Him under all conditions. He, in truth, is the All-Possessing, the Exalted. Know thou that the ear of man hath been created that it may hearken unto the Divine Voice on this Day that hath been mentioned in all the Books, Scriptures, and Tablets. Purify thou, first, thy soul with the waters of renunciation, and adorn thine head with the crown of the fear of God, and thy temple with the ornament of reliance upon Him. Arise, then, and, with thy face set towards the Most Great House, the Spot round which, as decreed by the Eternal King, all that dwell on earth must circle, recite: "O God, my God, and my Desire, and my Adored One, and my Master, and my Mainstay, and my utmost Hope, and my supreme Aspiration! Thou seest me turning towards Thee, holding fast unto the cord of Thy bounty, clinging to the hem of Thy generosity, acknowledging the sanctity of Thy Self and the purity of Thine Essence, and testifying to Thy unity and Thy oneness. I bear witness that Thou art the One, the Single, the Incomparable, the Ever-Abiding. Thou didst not take unto Thyself a partner in Thy dominion, nor didst Thou choose a peer for Thyself upon earth. All created things have borne witness unto that which the Tongue of Thy grandeur hath testified ere their creation. Verily Thou art God; there is none other God but Thee! From everlasting Thou wast sanctified from the mention of Thy servants, and exalted above the description of Thy creatures. Thou beholdest, O Lord, the ignorant seeking the ocean of Thy knowledge, the sore athirst the living waters of Thine utterance, the abased the tabernacle of Thy glory, the poor the treasury of Thy riches, the suppliant the dawning-place of Thy wisdom, the weak the source of Thy strength, the wretched the heaven of Thy bounty, the dumb the kingdom of Thy mention.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 2-3

July 06 (13 Rahmat/Mercy)

I testify, O my God, and my King, that Thou hast created me to remember Thee, to glorify Thee, and to aid Thy Cause. And yet, I have aided Thine enemies, who have broken Thy Covenant, who have cast away Thy Book, disbelieved in Thee, and repudiated Thy signs. Alas, alas, for my waywardness, and my shame, and my sinfulness, and my wrong-doing that have withheld me from the depths of the ocean of Thy unity and from fathoming the sea of Thy mercy. Wherefore, alas, alas! and again alas, alas! for my wretchedness and the grievousness of my transgressions! Thou didst call me into being, O my God, to exalt Thy Word, and to manifest Thy Cause. My heedlessness, however, hath deterred me and compassed me about, in such wise that I have arisen to blot out Thy signs, and to shed the blood of Thy loved ones, and of the dawning-places of Thy signs, and of the daysprings of Thy revelation, and of the repositories of Thy mysteries.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 3-4

July 07 (14 Rahmat/Mercy)

Change and transformation are peculiarities of composition. There is no change and transformation in the spirit. In proof of this, the body may become weakened in its members. It may be dismembered, or one of its members may be incapacitated. The whole body may be paralyzed; and yet the mind, the spirit, remains ever the same. The mind decides; the thought is perfect; and yet the hand is withered, the feet have become useless, the spinal column is paralyzed, and there is no muscular movement at all, but the spirit is in the same status. Dismember a healthy man; the spirit is not dismembered. Amputate his feet; his spirit is there. He may become lame; the spirit is not affected. The spirit is ever the same; no change or transformation can you perceive, and because there is no change or transformation, it is everlasting and permanent.

July 08 (15 Rahmat/Mercy)

While the mind seeks intellectual certainty, what the soul longs for is the attainment of certitude. Such inner conviction is the ultimate goal of all spiritual seeking, regardless of how rapid or gradual the process may be. For the soul, the experience of conversion is not an extraneous or incidental feature of the exploration of religious truth, but the pivotal issue that must eventually be addressed. There is no ambiguity about Bahá’u’lláh’s words on the subject and there can be none in the minds of those who seek to serve Him: “Verily I say, this is the Day in which mankind can behold the Face, and hear the Voice, of the Promised One. The Call of God hath been raised, and the light of His countenance hath been lifted up upon men. It behoveth every man to blot out the trace of every idle word from the tablet of his heart, and to gaze, with an open and unbiased mind, on the signs of His Revelation, the proofs of His Mission, and the tokens of His glory.” (2)

2. Gleanings, section VII.

-- Bahá’í World Centre, One Common Faith, pp 52-53

July 09 (16 Rahmat/Mercy)

The praise which hath dawned from Thy most august Self, and the glory which hath shone forth from Thy most effulgent Beauty, rest upon Thee, O Thou Who art the Manifestation of Grandeur, and the King of Eternity, and the Lord of all who are in heaven and on earth! I testify that through Thee the sovereignty of God and His dominion, and the majesty of God and His grandeur, were revealed, and the Daystars of ancient splendor have shed their radiance in the heaven of Thine irrevocable decree, and the Beauty of the Unseen hath shone forth above the horizon of creation. I testify, moreover, that with but a movement of Thy Pen Thine injunction “Be Thou” hath been enforced, and God’s hidden Secret hath been divulged, and all created things have been called into being, and all the Revelations have been sent down.

I bear witness, moreover, that through Thy beauty the beauty of the Adored One hath been unveiled, and through Thy face the face of the Desired One hath shone forth, and that through a word from Thee Thou hast decided between all created things, caused them who are devoted to Thee to ascend unto the summit of glory, and the infidels to fall into the lowest abyss.

I bear witness that he who hath known Thee hath known God, and he who hath attained unto Thy presence hath attained unto the presence of God. Great, therefore, is the blessedness of him who hath believed in Thee, and in Thy signs, and hath humbled himself before Thy sovereignty, and hath been honored with meeting Thee, and hath attained the good pleasure of Thy will, and circled around Thee, and stood before Thy throne. Woe betide him that hath transgressed against Thee, and hath denied Thee, and repudiated Thy signs, and gainsaid Thy sovereignty, and risen up against Thee, and waxed proud before Thy face, and hath disputed Thy testimonies, and fled from Thy rule and Thy dominion, and been numbered with the infidels whose names have been inscribed by the fingers of Thy behest upon Thy holy Tablets.

Waft, then, unto me, O my God and my Beloved, from the right hand of Thy mercy and Thy loving-kindness, the holy breaths of Thy favors, that they may draw me away from myself and

from the world unto the courts of Thy nearness and Thy presence. Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou, truly, hast been supreme over all things.

The remembrance of God and His praise, and the glory of God and His splendor, rest upon Thee, O Thou Who art His Beauty! I bear witness that the eye of creation hath never gazed upon one wronged like Thee. Thou wast immersed all the days of Thy life beneath an ocean of tribulations. At one time Thou wast in chains and fetters; at another Thou wast threatened by the sword of Thine enemies. Yet despite all this, Thou didst enjoin upon all men to observe what had been prescribed unto Thee by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

May my spirit be a sacrifice to the wrongs Thou didst suffer, and my soul be a ransom for the adversities Thou didst sustain. I beseech God, by Thee and by them whose faces have been illumined with the splendors of the light of Thy countenance, and who, for love of Thee, have observed all whereunto they were bidden, to remove the veils that have come in between Thee and Thy creatures, and to supply me with the good of this world and the world to come. Thou art, in truth, the Almighty, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Compassionate.

Bless Thou, O Lord my Lord, the Divine Lote-Tree and its leaves, and its boughs, and its branches, and its stems, and its offshoots, as long as Thy most excellent titles will endure and Thy most august attributes will last. Protect it, then, from the mischief of the aggressor and the hosts of tyranny. Thou art, in truth, the Almighty, the Most Powerful. Bless Thou, also, O Lord my God, Thy servants and Thy handmaidens who have attained unto Thee, Thou, truly, art the All-Bountiful, Whose grace is infinite. No God is there save Thee, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 228

July 10 (17 Rahmat/Mercy)

O Thou kind Lord! These are Thy servants who have gathered in this meeting, have turned unto Thy Kingdom and are in need of Thy bestowal and blessing. O thou God! Manifest and make evident the signs of Thy oneness which have been deposited in all the realities of life. Reveal and unfold the virtues which Thou hast made latent and concealed in these human realities.

O God! We are as plants, and Thy bounty is as the rain; refresh and cause these plants to grow through Thy bestowal. We are Thy servants; free us from the fetters of material existence. We are ignorant; make us wise. We are dead; make us alive. We are material; endow us with spirit. We are deprived; make us the intimates of Thy mysteries. We are needy; enrich and bless us from Thy boundless treasury. O God! Resuscitate us; give us sight; give us hearing; familiarize us with the mysteries of life, so that the secrets of Thy kingdom may become revealed to us in this world of existence and we may confess Thy oneness. Every bestowal emanates from Thee; every benediction is Thine.

Thou art mighty. Thou art powerful. Thou art the Giver, and Thou art the Ever-Bounteous.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 91

July 11 (18 Rahmat/Mercy)

Thus ended a life which posterity will recognize as standing at the confluence of two universal prophetic cycles, the Adamic Cycle stretching back as far as the first dawns of the world's recorded religious history and the Bahá'í Cycle destined to propel itself across the unborn reaches of time for a period of no less than five thousand centuries. The apotheosis in which such a life attained its consummation marks, as already observed, the culmination of the most heroic phase of the Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation. It can, moreover, be regarded in no other light except as the most dramatic, the most tragic event transpiring within the entire range of the first Bahá'í century. Indeed it can be rightly acclaimed as unparalleled in the annals of the lives of all the Founders of the world's existing religious systems.

-- Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 54-55

July 12 (19 Rahmat/Mercy)

His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh has greatly strengthened the cause of women, and the rights and privileges of women is one of the greatest principles of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Rest ye assured! Ere long the days shall come when the men addressing the women, shall say: 'Blessed are ye! Blessed are ye! Verily ye are worthy of every gift. Verily ye deserve to adorn your heads with the crown of everlasting glory, because in sciences and arts, in virtues and perfections ye shall become equal to man, and as regards tenderness of heart and the abundance of mercy and sympathy ye are superior'.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 183-184

July 13 (1 Kalimát/Words)

67. O SON OF BEAUTY!

By My spirit and by My favor! By My mercy and by My beauty! All that I have revealed unto thee with the tongue of power, and have written for thee with the pen of might, hath been in accordance with thy capacity and understanding, not with My state and the melody of My voice.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *The Arabic Hidden Words*

July 14 (2 Kalimát/Words)

Love the creatures for the sake of God and not for themselves. You will never become angry or impatient if you love them for the sake of God. Humanity is not perfect. There are imperfections in every human being, and you will always become unhappy if you look toward the people themselves. But if you look toward God, you will love them and be kind to them, for the world of God is the world of perfection and complete mercy. Therefore, do not look at the shortcomings of anybody; see with the sight of forgiveness. The imperfect eye beholds imperfections. The eye that covers faults looks toward the Creator of souls. He created them, trains and provides for them, endows them with capacity and life, sight and hearing; therefore, they are the signs of His grandeur. You must love and be kind to everybody, care for the poor, protect the weak, heal the sick, teach and educate the ignorant.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 93

July 15 (3 Kalimát/Words)

The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are boundless and without end in their far-reaching benefit to mankind. The point and purpose of our statement today is that they are new and that they are not found in any of the religious Books of the past. This is in answer to the question, "What has Bahá'u'lláh brought that we have not heard before?" Therefore, it is conclusive and evident that the

Manifestation of God in this day is distinguished from all former appearances and revelations by His majesty, His power and the efficacy and application of His Word.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 435

July 16 (4 Kalimát/Words)

Within the treasury of Our Wisdom there lieth unrevealed a knowledge, one word of which, if we chose to divulge it to mankind, would cause every human being to recognize the Manifestation of God and to acknowledge His omniscience, would enable every one to discover the secrets of all the sciences, and to attain so high a station as to find himself wholly independent of all past and future learning. Other knowledges We do as well possess, not a single letter of which We can disclose, nor do We find humanity able to hear even the barest reference to their meaning. Thus have We informed you of the knowledge of God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Were We to find worthy vessels, We would deposit within them the treasures of hidden meanings and impart unto them a knowledge, one letter of which would encompass all created things.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, p. 35

July 17 (5 Kalimát/Words)

Be thankful unto God that Bahá'u'lláh has given us a firm and solid foundation. He left no place for sadness in hearts, and the writings of His sacred pen contain consolation for the whole world. He had the words of truth, and anything that is contrary to His teaching is false. The chief aim of all His work was to do away with division.

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

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 172

July 18 (6 Kalimát/Words)

In these days it is incumbent upon everyone to adhere tenaciously unto unity and concord and to labour diligently in promoting the Cause of God, that perchance the wayward souls may attain that which will lead unto abiding prosperity.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p. 60

July 19 (7 Kalimát/Words)

Incline your hearts, O people of God, unto the counsels of your true, your incomparable Friend. The Word of God may be likened unto a sapling, whose roots have been implanted in the hearts of men. It is incumbent upon you to foster its growth through the living waters of wisdom, of sanctified and holy words, so that its root may become firmly fixed and its branches may spread out as high as the heavens and beyond.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, pp. 93-94

July 20 (8 Kalimát/Words)

Apart from the soul's recognition of the Manifestation of God, nothing awakens so great a sense of confidence and vitality in human consciousness-both individual and collective-as does the force of moral certitude. In the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, laws that are basic to both personal and community life have been reformulated in the context of a society that embraces the whole range of human diversity. New laws and concepts address the further needs of a human race that is entering on its collective

coming of age. “O peoples of the earth!”, is Bahá’u’lláh’s appeal, “Cast away that which ye possess, and, on the wings of detachment, soar beyond all created things. Thus biddeth you the Lord of creation, the movement of Whose Pen hath revolutionized the soul of mankind.” **

** Bahá’u’lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, paragraph 54.

-- Universal House of Justice, Century of Light, p. 140

July 21 (9 Kalimát/Words)

Know then that “life” hath a twofold meaning. The first pertaineth to the appearance of man in an elemental body, and is as manifest to thine eminence and to others as the midday sun. This life cometh to an end with physical death, which is a God-ordained and inescapable reality. That life, however, which is mentioned in the Books of the Prophets and the Chosen Ones of God is the life of knowledge; that is to say, the servant’s recognition of the sign of the splendours wherewith He Who is the Source of all splendour hath Himself invested him, and his certitude of attaining unto the presence of God through the Manifestations of His Cause. This is that blessed and everlasting life that perisheth not: whosoever is quickened thereby shall never die, but will endure as long as His Lord and Creator will endure.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries, pp. 47-48

July 22 (10 Kalimát/Words)

Let not the deeds of those who reject the Truth shut you out as by a veil. Such people have warrant over your bodies only, and God hath not reposed in them power over your spirits, your souls and your hearts. Fear ye God that haply it may be well with you. All things have been created for your sakes, and for the sake of naught else hath your creation been ordained. Fear ye God and take heed lest forms and apparels debar you from recognizing Him. Render ye thanksgiving unto God that perchance He may deal mercifully with you.

-- The Bab, Selections From the Writings of the Bab, pp. 161-162

July 23 (11 Kalimát/Words)

O SON OF DUST! Verily I say unto thee: Of all men the most negligent is he that disputeth idly and seeketh to advance himself over his brother. Say, O brethren! Let deeds, not words, be your adorning.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, The Hidden Words of Bahá’u’lláh, p 52

July 24 (12 Kalimát/Words)

O ye Cohorts of God! Beware lest ye offend the feelings of anyone, or sadden the heart of any person, or move the tongue in reproach of and finding fault with anybody, whether he is friend or stranger, believer or enemy.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá v1, p. 45

July 25 (13 Kalimát/Words)

Among the people of Bahá, however, marriage must be a union of the body and of the spirit as well, for here both husband and wife are aglow with the same wine, both are enamoured of the same matchless Face, both live and move through the same spirit, both are illumined by the same glory. This connection between them is a spiritual one, hence it is a bond that will abide forever. Likewise do they enjoy strong and lasting ties in the physical world as well, for if the marriage is based both on the spirit and the body, that union is a true one, hence it will endure. If, however, the

bond is physical and nothing more, it is sure to be only temporary, and must inexorably end in separation.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 117

July 26 (14 Kalimát/Words)

O SON OF MY HANDMAID! Be not troubled in poverty nor confident in riches, for poverty is followed by riches, and riches are followed by poverty. Yet to be poor in all save God is a wondrous gift, belittle not the value thereof, for in the end it will make thee rich in God, and thus thou shalt know the meaning of the utterance, "In truth ye are the poor," and the holy words, "God is the all-possessing," shall even as the true morn break forth gloriously resplendent upon the horizon of the lover's heart, and abide secure on the throne of wealth.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, p. 52

July 27 (15 Kalimát/Words)

O MY BROTHER! Hearken to the delightful words of My honeyed tongue, and quaff the stream of mystic holiness from My sugar-shedding lips. Sow the seeds of my divine wisdom in the pure soil of thy heart, and water them with the water of certitude, that the hyacinths of My knowledge and wisdom may spring up fresh and green in the sacred city of thy heart.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, p. 52

July 28 (16 Kalimát/Words)

O SON OF MY HANDMAID! Guidance hath ever been given by words, and now it is given by deeds. Every one must show forth deeds that are pure and holy, for words are the property of all alike, whereas such deeds as these belong only to Our loved ones. Strive then with heart and soul to distinguish yourselves by your deeds. In this wise We counsel you in this holy and resplendent tablet.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, p. 52

July 29 (17 Kalimát/Words)

O CHILDREN OF ADAM! Holy words and pure and goodly deeds ascend unto the heaven of celestial glory. Strive that your deeds may be cleansed from the dust of self and hypocrisy and find favor at the court of glory; for ere long the assayers of mankind shall, in the holy presence of the Adored One, accept naught but absolute virtue and deeds of stainless purity. This is the daystar of wisdom and of divine mystery that hath shone above the horizon of the divine will. Blessed are they that turn thereunto.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, p. 52

July 30 (18 Kalimát/Words)

O SON OF WORLDLINESS! Pleasant is the realm of being, wert thou to attain thereto; glorious is the domain of eternity, shouldst thou pass beyond the world of mortality; sweet is the holy ecstasy if thou drinkest of the mystic chalice from the hands of the celestial Youth. Shouldst thou attain this station, thou wouldst be freed from destruction and death, from toil and sin.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, p. 52

July 31 (19 Kalimát/Words)

O MY SERVANT! The best of men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred for the love of God, the Lord of all worlds.

The mystic and wondrous Bride, hidden ere this beneath the veiling of utterance, hath now, by the grace of God and His divine favor, been made manifest even as the resplendent light shed by the beauty of the Beloved. I bear witness, O friends that the favor is complete, the argument fulfilled, the proof manifest and the evidence established. Let it now be seen what your endeavors in the path of detachment will reveal. In this wise hath the divine favor been fully vouchsafed unto you and unto them that are in heaven and on earth. All praise to God, the Lord of all Worlds.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words*, p. 52

August 1 (1 Kamál/Perfection)

Whoso hath searched the depths of the oceans that lie hid within these exalted words, and fathomed their import, can be said to have discovered a glimmer of the unspeakable glory with which this mighty, this sublime, and most holy Revelation hath been endowed. From the excellence of so great a Revelation the honor with which its faithful followers must needs be invested can be well imagined. By the righteousness of the one true God! The very breath of these souls is in itself richer than all the treasures of the earth. Happy is the man that hath attained thereunto, and woe betide the heedless.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 10

War and rapine with their attendant cruelties are an abomination to God, and bring their own punishment, for the God of love is also a God of justice and each man must inevitably reap what he sows. Let us try to understand the commands of the Most High and to order our lives as He directs. True happiness depends on spiritual good and having the heart ever open to receive the Divine Bounty.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 108

August 2 (2 Kamál/Perfection)

It is evident unto thee that the Birds of Heaven and Doves of Eternity speak a twofold language. One language, the outward language, is devoid of allusions, is unconcealed and unveiled; that it may be a guiding lamp and a beaconing light whereby wayfarers may attain the heights of holiness, and seekers may advance into the realm of eternal reunion. Such are the unveiled traditions and the evident verses already mentioned. The other language is veiled and concealed, so that whatever lieth hidden in the heart of the malevolent may be made manifest and their innermost being be disclosed. Thus hath Sa'diq, son of Muhammad, spoken: "God verily will test them and sift them." This is the divine standard, this is the Touchstone of God, wherewith He proveth His servants. None apprehendeth the meaning of these utterances except them whose hearts are assured, whose souls have found favour with God, and whose minds are detached from all else but Him. In such utterances, the literal meaning, as generally understood by the people, is not what hath been intended. Thus it is recorded: "Every knowledge hath seventy meanings, of which one only is known amongst the people. And when the Qai'm shall arise, He shall reveal unto men all that which remaineth." He also saith: "We speak one word, and by it we intend one and seventy meanings; each one of these meanings we can explain."

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, pp254-255

In the fifth chapter of Matthew beginning with the thirty-seventh verse He counsels: "Resist not evil and injury with its like; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." And further, from the forty-third verse: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and thou shalt not vex thine enemy with enmity.' But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which

despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth down the rain of His mercy on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?"

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Secret of Divine Civilization, pp. 81-82

What is the wisdom of this: since Christ possessed all essential perfection, why did He need baptism?

Answer.-The principle of baptism is purification by repentance. John admonished and exhorted the people, and caused them to repent; then he baptized them. Therefore, it is apparent that this baptism is a symbol of repentance from all sin: its meaning is expressed in these words: "O God! as my body has become purified and cleansed from physical impurities, in the same way purify and sanctify my spirit from the impurities of the world of nature, which are not worthy of the Threshold of Thy Unity!" Repentance is the return from disobedience to obedience. Man, after remoteness and deprivation from God, repents and undergoes purification: and this is a symbol signifying "O God! make my heart good and pure, freed and sanctified from all save Thy love."

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 91

August 3 (3 Kamál/Perfection)

O servant of God! rejoice through the glad-tidings of God, be happy by the wafting of the fragrance of God, and cling to the Kingdom of God in such wise that it makes thee separate thyself from the world and kindle in thy heart the fire of the love of God to such an extent that any one who approaches thee will feel its warmth; and if thou desirest to attain to this station, thou shouldst turn thyself wholly unto God. Perhaps an illumination will descend upon thee by which the fragrances of God will be diffused throughout those regions and districts and thou wilt be a lamp of guidance from which the lights of knowledge will emanate and spread in those far countries and distant lands.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1909 edition)
p. 114

I swear by Thy might, O Thou in Whose grasp are the reins of all mankind, and the destinies of the nations! I am so inflamed by my love for Thee, and so inebriated with the wine of Thy oneness, that I can hear from the whisper of the winds the sound of Thy glorification and praise, and can recognize in the murmur of the waters the voice that proclaimeth Thy virtues and Thine attributes, and can apprehend from the rustling of the leaves the mysteries that have been irrevocably ordained by Thee in Thy realm.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations, p. 272

August 4 (4 Kamál/Perfection)

The only real difference that exists between people is that they are at various stages of development. Some are imperfect-these must be brought to perfection. Some are asleep-they must be awakened; some are negligent-they must be roused; but one and all are the children of God. Love them all with your whole heart; no one is a stranger to the other, all are friends.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 170-171

Deceive not your own selves that you are being virtuous for the sake of God when you are not. For should ye truly do your works for God, ye would be performing them for Him Whom God shall make manifest and would be magnifying His Name. The dwellers of this mountain who are bereft of true understanding unceasingly utter the words, 'No God is there but God'; but what benefit doth it yield them? Ponder awhile that ye may not be shut out as by a veil from Him Who is the Dayspring of Revelation. VIII, 19.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 86

August 5 (5 Kamál/Perfection)

O beloved of God! Know ye that the world is like unto a mirage which the thirsty one thinks to be water; its water is a vapor; its mercy a difficulty; its repose hardship and ordeal; leave it to its people and turn unto the Kingdom of your Lord the Merciful. Thus the lights of with your whole heart; no one is a stranger to the other, all are friends.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 170-171

Ours is the duty to ponder these things in our heart, to strive to widen our vision, and to deepen our comprehension of this Cause, and to arise, resolutely and unreservedly, to play our part, however small, in this greatest drama of the world's spiritual history.

Your brother and co-worker,
Shoghi.

-- Shoghi Effendi, The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 26

August 6 (6 Kamál/Perfection)

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

O beloved of God! Is there any giver save God? He chooseth for His mercy whomsoever He desireth.

He shall open unto you the doors of His knowledge, fill your hearts with His love, rejoice your spirits by the wafting of His holy fragrances, illumine your faces by the Manifest Light and elevate your names among the people.

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

Become as waves of one sea, trees of one forest, growing in the utmost love, agreement and unity.

If you attain to such a capacity of love and unity, the Blessed Perfection will shower infinite graces of the spiritual Kingdom upon you, guide, protect and preserve you under the shadow of His Word, increase your happiness in this world and uphold you through all difficulties. Therefore, it is my hope that day by day you will become more and more effulgent in the horizon of heaven, advance nearer and nearer toward the Kingdom of Abhá, attain greater and greater bounties of the Blessed Perfection.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp. 24-25

August 7 (7 Kamál/Perfection)

Lauded be Thy name, O Lord my God! Darkness hath fallen upon every land, and the forces of mischief have encompassed all the nations. Through them, however, I perceive the splendors of Thy wisdom, and discern the brightness of the light of Thy providence.

Thy that are shut out as by a veil from Thee have imagined that they have the power to put out Thy light, and to quench Thy fire, and to still the winds of Thy grace. Nay, and to this Thy might beareth me witness! Had not every tribulation been made the bearer of Thy wisdom, and every ordeal the vehicle of Thy providence, no one would have dared oppose us, though the powers of earth and heaven were to be leagued against us. Were I to unravel the wondrous mysteries of Thy wisdom which are laid bare before me, the reins of Thine enemies would be cleft asunder.

Glorified be Thou, then, O my God! I beseech Thee by Thy Most Great Name to assemble them that love Thee around the Law that streameth from the good pleasure of Thy will, and to send down upon them what will assure their hearts.

Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou art, verily, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Prayers, pp. 196-197

With fixed and steady gaze, born of the unerring eye of God, scan for a while the horizon of divine knowledge, and contemplate those words of perfection which the Eternal hath revealed, that haply the mysteries of divine wisdom, hidden ere now beneath the veil of glory and treasured within the tabernacle of His grace, may be made manifest unto you.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Iqán, pp. 16-17

August 8 (8 Kamál/Perfection)

Glory be unto Thee, O Lord, Thou Who hast brought into being all created things, through the power of Thy behest.

O Lord! Assist those who have renounced all else but Thee, and grant them a mighty victory. Send down upon them, O Lord, the concourse of the angels in heaven and earth and all that is between, to aid Thy servants, to succor and strengthen them, to enable them to achieve success, to sustain them, to invest them with glory, to confer upon them honor and exaltation, to enrich them and to make them triumphant with a wondrous triumph.

Thou art their Lord, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of all the worlds. Strengthen this Faith, O Lord, through the power of these servants, and cause them to prevail over all the peoples of the world; for they, of a truth, are Thy servants who have detached themselves from aught else but Thee, and Thou, verily, art the protector of true believers.

Grant Thou, O Lord, that their hearts may, through allegiance to this, Thine inviolable Faith, grow stronger than anything else in the heavens and on earth and in whatsoever is between them; and strengthen, O Lord, their hands with the tokens of Thy wondrous power that they may manifest Thy power before the gaze of all mankind.

-- The Bab, Bahá'í Prayers, pp. 197-198

Souls are like unto mirrors, and the bounty of God is like unto the sun. When the mirrors pass beyond all coloring and attain purity and polish, and are confronted with the sun, they will reflect in full perfection its light and glory. In this condition one should not consider the mirror, but the power of the light of the sun, which hath penetrated the mirror, making it a reflector of the heavenly glory.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 367

August 9 (9 Kamál/Perfection)

O Lord! Provide for the speedy growth of the Tree of Thy divine Unity; water it then, O Lord, with the flowing waters of Thy good-pleasure, and cause it, before the revelations of Thy divine assurance, to yield such fruits as Thou desirest for Thy glorification and exaltation, Thy praise and thanksgiving, and to magnify Thy Name, to laud the oneness of Thine Essence and to offer adoration unto Thee, inasmuch as all this lieth within Thy grasp and in that of none other.

Great is the blessedness of those whose blood Thou hast chosen wherewith to water the Tree of Thine affirmation, and thus to exalt Thy holy and immutable Word.

-- The Bab, Bahá'í Prayers, pp. 198-199

August 10 (10 Kamál/Perfection)

O Lord! Render victorious Thy forbearing servants in Thy days by granting them a befitting victory, inasmuch as they have sought martyrdom in Thy path. Send down upon them that which will bring comfort to their minds, will rejoice their inner beings, will impart assurance to their hearts and tranquillity to their bodies and will enable their souls to ascend to the presence of God, the Most Exalter, and to attain the supreme Paradise and such retreats of glory as Thou hast destined for men of true knowledge and virtue. Verily, Thou knowest all things, while we are but Thy servants, Thy thralls, Thy bondsmen and Thy poor ones. No Lord but Thee do we invoke, O God our Lord, nor do we impore blessings or grace from anyone but Thee, O Thou Who art the God of mercy unto this world and the next. We are but the embodiments of poverty, of nothingness, of helplessness and of perdition, while Thy whole Being betokeneth wealth, independence, glory, majesty and boundless grace.

Turn our recompense, O Lord, into that which well beseemeth Thee of the good of this world and of the next, and of the manifold bounties which extend from on high down to the earth below.

Verily, Thou art our Lord and the Lord of all things. Into Thy hands do we surrender ourselves, yearning for the things that pertain unto Thee.

-- The Bab, Bahá'í Prayers, pp. 199 - 200, 1991 Edition

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

teachings of Bahá'u'lláh shall surely witness this divine outcome in the degrees of its perfection and will attain unto the good pleasure of the Merciful One.

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

August 11 (11 Kamál/Perfection)

Lord! Enable all the peoples of the earth to gain admittance into the Paradise of Thy Faith, so that no created being may remain beyond the bounds of Thy good-pleasure.

From time immemorial Thou hast been potent to do what pleaseth Thee and transcendent above whatsoever Thou desirest.

-- The Bab, *Bahá'í Prayers*, p. 200, 1991 Edition

The disciples had taken many meals from the hand of Christ; why was the last supper distinguished from the others? It is evident that the heavenly bread did not signify this material bread, but rather the divine nourishment of the spiritual body of Christ, the divine graces and heavenly perfections of which His disciples partook, and with which they became filled.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 99

August 12 (12 Kamál/Perfection)

O God, my God! Praise be unto Thee for kindling the fire of divine love in the Holy Tree on the summit of the loftiest mount: that Tree which is "neither of the East nor of the West,"¹ that fire which blazed out till the flame of it soared upward to the Concourse on high, and from it those realities caught the light of guidance, and cried out: "Verily have we perceived a fire on the slope of Mount Sinai."²

O God, my God! Increase Thou this fire, as day followeth day, till the blast of it setteth in motion all the earth. O Thou, my Lord! Kindle the light of Thy love in every heart, breathe into men's souls the spirit of Thy knowledge, gladden their breasts with the verses of Thy oneness. Call Thou to life those who dwell in their tombs, warn Thou the prideful, make happiness worldwide, send down Thy crystal waters, and in the assemblage of manifest splendors, pass round that cup which is "tempered at the camphor fountain."³

Verily, art Thou the Giving, the Forgiving, the Ever-Bestowing. Verily, art Thou the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1 - Qur'an 24:35

2 - cf. Qur'an 28:29

3 - Qur'an 76:5

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í Prayers*, pp. 200 - 201

One of the holy Manifestations, addressing a believing soul, has said that, if a person become the cause of the illumination of one soul, it is better than a boundless treasury. "O 'Alí! If God guide, through thee, one soul, it is better for thee than all the riches!"

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, p. 12

August 13 (13 Kamál/Perfection)

O Lord, my God, my Well-Beloved! These are servants of Thine that have heard Thy Voice, given ear to Thy Word and hearkened to Thy Call. They have believed in Thee, witnessed Thy wonders,

acknowledged Thy proof and testified to Thine evidence. They have walked in Thy ways, followed Thy guidance, discovered Thy mysteries, comprehended the secrets of Thy Book, the verses of Thy Scrolls and the tidings of Thy Epistles and Tablets. They have clung to the hem of Thy garment and held fast unto the robe of Thy light and grandeur. Their footsteps have been strengthened in Thy Covenant and their hearts made firm in Thy Testament. Lord! Do Thou kindle in their hearts the flame of Thy divine attraction and grant that the bird of love and understanding may sing within their hearts. Grant that they may be even as potent signs, resplendent standards, and perfect as Thy Word. Exalt by them Thy Cause, unfurl Thy banners and publish far and wide Thy wonders. Make by them Thy Word triumphant, and strengthen the loins of Thy loved ones. Unloose their tongues to laud Thy Name, and inspire them to do Thy holy will and pleasure. Illumine their faces in Thy Kingdom of holiness, and perfect their joy by aiding them to arise for the triumph of Thy Cause.

Lord! Feeble are we, strengthen us to diffuse the fragrances of Thy Holiness; poor, enrich us from the treasures of Thy Divine Unity; naked, clothe us with the robe of Thy bounty; sinful, forgive us our sins by Thy grace, Thy favor and Thy pardon. Thou art, verily, the Aider, the Helper, the Gracious, the Mighty, the Powerful.

The glory of glories rest upon them that are fast and firm.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í Prayers, pp. 202 - 203

We hear that thou hast in mind to embellish thy house from time to time with a meeting of Bahá’ís, where some among them will engage in glorifying the All-Glorious Lord. Know that shouldst thou bring this about, that house of earth will become a house of heaven, and that fabric of stone a congress of the spirit.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 94

August 14 (14 Kamál/Perfection)

Souls are like unto mirrors, and the bounty of God is like unto the sun. When the mirrors pass beyond all coloring and attain purity and polish, and are confronted with the sun, they will reflect in full perfection its light and glory. In this condition one should not consider the mirror, but the power of the light of the sun, which hath penetrated the mirror, making it a reflector of the heavenly glory.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í World Faith, pp. 175-367

O friend, the heart is the dwelling of eternal mysteries, make it not the home of fleeting fancies; waste not the treasure of thy precious life in employment with this swiftly passing world. Thou comest from the world of holiness-bind not thine heart to the earth; thou art a dweller in the court of nearness-choose not the homeland of the dust.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys, p. 35

August 15 (15 Kamál/Perfection)

Consider, moreover, how the fruit, ere it is formed, lieth potentially within the tree. Were the tree to be cut into pieces, no sign nor any part of the fruit, however small, could be detected. When it appeareth, however, it manifesteth itself, as thou hast observed, in its wondrous beauty and glorious perfection. Certain fruits, indeed, attain their fullest development only after being severed from the tree.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh, p.155

Say: In the East the light of His Revelation hath broken; in the West have appeared the signs of His dominion. Ponder this in your hearts, O people, and be not of those who have turned a deaf ear to the admonitions of Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Praised. Let the Breeze of God awaken you. Verily, it hath wafted over the world. Well is it with him that hath discovered the fragrance thereof and been accounted among the well-assured.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p. 13

August 16 (16 Kamál/Perfection)

As to Christ: He was a single, unique and lowly individual Who appeared at a time when the Israelitish nation had fallen from the heights of its glory to the lowest condition of bondage and contempt, subject to the tyranny of the Roman Empire, living under a yoke of humiliation, ignorant and negligent of God. The historical records of the Holy Books confirm these statements. Christ -- this single and unique Personage -- appeared amongst these despised and degraded people, reflecting a divine power and the potency of the Holy Spirit. He unified the various peoples and nations of the world, brought them together in fellowship and agreement and gathered them beneath the overshadowing protection of one Word. His prestige and mention were not confined to the children of Israel alone, who were at that time a limited race and people, but His spiritual power had also permeated and united great influential nations who had been warlike and hostile, such as the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Syrians and Assyrian. He dispelled their hostility, healed their hatred, made them a united people, and by His Word created the utmost love amongst them so that they advanced immeasurably in the degrees of education and human perfection, thereby attaining a never-ending glory.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace. 1982: 412

He is indeed a true believer in the unity of God who, in this Day, will regard Him as One immeasurably exalted above all the comparisons and likenesses with which men have compared Him. He hath erred grievously who hath mistaken these comparisons and likenesses for God Himself. Consider the relation between the craftsman and his handiwork, between the painter and his painting. Can it ever be maintained that the work their hands have produced is the same as themselves? By Him Who is the Lord of the Throne above and of earth below! They can be regarded in no other light except as evidences that proclaim the excellence and perfection of their author.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 336-337

August 17 (17 Kamál/Perfection)

As difference in degree of capacity exists among human souls, as difference in capability is found, therefore, individualities will differ one from another. But in reality this is a reason for unity and not for discord and enmity. If the flowers of a garden were all of one color, the effect would be monotonous to the eye; but if the colors are variegated, it is most pleasing and wonderful. The difference in adornment of color and capacity of reflection among the flowers gives the garden its beauty and charm. Therefore, although we are of different individualities, different in ideas and of various fragrances, let us strive like flowers of the same divine garden to live together in harmony. Even though each soul has its own individual perfume and color, all are reflecting the same light, all contributing fragrance to the same breeze which blows through the garden, all continuing to grow in complete harmony and accord. Become as waves of one sea, trees of one forest, growing in the utmost love, agreement and unity.

If you attain to such a capacity of love and unity, the Blessed Perfection will shower infinite graces of the spiritual Kingdom upon you, guide, protect and preserve you under the shadow of His Word, increase your happiness in this world and uphold you through all difficulties.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*. 1982: 24

All praise be to God Who hath adorned the world with an ornament, and arrayed it with a vesture, of which it can be despoiled by no earthly power, however mighty its battalions, however vast its wealth, however profound its influence. Say: the essence of all power is God’s, the highest and the last End of all creation. The source of all majesty is God’s, the Object of the adoration of all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth. Such forces as have their origin in this world of dust are, by their very nature, unworthy of consideration.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 341

August 18 (18 Kamál/Perfection)

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

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*

O THOU cherished Fruit of the heart! Give ear to the melodies of this mystic Bird warbling in the loftiest heights of heaven. The Lord hath, in truth, inspired Me to proclaim: Verily, verily, I am God, He besides Whom there is none other God. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise.

-- The Bab, *Selections from the Writings of the Bab*, p. 67

August 19 (19 Kamál/Perfection)

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.

These words have streamed from the pen of this Wronged One in one of His Tablets: “The purpose of the one true God, exalted be His glory, hath been to bring forth the Mystic Gems out of the mine of man -- they Who are the Dawning-Places of His Cause and the Repositories of the pearls of His knowledge, for, God Himself, glorified be He, is the Unseen, the One concealed and hidden from the eyes of men. Consider what the Merciful hath revealed in the Qur’an: No vision taketh in Him, but He taketh in all vision, and He is the Subtile, the All-Informed!”

That the divers communions of the earth, and the manifold systems of religious belief, should never be allowed to foster the feelings of animosity among men, is, in this Day, of the essence of the Faith of God and His Religion. These principles and laws, these firmly-established and mighty systems, have proceeded from one Source, and are rays of one Light. That they differ one from another is to be attributed to the varying requirements of the ages in which they were promulgated.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 67

However, it should be recognized that the ultimate solution to the problems of humanity lies not in penalties and punishments, but rather in spiritual education and illumination. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has written:

It is incumbent upon human society to expend all its forces on the education of the people, and to copiously water men’s hearts with the sacred streams that pour down from the Realm of the All-Merciful, and to teach them the manners of Heaven and spiritual ways of life, until every member of the community of man will be schooled, refined, and exalted to such a degree of perfection that the very committing of a shameful act will seem in itself the direst infliction and most agonizing of punishments, and man will fly in terror and seek refuge in his God from the very idea of crime, as something far harsher and more grievous than the punishment assigned to it.

It is toward this goal that the community of the Greatest Name is striving, aided and reinforced by the limitless power of the Holy Spirit.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, qtd. in Letters of The Universal House of Justice. Violence and Sexual Abuse of Women and Children, 1992

August 20 (1 Asmá’/Names)

This poverty and these riches, this abasement and glory, this dominion, power, and the like, upon which the eyes and hearts of these vain and foolish souls are set, -- all these things fade into utter nothingness in that Court! Even as He hath said: “O men! Ye are but paupers in need of God; but God is the Rich, the Self-Sufficing.”[1] By ‘riches’ therefore is meant independence of all else but God, and by ‘poverty’ the lack of things that are of God.

[1 Qur’an 35:15.]

-- Bahá’u’lláh -- The Kitáb-i-Iqán. 1931. Trans. Shoghi Effendi

August 21 (2 Asmá’/Names)

It is clear and evident that in every community there have been, and will ever be, the learned and the ignorant, the wise and the heedless, the profligate and the pious. That a wise and reflecting soul should commit a heinous deed is most improbable, inasmuch as such a person either seeketh after this world or hath forsaken it: if he be of the latter, he would assuredly have no regard for aught else besides God, and moreover the fear of God would deter him from unlawful and reprehensible actions; and if he be of the former, he would just as assuredly avoid such deeds as would alienate and alarm the people, and act in such a manner as to earn their confidence and trust. It is therefore evident that reprehensible actions have always emanated, and will ever emanate, from ignorant and foolish souls. We implore God to guard His servants from turning to anyone save Him, and to draw them nigh unto His presence. His might, in truth, is equal to all things.

- Bahá’u’lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, p. 120-121

In the Kitáb-i-Aqdas (Most Holy Book) the following hath been revealed: “Say: O leaders of religion! Weigh not the Book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring Balance established amongst men. In this most perfect Balance whatsoever the peoples and kindreds possess must be weighed, while the measure of its weight should be tested according to its own standard, did ye but know it. The eye of My loving-kindness weepeth sore over you, inasmuch as ye have failed to recognize the One upon Whom ye have been calling in the daytime and in the night season, at even and at morn. Advance, O people, with snow-white faces and radiant hearts, unto the blest and crimson Spot, wherein the Tree beyond which

there is no passing is calling: “Verily, there is none other God beside Me, the Omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting!” O ye leaders of religion in Persia! Who is the man amongst you that can rival Me in vision or insight? Where is he to be found that dareth to claim to be My equal in utterance or wisdom? No, by My Lord, the All-Merciful! All on the earth shall pass away; and this is the face of your Lord, the Almighty, the Well-Beloved. We have decreed, O people, that the highest and last end of all learning be the recognition of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge; and yet behold how ye have allowed your learning to shut you out, as by a veil, from Him Who is the Dayspring of this Light, through Whom every hidden thing hath been revealed. Say: This, verily, is the heaven in which the Mother Book is treasured, could ye but comprehend it. He it is Who hath caused the Rock to shout, and the Burning Bush to lift up its voice upon the Mount rising above the Holy Land, and proclaim: “The Kingdom is God’s, the sovereign Lord of all, the All-Powerful, the Loving!” We have not entered any school, nor read any of your dissertations. Incline your ears to the words of this unlettered One, wherewith He summoneth you unto God, the Ever-Abiding. Better is this for you than all the treasures of the earth, could ye but comprehend it. Whoso interpreteth what hath been sent down from the heaven of Revelation, and altereth its evident meaning, he, verily, is of them that have perverted the Sublime Word of God, and is of the lost ones in the Lucid Book.”

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 129-130

August 22 (3 Asmá’/Names)

The word of God which the Abhá Pen hath revealed and inscribed on the first leaf of the Most Exalted Paradise is this: Verily I say: The fear of God hath ever been a sure defence and a safe stronghold for all the peoples of the world. It is the chief cause of the protection of mankind, and the supreme instrument for its preservation. Indeed, there existeth in man a faculty which deterreth him from, and guardeth him against, whatever is unworthy and unseemly, and which is known as his sense of shame. This, however, is confined to but a few; all have not possessed and do not possess it.

- Bahá’u’lláh, Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, p. 62

August 23 (4 Asmá’/Names)

208. O ye servants of the Sacred Threshold! The triumphant hosts of the Celestial Concourse, arrayed and marshalled in the Realms above, stand ready and expectant to assist and assure victory to that valiant horseman who with confidence spurs on his charger into the arena of service. Well is it with that fearless warrior, who armed with the power of true Knowledge, hastens unto the field, disperses the armies of ignorance, and scatters the hosts of error, who holds aloft the Standard of Divine Guidance, and sounds the Clarion of Victory. By the righteousness of the Lord! He hath achieved a glorious triumph and obtained the true victory.

- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 264

Your questions, however, can be answered only briefly, since there is no time for a detailed reply. The answer to the first question: the souls of the children of the Kingdom, after their separation from the body, ascend unto the realm of everlasting life. But if ye ask as to the place, know ye that the world of existence is a single world, although its stations are various and distinct. For example, the mineral life occupieth its own plane, but a mineral entity is without any awareness at all of the vegetable kingdom, and indeed, with its inner tongue denieth that there is any such kingdom. In the same way, a vegetable entity knoweth nothing of the animal world, remaining completely heedless and ignorant thereof, for the stage of the animal is higher than that of the vegetable, and the vegetable is veiled from the animal world and inwardly denieth the existence of that world -- all

this while animal, vegetable and mineral dwell together in the one world. In the same way the animal remaineth totally unaware of that power of the human mind which graspeth universal ideas and layeth bare the secrets of creation -- so that a man who liveth in the east can make plans and arrangements for the west, can unravel mysteries; although located on the continent of Europe can discover America; although sited on the earth can lay hold of the inner realities of the stars of heaven. Of this power of discovery which belongeth to the human mind, this power which can grasp abstract and universal ideas, the animal remaineth totally ignorant, and indeed denieth its existence. In the same way, the denizens of this earth are completely unaware of the world of the Kingdom and deny the existence thereof. They ask, for example: 'Where is the Kingdom? Where is the Lord of the Kingdom?' These people are even as the mineral and the vegetable, who know nothing whatever of the animal and the human realm; they see it not; they find it not. Yet the mineral and vegetable, the animal and man, are all living here together in this world of existence.

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 194-195

August 24 (5 Asmá'/Names)

Not by the force of numbers, not by the mere exposition of a set of new and noble principles, not by an organized campaign of teaching -- no matter how worldwide and elaborate in its character -- not even by the staunchness of our faith or the exaltation of our enthusiasm, can we ultimately hope to vindicate in the eyes of a critical and sceptical age the supreme claim of the Abhá Revelation. One thing and only one thing will unfailingly and alone secure the undoubted triumph of this sacred Cause, namely, the extent to which our own inner life and private character mirror forth in their manifold aspects the splendor of those eternal principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh.

- Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'í Administration, p. 66

August 25 (6 Asmá'/Names)

Effort must be exerted that the East and West may be reconciled, that the darkness of bigotry may vanish, that the unity of mankind may be made manifest and that East and West, like unto two longing souls, may embrace each other in the utmost love, for all are the sheep of God and God is the Real Shepherd and is kind to every one.

- Shoghi Effendi, Japan Will Turn Ablaze, p. 14

August 26 (7 Asmá'/Names)

The third Taraz concerneth good character. A good character is, verily, the best mantle for men from God. With it He adorneth the temples of His loved ones. By My life! The light of a good character surpasseth the light of the sun and the radiance thereof. Whoso attaineth unto it is accounted as a jewel among men. The glory and the upliftment of the world must needs depend upon it. A goodly character is a means whereby men are guided to the Straight Path and are led to the Great Announcement. Well is it with him who is adorned with the saintly attributes and character of the Concourse on High.

- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 36

August 27 (8 Asmá'/Names)

God in his wisdom has created all things. Nothing has been created without a special destiny, for every creature has an innate station of attainment. This flower has been created to mirror forth a harmonious ensemble of color and perfume. Each kingdom of nature holds potentialities and each must be cultivated in order to reach its fulfillment. The divine teachers desire man to be educated that he may attain to the high rank of his own reality, the deprivation of which is the rank of

perdition. The flower needs light that it may achieve its fruitage; man needs the light of the Holy Spirit, and the measure of illumination throughout creation is proportionate to the different kingdoms.

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 110-111

August 28 (9 Asmá'/Names)

This rectitude of conduct, with its implications of justice, equity, truthfulness, honesty, fair-mindedness, reliability, and trustworthiness, must distinguish every phase of the life of the Bahá'í community. "The companions of God," Bahá'u'lláh Himself has declared, "are, in this day, the lump that must leaven the peoples of the world. They must show forth such trustworthiness, such truthfulness and perseverance, such deeds and character that all mankind may profit by their example." "I swear by Him Who is the Most Great Ocean!" He again affirms, "Within the very breath of such souls as are pure and sanctified far-reaching potentialities are hidden. So great are these potentialities that they exercise their influence upon all created things." "He is the true servant of God," He, in another passage has written, "who, in this day, were he to pass through cities of silver and gold, would not deign to look upon them, and whose heart would remain pure and undefiled from whatever things can be seen in this world, be they its goods or its treasures. I swear by the Sun of Truth! The breath of such a man is endowed with potency, and his words with attraction."

- Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 23

August 29 (10 Asmá'/Names)

"By Him Who shineth above the Dayspring of sanctity!" He, still more emphatically, has revealed, "If the whole earth were to be converted into silver and gold, no man who can be said to have truly ascended into the heaven of faith and certitude would deign to regard it, much less to seize and keep it... They who dwell within the Tabernacle of God, and are established upon the seats of everlasting glory, will refuse, though they be dying of hunger, to stretch their hands, and seize unlawfully the property of their neighbor, however vile and worthless he may be. The purpose of the one true God in manifesting Himself is to summon all mankind to truthfulness and sincerity, to piety and trustworthiness, to resignation and submissiveness to the will of God, to forbearance and kindness, to uprightness and wisdom. His object is to array every man with the mantle of a saintly character, and to adorn him with the ornament of holy and goodly deeds." "We have admonished all the loved ones of God," He insists, "to take heed lest the hem of Our sacred vesture be smirched with the mire of unlawful deeds, or be stained with the dust of reprehensible conduct." "Cleave unto righteousness, O people of Bahá," He thus exhorts them, "This, verily, is the commandment which this wronged One hath given unto you, and the first choice of His unrestrained will for every one of you." "A good character," He explains, "is, verily, the best mantle for men from God. With it He adorneth the temples of His loved ones. By My life! The light of a good character surpasseth the light of the sun and the radiance thereof." "One righteous act," He, again, has written, "is endowed with a potency that can so elevate the dust as to cause it to pass beyond the heaven of heavens. It can tear every bond asunder, and hath the power to restore the force that hath spent itself and vanished.... Be pure, O people of God, be pure; be righteous, be righteous.... Say: O people of God! That which can insure the victory of Him Who is the Eternal Truth, His hosts and helpers on earth, have been set down in the sacred Books and Scriptures, and are as clear and manifest as the sun. These hosts are such righteous deeds, such conduct and character, as are acceptable in His sight. Whoso ariseth, in this Day, to aid Our Cause, and summoneth to his

assistance the hosts of a praiseworthy character and upright conduct, the influence from such an action will, most certainly, be diffused throughout the whole world.”

- Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 23-24

August 30 (11 Asmá’/Names)

“The betterment of the world,” is yet another statement, “can be accomplished through pure and goodly deeds, through commendable and seemly conduct.” “Be fair to yourselves and to others,” He thus counseleth them, “that the evidences of justice may be revealed through your deeds among Our faithful servants.” “Equity,” He also has written, “is the most fundamental among human virtues. The evaluation of all things must needs depend upon it.” And again, “Observe equity in your judgment, ye men of understanding heart! He that is unjust in his judgment is destitute of the characteristics that distinguish man’s station.” “Beautify your tongues, O people,” He further admonishes them, “with truthfulness, and adorn your souls with the ornament of honesty. Beware, O people, that ye deal not treacherously with anyone. Be ye the trustees of God amongst His creatures, and the emblems of His generosity amidst His people.” “Let your eye be chaste,” is yet another counsel, “your hand faithful, your tongue truthful, and your heart enlightened.” “Be an ornament to the countenance of truth,” is yet another admonition, “a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue.” “Let truthfulness and courtesy be your adorning,” is still another admonition; “suffer not yourselves to be deprived of the robe of forbearance and justice, that the sweet savors of holiness may be wafted from your hearts upon all created things. Say: Beware, O people of Bahá, lest ye walk in the ways of them whose words differ from their deeds. Strive that ye may be enabled to manifest to the peoples of the earth the signs of God, and to mirror forth His commandments. Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind, for the professions of most men, be they high or low, differ from their conduct. It is through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth. Happy is the man that heedeth My counsel, and keepeth the precepts prescribed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.”

- Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 24-25

August 31 (12 Asmá’/Names)

“Know thou, of a truth,” He [Bahá’u’lláh] significantly affirms, “these great oppressions that have befallen the world are preparing it for the advent of the Most Great Justice.” “Say,” He again asserts, “He hath appeared with that Justice wherewith mankind hath been adorned, and yet the people are, for the most part, asleep.” “The light of men is Justice,” He moreover states, “Quench it not with the contrary winds of oppression and tyranny. The purpose of justice is the appearance of unity among men.” “No radiance,” He declares, “can compare with that of justice. The organization of the world and the tranquillity of mankind depend upon it.” “O people of God!” He exclaims, “That which traineth the world is Justice, for it is upheld by two pillars, reward and punishment. These two pillars are the sources of life to the world.” “Justice and equity,” is yet another assertion, “are two guardians for the protection of man. They have appeared arrayed in their mighty and sacred names to maintain the world in uprightness and protect the nations.” “Bestir yourselves, O people,” is His emphatic warning, “in anticipation of the days of Divine justice, for the promised hour is now come. Beware lest ye fail to apprehend its import, and be accounted among the erring.” “The day is approaching,” He similarly has written, “when the faithful will behold the daystar of justice shining in its full splendor from the dayspring of glory.” “The shame I was made to bear,” He significantly remarks, “hath uncovered the glory with which the whole of creation had been

invested, and through the cruelties I have endured, the daystar of justice hath manifested itself, and shed its splendor upon men.” “The world,” He again has written, “is in great turmoil, and the minds of its people are in a state of utter confusion. We entreat the Almighty that He may graciously illuminate them with the glory of His Justice, and enable them to discover that which will be profitable unto them at all times and under all conditions.” And again, “There can be no doubt whatever that if the daystar 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.”

- Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 27-28

September 01 (13 Asmá’/Names)

“O ye discerning ones!” Bahá’u’lláh has written, “Verily, the words which have descended from the heaven of the Will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness.” “We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations,” He proclaims, “...that all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled.” “Bahá’u’lláh hath said,” writes ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “that the various races of humankind lend a composite harmony and beauty of color to the whole. Let all associate, therefore, in this great human garden even as flowers grow and blend together side by side without discord or disagreement between them.” “Bahá’u’lláh,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá moreover has said, “once compared the colored people to the black pupil of the eye surrounded by the white. In this black pupil is seen the reflection of that which is before it, and through it the light of the spirit shineth forth.”

- Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 36

September 02 (14 Asmá’/Names)

The field is indeed so immense, the period so critical, the Cause so great, the workers so few, the time so short, the privilege so priceless, that no follower of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh, worthy to bear His name, can afford a moment’s hesitation. That God-born Force, irresistible in its sweeping power, incalculable in its potency, unpredictable in its course, mysterious in its workings, and awe-inspiring in its manifestations -- a Force which, as the Bab has written, “vibrates within the innermost being of all created things,” and which, according to Bahá’u’lláh, has through its “vibrating influence,” “upset the equilibrium of the world and revolutionized its ordered life” -- such a Force, acting even as a two-edged sword, is, under our very eyes, sundering, on the one hand, the age-old ties which for centuries have held together the fabric of civilized society, and is unloosing, on the other, the bonds that still fetter the infant and as yet unemancipated Faith of Bahá’u’lláh. The undreamt-of opportunities offered through the operation of this Force -- the American believers must now rise, and fully and courageously exploit them. “The holy realities of the Concourse on high,” writes ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “yearn, in this day, in the Most Exalted Paradise, to return unto this world, so that they may be aided to render some service to the threshold of the Abhá Beauty, and arise to demonstrate their servitude to His sacred Threshold.”

- Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 46-47

September 03 (15 Asmá’/Names)

The effort required is prodigious, the conditions under which these preliminary establishments are to be made are often unattractive and unfavorable, the workers who are in a position to undertake such tasks limited, and the resources they can command meager and inadequate. And yet, how often has the pen of Bahá’u’lláh assured us that “should a man, all alone, arise in the name of Bahá,

and put on the armor of His love, him will the Almighty cause to be victorious, though the forces of earth and heaven be arrayed against him.” Has He not written: “By God, besides Whom is none other God! Should anyone arise for the triumph of our Cause, him will God render victorious though tens of thousands of enemies be leagued against him. And if his love for me wax stronger, God will establish his ascendancy over all the powers of earth and heaven.” “Consider the work of former generations,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has written; “During the lifetime of Jesus Christ the believing, firm souls were few and numbered, but the heavenly blessings descended so plentifully that in a number of years countless souls entered beneath the shadow of the Gospel. God has said in the Qur’an: ‘One grain will bring forth seven sheaves, and every sheaf shall contain one hundred grains.’ In other words, one grain will become seven hundred; and if God so wills He will double these also. It has often happened that one blessed soul has become the cause of the guidance of a nation. Now we must not consider our ability and capacity, nay rather we must fix our gaze upon the favors and bounties of God, in these days, Who has made of the drop a sea, and of the atom a sun.” Let those who resolve to be the first to hoist the standard of such a Cause, under such conditions, and in such territories, nourish their souls with the sustaining power of these words, and, “putting on the armor of His love,” a love which must “wax stronger” as they persevere in their lonesome task, arise to adorn with the tale of their deeds the most brilliant pages ever written in their country’s spiritual history.

- Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 56

September 04 (16 Asmá’/Names)

Every discerning observer will recognize that in the Dispensation of the Qur’an both the Book and the Cause of Jesus were confirmed. As to the matter of names, Muhammad, Himself, declared: “I am Jesus.” He recognized the truth of the signs, prophecies, and words of Jesus, and testified that they were all of God. In this sense, neither the person of Jesus nor His writings hath differed from that of Muhammad and of His holy Book, inasmuch as both have championed the Cause of God, uttered His praise, and revealed His commandments. Thus it is that Jesus, Himself, declared: “I go away and come again unto you.” Consider the sun. Were it to say now, “I am the sun of yesterday,” it would speak the truth. And should it, bearing the sequence of time in mind, claim to be other than that sun, it still would speak the truth. In like manner, if it be said that all the days are but one and the same, it is correct and true. And if it be said, with respect to their particular names and designations, that they differ, that again is true. For though they are the same, yet one doth recognize in each a separate designation, a specific attribute, a particular character. Conceive accordingly the distinction, variation, and unity characteristic of the various Manifestations of holiness, that thou mayest comprehend the allusions made by the creator of all names and attributes to the mysteries of distinction and unity, and discover the answer to thy question as to why that everlasting Beauty should have, at sundry times, called Himself by different names and titles.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, pp. 20-22

September 05 (17 Asmá’/Names)

The Bab, the Primal Point of a new creation, brought humanity into a new division of time in a calendar of nineteen months. All through our past heritage the months of the years and the days of the week have borne the names of pagan feasts and Roman holidays. The Bab swept these ancient landmarks away, and replaced them by the Qualities of: Splendour, Glory, Beauty, Grandeur, Light, Mercy, Words, Perfection, Names, Might, Will, Knowledge, Power, Speech, Questions, Honour, Sovereignty, Dominion, and Loftiness.

-- Shoghi Effendi, *Principles of Bahá’í Administration*, pp. 53-54

September 06 (18 Asmá'/Names)

Without doubt each being is the center of the shining forth of the glory of God -- that is to say, the perfections of God appear from it and are resplendent in it. It is like the sun, which is resplendent in the desert, upon the sea, in the trees, in the fruits and blossoms, and in all earthly things. The world, indeed each existing being, proclaims to us one of the names of God, but the reality of man is the collective reality, the general reality, and is the center where the glory of all the perfections of God shine forth -- that is to say, for each name, each attribute, each perfection which we affirm of God there exists a sign in man. If it were otherwise, man could not imagine these perfections and could not understand them. So we say that God is the seer, and the eye is the sign of His vision; if this sight were not in man, how could we imagine the vision of God?

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, pp. 195-196

September 07 (19 Asmá'/Names)

All men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization. The Almighty beareth Me witness: To act like the beasts of the field is unworthy of man. Those virtues that befit his dignity are forbearance, mercy, compassion and loving-kindness towards all the peoples and kindreds of the earth. Say: O friends! Drink your fill from this crystal stream that floweth through the heavenly grace of Him Who is the Lord of Names. Let others partake of its waters in My name, that the leaders of men in every land may fully recognize the purpose for which the Eternal Truth hath been revealed, and the reason for which they themselves have been created.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 215

September 08 (1 Izzat/Might)

“By God! Troubles have failed to unnerve Me, and the repudiation of the divines hath been powerless to weaken Me. I have spoken, and still speak forth before the face of men: ‘The door of grace hath been unlocked and He Who is the Dayspring of Justice is come with perspicuous signs and evident testimonies, from God, the Lord of strength and of might!’ Present thyself before Me that thou mayest hear the mysteries which were heard by the Son of Imran (Moses) upon the Sinai of Wisdom. Thus commandeth thee He Who is the Dawning-Place of the Revelation of thy Lord, the God of Mercy, from His great Prison.”

-- Bahá'u'lláh -- Epistle to the Son of the Wolf. 1941

September 09 (2 Izzat/Might)

GOD testifieth that there is none other God but Him. His are the kingdoms in the heavens and on the earth and all that is between them. He is exalted above the comprehension of all things, and is inscrutable to the mind of every created being; none shall be able to fathom the oneness of His Being or to unravel the nature of His Existence. No peer or likeness, no similitude or equal can ever be joined with Him. Yield ye praise then unto Him and glorify Him and bear ye witness to the sanctity and oneness of His Being and magnify His might and majesty with wondrous glorification. This will enable you to gain admittance into the all-highest Paradise. Would that ye had firm faith in the revelation of the signs of God.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab. 1976. Trans. Habib Taherzadeh

September 10 (3 Izzat/Might)

Grieve not if none be found to accept the crimson wine proffered by Thy snow-white hand and to seize it in the name of Thy Lord, the Most Exalted, the Most High -- He Who hath appeared again in His name, the Most Glorious. Leave this people unto themselves, and repair unto the Tabernacle

of majesty and glory, wherein Thou shalt encounter a people whose faces shine as brightly as the sun in its noontide splendour, and who praise and extol their Lord in this Name that 14 hath arisen, in the plenitude of might and power, to assume the throne of independent sovereignty. From their lips Thou shalt hear naught but the strains of My glorification and praise; unto this Thy Lord beareth Me witness. The existence of these people, however, hath remained concealed from the eyes of all who, from everlasting, have been created through the Word of God. Thus have We made plain Our meaning and set forth Our verses, that perchance men may reflect upon the signs and tokens of their Lord.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts

September 11 (4 Izzat/Might)

O Shaykh! Enter thou My presence, that thou mayest behold what the eye of the universe hath never beheld, and hear that which the ear of the whole creation hath never heard, that haply thou mayest free thyself from the mire of vague fancies, and set thy face towards the Most Sublime Station, wherein this Wronged One calleth aloud: "The Kingdom is God's, the Almighty, the All-Praised!" We fain would hope that through thine exertions the wings of men may be sanctified from the mire of self and desire, and be made worthy to soar in the atmosphere of God's love. Wings that are besmirched with mire can never soar. Unto this testify they who are the exponents of justice and equity, and yet the people are in evident doubt.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 130 - 131

September 12 (5 Izzat/Might)

LXXIII

Glorified art Thou, O Lord my God! I beseech Thee by Thy Name, the Restrainer, to withhold from us the maleficence of Thine adversaries who have disbelieved in Thy testimony, and caviled at Thy beauty. Overpower by Thy Name, the All-Subduing, such as have wronged Thy Previous Manifestation Who hath now appeared invested with Thy title, the All-Glorious. Lay hold, by Thy name, the Chastiser, on them that have treated Thy Cause with scorn, have jested at Thy most mighty utterances, and were hindered from attaining this most exalted station. Enable Thy loved ones, by Thy Name, the Victorious, to prevail against Thine enemies and the infidels among Thy creatures. Rend asunder, by Thy Name, the Cleaver, the veil that hideth the doings of them that have besmirched Thine honor and undermined Thy Faith among Thy people. Bind, by Thy Name, the Restorer, the broken hearts of them that love Thee, and graciously bless them in their affairs. Teach them, by Thy Name, the All-Knowing, the wonders of Thy wisdom, that they may cleave steadfastly to Thy Faith and walk in the ways of Thy pleasure. Keep them safe, by Thy Name, the Withholder, from the tyranny of the oppressor and the wickedness of the evil-doers and the malice of the stirrers of mischief. Shield them, by Thy Name, the Preserver, within the stronghold of Thy might and power, that haply they may be protected from the darts of doubt that are hurled by such as have rebelled against Thee. Sanctify for Thy servants, by Thy Name which Thou hast blessed above all other names, which Thou hast singled out for Thy favor, and by which Thou didst reveal Thy beauty, these days of which the Pen of Thy decree hath distinctly written, and which, according to Thy will and wisdom, have been preordained in Thine irrevocable Tablet. Subject to Thy rule, by Thy Name, the Conqueror, the people of Thy realm, that all may turn towards Thy face and forsake their all for love of Thee and for the sake of Thy pleasure.

Abase Thou, O my Lord, Thine enemies, and lay hold on them with Thy power and might, and let them be stricken by the blast of Thy wrath. Make them taste, O my God, of Thine awful majesty and vengeance, for they have repudiated the truth of the One in Whom they had believed, Who came unto them with Thy signs and Thy clear tokens and the evidences of Thy power and the manifold revelations of Thy might. Gather, then, together Thy loved ones beneath the shadow of the Tree of Thy oneness, and of the Manifestation of the effulgent light of Thy unity.

Thou art, verily, the One Whose power is immense, Whose vengeance is terrible. No God is there beside Thee, the Almighty, the Most Powerful.

--- Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 119 - 121

September 13 (6 Izzat/Might)

All praise, O my God, be to Thee Who art the Source of all glory and majesty, of greatness and honor, of sovereignty and dominion, of loftiness and grace, of awe and power. Whomsoever Thou willest Thou causest to draw nigh unto the Most Great Ocean, and on whomsoever Thou desirest Thou conferrest the honor of recognizing Thy Most Ancient Name. Of all who are in heaven and on earth, none can withstand the operation of Thy sovereign Will. From all eternity Thou didst rule the entire creation, and Thou wilt continue for evermore to exercise Thy dominion over all created things. There is none other God but Thee, the Almighty, the Most Exalted, the All-Powerful, the All-Wise. O Illumine, O Lord, the faces of Thy servants, that they may behold Thee; and cleanse their hearts that they may turn unto the court of Thy heavenly favors, and recognize Him Who is the Manifestation of Thy Self and the Day Spring of Thine Essence. Verily, Thou art the Lord of all worlds. There is no God but Thee, the Unconstrained, the All-Subduing. Glorified art Thou, O Lord my God! I beseech Thee by Thy Name, the Restrainer, to withhold from us the maleficence of Thine adversaries who have disbelieved in Thy testimony, and caviled at Thy beauty. Overpower by Thy Name, the All-Subduing, such as have wronged Thy Previous Manifestation Who hath now appeared invested with Thy title, the All-Glorious. Lay hold, by Thy name, the Chastiser, on them that have treated Thy Cause with scorn, have jested at Thy most mighty utterances, and were hindered from attaining this most exalted station. Enable Thy loved ones, by Thy Name, the Victorious, to prevail against Thine enemies and the infidels among Thy creatures. Rend asunder, by Thy Name, the Cleaver, the veil that hideth the doings of them that have besmirched Thine honor and undermined Thy Faith among Thy people. Bind, by Thy Name, the Restorer, the broken hearts of them that love Thee, and graciously bless them in their affairs. Teach them, by Thy Name, the All-Knowing, the wonders of Thy wisdom, that they may cleave steadfastly to Thy Faith and walk in the ways of Thy pleasure. Keep them safe, by Thy Name, the Withholder, from the tyranny of the oppressor and the wickedness of the evil-doers and the malice of the stirrers of mischief. Shield them, by Thy Name, the Preserver, within the stronghold of Thy might and power, that haply they may be protected from the darts of doubt that are hurled by such as have rebelled against Thee. Sanctify for Thy servants, by Thy Name which Thou hast blessed above all other names, which Thou hast singled out for Thy favor, and by which Thou didst reveal Thy beauty, these days of which the Pen of Thy decree hath distinctly written, and which, according to Thy will and wisdom, have been preordained in Thine irrevocable Tablet. Subject to Thy rule, by Thy Name, the Conqueror, the people of Thy realm, that all may turn towards Thy face and forsake their all for love of Thee and for the sake of Thy pleasure.

-- Compilations, Bahá'í World Faith, pp. 148 - 150

September 14 (7 Izzat/Might)

O Shaykh! Every time God the True One - exalted be His glory -- revealed Himself in the person of His Manifestation, He came unto men with the standard of "He doeth what He willeth, and ordaineth what He pleaseth." None hath the right to ask why or wherefore, and he that doth so, hath indeed turned aside from God, the Lord of Lords. In the days of every Manifestation these things appear and are evident. Likewise, they have said that about this Wronged One, to the falsity of which they who are nigh unto God and are devoted to Him have borne, and still bear, witness. By the righteousness of God! This Hem of His Robe hath ever been and remaineth unsullied, though many have, at the present time, purposed to besmirch it with their lying and unseemly calumnies. God, however, knoweth and they know not. He Who, through the might and power of God, hath arisen before the face of all the kindreds of the earth, and summoned the multitudes to the Supreme Horizon, hath been repudiated by them and they have clung instead unto such men as have invariably withdrawn themselves behind veils and curtains, and busied themselves about their own protection. Moreover, many are now engaged in spreading lies and calumnies, and have no other intention than to instill distrust into the hearts and souls of men. As soon as someone leaveth the Great City (Constantinople) to visit this land, they at once telegraph and proclaim that he hath stolen money and fled to 'Akka. A highly accomplished, learned and distinguished man visited, in his declining years, the Holy Land, seeking peace and retirement, and about him they have written such things as have caused them who are devoted to God and are nigh unto Him to sigh.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 66 - 68

September 15 (8 Izzat/Might)

What, then -- might we not consider -- has, in the face of so complete and ignominious a rejection, happened, and is still happening, in the course, and particularly in the closing years, of this, the first Bahá'í century, a century fraught with such tumultuous sufferings and violent outrages for the persecuted Faith of Bahá'u'lláh? Empires fallen in dust, kingdoms subverted, dynasties extinguished, royalty besmirched, kings assassinated, poisoned, driven into exile, subjugated in their own realms, whilst the few remaining thrones are trembling with the repercussions of the fall of their fellows.

-- Shoghi Effendi, The Promised Day is Come, pp. 48 - 49

September 16 (9 Izzat/Might)

O Shaykh! The breezes of Revelation can never be confounded with other breezes. Now the Lote-Tree beyond which there is no passing standeth laden with countless fruits before thy face; besmirch not thyself with idle fancies, as have done the people aforetime. These utterances themselves proclaim the true nature of the Faith of God. He it is Who witnesseth unto all things. To demonstrate the truth of His Revelation He hath not been, nor is He, dependent upon any one. Well nigh a hundred volumes of luminous verses and perspicuous words have already been sent down from the heaven of the will of Him Who is the Revealer of signs, and are available unto all. It is for thee to direct thyself towards the Ultimate Goal, and the Supreme End, and the Most Sublime Pinnacle, that thou mayest hear and behold what hath been revealed by God, the Lord of the worlds.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 114 - 115

September 17 (10 Izzat/Might)

In these days enemies have compassed Us about, and the fire of hatred is kindled. O peoples of the earth! By My life and by your own! This Wronged One hath never had, nor hath He now any desire

for leadership. Mine aim hath ever been, and still is, to suppress whatever is the cause of contention amidst the peoples of the earth, and of separation amongst the nations, so that all men may be sanctified from every earthly attachment, and be set free to occupy themselves with their own interests. We entreat Our loved ones not to besmirch the hem of Our raiment with the dust of falsehood, neither to allow references to what they have regarded as miracles and prodigies to debase Our rank and station, or to mar the purity and sanctity of Our name.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 32 - 33

September 18 (11 Izzat/Might)

At first it is very difficult to welcome death, but after attaining its new condition the soul is grateful, for it has been released from the bondage of the limited to enjoy the liberties of the unlimited. It has been freed from a world of sorrow, grief and trials to live in a world of unending bliss and joy. The phenomenal and physical have been abandoned in order that it may attain the opportunities of the ideal and spiritual.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace p. 47

September 19 (12 Izzat/Might)

It is incumbent upon each child to know something of music, for without knowledge of this art the melodies of instrument and voice cannot be rightly enjoyed.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 52

September 20 (13 Izzat/Might)

Incline your hearts, O people of God, unto the counsels of your true, your incomparable Friend. The Word of God may be likened unto a sapling, whose roots have been implanted in the hearts of men. It is incumbent upon you to foster its growth through the living waters of wisdom, of sanctified and holy words, so that its root may become firmly fixed and its branches may spread out as high as the heavens and beyond.

- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 97

September 21 (14 Izzat/Might)

Teach thou the Cause of God with an utterance which will cause the bushes to be enkindled, and the call "Verily, there is no God but Me, the Almighty, the Unconstrained" to be raised therefrom.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 143

September 22 (15 Izzat/Might)

O My servants! Sorrow not if, in these days and on this earthly plane, things contrary to your wishes have been ordained and manifested by God, for days of blissful joy, of heavenly delight, are assuredly in store for you. Worlds, holy and spiritually glorious, will be unveiled to your eyes. You are destined by Him, in this world and hereafter, to partake of their benefits, to share in their joys, and to obtain a portion of their sustaining grace. To each and every one of them you will, no doubt, attain.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 329

September 23 (16 Izzat/Might)

Concerning thine own affairs, if thou wouldst content thyself with whatever might come to pass it would be praiseworthy. To engage in some profession is highly commendable, for when occupied with work one is less likely to dwell on the unpleasant aspects of life. God willing thou mayest

experience joy and radiance, gladness and exultation in any city or land where thou mayest happen to sojourn.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 175

September 24 (17 Izzat/Might)

If a soul of his own accord advances toward God he will be accepted at the Threshold of Oneness, for such a one is free of personal considerations, of greed and selfish interests, and he has taken refuge within the sheltering protection of his Lord.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization, p. 46

September 25 (18 Izzat/Might)

“Know of a truth that your subjects are God’s trust amongst you. Watch ye, therefore, over them as ye watch over your own selves. Beware that ye allow not wolves to become the shepherds of the fold, or pride and conceit to deter you from turning unto the poor and the desolate. Arise thou, in My name, above the horizon of renunciation, and set, then, thy face towards the Kingdom, at the bidding of thy Lord, the Lord of strength and of might.”

And further We have said: “Adorn the body of Thy kingdom with the raiment of My name, and arise, then, to teach My Cause. Better is this for thee than that which thou possessest. God will, thereby, exalt thy name among all the kings. Potent is He over all things. Walk thou amongst men in the name of God, and by the power of His might, that thou mayest show forth His signs amidst the peoples of the earth.”

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 53-54

September 26 (19 Izzat/Might)

And further We have said: “Deal not treacherously with the substance of your neighbor. Be ye trustworthy on earth, and withhold not from the poor the things given unto you by God through His grace. He, verily, will bestow upon you the double of what ye possess. He, in truth, is the All-Bounteous, the Most Generous. O people of Bahá! Subdue the citadels of men’s hearts with the swords of wisdom and of utterance. They that dispute, as prompted by their desires, are indeed wrapped in a palpable veil. Say: The sword of wisdom is hotter than summer heat, and sharper than blades of steel, if ye do but understand. Draw it forth in My name and through the power of My might, and conquer, then, with it the cities of the hearts of them that have secluded themselves in the stronghold of their corrupt desires. Thus biddeth you the Pen of the All-Glorious, whilst seated beneath the swords of the wayward. If ye become aware of a sin committed by another, conceal it, that God may conceal your own sin. He, verily, is the Concealer, the Lord of grace abounding. O ye rich ones on earth! If ye encounter one who is poor, treat him not disdainfully. Reflect upon that whereof ye were created. Every one of you was created of a sorry germ.”

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 54-55

September 27 (1 Mashíyyat/Will)

Such things have appeared in this Revelation that there is no recourse for either the exponents of science and knowledge or the manifestations of justice and equity other than to recognize them. It is incumbent upon thee, in this day, to arise with celestial power and dissipate, with the aid of knowledge, the doubts of the peoples of the world, so that all men may be sanctified, and direct their steps towards the Most Great Ocean and cleave fast unto that which God hath purposed.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 111

September 28 (2 Mashíyyat/Will)

O concourse of the fair-minded! Observe and reflect upon the billows of the ocean of the utterance and knowledge of God, so that ye may testify with your inner and outer tongues that with Him is the knowledge of all that is in the Book. Nothing escapeth His knowledge. He, verily, hath manifested that which was hidden, when He, upon His return, mounted the throne of the Bayan. All that hath been sent down hath and will come to pass, word for word, upon earth. No possibility is left for anyone either to turn aside or protest. As fairness, however, is disgraced and concealed, most men speak as prompted by their own idle fancies.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 150-151

September 29 (2 Mashíyyat/Will)

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

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, V, p. 7

September 30 (3 Mashíyyat/Will)

Attract the hearts of men, through the call of Him, the one alone Beloved. Say: This is the Voice of God, if ye do but hearken. This is the Day Spring of the Revelation of God, did ye but know it. This is the Dawning-Place of the Cause of God, were ye to recognize it. This is the Source of the commandment of God, did ye but judge it fairly. This is the manifest and hidden Secret; would that ye might perceive it. O peoples of the world! Cast away, in My name that transcendeth all other names, the things ye possess, and immerse yourselves in this Ocean in whose depths lay hidden the pearls of wisdom and of utterance, an ocean that surgeth in My name, the All-Merciful. Thus instructeth you He with Whom is the Mother Book.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 33-34

October 1 (4 Mashíyyat/Will)

Consider this wronged One. Though the clearest proofs attest the truth of His Cause; though the prophecies He, in an unmistakable language, hath made have been fulfilled; though, in spite of His not being accounted among the learned, His being unschooled and inexperienced in the disputations current among the divines, He hath rained upon men the showers of His manifold and Divinely-inspired knowledge; yet, behold how this generation hath rejected His authority, and rebelled against Him! He hath, during the greater part of His life, been sore-tried in the clutches of His enemies. His sufferings have now reached their culmination in this afflictive Prison, into which His oppressors have so unjustly thrown Him. God grant that, with a penetrating vision and radiant heart, thou mayest observe the things that have come to pass and are now happening, and, pondering them in thine heart, mayest recognize that which most men have, in this Day, failed to perceive. Please God, He may enable thee to inhale the sweet fragrance of His Day, to partake of the limitless effusions of His grace, to quaff thy fill, through His gracious favor, from the most great Ocean that surgeth in this Day in the name of the Ancient King, and to remain firm and immovable as the mountain in His Cause.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 58-59

October 2 (5 Mashíyyat/Will)

To what else if not to the power and majesty which this Administrative Order -- the rudiments of the future all-enfolding Bahá'í Commonwealth -- is destined to manifest, can these utterances of Bahá'u'lláh allude: "The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System -- the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed."

-- Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*. [1938] 1983: 146

October 3 (6 Mashíyyat/Will)

Say: This is the Paradise on whose foliage the wine of utterance hath imprinted the testimony: "He that was hidden from the eyes of men is revealed, girded with sovereignty and power!" This is the Paradise, the rustling of whose leaves proclaims: "O ye that inhabit the heavens and the earth! There hath appeared what hath never previously appeared. He Who, from everlasting, had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come." From the whispering breeze that wafteth amidst its branches there cometh the cry: "He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is made manifest. The Kingdom is God's," while from its streaming waters can be heard the murmur: "All eyes are gladdened, for He Whom none hath beheld, Whose secret no one hath discovered, hath lifted the veil of glory, and uncovered the countenance of Beauty."

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 31-32

October 4 (7 Mashíyyat/Will)

At a time when the Cause of the Bab seemed to be hovering on the brink of extinction, when the hopes and ambitions which animated it had, to all human seeming, been frustrated, when the colossal sacrifices of its unnumbered lovers appeared to have been made in vain, the Divine Promise enshrined within it was about to be suddenly redeemed, and its final perfection mysteriously manifested. The Babi Dispensation was being brought to its close (not prematurely but in its own appointed time), and was yielding its destined fruit and revealing its ultimate purpose -- the birth of the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh. In this most dark and dreadful hour a New Light was about to break in glory on Persia's somber horizon. As a result of what was in fact an evolving, ripening process, the most momentous if not the most spectacular stage in the Heroic Age of the Faith was now about to open.

-- Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*. [1938] 1983: 146

October 5 (8 Mashíyyat/Will)

Teach thou the Cause of God with an utterance which will cause the bushes to be enkindled, and the call 'Verily, there is no God but Me, the Almighty, the Unconstrained' to be raised therefrom. Say: Human utterance is an essence which aspireth to exert its influence and needeth moderation. As to its influence, this is conditional upon refinement which in turn is dependent upon hearts which are detached and pure. As to its moderation, this hath to be combined with tact and wisdom as prescribed in the Holy Scriptures and Tablets. Meditate upon that which hath streamed forth from the heaven of the Will of thy Lord, He Who is the Source of all grace, that thou mayest grasp the intended meaning which is enshrined in the sacred depths of the Holy Writings.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*. p 143

October 6 (9 Mashíyyat/Will)

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.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh. N/D: 166-167

October 7 (10 Mashíyyat/Will)

The animal is the captive of nature and cannot transgress the rules and laws thereof. In man, however, there is a discovering power that transcendeth the world of nature and controlleth and interfereth with the laws thereof. For instance, all minerals, plants and animals are captives of nature. The sun itself with all its majesty is so subservient to nature that it hath no will of its own and cannot deviate a hair's-breadth from the laws thereof. In like manner all other beings, whether of the mineral, the vegetable or the animal world, cannot deviate from the laws of nature, nay, all are the slaves thereof. Man, however, though in body the captive of nature is yet free in his mind and soul, and hath the mastery over nature.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith. [1943] 1976: 338

October 8 (11 Mashíyyat/Will)

It is quite apparent to the seeing mind that a man's spirit is something very different from his physical body.

The spirit is changeless, indestructible. The progress and development of the soul, the joy and sorrow of the soul, are independent of the physical body.

If we are caused joy or pain by a friend, if a love prove true or false, it is the soul that is affected. If our dear ones are far from us -- it is the soul that grieves, and the grief or trouble of the soul may react on the body.

Thus, when the spirit is fed with holy virtues, then is the body joyous; if the soul falls into sin, the body is in torment!

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks. [1912] 1995: 65

October 9 (12 Mashíyyat/Will)

Say: Nature in its essence is the embodiment of My Name, the Maker, the Creator. Its manifestations are diversified by varying causes, and in this diversity there are signs for men of discernment. Nature is God's Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world. It is a dispensation of Providence ordained by the Ordainer, the All-Wise. Were anyone to affirm that it is the Will of God as manifested in the world of being, no one should question this assertion. It is endowed with a power whose reality men of learning fail to grasp. Indeed a man of insight can perceive naught therein save the effulgent splendour of Our Name, the Creator. Say: This is an existence which knoweth no decay, and Nature itself is lost in bewilderment before its revelations, its compelling evidences and its effulgent glory which have encompassed the universe.

It ill beseemeth thee to turn thy gaze unto former or more recent times. Make thou mention of this Day and magnify that which hath appeared therein. It will in truth suffice all mankind. Indeed expositions and discourses in explanation of such things cause the spirits to be chilled. It behoveth thee to speak forth in such wise as to set the hearts of true believers ablaze and cause their bodies to soar.

Whoso firmly believeth today in the rebirth of man and is fully conscious that God, the Most Exalted, wieldeth supreme ascendancy and absolute authority over this new creation, verily such a man is reckoned with them that are endued with insight in this most great Revelation. Unto this beareth witness every discerning believer.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 142

October 10 (13 Mashíyyat/Will)

They that valiantly labour in quest of God's will, when once they have renounced all else but Him, will be so attached and wedded to that City that a moment's separation from it would to them be unthinkable. They will hearken unto infallible proofs from the Hyacinth of that assembly, and receive the surest testimonies from the beauty of its Rose and the melody of its Nightingale. Once in about a thousand years shall this City be renewed and re-adorned.

Wherefore, O my friend, it behooveth Us to exert the highest endeavour to attain unto that City, and, by the grace of God and His loving-kindness, rend asunder the "veils of glory"; so that, with inflexible steadfastness, we may sacrifice our drooping souls in the path of the New Beloved. We should with tearful eyes, fervently and repeatedly, implore Him to grant us the favour of that grace. That city is none other than the Word of God revealed in every age and dispensation. In the days of Moses it was the Pentateuch; in the days of Jesus the Gospel; in the days of Muhammad the Messenger of God the Qur'an; in this day the Bayan; and in the dispensation of Him Whom God will make manifest His own Book -- the Book unto which all the Books of former Dispensations must needs be referred, the Book which standeth amongst them all transcendent and supreme. In these cities spiritual sustenance is bountifully provided, and incorruptible delights have been ordained. The food they bestow is the bread of heaven, and the Spirit they impart is God's imperishable blessing. Upon detached souls they bestow the gift of Unity, enrich the destitute, and offer the cup of knowledge unto them who wander in the wilderness of ignorance. All the guidance, the blessings, the learning, the understanding, the faith, and certitude, conferred upon all that is in heaven and on earth, are hidden and treasured within these Cities.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Iqan, pp. 198 - 200

October 11 (14 Mashíyyat/Will)

Brother! Not every sea hath pearls; not every branch will flower, nor will the nightingale sing thereon. Then, ere the nightingale of the mystic paradise repair to the garden of God, and the rays of the heavenly morning return to the Sun of Truth -- make thou an effort, that haply in this dust heap of the mortal world thou mayest catch a fragrance from the everlasting garden, and live forever in the shadow of the peoples of this city. And when thou hast attained this highest station and come to this mightiest plane, then shalt thou gaze on the Beloved, and forget all else.

The Beloved shineth on gate and all Without a veil, O men of vision. [1]

Now hast thou abandoned the drop of life and come to the sea of the Life-Bestower. This is the goal thou didst ask for; if it be God's will, thou wilt gain it.

[1 Faridu'd-Din Attar (ca. 1150-1230 A.D.), the great Persian Sufi poet.]

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys*, pp. 38 - 39

October 12 (15 Mashíyyat/Will)

The question of Guidance is a very subtle one. We cannot be positive that an impulse or a dream is guidance. We can seek, through earnest prayer and longing, sincerely to do God's will, His guidance. We can try, as you say, to emulate the Master and at all times live up to the teachings, but we cannot be sure that doing these things we will still make no mistakes and are perfectly guided. These things help us not to make so many mistakes and to receive more directly the guidance God seeks to give us.

-- Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, p. 35

October 13 (16 Mashíyyat/Will)

It should also be borne in mind that, great as is the power manifested by this Revelation and however vast the range of the Dispensation its Author has inaugurated, it emphatically repudiates the claim to be regarded as the final revelation of God's will and purpose for mankind. To hold such a conception of its character and functions would be tantamount to a betrayal of its cause and a denial of its truth. It must necessarily conflict with the fundamental principle which constitutes the bedrock of Bahá'í belief, the principle that religious truth is not absolute but relative, that Divine Revelation is orderly, continuous and progressive and not spasmodic or final. Indeed, the categorical rejection by the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh of the claim to finality which any religious system inaugurated by the Prophets of the past may advance is as clear and emphatic as their own refusal to claim that same finality for the Revelation with which they stand identified. "To believe that all revelation is ended, that the portals of Divine mercy are closed, that from the daysprings of eternal holiness no sun shall rise again, that the ocean of everlasting bounty is forever stilled, and that out of the tabernacle of ancient glory the Messengers of God have ceased to be made manifest" must constitute in the eyes of every follower of the Faith a grace, an inexcusable departure from one of its most cherished and fundamental principles.

-- Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 115 - 116

October 14 (17 Mashíyyat/Will)

O people of the world!

The dawn of the Sun of Reality is assuredly for the illumination of the world and for the manifestation of mercy. In the assemblage of the family of Adam results and fruits are praiseworthy, and the holy bestowals of every bounty are abundant. It is an absolute mercy and a complete bounty, the illumination of the world, fellowship and harmony, love and union; nay, rather, mercifulness and oneness, the elimination of discord and the unity of whosoever are on the earth in the utmost of freedom and dignity. The Blessed Beauty said: "All are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch." He likened the world of existence to one tree and all the souls to leaves, blossoms and fruits. Therefore all the branches, leaves, blossoms and fruits must be in the utmost of freshness, and the bringing about of this delicacy and sweetness depends upon union and fellowship. Therefore they must assist each other with all their power and seek everlasting life.

Thus the friends of God must manifest the mercy of the Compassionate Lord in the world of existence and must show forth the bounty of the visible and invisible King. They must purify their sight, and look upon mankind as the leaves, blossoms and fruits of the tree of creation, and must always be thinking of doing good to someone, of love, consideration, affection and assistance to somebody. They must see no enemy and count no one as an ill wisher. They must consider every one on the earth as a friend; regard the stranger as an intimate, and the alien as a companion. They must not be bound by any tie, nay, rather, they should be free from every bond. In this day the one who is favored in the threshold of grandeur is the one who offers the cup of faithfulness and bestows the pearl of gift to the enemies, even to the fallen oppressor, lends a helping hand, and considers every bitter foe as an affectionate friend.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, pp. 215 - 216

October 15 (18 Mashíyyat/Will)

These are the commands of the Blessed Beauty, these are the counsels of the Greatest Name. O ye dear friends! The world is engaged in war and struggle, and mankind is in the utmost conflict and danger. The darkness of unfaithfulness has enshrouded the earth and the illumination of faithfulness has become concealed. All nations and tribes of the world have sharpened their claws and are warring and fighting with each other. The edifice of man is shattered. Thousands of families are wandering disconsolate. Thousands of souls are besmeared with dust and blood in the arena of battle and struggle every year, and the tent of happiness and life is overthrown. The prominent men become commanders and boast of bloodshed, and glory and destruction. One says: "I have severed with my sword the necks of a nation," and one: "I have levelled a kingdom to the dust"; and another: "I have overthrown the foundation of a government." This is the pivot around which the pride and glory of mankind are revolving. In all regions friendship and uprightness are denounced and reconciliation is the Religion of the Blessed Beauty which has pitched its tent on the apex of the world and proclaimed its summons to the people.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, pp. 216 - 217

October 16 (19 Mashíyyat/Will)

Public opinion must be directed toward whatever is worthy of this day, and this is impossible except through the use of adequate arguments and the adducing of clear, comprehensive and conclusive proofs. For the helpless masses know nothing of the world, and while there is no doubt that they seek and long for their own happiness, yet ignorance like a heavy veil shuts them away from it.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization, p. 110

October 17 (1 'Ilm/Knowledge)

O handmaid of the Lord! Speak thou no word of politics; thy task concerneth the life of the soul, for this verily leadeth to man's joy in the world of God. Except to speak well of them, make thou no mention of the earth's kings, and the worldly governments thereof. Rather, confine thine utterance to spreading the blissful tidings of the Kingdom of God, and demonstrating the influence of the Word of God, and the holiness of the Cause of God. Tell thou of abiding joy and spiritual delights, and godlike qualities, and of how the Sun of Truth hath risen above the earth's horizons: tell of the blowing of the spirit of life into the body of the world.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 92-93

October 18 (2 'Ilm/Knowledge)

What are the fruits of the human world? They are the spiritual attributes which appear in man. If man is bereft of those attributes, he is like a fruitless tree. One whose aspiration is lofty and who has developed self-reliance will not be content with a mere animal existence. He will seek the divine Kingdom; he will long to be in heaven although he still walks the earth in his material body, and though his outer visage be physical, his face of inner reflection will become spiritual and heavenly. Until this station is attained by man, his life will be utterly devoid of real outcomes.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 336

October 19 (3 'Ilm/Knowledge)

27. In cycles gone by, each one of the Manifestations of God hath had His own rank in the world of existence, and each hath represented a stage in the development of humanity. But the Manifestation of the Most Great Name -- may my life be a sacrifice for His loved ones -- was an expression of the coming of age, the maturing of man's inmost reality in this world of being. For the sun is the source and well-spring of light and heat, the focal point of splendours, and it compriseth all the perfections that are made manifest by the other stars which have dawned upon the world. Make thou an effort that thou mayest take thy place under the sun and receive an abundant share of its dazzling light. In truth do I tell thee, once thou hast attained this station, thou shalt behold the saints bowing down their heads in all humility before Him. Haste thou to life before death cometh; haste thou to the spring season before autumn draweth in; and before illness striketh, haste thou to healing -- that thou mayest become a physician of the spirit who, with the breaths of the Holy Spirit, healeth all manner of sickness in this famed and glorious age.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 56-57

October 20 (4 'Ilm/Knowledge)

This glorious Tablet hath been revealed on the Anniversary of the Birth [of the Bab] that thou mayest recite it in a spirit of humility and supplication and give thanks unto thy Lord, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. Make thou every effort to render service unto God, that from thee may appear that which will immortalize thy memory in His glorious and exalted heaven.

Say: Glorified art Thou, O my God! I implore Thee by the Dawning-Place of Thy signs and by the Revealer of Thy clear tokens to grant that I may, under all conditions, hold fast the cord of Thy loving providence and cling tenaciously to the hem of Thy generosity. Reckon me then with those whom the changes and chances of the world have failed to deter from serving Thee and from bearing allegiance unto Thee, whom the onslaught of the people hath been powerless to hinder from magnifying Thy Name and celebrating Thy praise. Graciously assist me, O my Lord, to do whatever Thou lovest and desirest. Enable me then to fulfil that which will exalt Thy Name and will set ablaze the fire of Thy love.

Thou art, in truth, the Forgiving, the Bountiful.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 233

October 21 (5 'Ilm/Knowledge)

IT is better to guide one soul than to possess all that is on earth, for as long as that guided soul is under the shadow of the Tree of Divine Unity, he and the one who hath guided him will both be recipients of God's tender mercy, whereas possession of earthly things will cease at the time of

death. The path to guidance is one of love and compassion, not of force and coercion. This hath been God's method in the past, and shall continue to be in the future! He causeth him whom He pleaseth to enter the shadow of His Mercy. Verily, He is the Supreme Protector, the All-Generous.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 74

October 22 (6 'Ilm/Knowledge)

Wert thou to open the heart of a single soul by helping him to embrace the Cause of Him Whom God shall make manifest, thine inmost being would be filled with the inspirations of that august Name. It devolveth upon you, therefore, to perform this task in the Days of Resurrection, inasmuch as most people are helpless, and wert thou to open their hearts and dispel their doubts, they would gain admittance into the Faith of God. Therefore, manifest thou this attribute to the utmost of thine ability in the days of Him Whom God shall make manifest. For indeed if thou dost open the heart of a person for His sake, better will it be for thee than every virtuous deed; since deeds are secondary to faith in Him and certitude in His Reality. XVII, 15.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 133

October 23 (7 'Ilm/Knowledge)

Say: The measure of all created things hath been appointed in this concealed and manifest Temple, wherein lie enshrined the knowledge of the heavens and the earth, and of all things past and future. The finger of God's handiwork hath inscribed upon this Tablet that which the wisest and most learned of men are powerless to fathom, and hath created therein temples inscrutable to all save His own Self, could ye but apprehend this truth. Blessed be the one who readeth it, who pondereth its contents, and who is numbered with them that comprehend!

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, 1.43, p. 22

October 24 (8 'Ilm/Knowledge)

O Temple of Holiness! We, verily, have made Thine inmost heart the treasury of all the knowledge of past and future ages, and the dawning-place of Our own knowledge which We have ordained for the dwellers of earth and heaven, that all creation may partake of the outpourings of Thy grace and may attain, through the wonders of Thy knowledge, unto the recognition of God, the Exalted, the Powerful, the Great. In truth, that knowledge which belongeth unto Mine own Essence is such as none hath ever attained or will ever grasp, nor shall any heart be capable of bearing its weight. Were We to disclose but a single word of this knowledge, the hearts of all men would be filled with consternation, the foundations of all things would crumble into ruin, and the feet of even the wisest among men would be made to slip.

Within the treasury of Our Wisdom there lieth unrevealed a knowledge, one word of which, if we chose to divulge it to mankind, would cause every human being to recognize the Manifestation of God and to acknowledge His omniscience, would enable every one to discover the secrets of all the sciences, and to attain so high a station as to find himself wholly independent of all past and future learning. Other knowledges We do as well possess, not a single letter of which We can disclose, nor do We find humanity able to hear even the barest reference to their meaning. Thus have We informed you of the knowledge of God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Were We to find worthy vessels, We would deposit within them the treasures of hidden meanings and impart unto them a knowledge, one letter of which would encompass all created things.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, 1.65-1.66, p. 34-35

October 25 (9 'Ilm/Knowledge)

Say: Of all that lieth between heaven and earth, naught can stir except by My leave, and unto My Kingdom none can ascend save at My behest. My creatures, however, have remained veiled from My might and My sovereignty, and are numbered with the heedless. Say: Naught is seen in My revelation but the Revelation of God, and in My might but His Might, could ye but know it. Say: My creatures are even as the leaves of a tree. They proceed from the tree, and depend upon it for their existence, yet remain oblivious of their root and origin. We draw such similitudes for the sake of Our discerning servants that perchance they may transcend a mere plant -- like level of existence and attain unto true maturity in this resistless and immovable Cause. Say: My creatures are even as the fish of the deep. Their life dependeth upon the water, and yet they remain unaware of that which, by the grace of an omniscient and omnipotent Lord, sustaineth their very existence. Indeed, their heedlessness is such that were they asked concerning the water and its properties, they would prove entirely ignorant. Thus do We set forth comparisons and similitudes, that perchance the people may turn unto Him Who is the Object of the adoration of the entire creation.

O people! Fear God, and disbelieve not in Him Whose grace hath surrounded all things, Whose mercy hath pervaded the contingent world, and the sovereign potency of Whose Cause hath encompassed both your inner and your outer beings, both your beginning and your end. Stand ye in awe of the Lord, and be of them that act uprightly. Beware lest ye be accounted among those who allow the verses of their Lord to pass them by unheard and unrecognized; these, truly, are of the wayward.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, #1.76-1.77, p. 40-41

October 26 (10 'Ilm/Knowledge)

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, #1.88, p. 47-48

October 27 (11 'Ilm/Knowledge)

Say: O peoples of the earth! Destroy the abodes of negligence with the hands of power and assurance, and raise up the mansions of true knowledge within your hearts, that the All-Merciful may shed the radiance of His light upon them. Better is this for you than all whereon the sun shineth, and unto this beareth witness He Who holdeth within His grasp the ultimate decree. The Breeze of God hath been wafted over the world at the advent of the Desired One in His great glory,

whereupon every stone and clod of earth hath cried out: “The Promised One is come! The Kingdom is God’s, the Mighty, the Gracious, the Forgiving.”

Beware lest human learning debar thee from Him Who is the Supreme Object of all knowledge, or lest the world deter thee from the One Who created it and set it upon its course. Arise in the name of thy Lord, the God of Mercy, amidst the peoples of the earth, and seize thou the Cup of Life with the hands of confidence. First drink thou therefrom, and proffer it then to such as turn towards it amongst the peoples of all faiths. Thus hath the Moon of Utterance risen above the horizon of wisdom and understanding.

Tear asunder the veils of human learning lest they hinder thee from Him Who is My name, the Self-Subsisting. Call thou to remembrance Him Who was the Spirit, Who, when He came, the most learned of His age pronounced judgement against Him in His own country, whilst he who was only a fisherman believed in Him. Take heed, then, ye men of understanding heart! Thou, in truth, art one of the suns of the heaven of His names. Guard thyself, lest darkness spread its veils over thee, and fold thee away from His light. Ponder, then, that which hath been sent down in the Book by thy Lord, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, #1.104-.106, p. 55-56

October 28 (12 ‘Ilm/Knowledge)

That which God -- glorified be His Name! -- hath desired for Himself is the hearts of His servants, which are the treasuries of His love and remembrance and the repositories of His knowledge and wisdom. It hath ever been the wish of the Eternal King to cleanse the hearts of His servants from the things of the world and all that pertaineth thereunto, that they may be made worthy recipients of the effulgent splendours of Him Who is the King of all names and attributes. Wherefore must no stranger be allowed in the city of the heart, that the incomparable Friend may enter His abode. By this is meant the effulgence of His names and attributes, and not His exalted Essence, inasmuch as that peerless King hath ever been, and shall eternally remain, sanctified above ascent and descent.

It followeth, therefore, that rendering assistance unto God, in this day, doth not and shall never consist in contending or disputing with any soul; nay rather, what is preferable in the sight of God is that the cities of men’s hearts, which are ruled by the hosts of self and passion, should be subdued by the sword of utterance, of wisdom and of understanding. Thus, whoso seeketh to assist God must, before all else, conquer, with the sword of inner meaning and explanation, the city of his own heart and guard it from the remembrance of all save God, and only then set out to subdue the cities of the hearts of others.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, 1.211-1.212, p. 109-110

October 29 (13 ‘Ilm/Knowledge)

Say: The Sun of vicegerency hath dawned, the Point of knowledge and wisdom hath been made plain, and the Testimony of God, the Almighty, the All-Wise, hath been made manifest. Say: The Moon of eternity hath risen in the midmost heaven, and its light hath illumined the dwellers of the realms above. My face hath come forth from the veils, and shed its radiance upon all that is in heaven and on earth; and yet, ye turned not towards Him, notwithstanding that ye were created for Him, O concourse of kings! Follow, therefore, that which I speak unto you, and hearken unto it

with your hearts, and be not of such as have turned aside. For your glory consisteth not in your sovereignty, but rather in your nearness unto God and your observance of His command as sent down in His holy and preserved Tablets. Should any one of you rule over the whole earth, and over all that lieth within it and upon it, its seas, its lands, its mountains, and its plains, and yet be not remembered by God, all these would profit him not, could ye but know it.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, #5.4, p. 186-187

October 30 (14 'Ilm/Knowledge)

The instruments which are essential to the immediate protection, the security and assurance of the human race have been entrusted to the hands, and lie in the grasp, of the governors of human society ... We cherish the hope that one of the kings of the earth will, for the sake of God, arise for the triumph of this wronged, this oppressed people ... God hath prescribed unto this people the duty of aiding whosoever will aid them, of serving his best interests, and of demonstrating to him their abiding loyalty. They who follow Me must strive, under all circumstances, to promote the welfare of whosoever will arise for the triumph of My Cause, and must at all times prove their devotion and fidelity unto him. Happy is the man that hearkeneth and observeth My counsel.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 207

October 31 (15 'Ilm/Knowledge)

The fourth Taraz concerneth trustworthiness. Verily it is the door of security for all that dwell on earth and a token of glory on the part of the All-Merciful. He who partaketh thereof hath indeed partaken of the treasures of wealth and prosperity. Trustworthiness is the greatest portal leading unto the tranquillity and security of the people. In truth the stability of every affair hath depended and doth depend upon it. All the domains of power, of grandeur and of wealth are illumined by its light.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 37

November 1 (16 'Ilm/Knowledge)

The divine Prophets came to establish the unity of the Kingdom in human hearts. All of them proclaimed the glad tidings of the divine bestowals to the world of mankind. All brought the same message of divine love to the world. Jesus Christ gave His life upon the cross for the unity of mankind. Those who believed in Him likewise sacrificed life, honour, possessions, family, everything, that this human world might be released from the hell of discord, enmity and strife. His foundation was the oneness of humanity. Only a few were attracted to Him. They were not the kings and rulers of His time. They were not rich and important people. Some of them were catchers of fish. Most of them were ignorant men, not trained in the knowledge of this world. One of the greatest of them, Peter, could not remember the days of the week. All of them were men of the least consequence in the eyes of the world. But their hearts were pure and attracted by the fires of the Divine Spirit manifested in Christ. With this small army Christ conquered the world of the East and the West. Kings and nations rose against Him. Philosophers and the greatest men of learning assailed and blasphemed His Cause. All were defeated and overcome, their tongues silenced, their lamps extinguished, their hatred quenched; no trace of them now remains. They have become as nonexistent, while His Kingdom is triumphant and eternal.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 5

November 2 (17 'Ilm/Knowledge)

2. 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 neighbor. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behooveth 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, *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 3-4

November 3 (18 'Ilm/Knowledge)

... The three inseparable participants in the evolution of the new World Order -- the individual, the institutions, and the community -- must now demonstrate more tangibly than ever before their capacity and willingness to embrace masses of new adherents, to effect the spiritual and administrative transformation of thousands upon thousands, and, above all, to multiply the army of knowledgeable, consecrated teachers of a Faith whose emergence from obscurity must be registered on the consciousness of countless multitudes throughout the earth.

-- *The Universal House of Justice*, 1996 Ridvan Message, p. 12

November 4 (19 'Ilm/Knowledge)

The purpose of the creation of man is the attainment of the supreme virtues of humanity through descent of the heavenly bestowals. The purpose of man's creation is, therefore, unity and harmony, not discord and separateness. If the atoms which compose the kingdom of the minerals were without affinity for each other, the earth would never have been formed, the universe could not have been created. Because they have affinity for each other, the power of life is able to manifest itself, and the organisms of the phenomenal world become possible. When this attraction or atomic affinity is destroyed, the power of life ceases to manifest; death and nonexistence result. It is so, likewise, in the spiritual world. That world is the Kingdom of complete attraction and affinity. It is the Kingdom of the One Divine Spirit, the Kingdom of God... When the souls become separated and selfish, the divine bounties do not descend, and the lights of the Supreme Concourse are no longer reflected even though the bodies meet together. A mirror with its back turned to the sun has no power to reflect the sun's effulgence. Praise be to God!

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 4

November 5 (1 Quدرات/Power)

A tempest, unprecedented in its violence, unpredictable in its course, catastrophic in its immediate effects, unimaginably glorious in its ultimate consequences, is at present sweeping the face of the earth. Its driving power is remorselessly gaining in range and momentum. Its cleansing force, however much undetected, is increasing with every passing day. Humanity, gripped in the clutches of its devastating power, is smitten by the evidences of its resistless fury. It can neither perceive its origin, nor probe its significance, nor discern its outcome. Bewildered, agonized and helpless, it watches this great and mighty wind of God invading the remotest and fairest regions of the earth, rocking its foundations, deranging its equilibrium, sundering its nations, disrupting the homes of its peoples, wasting its cities, driving into exile its kings, pulling down its bulwarks, uprooting its institutions, dimming its light, and harrowing up the souls of its inhabitants.

-- Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 3

November 6 (2 Qudrat/Power)

The most important thing is to polish the mirrors of hearts in order that they may become illumined and receptive of the divine light. One heart may possess the capacity of the polished mirror; another be covered and obscured by the dust and dross of this world. Although the same Sun is shining upon both, in the mirror which is polished, pure and sanctified you may behold the Sun in all its fullness, glory and power revealing its majesty and effulgence, but in the mirror which is rusted and obscured there is no capacity for reflection although so far as the Sun itself is concerned it is shining thereon and is neither lessened nor deprived. Therefore our duty lies in seeking to polish the mirrors of our hearts in order that we shall become reflectors of that light and recipients of the divine bounties which may be fully revealed through them.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 218

November 7 (3 Qudrat/Power)

... Therefore our duty lies in seeking to polish the mirrors of our hearts in order that we shall become reflectors of that light and recipients of the divine bounties which may be fully revealed through them.

This means the oneness of the world of humanity. That is to say, when this human body-politic reaches a state of absolute unity, the effulgence of the eternal Sun will make its fullest light and heat manifest. Therefore we must not make distinctions between individual members of the human family. We must not consider any soul as barren or deprived. Our duty lies in educating souls so that the Sun of the bestowals of God shall become resplendent in them, and this is possible through the power of the oneness of humanity. The more love is expressed among mankind and the stronger the power of unity, the greater will be this reflection and revelation, for the greatest bestowal of God is love. Love is the source of all the bestowals of God. Until love takes possession of the heart no other divine bounty can be revealed in it.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 218

November 8 (4 Qudrat/Power)

All the prophets have striven to make love manifest in the hearts of men. His Holiness Jesus Christ sought to create this love in the hearts. He suffered all difficulties and ordeals that perchance the human heart might become the fountain-source of love. Therefore we must strive with all our heart and soul that this love may take possession of us so that all humanity whether it be in the east or in the west may be connected through the bond of this divine affection; for we are all the waves of one sea; we have come into being through the same bestowal and are recipients from the same center. The lights of earth are all acceptable, but the center of effulgence is the sun and we must direct our gaze to the sun. God is the supreme center. The more we turn toward this center of light, the greater will be our capacity.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 218

November 9 (5 Qudrat/Power)

A tempest, unprecedented in its violence, unpredictable in its course, catastrophic in its immediate effects, unimaginably glorious in its ultimate consequences, is at present sweeping the face of the earth. Its driving power is remorselessly gaining in range and momentum. Its cleansing force, however much undetected, is increasing with every passing day. Humanity, gripped in the clutches of its devastating power, is smitten by the evidences of its resistless fury. It can neither perceive its

origin, nor probe its significance, nor discern its outcome. Bewildered, agonized and helpless, it watches this great and mighty wind of God invading the remotest and fairest regions of the earth, rocking its foundations, deranging its equilibrium, sundering its nations, disrupting the homes of its peoples, wasting its cities, driving into exile its kings, pulling down its bulwarks, uprooting its institutions, dimming its light, and harrowing up the souls of its inhabitants.

-- Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 3

November 10 (6 Qudrat/Power)

In the Orient there were great differences among races and peoples. They hated each other and there was no association among them. Various and divergent sects were hostile, irreconcilable. The different races were in constant war and conflict. About sixty years ago Bahá'u'lláh appeared upon the eastern horizon. He caused love and unity to become manifest among these antagonistic peoples. He united them with the bond of love; their former hatred and animosity passed away; love and unity reigned instead. It was a dark world; it became radiant. A new springtime appeared through Him, for the Sun of Truth had risen again. In the fields and meadows of human hearts variegated flowers of inner significance were blooming and the good fruits of the kingdom of God became manifest.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, pp. 218 - 219

November 11 (7 Qudrat/Power)

I have come here with this mission; that through your endeavors, through your heavenly morals, through your devoted efforts a perfect bond of unity and love may be established between the east and the west, so that the bestowals of God may descend upon all and that all may be seen to be the parts of the same tree, -- the great tree of the human family. For mankind may be likened to the branches, leaves, blossoms and fruit of that tree.

The favors of God are unending, limitless. Infinite bounties have encompassed the world. We must emulate the bounties of God, and just as each one of them -- the bounty of life for instance -- surrounds and encompasses all, so likewise must we be connected and blended together until each part shall become the expression of the whole.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, pp. 218 - 219

November 12 (8 Qudrat/Power)

Religion is the outer expression of the divine reality. Therefore it must be living, vitalized, moving and progressive. If it be without motion and non-progressive it is without the divine life; it is dead. The divine institutes are continuously active and evolutionary; therefore the revelation of them must be progressive and continuous. All things are subject to re-formation. This is a century of life and renewal. Sciences and arts, industry and invention have been reformed. Law and ethics have been reconstituted, reorganized. The world of thought has been regenerated. Sciences of former ages and philosophies of the past are useless today. Present exigencies demand new methods of solution; world problems are without precedent. Old ideas and modes of thought are fast becoming obsolete. Ancient laws and archaic ethical systems will not meet the requirements of modern conditions, for this is clearly the century of a new life, the century of the revelation of the reality and therefore the greatest of all centuries. Consider how the scientific developments of fifty years have surpassed and eclipsed the knowledge and achievements of all the former ages combined. Would the announcements and theories of ancient astronomers explain our present knowledge of

the sun-worlds and planetary systems? Would the mask of obscurity which beclouded mediaeval centuries meet the demand for clear-eyed vision and understanding which characterizes the world today? Will the despotism of former governments answer the call for freedom which has risen from the heart of humanity in this cycle of illumination? It is evident that no vital results are now forthcoming from the customs, institutions and standpoints of the past. In view of this, shall blind imitations of ancestral forms and theological interpretations continue to guide and control the religious life and spiritual development of humanity today? Shall man gifted with the power of reason unthinkingly follow and adhere to dogma, creeds and hereditary beliefs which will not bear the analysis of reason in this century of effulgent reality? Unquestionably this will not satisfy men of science, for when they find premise or conclusion contrary to present standards of proof and without real foundation, they reject that which has been formerly accepted as standard and correct and move forward from new foundations.

The divine prophets have revealed and founded religion. They have laid down certain laws and heavenly principles for the guidance of mankind. They have taught and promulgated the knowledge of God, established praiseworthy ethical ideals and inculcated the highest standards of virtues in the human world. Gradually these heavenly teachings and foundations of reality have been beclouded by human interpretations and dogmatic imitations of ancestral beliefs. The essential realities which the prophets labored so hard to establish in human hearts and minds while undergoing ordeals and suffering tortures of persecution, have now well nigh vanished. Some of these heavenly messengers have been killed, some imprisoned; all of them despised and rejected while proclaiming the reality of divinity. Soon after their departure from this world, the essential truth of their teachings was lost sight of and dogmatic imitations adhered to.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, pp. 224 - 225

November 13 (9 Qudrat/Power)

It followeth, therefore, that rendering assistance unto God, in this day, doth not and shall never consist in contending or disputing with any soul; nay rather, what is preferable in the sight of God is that the cities of men's hearts, which are ruled by the hosts of self and passion, should be subdued by the sword of utterance, of wisdom and of understanding. Thus, whoso seeketh to assist God must, before all else, conquer, with the sword of inner meaning and explanation, the city of his own heart and guard it from the remembrance of all save God, and only then set out to subdue the cities of the hearts of others.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, p. 109-110

November 14 (10 Qudrat/Power)

O MY God, O my Lord, O my Master! I beg Thee to forgive me for seeking any pleasure save Thy love, or any comfort except Thy nearness, or any delight besides Thy good-pleasure, or any existence other than communion with Thee.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 216

November 15 (11 Qudrat/Power)

In formulating the principles and laws a part hath been devoted to penalties which form an effective instrument for the security and protection of men. However, dread of the penalties maketh people desist only outwardly from committing vile and contemptible deeds, while that which guardeth and

restraineth man both outwardly and inwardly hath been and still is the fear of God. It is man's true protector and his spiritual guardian.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 93

November 16 (12 Qudrat/Power)

O LEADERS of religion! Weigh not the Book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring balance established amongst men. In this most perfect balance whatsoever the peoples and kindreds of the earth possess must be weighed, while the measure of its weight should be tested according to its own standard, did ye but know it.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 67

November 17 (13 Qudrat/Power)

Say: God sufficeth unto me; He is the One Who holdeth in His grasp the kingdom of all things. Through the power of His hosts of heaven and earth and whatever lieth between them, He protecteth whomsoever among His servants He willeth. God, in truth, keepeth watch over all things.

Immeasurably exalted art Thou, O Lord! Protect us from what lieth in front of us and behind us, above our heads, on our right, on our left, below our feet and every other side to which we are exposed. Verily Thy protection over all things is unailing.[1]

[1 The original of this prayer for protection is written in the Bab's own hand, in the form of a pentacle.]

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 171

November 18 (14 Qudrat/Power)

The whole duty of man in this Day is to attain that share of the flood of grace which God poureth forth for him. Let none, therefore, consider the largeness or smallness of the receptacle. The portion of some might lie in the palm of a man's hand, the portion of others might fill a cup, and of others even a gallon-measure.

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

November 19 (15 Qudrat/Power)

The ninth Glad-Tidings

When the sinner findeth himself wholly detached and freed from all save God, he should beg forgiveness and pardon from Him. Confession of sins and transgressions before human beings is not permissible, as it hath never been nor will ever be conducive to divine forgiveness. Moreover such confession before people results in one's humiliation and abasement, and God -- exalted be His glory -- wisheth not the humiliation of His servants. Verily He is the Compassionate, the Merciful.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 24

November 20 (16 Qudrat/Power)

Say: Blessed the slumberer who is awakened by My Breeze. Blessed the lifeless one who is quickened through My reviving breaths. Blessed the eye that is solaced by gazing at My beauty. Blessed the wayfarer who directeth his steps towards the Tabernacle of My glory and majesty. Blessed the distressed one who seeketh refuge beneath the shadow of My canopy. Blessed the sore

athirst who hasteneth to the soft-flowing waters of My loving-kindness. Blessed the insatiate soul who casteth away his selfish desires for love of Me and taketh his place at the banquet table which I have sent down from the heaven of divine bounty for My chosen ones. Blessed the abased one who layeth fast hold on the cord of My glory; and the needy one who entereth beneath the shadow of the Tabernacle of My wealth. Blessed the ignorant one who seeketh the fountain of My knowledge; and the heedless one who cleaveth to the cord of My remembrance. Blessed the soul that hath been raised to life through My quickening breath and hath gained admittance into My heavenly Kingdom. Blessed the man whom the sweet savours of reunion with Me have stirred and caused to draw nigh unto the Dayspring of My Revelation.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 16

November 21 (17 Qudrat/Power)

Blessed the ear that hath heard and the tongue that hath borne witness and the eye that hath seen and recognized the Lord Himself, in His great glory and majesty, invested with grandeur and dominion. Blessed are they that have attained His presence. Blessed the man who hath sought enlightenment from the Day-Star of My Word. Blessed he who hath attired his head with the diadem of My love. Blessed is he who hath heard of My grief and hath arisen to aid Me among My people. Blessed is he who hath laid down his life in My path and hath borne manifold hardships for the sake of My Name. Blessed the man who, assured of My Word, hath arisen from among the dead to celebrate My praise. Blessed is he that hath been enraptured by My wondrous melodies and hath rent the veils asunder through the potency of My might. Blessed is he who hath remained faithful to My Covenant, and whom the things of the world have not kept back from attaining My Court of holiness. Blessed is the man who hath detached himself from all else but Me, hath soared in the atmosphere of My love, hath gained admittance into My Kingdom, gazed upon My realms of glory, quaffed the living waters of My bounty, hath drunk his fill from the heavenly river of My loving providence, acquainted himself with My Cause, apprehended that which I concealed within the treasury of My Words, and hath shone forth from the horizon of divine knowledge engaged in My praise and glorification. Verily, he is of Me. Upon him rest My mercy, My loving-kindness, My bounty and My glory.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 16-17

November 22 (18 Qudrat/Power)

O ye servants of the Blessed Beauty!... It is clear that in this day, confirmations from the unseen world are encompassing all those who deliver the divine Message. Should the work of teaching lapse, these confirmations would be entirely cut off, since it is impossible for the loved ones of God to receive assistance unless they teach.

Under all conditions, the teaching must be carried forward, but with wisdom. If the work cannot proceed openly, then let them teach in private, and thus engender spirituality and fellowship among the children of men. If, for example, each and every one of the believers would become a true friend to one of the unheeding, and, conducting himself with absolute rectitude, associate with this soul, treat him with the utmost kindness, himself exemplify the divine instructions he hath received, the good qualities and behaviour patterns, and at all times act in accord with the admonitions of God -- it is certain that little by little he will succeed in awakening that previously heedless individual, and in changing his ignorance to knowledge of the truth.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 264-265

November 23 (19 Qudrat/Power)

O ye that dwell on earth! The distinguishing feature that marketh the preeminent character of this Supreme Revelation consisteth in that We have, on the one hand, blotted out from the pages of God's holy Book whatsoever hath been the cause of strife, of malice and mischief amongst the children of men, and have, on the other, laid down the essential prerequisites of concord, of understanding, of complete and enduring unity. Well is it with them that keep My statutes.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 97

November 24 (1 Qawl/Speech)

Consider the eagerness with which certain peoples and nations have anticipated the return of Imam-Husayn, whose coming, after the appearance of the Qa'im, hath been prophesied, in days past, by the chosen ones of God, exalted be His glory. These holy ones have, moreover, announced that when He Who is the Day Spring of the manifold grace of God manifesteth Himself, all the Prophets and Messengers, including the Qa'im, will gather together beneath the shadow of the sacred Standard which the Promised One will raise. That hour is now come. The world is illumined with the effulgent glory of His countenance. And yet, behold how far its peoples have strayed from His path! None have believed in Him except them who, through the power of the Lord of Names, have shattered the idols of their vain imaginings and corrupt desires and entered the city of certitude. The seal of the choice Wine of His Revelation hath, in this Day and in His Name, the Self-Sufficing, been broken. Its grace is being poured out upon men. Fill thy cup, and drink in, in His Name, the Most Holy, the All-Praised.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, IX, p. 11

November 25 (2 Qawl/Speech)

O Friends of the Pure and Omnipotent God! To be pure and holy in all things is an attribute of the consecrated soul and a necessary characteristic of the unenslaved mind. The best of perfections is immaculacy and the freeing of oneself from every defect. Once the individual is, in every respect, cleansed and purified, then will he become a focal centre reflecting the Manifest Light.

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

This is why, in Holy Scriptures, the counsels of heaven are likened to water, even as the Qur'an saith: 'And pure water send We down from Heaven,'[1] and the Gospel: 'Except a man be baptized of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.'[2] Thus is it clear that the Teachings which come from God are heavenly outpourings of grace; they are rain-showers of divine mercy, and they cleanse the human heart.

[1 Qur'an 25:50]

[2 cf. John 3:5]

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, #129, p. 146

November 26 (3 Qawl/Speech)

Say: If it be Our pleasure We shall render the Cause victorious through the power of a single word from Our presence. He is in truth the Omnipotent, the All-Compelling. Should it be God's intention, there would appear out of the forests of celestial might the lion of indomitable strength whose roaring is like unto the peals of thunder reverberating in the mountains. However, since Our loving providence surpasseth all things, We have ordained that complete victory should be achieved through speech and utterance, that Our servants throughout the earth may thereby become the recipients of divine good. This is but a token of God's bounty vouchsafed unto them. Verily thy Lord is the All-Sufficing, the Most Exalted.

-- Bahá'u'lláh -- Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh:197-198

November 27 (4 Qawl/Speech)

Among these children many blessed souls will arise, if they be trained according to the Bahá'í Teachings. If a plant is carefully Nurtured by a gardener, it will become good, and produce better fruit. These children must be given a good training from their earliest childhood. They must be given a systematic training which will further their development from day to day, in order that they may receive greater insight, so that their spiritual receptivity be broadened. Beginning in childhood they must receive instruction. They cannot be taught through books. Many elementary sciences must be made clear to them in the Nursery; they must learn in play, in amusement. Most ideas must be taught them through speech, not by book learning. One child must question the other concerning these things, and the other child must give the answer. In this way, they will make great progress. For example, mathematical problems must also be taught in the form of questions and answers. One of the children asks a question and the other must give the answer. Later on, the children will of their own accord speak with each other concerning these same subjects. The children who are at the head of the class must receive premiums. They must be encouraged and when any one of them shows good advancement, for the further development they must be praised and encouraged therein. Even so in God-like affairs. Oral questions must be asked and the answers must be given orally. They must discuss with each other in this manner.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, qtd. in Lights of Guidance: A Bahá'í Reference File. Helen Hornsby, ed.[1983] 1994:146-147

November 28 (5 Qawl/Speech)

Whoso ariseth among you to teach the Cause of his Lord, let him, before all else, teach his own self, that his speech may attract the hearts of them that hear him. Unless he teacheth his own self, the words of his mouth will not influence the heart of the seeker. Take heed, O people, lest ye be of them that give good counsel to others but forget to follow it themselves. The words of such as these, and beyond the words the realities of all things, and beyond these realities the angels that are nigh unto God, bring against them the accusation of falsehood.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. Trans. Shoghi Effendi. [1952] 1983: 277

November 29 (6 Qawl/Speech)

Love ye all religions and all races with a love that is true and sincere and show that love through deeds and not through the tongue; for the latter hath no importance, as the majority of men are, in speech, well-wishers, while action is the best.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. [1978] 1982: 69

November 30 (7 Qawl/Speech)

It is the hope of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that those youthful souls in the schoolroom of the deeper knowledge will be tended by one who traineth them to love. May they all, throughout the reaches of the spirit, learn well of the hidden mysteries; so well that in the Kingdom of the All-Glorious, each one of them, even as a nightingale endowed with speech, will cry out the secrets of the Heavenly Realm, and like unto a longing lover pour forth his sore need and utter want of the Beloved.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. [1978] 1982: 134

December 01 (8 Qawl/Speech)

Praise be to God, the Eternal that perisheth not, the Everlasting that declineth not, the Self-Subsisting that altereth not. He it is Who is transcendent in His sovereignty, Who is manifest through His signs, and is hidden through His mysteries. He it is at Whose bidding the standard of the Most Exalted Word hath been lifted up in the world of creation, and the banner of “He doeth whatsoever He willeth” raised amidst all peoples. He it is Who hath revealed His Cause for the guidance of His creatures, and sent down His verses to demonstrate His Proof and His Testimony, and embellished the preface of the Book of Man with the ornament of utterance through His saying: “The God of Mercy hath taught the Qur’an, hath created man, and taught him articulate speech.” No God is there but Him, the One, the Peerless, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Beneficent.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf. Trans. Shoghi Effendi 1988: 1

December 02 (9 Qawl/Speech)

Great God! When the stream of utterance reached this stage, We beheld, and lo! the sweet savours of God were being wafted from the dayspring of Revelation, and the morning breeze was blowing out of the Sheba of the Eternal. Its tidings rejoiced anew the heart, and imparted immeasurable gladness to the soul. It made all things new, and brought unnumbered and inestimable gifts from the unknowable Friend. The robe of human praise can never hope to match Its noble stature, and Its shining figure the mantle of utterance can never fit. Without word It unfoldeth the inner mysteries, and without speech It revealeth the secrets of the divine sayings.

-- Bahá’u’lláh, The Kitab-i-Iqan. Trans. Shoghi Effendi [1931] 1983: 59

December 03 (10 Qawl/Speech)

Inasmuch as human interpretations and blind imitations differ widely, religious strife and disagreement have arisen among mankind, the light of true religion has been extinguished and the unity of the world of humanity destroyed. The prophets of God voiced the spirit of unity and agreement. They have been the founders of divine reality. Therefore if the nations of the world forsake imitations and investigate the reality underlying the revealed Word of God they will agree and become reconciled. For reality is one and not multiple.

The nations and religions are steeped in blind and bigoted imitations. A man is a Jew because his father was a Jew. A Muhammadan follows implicitly the footsteps of his ancestors in belief and observance. The Buddhist is true to his heredity as a Buddhist. That is to say they profess religious belief blindly and without investigation, making unity and agreement impossible. It is evident therefore that this condition will not be remedied without a reformation in the world of religion. In other words the fundamental reality of the divine religions must be renewed, reformed, revoiced to mankind.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í World Faith, pp. 224 - 225

December 04 (11 Qawl/Speech)

From the seed of reality, religion has grown into a tree which has put forth leaves and branches, blossoms and fruit. After a time this tree has fallen into a condition of decay. The leaves and blossoms have withered and perished; the tree has become stricken and fruitless. It is not reasonable that man should hold to the old tree, claiming that its life forces are undiminished, its fruit unequalled, its existence eternal. The seed of reality must be sown again in human hearts in order that a new tree may grow therefrom and new divine fruits refresh the world. By this means the nations and peoples now divergent in religion will be brought into unity, imitations will be forsaken and a universal brotherhood in the reality itself will be established. Warfare and strife will cease among mankind; all will be reconciled as servants of God. For all are sheltered beneath the tree of His providence and mercy. God is kind to all; He is the giver of bounty to all alike, even as His Holiness Jesus Christ has declared that God “sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust”; that is to say, the mercy of God is universal. All humanity is under the protection of His love and favor, and unto all He has pointed the way of guidance and progress.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í World Faith, pp. 226-227

December 05 (12 Qawl/Speech)

Progress is of two kinds, material and spiritual. The former is attained through observation of the surrounding existence and constitutes the foundation of civilization. Spiritual progress is through the breaths of the Holy Spirit and is the awakening of the conscious soul of man to perceive the reality of divinity. Material progress insures the happiness of the human world. Spiritual progress insures the happiness and eternal continuance of the soul. The prophets of God have founded the laws of divine civilization. They have been the root and fundamental source of all knowledge. They have established the principles of human brotherhood or fraternity which is of various kinds, such as the fraternity of family, of race, of nation and of ethical motives. These forms of fraternity, these bonds of brotherhood are merely temporal and transient in association. They do not insure harmony and are usually productive of disagreement. They do not prevent warfare and strife; on the contrary they are selfish, restricted and fruitful causes of enmity and hatred among mankind. The spiritual brotherhood which is enkindled and established through the breaths of the Holy Spirit unites nations and removes the cause of warfare and strife. It transforms mankind into one great family and establishes the foundations of the oneness of humanity. It promulgates the spirit of international agreement and insures Universal Peace. Therefore we must investigate the foundation reality of this heavenly fraternity. We must forsake all imitations and promote the reality of the divine teachings. In accordance with these principles and actions and by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, both material and spiritual happiness shall become realized. 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, pp. 227 - 228

December 06 (13 Qawl/Speech)

If any person wishes to speak of government affairs, or to interfere with the order of Governors, the others must not combine with him because the Cause of God is withdrawn entirely from political

affairs; the political realm pertains only to the Rulers of those matters: it has nothing to do with the souls who are exerting their utmost energy to harmonizing affairs, helping character and inciting (the people) to strive for perfections. Therefore no soul is allowed to interfere with (political) matters, but only in that which is commanded.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith - 'Abdu'l-Bahá Section, p. 407

December 07 (14 Qawl/Speech)

Now, if ever, is the time to emulate the example of these heroes, saints and martyrs. Now is the time to pour out one's substance as copiously and as readily, as the Dawn-breakers of the Heroic Age of the Faith have shed their life-blood in the path of this most precious Cause. No more befitting tribute can be paid to the memory of these luminous souls, by those who carry the torch of Divine Guidance after them, than by a corresponding manifestation of solidarity, self-abnegation, zeal and devotion, which will impel them to forsake their homes, sacrifice their treasure, brave every danger, endure every hardship, expend every ounce of energy, that the Plan which they have spontaneously and unitedly sponsored may, through its triumphant termination, carry them a stage further along the broad highway of their destiny.

-- Shoghi Effendi, Dawn of a New Day, pp. 134-135

December 08 (15 Qawl/Speech)

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

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 279

December 09 (16 Qawl/Speech)

As opposition to the Faith, from whatever source it may spring, whatever form it may assume, however violent its outbursts, is admittedly the motive-power that galvanizes on the one hand, the souls of its valiant defenders, and taps for them, on the other, fresh springs of that Divine and inexhaustible Energy, we who are called upon to represent, defend and promote its interests, should, far from regarding any manifestation of hostility as an evidence of the weakening of the pillars of the Faith, acclaim it as both a God-sent gift and a God-sent opportunity which, if we remain undaunted, we can utilize for the furtherance of His Faith and the routing and complete elimination of its adversaries.

The Heroic Age of the Faith, born in anguish, Nursed in adversity, and terminating in trials as woeful as those that greeted its birth, has been succeeded by that Formative Period which is to witness the gradual crystallization of those creative energies which the Faith has released, and the consequent emergence of that World Order for which those forces were made to operate.

-- Shoghi Effendi, Messages to America, p. 52

December 10 (17 Qawl/Speech)

From the beginning of human history down to the present time the various religions of the world have anathematized and accused each other of falsity. Each religion has considered the others

bereft of the face of God, deprived of His mercy and in the direct line of divine wrath. Therefore, they have shunned each other most rigidly, exercising mutual animosity and rancor. Consider the record of religious warfare, the battles between nations, the bloodshed and destruction in the name of religion. One of the greatest religious wars, the Crusades, extended over a period of two hundred years. In this succession of great campaigns the western crusaders were constantly invading the Orient, bent upon recovering the Holy City from the hands of the Islamic people. Army after army raised in Europe poured its fanatical legions into the East. The kings of European nations personally led these Crusades, killing and shedding the blood of the Orientals. During this period of two hundred years the East and West were in a state of violence and commotion. Sometimes the crusaders were successful, killing, pillaging and taking captive the Muslim people; sometimes the Muslims were victorious, inflicting bloodshed, death and ruin in turn upon the invaders. So they continued for two centuries, alternately fighting with fury and relaxing from weakness, until the European religionists withdrew from the East, leaving ashes of desolation behind them and finding their own nations in a condition of turbulence and upheaval. Hundreds of thousands of human beings were killed and untold wealth wasted in this fruitless religious warfare. How many fathers mourned the loss of their sons! How many mothers and wives lamented the absence of their dear ones! Yet this was only one of the “holy” wars. Consider and reflect.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 265

December 11 (18 Qawl/Speech)

The hidden secrets of the future were revealed to the Prophets, and They thus became acquainted with the future events which They announced. This knowledge and these prophecies were not the cause of the occurrences. For example, tonight everyone knows that after seven hours the sun will rise, but this general foreknowledge does not cause the rising and appearance of the sun.

Therefore, the knowledge of God in the realm of contingency does not produce the forms of the things. On the contrary, it is purified from the past, present and future. It is identical with the reality of the things; it is not the cause of their occurrence.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 138

December 12 (19 Qawl/Speech)

In short, the meaning of “He doeth whatsoever He willeth” is that if the Manifestation says something, or gives a command, or performs an action, and believers do not understand its wisdom, they still ought not to oppose it by a single thought, seeking to know why He spoke so, or why He did such a thing. The other souls who are under the shadow of the supreme Manifestations are submissive to the commandments of the Law of God, and are not to deviate as much as a hairsbreadth from it; they must conform their acts and words to the Law of God. If they do deviate from it, they will be held responsible and reprovved in the presence of God. It is certain that they have no share in the permission “He doeth whatsoever He willeth,” for this condition is peculiar to the supreme Manifestations.

-- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 173

December 13 (1 Masá’il/Questions)

Know that the conditions of existence are limited to the conditions of servitude, of prophethood and of Deity, but the divine and the contingent perfections are unlimited. When you reflect deeply, you discover that also outwardly the perfections of existence are also unlimited, for you cannot find a

being so perfect that you cannot imagine a superior one. For example, you cannot see a ruby in the mineral kingdom, a rose in the vegetable kingdom, or a nightingale in the animal kingdom, without imagining that there might be better specimens. As the divine bounties are endless, so human perfections are endless.

If it were possible to reach a limit of perfection, then one of the realities of the beings might reach the condition of being independent of God, and the contingent might attain to the condition of the absolute. But for every being there is a point which it cannot overpass -- that is to say, he who is in the condition of servitude, however far he may progress in gaining limitless perfections, will never reach the condition of Deity.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 230

December 14 (2 Masá'il/Questions)

In trying to assist the friends to develop visions of growth for their local and national communities or regions, we must remember that such visions can only emerge from a far greater vision of such realities as the greatness of this Day, the power of Divine Assistance, the potential inherent in every human being, and the powers that become available to us when we truly unite and work in a spirit of oneness. Evolving a vision of growth, then, is fundamentally a spiritual process, one that implies ever-increasing consciousness of the spiritual forces released by Bahá'u'lláh.

-- International Teaching Centre, 1992, Building Visions of Growth

December 15 (3 Masá'il/Questions)

We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one of these is reformed everything will be improved. Man is organic with the world. His inner life moulds the environment and is itself also deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions.

-- From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer dated 17 February 1933

December 16 (4 Masá'il/Questions)

“With reference to the question you have asked concerning the time and means through which the Lesser and Most Great Peace, referred to by Bahá'u'lláh, will be established, following the coming world war. Your view that the lesser peace will come about through political efforts of the states and nations of the world, and independently of any direct Bahá'í plan or effort, and the Most Great peace established through the instrumentality of the believers, and by the direct operation of the laws and principles revealed by Bahá'u'lláh and the functioning of the Universal House of Justice as the supreme organ of the Bahá'í super state -- your view on this subject is quite correct and in full accord with the pronouncements of the Guardian as embodied in the 'Unfoldment of World Civilization'.”

-- From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, March 14, 1939

December 17 (5 Masá'il/Questions)

O BEFRIENDED STRANGER!

The candle of thine heart is lighted by the hand of My power, quench it not with the contrary winds of self and passion. The healer of all thine ills is remembrance of Me, forget it not. Make My love thy treasure and cherish it even as thy very sight and life.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Persian Hidden Words, # 32

December 18 (6 Masá'il/Questions)

Today the world of humanity is in need of international unity and conciliation. To establish these great fundamental principles a propelling power is needed. It is self-evident that the unity of the human world and the Most Great Peace cannot be accomplished through material means. They cannot be established through political power, for the political interests of nations are various and the policies of peoples are divergent and conflicting. They cannot be founded through racial or patriotic power, for these are human powers, selfish and weak. The very nature of racial differences and patriotic prejudices prevents the realization of this unity and agreement. Therefore, it is evidenced that the promotion of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity, which is the essence of the teachings of all the Manifestations of God, is impossible except through the divine power and breaths of the Holy Spirit. Other powers are too weak and are incapable of accomplishing this.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp. 11-12

December 19 (7 Masá'il/Questions)

O ye wise men of the City and philosophers of the world! Beware lest human learning and wisdom cause you to wax proud before God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Know ye that true wisdom is to fear God, to know Him, and to recognize His Manifestations. This wisdom, however, can be attained only by those who detach themselves from the world, and who walk in the ways of the good pleasure of their Lord.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Summons of the Lord of Hosts, pp. 233-234

December 20 (8 Masá'il/Questions)

As to thy question concerning the origin of creation. Know assuredly that God's creation hath existed from eternity, and will continue to exist forever. Its beginning hath had no beginning, and its end knoweth no end. His name, the Creator, presupposeth a creation, even as His title, the Lord of Men, must involve the existence of a servant.

As to those sayings, attributed to the Prophets of old, such as, "In the beginning was God; there was no creature to know Him," and "The Lord was alone; with no one to adore Him," the meaning of these and similar sayings is clear and evident, and should at no time be misapprehended. To this same truth bear witness these words which He hath revealed: "God was alone; there was none else besides Him. He will always remain what He hath ever been." Every discerning eye will readily perceive that the Lord is now manifest, yet there is none to recognize His glory. By this is meant that the habitation wherein the Divine Being dwelleth is far above the reach and ken of any one besides Him. Whatsoever in the contingent world can either be expressed or apprehended, can never transgress the limits which, by its inherent nature, have been imposed upon it. God, alone, transcendeth such limitations. He, verily, is from everlasting. No peer or partner has been, or can ever be, joined with Him. No name can be compared with His Name. No pen can portray His nature, neither can any tongue depict His glory. He will, for ever, remain immeasurably exalted above any one except Himself.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, LXXVIII, pp. 150-151

December 21 (9 Masá'il/Questions)

XCV. Know thou that, according to what thy Lord, the Lord of all men, hath decreed in His Book, the favors vouchsafed by Him unto mankind have been, and will ever remain, limitless in their range. First and foremost among these favors, which the Almighty hath conferred upon man, is the

gift of understanding. His purpose in conferring such a gift is none other except to enable His creature to know and recognize the one true God -- exalted be His glory. This gift giveth man the power to discern the truth in all things, leadeth him to that which is right, and helpeth him to discover the secrets of creation.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, XCV, p. 194

December 22 (10 Masá'il/Questions)

If it be your wish, O people, to know God and to discover the greatness of His might, look, then, upon Me with Mine own eyes, and not with the eyes of any one besides Me. Ye will, otherwise, be never capable of recognizing Me, though ye ponder My Cause as long as My Kingdom endureth, and meditate upon all created things throughout the eternity of God, the Sovereign Lord of all, the Omnipotent, the Ever-Abiding, the All-Wise. Thus have We manifested the truth of Our Revelation, that haply the people may be roused from their heedlessness, and be of them that understand.

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, CXXVII, pp. 272-273

December 23 (11 Masá'il/Questions)

THOU hast asked concerning the fundamentals of religion and its ordinances: Know thou that first and foremost in religion is the knowledge of God. This attaineth its consummation in the recognition of His divine unity, which in turn reacheth its fulfilment in acclaiming that His hallowed and exalted Sanctuary, the Seat of His transcendent majesty, is sanctified from all attributes. And know thou that in this world of being the knowledge of God can never be attained save through the knowledge of Him Who is the Dayspring of divine Reality.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 115

December 24 (12 Masá'il/Questions)

I have known Thee by Thy making known unto me that Thou art unknowable to anyone save Thyself. I have become apprised by the creation Thou hast fashioned out of sheer non-existence that the way to attain the comprehension of Thine Essence is barred to everyone. Thou art God, besides Whom there is none other God. No one except Thine Own Self can comprehend Thy nature. Thou art without peer or partner. From everlasting Thou hast been alone with no one else besides Thee and unto everlasting Thou wilt continue to be the same, while no created thing shall ever approach Thine exalted position.

All men, O my God, confess their powerlessness to know Thee as Thou knowest Thine Own Being; the generative impulse Thou hast released is manifest throughout the entire creation, and all created things which Thou hast fashioned are but expressions of Thy wondrous signs. Magnified be Thy name; Thou art immeasurably exalted above the strivings of anyone among Thy creatures to attain Thy recognition as is befitting and worthy of Thee.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 196-197

December 25 (13 Masá'il/Questions)

O army of God! Whosoever ye behold a person whose entire attention is directed toward the Cause of God; whose only aim is this, to make the Word of God to take effect; who, day and night, with pure intent, is rendering service to the Cause; from whose behaviour not the slightest trace of egotism or private motives is discerned -- who, rather, wandereth distracted in the wilderness of the love of God, and drinketh only from the cup of the knowledge of God, and is utterly engrossed in

spreading the sweet savours of God, and is enamoured of the holy verses of the Kingdom of God -- know ye for a certainty that this individual will be supported and reinforced by heaven; that like unto the morning star, he will forever gleam brightly out of the skies of eternal grace. But if he show the slightest taint of selfish desires and self love, his efforts will lead to nothing and he will be destroyed and left hopeless at the last.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 71-72

December 26 (14 Masá'il/Questions)

THROUGH Thy revelation, O my God, Thou hast enabled me to know Thee, and through the radiance of Thine effulgent splendour Thou hast inspired me with Thy remembrance. Thou art the One nearest to me with naught else between Thee and me, and Thou art the One Whose power nothing whatsoever can frustrate. Far be it then from Thine Essence that the mightiest birds of the souls of men or of human imaginings should ever scale its heights, and too exalted is Thy holy Being for the loftiest sentiments of men of understanding to attain unto Thee. From everlasting no one hath comprehended Thine Own Self, and unto everlasting Thou shalt remain what Thou hast been since time immemorial with no one else besides Thee.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 211-212

December 27 (15 Masá'il/Questions)

It is better for a man to guide a soul than to possess all that lies between East and West. Likewise better is guidance for him who is guided than all the things that exist on earth, for by reason of this guidance he will, after his death, gain admittance into Paradise, whereas by reason of the things of the world below, he will, after his death, receive his deserts. Hence God desireth that all men should be guided aright through the potency of the Words of Him Whom God shall make manifest. However, such as are conceited will not suffer themselves to be guided. They will be debarred from the Truth, some by reason of their learning, others on account of their glory and power, and still others due to reasons of their own, none of which shall be of any avail at the hour of death.

-- The Bab, Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 95-96

December 28 (16 Masá'il/Questions)

XLV. The Ancient Beauty hath consented to be bound with chains that mankind may be released from its bondage, and hath accepted to be made a prisoner within this most mighty Stronghold that the whole world may attain unto true liberty. He hath drained to its dregs the cup of sorrow, that all the peoples of the earth may attain unto abiding joy, and be filled with gladness. This is of the mercy of your Lord, the Compassionate, the Most Merciful. We have accepted to be abased, O believers in the Unity of God, that ye may be exalted, and have suffered manifold afflictions, that ye might prosper and flourish. He Who hath come to build anew the whole world, behold, how they that have joined partners with God have forced Him to dwell within the most desolate of cities!

-- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 99-100

December 29 (17 Masá'il/Questions)

My highest wish and desire is that ye who are my children may be educated according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and may receive a Bahá'í training; that ye may each become a lighted candle in the world of humanity, may be devoted to the service of all mankind, may give up your rest and comfort, so that ye may become the cause of the tranquillity of the world of creation.

Such is my hope for you and I trust that ye may become the cause of my joy and gladness in the Kingdom of God.

-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 141-142

December 30 (18 Masá'il/Questions)

God's purpose is none other than to usher in, in ways He alone can bring about, and the full significance of which He alone can fathom, the Great, the Golden Age of a long-divided, a long-afflicted humanity. Its present state, indeed even its immediate future, is dark, distressingly dark. Its distant future, however, is radiant, gloriously radiant -- so radiant that no eye can visualize it.

-- Shoghi Effendi, The Promised Day is Come, p. 115

December 31 (19 Masá'il/Questions)

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.

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-- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 86