

DIVINE WISDOM

BRIEF EXCERPTS FROM
THE WRITINGS OF

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH
AND
'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
INTRODUCTION :	The Bahá'í Faith .	vii
THE DAY OF GOD	Bahá'u'lláh . . .	2
	'Abdu'l-Bahá . . .	9
WORDS OF WISDOM	Bahá'u'lláh . . .	13
THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD		
FAITH		
IMMORTALITY	Bahá'u'lláh . . .	17
THE REALITY OF MAN	'Abdu'l-Bahá . . .	31
ON MEDITATION	'Abdu'l-Bahá . . .	40
THE WAY OF GOD	Bahá'u'lláh . . .	44
	'Abdu'l-Bahá . . .	56
KEY TO REFERENCES	63

INTRODUCTION

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are so universal that people of all shades of religious and humanitarian belief find much in them to ponder. This book has been compiled in the hope that it will be found of value by others as well as by declared Bahá'ís. The editors feel certain that no one will fail to find these brief excerpts helpful to their understanding of the problems of life.

Bahá'u'lláh (Whose Name means the Glory of God) was born in Persia in 1817, at a time when the country was in an extremely degenerate condition, great power being wielded by an exceedingly corrupt Shí'ih Muslím priesthood. When Bahá'u'lláh was twenty-seven years of age, the whole country was thrown into tumult by the claim of a young man named the Báb (the Gate), to be the Messenger of God anticipated by Islám. Besides giving His own teachings, He proclaimed the imminent appearance of "He whom God shall make manifest", a great teacher for whom He Himself was the Herald. In spite of the purity of His teaching, and of His own life, He was thrown into prison and eventually shot. His followers were persecuted, tortured, and martyred. Their steadfastness and the cruel fate of their Leader recall the early history of Christianity.

Bahá'u'lláh was one of the few leading Bábís who escaped martyrdom; His life was always in danger, but always it

passed Him by. In 1863, He declared that He was the One whom the Báb had foretold, "He Whom God shall make manifest." He had come to unite all peoples in "one universal Cause, one common Faith".¹

The persecutions of the Bahá'ís continued after the declaration by Bahá'u'lláh of His mission. He Himself was banished from one place to another, and finally to the prison city of 'Akká. In 1892, He left this earthly life. In His Will, He appointed His eldest Son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá (Servant of the Glory), to be the Interpreter and Expounder of His teachings.

'Abdu'l-Bahá brought no new revelation, as the Founders of religions do. His message was the message of His Father, not His own. His word, however, was invested with authority by Bahá'u'lláh, and His writings and recorded talks form part of Bahá'í scripture. After spending forty years of His life in captivity, He was released after the Young Turk revolution of 1908. In 1911-13, He toured Europe and America, visiting Great Britain in both years. Among the places at which He spoke are St. John's, Westminster, and the City Temple. He left this life in 1921.

With the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, concerning progressive revelation, this book does not deal. It can be stated briefly that all the Founders of the great religions were intermediaries between God and man, showing to man in their Persons the Divine perfections. Each has taught the same basic truths adapted to the understanding and needs of the men of His day. All these Manifestations of God must be regarded as equally perfect; They are men, and more than men, the Mirrors of God. But although no Manifestation is superior in His essence to any other, the capacity of man to receive revelation increases; and now mankind approaches maturity. Now it is possible for the oneness of mankind to be effective in the world

¹ Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to Queen Victoria.

commonwealth, and for the one eternal religion to be the mainstay of its life.

Although Bahá'u'lláh gave His teachings nearly a century ago, the world needs His message, even more now than it did then. Progressive people have come to realize the truth of much of what He taught, but His social and spiritual teachings are still neglected by a world dying for this very water of life.

In this book, only passages generally suitable for meditation are offered, but even these fragments show the calibre of the utterances of this Being, Who claimed to be the Mouthpiece of God, and of His Son, the appointed Expounder of His revelation.

THE DAY OF GOD

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

PEERLESS is this Day, for it is as the eye to past ages and centuries, and as a light unto the darkness of the times. (ADJ 66)

THIS is the Day whereon naught can be seen except the splendours of the Light that shineth from the face of thy Lord, the Gracious, the Most Bountiful. Verily, We have caused every soul to expire by virtue of Our irresistible and all-subduing sovereignty. We have then called into being a new creation, as a token of Our grace unto men. I am, verily, the All-Bountiful, the Ancient of Days. This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: "Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the footstool 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." (WOB 206)

THROUGH the movement of Our Pen of Glory, We have, at the bidding of the Omnipotent Ordainer, breathed

a new life into every human frame, and instilled into every word a fresh potency. All created things proclaim the evidences of this world-wide regeneration. (ADJ 67)

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. (GWB 272)

GOD'S purpose in sending His Prophets unto men is twofold. The first is to liberate the children of men from the darkness of ignorance, and guide them to the light of true understanding. The second is to ensure the peace and tranquillity of mankind, and provide all the means by which they can be established. (GWB 79)

KNOW thou, of a truth, these great oppressions that have befallen the world are preparing it for the advent of the Most Great Justice. (ADJ 23)

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. (GWB 299)

THE Prophets and Messengers of God have been sent down for the sole purpose of guiding mankind to the straight Path of Truth. The purpose underlying their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute detachment, to the throne of the Most High. (GWB 156)

IN this day the tastes of men have changed, and their power of perception hath altered. The contrary winds of the world, and its colour, have provoked a cold, and deprived men's nostrils of the sweet savours of Revelation. (PDC 119)

AND when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake. Then, and only then, will the Divine Standard be unfurled, and the Nightingale of Paradise warble its melody. (ADJ 69)

THERE is no place to flee to, no refuge that anyone can seek, except Him. (GWB 203)

THE greatness of His mercy surpasseth the fury of His wrath, and His grace encompasseth all who have been called into being and been clothed with the robe of life, be they of the past or of the future. (GBW 130)

THOUGH the wonders of My mercy have encompassed all created things, both visible and invisible, and though the revelations of My grace and bounty have permeated every atom of the universe, yet the rod with which I can chastise the wicked is grievous, and the fierceness of Mine anger against them terrible. (GWB 325)

SET all thy hope in God, and cleave tenaciously to His unfailing mercy. Who else but Him can enrich the destitute, and deliver the fallen from his abasement? (GWB 323)

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. (HWA 9)

EVERY good thing is of God, and every evil thing is from yourselves. (GWB 149)

THE fear of God hath ever been the prime factor in the education of His creatures. (ESW 27)

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. (HWA 5)

O PEOPLE! Let not this life and its deceits deceive you, for the world and all that is therein is held firmly in the grasp of His Will. He bestoweth His favour on whom He willeth, and from whom He willeth He taketh it away. He doeth whatsoever He chooseth. (GWB 200)

THE decrees of the Sovereign Ordainer, as related to fate and predestination, are of two kinds. Both are to be obeyed and accepted. The one is irrevocable, the other is, as termed by men, impending. To the former all must unreservedly submit, inasmuch as it is fixed and settled. God, however, is able to alter or repeal it. As the harm that must result from such a change will be greater than if the decree had remained unaltered, all, therefore, should willingly acquiesce in what God hath willed and confidently abide by the same. The decree that is impending, however, is such that prayer and entreaty can succeed in averting it. (GWB 200)

O SON of Man! My majesty is My gift to thee, and My grandeur the token of My mercy unto thee. That which beseemeth Me none shall understand, nor can anyone recount. Verily, I have preserved it in My hidden store-houses and in the treasuries of My command, as a sign of My lovingkindness unto My servants and My mercy unto My people. (HWA 65)

REGARD thou the one true God as One Who is apart from, and immeasurably exalted above, all created things. The whole universe reflecteth His glory, while He is Himself

independent of, and transcendeth His creatures. This is the true meaning of Divine Unity. He Who is the Eternal Truth is the one Power Who exerciseth undisputed sovereignty over the world of being, Whose image is reflected in the mirror of the entire creation. All existence is dependent upon Him, and from Him is derived the source of the sustenance of all things. This is what is meant by Divine Unity ; this is its fundamental principle. (GWB 166)

THE signs of God shine as manifest and resplendent as the sun amidst the works of His creatures. Whatsoever proceedeth from Him is apart, and will always remain distinguished. (GWB 144)

WERE man to gaze with the eye of divine and spiritual discernment, he will readily recognize that nothing whatsoever can exist without the revelation of the splendour of God, the ideal King. (KI 140)

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. (GWB 150)

HE is really a believer in the Unity of God who recogniseth in each and every created thing the sign of

the revelation of Him who is the Eternal Truth, and not he who maintaineth that the creature is indistinguishable from the Creator. (GWB 189)

SO perfect and comprehensive is His creation that no mind or heart, however keen or pure, can ever grasp the nature of the most insignificant of His creatures ; much less fathom the mystery of Him who is the Day Star of Truth, who is the invisible and unknowable Essence. The conceptions of the devoutest of mystics, the attainments of the most accomplished amongst men, the highest praise which human tongue or pen can render are all the product of man's finite mind and are conditioned by its limitations.

HE ordaineth as He pleaseth, by virtue of His sovereignty, and doeth whatsoever He willeth at His own behest. He shall not be asked of the things it pleaseth Him to ordain. He, in truth, is the Unrestrained, the All-Powerful, the All-Wise. (GWB 284)

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

THE essence of all religions is the love of God, and it is the foundation of all the sacred teachings. (PT 74)

WHEN you behold in existence such organizations, arrangements, and laws, can you say that all these are the effect of Nature, though Nature has neither intelligence nor perception? If not, it becomes evident that this Nature, which has neither perception nor intelligence, is in the grasp of Almighty God, who is the Ruler of the world of Nature; whatever He wishes He causes Nature to manifest. (SAQ 4)

FORMATION is of three kinds and of three kinds only; accidental, necessary, and voluntary. The coming together of the various constituent elements of beings cannot be accidental, for unto every effect there must be a cause. It cannot be compulsory, for then the formation must be an inherent property of the constituent parts and the inherent property of a thing can in no wise be dissociated from it, such as light that is the revealer of things, heat that causes the expansion of elements and the (solar) rays which are the essential property of the sun. Thus, under such circumstances the decomposition of any formation is impossible, for the inherent properties of a thing cannot be separated

from it. The third formation remaineth and that is the voluntary one, that is, an unseen force described as the Ancient Power, causeth these elements to come together, every formation giving rise to a distinct being. (TF)

WHEN you look at man you see that he is weak. This weakness of the creature is a proof of the power of the Eternal Almighty One, because if there were no power, weakness could not be imagined. Then the weakness of the creature is a proof of the power of God ; for if there were no power there could be no weakness ; so from this weakness it becomes evident that there is power in the world. (SAQ 5)

ALTHOUGH beings in relation to the existence of God have no existence, but are like the mirage or the reflections in the mirror, yet in their own degree they exist. (SAQ 326)

AS we reflect, we observe that man is like unto a tiny organism contained within a fruit ; this fruit hath developed out of the blossom, the blossom hath grown out of the tree, the tree is sustained by the sap, and the sap formed out of earth and water. How then can this tiny organism comprehend the nature of the garden, conceive of the gardener and comprehend his being ? That is manifestly impossible. Should that organism understand and reflect, it would observe that this garden, this tree, this blossom, this fruit would in no wise have come to exist by themselves in such order and perfection. Similarly, the wise and reflecting soul will know of a certainty that this

infinite universe with all its grandeur and perfect order could not have come to exist by itself. (TF)

AS the pure mirror receives light from the sun and transmits this bounty to others, so the Holy Spirit is the mediator of the holy light from the Sun of Reality, which it gives to the sanctified realities. It is adorned with all the divine perfections. Every time it appears, the world is renewed, and a new cycle is founded. The body of the world of humanity puts on a new garment. It can be compared to the spring; whenever it comes, the world passes from one condition to another. Through the advent of the season of spring the black earth and the fields and wildernesses will become verdant and blooming, and all sorts of flowers and sweet-scented herbs will grow; the trees will have new life, and new fruits will appear, and a new cycle is founded. The appearance of the Holy Spirit is like this. Whenever it appears, it renews the world of humanity and gives a new spirit to the human realities; it arrays the world of existence in a praiseworthy garment, dispels the darkness of ignorance, and causes the radiation of the light of perfections. (SAQ 165)

IN every Dispensation the light of Divine Guidance has been focused upon one central theme. . . . In this wondrous Revelation, this glorious century, the foundation of the Faith of God, and the distinguishing feature of His Law, is the consciousness of the oneness of mankind. (PDC 123)

THE holy realities of the Concourse on high 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. (ADJ 39)

CONSIDER the work of former generations. 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. (ADJ 47)

IN this holy dispensation, the crowning glory of bygone ages and cycles, faith is no mere acknowledgment of the unity of God, but rather the living of a life that manifests the virtues and perfections implied in such belief. (SBS 332)

WORDS OF WISDOM

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

THE source of all good is trust in God, submission unto His command, and contentment in His holy will and pleasure.

THE essence of wisdom is the fear of God, the dread of His scourge and the apprehension of His justice and decree.

THE essence of religion is to testify unto that which the Lord hath revealed, and follow that which He hath ordained in His mighty Book.

THE source of all glory is acceptance of whatsoever the Lord hath bestowed, and contentment with that which God hath ordained.

THE essence of love is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but God, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord.

TRUE remembrance is to make mention of the Lord, the All-Praised, and forget all else besides Him.

TRUE reliance is for the servant to pursue his profession and calling in this world, to hold fast unto the Lord, to seek naught but His grace, inasmuch as in His hands is the destiny of all His servants.

THE essence of detachment is for man to turn his face toward the courts of the Lord, to enter His presence, behold His countenance, and stand as witness before Him.

THE essence of understanding is to testify to one's poverty, and submit to the will of the Lord, the Sovereign, the Gracious, the All-Powerful.

THE source of courage and power is the promotion of the Word of God, and steadfastness in His love.

THE essence of charity is for the servant to recount the blessings of his Lord, and to render thanks unto Him at all times, and under all conditions.

THE essence of wealth is love for Me. Whoso loveth Me is the possessor of all things, and he that loveth Me not is, indeed, of the poor and needy. This is that which the Finger of Glory and Splendour hath revealed. . . .

THE essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds ; he whose words exceed his deeds, know verily his death is better than his life. . . .

THE source of all evil is for man to turn away from his Lord and set his heart on things ungodly.

THE most burning fire is to question the signs of God, to dispute idly that which He hath revealed, to deny Him and carry oneself proudly before Him.

THE source of all learning is the knowledge of God, exalted be His glory, and this cannot be attained save through the knowledge of His Divine Manifestation.

THE essence of abasement is to pass from under the shadow of the Merciful, and seek the shelter of the Evil One.

THE source of error is to disbelieve in the one true God, rely upon aught else but Him, and flee from His decree.

TRUE loss is for him whose days have been spent in utter ignorance of his true self.

THE essence of all that We have revealed for thee is justice, is for man to free himself from idle fancy and imitation, discern with the eye of oneness His glorious handiwork, and look into all things with a searching eye.

THUS have We instructed thee, manifested unto thee words of wisdom, that thou mayest be thankful unto the Lord, thy God, and glory therein amidst all peoples.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD
FAITH
IMMORTALITY

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

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. (GWB 5)

O MY servants ! Were ye to discover the hidden, the shoreless oceans of My incorruptible wealth, ye would, of a certainty, esteem as nothing the world, nay the entire creation. Let the flame of search burn with such fierceness within your hearts as to enable you to attain your supreme and most exalted goal—the station at which ye can draw nigh unto, and be united with, your Best-Beloved. (GWB 324)

BY self-surrender and perpetual union with God is meant that men should merge their will wholly in the Will of God, and regard their desires as utter nothingness beside His Purpose. Whatsoever the Creator commandeth His creatures to observe, the same must they diligently, and with the utmost joy and eagerness, arise and fulfil. They should in no wise allow their fancy to obscure their judgment, neither should they regard their own imaginings as the voice of the Eternal. (GWB 307)

O SON of Man ! Sorrow not save that thou art far from Us.
Rejoice not save that thou art drawing near and returning
unto Us. (HWA 35)

O YE lovers of the one true God ! Strive, that ye may truly
recognize and know Him, and observe befittingly His
precepts. (GWB 5)

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. (GWB 136)

THE understanding of His words and the comprehension
of the utterances of the Birds of Heaven are in no wise
dependent upon human learning. They depend solely upon
purity of heart, chastity of soul, and freedom of spirit.
(GWB 211)

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. (GWB 199)

KNOW verily that Knowledge is of two kinds : Divine
and Satanic. The one welleteth out from the fountain of

divine inspiration ; the other is but a reflection of vain and obscure thoughts. The source of the former is God Himself ; the motive-force of the latter the whisperings of selfish desire. (KI 69)

O SON of the Throne ! Thy hearing is My hearing, hear thou therewith. Thy sight is My sight, do thou see therewith, that in thine inmost soul thou mayest testify unto My exalted sanctity, and I within Myself may bear witness unto an exalted station for thee. (HWA 44)

HOW great the multitude of truths which the garment of words can never contain ! (GWB 176)

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. (HWA 16)

THE abject beetle can never scent the fragrance of holiness, and the bat of darkness can never face the splendour of the sun. (KI 118)

O CHILDREN of the Divine and Invisible Essence ! Ye shall be hindered from loving Me and souls shall be

perturbed as they make mention of Me. For minds cannot grasp Me nor hearts contain Me. (HWA 66)

O MY Son! The company of the ungodly increaseth sorrow, whilst fellowship with the righteous cleaneth the rust from off the heart. He that seeketh to commune with God, let him betake himself to the companionship of His loved ones; and he that desireth to hearken unto the word of God, let him give ear to the words of His chosen ones. (HWP 56)

THE faith of no man can be conditioned by anyone except himself. (GWB 143)

WHOSO reciteth, in the privacy of his chamber, the verses revealed by God, the scattering angels of the Almighty shall scatter abroad the fragrance of the words uttered by his mouth, and shall cause the heart of every righteous man to throb. Though he may, at first, remain unaware of its effect, yet the virtue of the grace vouchsafed unto him must needs sooner or later exercise its influence upon his soul. (GWB 295)

BLESSED is the spot, and the house, and the place, and the city, and the heart, and the mountain, and the refuge, and the cave, and the valley, and the land, and the sea, and the island, and the meadow where mention of God hath been made, and his praise glorified. (ADJ 70)

LET the flame of the love of God burn brightly within your radiant hearts. Feed it with the oil of Divine guidance, and protect it within the shelter of your constancy. Guard it within the globe of trust and detachment from all else but God, so that the evil whisperings of the ungodly may not extinguish its light. (GWB 325)

IF anyone revile you, or trouble touch you, in the path of God, be patient, and put your trust in Him Who heareth, Who seeth. He, in truth, witnesseth, and perceiveth, and doeth what He pleaseth, through the power of His sovereignty. He, verily, is the Lord of strength, and of might. (ESW 24)

KNOW ye that trials and tribulations have, from time immemorial, been the lot of the chosen Ones of God and His beloved, and such of His servants as are detached from all else but Him, they whom neither merchandise nor traffic beguile from the remembrance of the Almighty, they that speak not till He hath spoken, and act according to His commandment. Such is God's method carried into effect of old, and such will it remain in the future. Blessed are the steadfastly enduring, they that are patient under ills and hardships, who lament not over anything that befalleth them, and who tread the path of resignation. (GWB 129)

I SWEAR by My life ! Nothing save that which profiteth them can befall My loved ones. To this testifieth the Pen

of God, the Most Powerful, the All-Glorious, the Best-Beloved. (ADJ 60)

O SON of Man ! If adversity befall thee not in My path, how canst thou walk in the ways of them that are content with My pleasure ? If trials afflict thee not in thy longing to meet Me, how wilt thou attain the light in thy love for My beauty ? (HWA 50)

GLORY to Thee, O my God ! But for the tribulations which are sustained in Thy path, how could Thy true lovers be recognized ; and were it not for the trials which are borne for love of Thee, how could the station of such as yearn for Thee be revealed ? (ESW 125)

GOD hath never burdened any soul beyond its power. (GWB 106)

KNOW thou that the soul of man is exalted above, and is independent of all infirmities of body or mind. That a sick person showeth signs of weakness is due to the hindrances that interpose themselves between his soul and his body, for the soul itself remains unaffected by any bodily ailments. (GWB 153)

O FRIEND ! The heart is a store of divine mysteries ; make it not a receptacle for mortal thoughts ; and consume not the capital of this precious life by occupying thyself with the evanescent world. Thou art of the world of holiness ; attach not thy heart unto the earth. Thou art a denizen of the court of nearness ; choose not an earthly home. (GWB 169)

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. (GWB 8)

THE sovereigns of the earth have been and are the manifestations of the power, the grandeur and the majesty of God. (ESW 89)

THERE lay concealed within the Holy Veil, and prepared for the service of God, a company of His chosen ones who shall be manifested unto men, who shall aid His Cause, who shall be afraid of no one, though the entire human race rise up and war against them. These are the ones who, before the gaze of the dwellers on earth and the denizens of heaven, shall arise and, shouting aloud, acclaim the name of the Almighty, and summon the children of men to the path of God, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised. (ADJ 72)

KNOW thou that all men have been created in the nature made by God, the Guardian, the Self-Subsisting. Unto each one hath been prescribed a pre-ordained measure, as decreed in God's mighty and guarded Tablets. All that which ye potentially possess can, however, be manifested only as a result of your own volition. (GWB 149)

O SON of Being ! Thy heart is My home ; sanctify it for My descent. Thy spirit is My place of revelation ; cleanse it for My manifestation. (HWA 59)

NO man shall attain the shores of the ocean of true understanding except he be detached from all that is in heaven and on earth. Sanctify your souls, O ye peoples of the world, that haply ye may attain that station which God hath destined for you. (KI 3)

O MY Servant ! Thou art even as a finely tempered sword concealed in the darkness of its sheath and its value hidden from the artificer's knowledge. Wherefore come forth from the sheath of self and desire that thy worth may be made resplendent and manifest unto all the world. (HWP 72)

REGARD man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom. (GWB 260)

HAVING created the world and all that liveth and moveth therein, He, through the direct operation of His unconstrained and sovereign Will, chose to confer upon man the unique distinction and capacity to know Him and to love Him—a capacity that must needs be regarded as the generating impulse underlying the whole of creation. . . . Upon the inmost reality of each and every created thing He hath shed the light of one of His names, and made it a recipient of the glory of one of His attributes. Upon the reality of man, however, He hath focused the radiance of all of His names and attributes, and made it a mirror of His own Self. Alone of all created things, man hath been singled out for so great a favour, so enduring a bounty. (GWB 65)

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 My image and revealed to thee my beauty. (HWA 3)

VERILY I say, the human soul is, in its essence, one of the signs of God, a mystery among His mysteries. It is one of the mighty signs of the Almighty, the harbinger that proclaimeth the reality of all the worlds of God. Within it lieth concealed that which the world is now utterly incapable of apprehending. (GWB 160)

CONSIDER thy state when asleep. Verily, I say, this phenomenon is the most mysterious of the signs of God

amongst men, were they to ponder it in their hearts. Behold how the thing which thou hast seen in thy dream is, after a considerable lapse of time, fully realized. Had the world in which thou didst find thyself in thy dream been identical with the world in which thou livest, it would have been necessary for the event occurring in that dream to have transpired in this world at the very moment of its occurrence. Were it so, you yourself would have borne witness unto it. This being not the case, however, it must necessarily follow that the world in which thou livest is different and apart from that which thou hast experienced in thy dream. This latter world hath neither beginning nor end. It would be true if thou wert to contend that this same world is, as decreed by the All-Glorious and Almighty God, within thy proper self and is wrapped up within thee. It would be equally true to maintain that thy spirit, having transcended the limitations of sleep and having stripped itself of all earthly attachment, hath, by the act of God, been made to traverse a realm which lieth hidden in the innermost reality of this world. Verily I say, the creation of God embraceth other worlds besides this world, and creatures apart from these creatures. In each of these worlds He hath ordained things which none can search except Himself, the All-Searching, the All-Wise. (GWB 152)

KNOW thou of a truth that the soul, after its separation from the body, will continue to progress until it attaineth the presence of God, in a state and condition which neither the revolution of ages and centuries, nor the changes and chances of this world, can alter. It will endure as long as the Kingdom of God, His sovereignty, His dominion and power will endure. It will manifest the signs of God and His attributes, and will reveal His loving kindness and bounty.

The movement of My Pen is stilled when it attempteth to befittingly describe the loftiness and glory of so exalted a station. (GWB 155)

IT is clear and evident that all men shall, after their physical death, estimate the worth of their deeds, and realize all that their hands have wrought. (GWB 171)

O SON of Man ! Should prosperity befall thee, rejoice not, and should abasement come upon thee, grieve not, for both shall pass away and be no more. (HWA 32)

HOW often hath a sinner attained, at the hour of death, to the essence of faith, and, quaffing the immortal draught, hath taken his flight to the Concourse on high ! And how often hath a devout believer, at the hour of his soul's ascension, been so changed as to fall into the nethermost fire ! (GWB 266)

KNOW ye that the world and its vanities and its embellishments shall pass away. Nothing will endure except God's Kingdom which pertaineth to none but Him, the Sovereign Lord of all, the Help in Peril, the All-Glorious, the Almighty. (GWB 125)

O SON of the Supreme ! I have made death a messenger of joy to thee. Wherefore dost thou grieve ? I made the light to shed on thee its splendour. Why dost thou veil thyself therefrom ? (HWA 32)

THE REALITY OF MAN

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

As to the soul of man after death, it remains in the degree of purity to which it has evolved during life in the physical body, and after it is freed from the body it remains plunged in the Ocean of God's mercy. From the moment the soul leaves the body and arrives in the Heavenly World, its evolution is spiritual, and that evolution is the approaching unto God. (PT 59)

THE progress of man's spirit in the divine world, after the severance of its connection with the body of dust, is through the bounty and grace of the Lord alone, or through the intercession and the sincere prayers of other human souls, or through the charities and important good works which are performed in its name. (SAQ 278)

THE very fact that our spiritual instinct, surely never given in vain, prompts us to pray for the welfare of those, our loved ones, who have passed out of the material world, does it not bear witness to the continuance of their existence? (PT 81)

THE wealth of the other world is nearness to God. Consequently, it is certain that those who are near the Divine Court are allowed to intercede, and this intercession is approved by God. But intercession in the other world is not like intercession in this world; it is another thing, another reality, which cannot be expressed in words. (SAQ 268)

THE rewards of the other world are the perfections and the peace obtained in the spiritual worlds after leaving this world; whilst the rewards of this life are the real luminous perfections which are realized in this world, and which are the cause of eternal life, for they are the very progress of existence. It is like the man who passes from the embryonic world to the state of maturity, and becomes the manifestation of these words: "Blessed be God, the best of Creators." The rewards of the other world are peace, the spiritual graces, the various spiritual gifts in the Kingdom of God, the gaining of the desires of the heart and the soul, and the meeting of God in the world of eternity. In the same way, the punishments of the other world, that is to say, the torments of the other world, consist in being deprived of the special divine blessings and the absolute bounties, and falling into the lowest degree of existence. He who is deprived of these divine favours, although he continues after death, is considered as dead by the people of truth. (SAQ 261)

MAN then is the perfect mirror facing the Sun of Truth, and is the centre of radiation; the Sun of Truth shines in

this mirror. The reflection of the divine perfections appears in the reality of man, so he is the representative of God, the messenger of God. If man did not exist, the universe would be without result, for the object of existence is the appearance of the perfections of God. (SAQ 228)

THE animal creation is captive to matter, God has given freedom to man. The animal cannot escape the law of Nature, whereas man may control it, for he, containing nature, can rise above it. (PT 32)

SHOULD anyone suppose that man is but a part of the world of nature, and he being endowed with these perfections, these being but manifestations of the world of nature, and thus nature is the originator of these perfections and is not deprived therefrom, to him we make reply and say : the part dependeth upon the whole ; the part cannot possess perfections whereof the whole is deprived. (TF)

THE glory of humanity is the heritage of each one.
(PT 119)

AS long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs. (PT 123)

NO mortal can conceive the union and harmony which God has designed for man and wife. (SBS 333)

IN man there are two natures ; his spiritual or higher nature and his material or lower nature. In one, he approaches God, in the other he lives for the world alone. Signs of both these natures are to be found in men. In his material aspect he expresses untruth, cruelty, and injustice ; all these are the outcome of his lower nature. The attributes of his divine nature are shown forth in love, mercy, kindness, truth, justice, one and all being expressions of his higher nature. Every good habit, every noble quality belongs to man's spiritual nature, whereas all his imperfections and sinful actions are born of his material nature. If a man's divine nature dominates his human nature, we have a saint. (PT 54)

SOME things are subject to the free-will of man, such as justice, equity, tyranny, and injustice, as well as all the good and evil actions ; it is evident and clear that these actions are, for the most part, left to the will of man. But there are certain things to which man is forced and compelled, such as sleep, death, sickness, decline of power, injuries and misfortunes ; these are not subject to the will of man, and he is not responsible for them, for he is compelled to endure them. But in the choice of good and bad actions he is free, and he commits them according to his own will. (SAQ 287)

IN times of joy our strength is more vital, our intellect keener, and our understanding less clouded. We seem better able to cope with the world and to find our sphere of usefulness. But when sadness visits us we become weak, our strength leaves us, our comprehension is dim and our intelligence veiled. The actualities of life seem to elude our grasp, the eyes of our spirits fail to discover the sacred mysteries, and we become even as dead beings. (PT 100)

IN creation there is no evil ; all is good. Certain qualities and natures innate in some men and apparently blameworthy are not so in reality. For example, from the beginning of his life you can see in a nursing child the signs of desire, of anger, and of temper. Then, it may be said, good and evil are innate in the reality of man, and this is contrary to the pure goodness of nature and creation. The answer to this is that desire, which is to ask for something more, is a praiseworthy quality provided that it is used suitably. So, if a man has the desire to acquire science and knowledge, or to become compassionate, generous, and just, it is most praiseworthy. If he exercises his anger and wrath against the bloodthirsty tyrants who are like ferocious beasts, it is very praiseworthy ; but if he does not use these qualities in a right way, they are blameworthy. (SAQ 250)

NOW regarding the question whether the faculties of the mind and the human soul are one and the same. These faculties are but the inherent properties of the soul, such as the power of imagination, of thought, of understanding ; powers that are the essential requisites of the

reality of man, even as the solar ray is the inherent property of the sun. The temple of man is like unto a mirror, his soul is as the sun, and his mental faculties even as the rays that emanate from that source of light. The ray may cease to fall upon the mirror, but it can in no wise be dissociated from the sun. (TF)

THOUGHTS are infinite as the sea, and the ways and manners of life are like embankments and dykes against the waves ; and not until the sea moves do the waves rise up and cast on shore the pearls of wisdom. (MFC 124)

IF a man's thought is constantly aspiring towards heavenly subjects, then does he become saintly ; if, on the other hand, his thought does not soar, but is directed downwards to centre itself upon the things of this world, he grows more and more material until he arrives at a state little better than that of a mere animal. (PT 13)

IT is easy to read the Holy Scriptures, but it is only with a clean heart and a pure mind that one may understand their true meaning. (PT 50)

THE essential purpose of faith and belief is to ennoble the inner being of man with the outpourings of grace from on high. If this be not attained, it is, indeed, deprivation. It

is the realization of this deprivation that is the true eternal fire. (SBS 331)

WHEN the spirit is fed with holy virtues, then is the body joyous ; if the soul falls into sin, the body is in torment. (PT 58)

UNLESS the spirit be healed, the cure of the body is worth nothing. (PT 15)

GRIEF and sorrow do not come to us by chance, they are sent to us by the Divine mercy for our own perfecting. (PT 45)

THOSE who suffer most attain to the greatest perfection. (PT 44)

THE trials which beset our every step, all our sorrow, pain, shame, and grief, are born in the world of matter ; whereas the spiritual kingdom never causes sadness. A man living with his thoughts in this kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ills all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene. (PT 101)

SAINTS are men who have freed themselves from the world of matter and who have overcome sin. They live in the world but are not of it, their thoughts being continually in the world of the spirit. Their lives are spent in holiness, and their deeds show forth love, justice, and godliness. They are illumined from on high; they are as bright and shining lamps in the dark places of the earth. These are the saints of God. (PT 54)

WHEN a man turns his face to God, he finds sunshine everywhere. (PT 11)

ON MEDITATION

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

BAHÁ’U’LLÁH says there is a sign from God in every phenomenon ; the sign of the intellect is contemplation and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is impossible for a man to do two things at one time—he cannot both speak and meditate.

IT is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit. In that state of mind you put certain questions to your spirit and the spirit answers ; the light breaks forth and the reality is revealed.

YOU cannot apply the name " man " to any being void of this faculty of meditation ; without it he would be a mere animal, lower than the beasts.

THROUGH the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life ; through it he receives the breath of the Holy Spirit—the bestowal of the Spirit is given in reflection and meditation.

THE spirit of man is itself informed and strengthened during meditation ; through it affairs of which man knew nothing are unfolded before his view. Through it, he receives divine inspiration, through it he receives heavenly food.

MEDITATION is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that state man abstracts himself ; in that state man withdraws himself from all outside objects ; in that subjective mood he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life and can unfold the secrets of things-in-themselves. To illustrate this, think of man as endowed with two kinds of sight ; when the power of insight is being used the outward power of vision does not see.

THE faculty of meditation frees man from the animal nature, discerns the reality of things, puts man in touch with God.

THIS faculty brings forth from the invisible plane the sciences and arts. Through the meditative faculty, inventions are made possible, colossal undertakings are carried out ; through it governments can run smoothly. Through this faculty man enters into the very Kingdom of God.

NEVERTHELESS, some thoughts are useless to man ; they are like waves moving in the sea without result. But if the faculty of meditation is bathed in the inner light and characterized with divine attributes, the results will be confirmed.

THE WAY OF GOD

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

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. (GWB 289)

WHATSOEVER instilleth assurance into the hearts of men, whatsoever exalteth their station or promoteth their contentment, is acceptable in the sight of God. (GWB 206)

WE verily behold your actions. If We perceive from them the sweet smelling savour of purity and holiness, We will most certainly bless you. Then will the tongues of Paradise utter your praise and magnify your names amidst them who have drawn nigh unto God. (GWB 307)

ONE righteous act 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. (GWB 287)

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. (HWA 1)

HOW great the felicity that awaiteth the man that forsaketh all he hath in a desire to obtain the things of God ! Such a man, We testify, is among God's blessed ones. (GWB 214)

FORGET your own selves, and turn your eyes towards your neighbour. (GWB 9)

O MAN of Two Visions ! Close one eye and open the other. Close one to the world, and all that is therein and open the other to the hallowed beauty of the Beloved. (HWP 12)

O SON of Being ! Bring thyself to account each day ere

thou art summoned to a reckoning ; for death, unheralded, shall come upon thee and thou shalt be called to give account for thy deeds. (HWA 31)

BESEECH ye the one true God to grant that all men may be graciously assisted to fulfil that which is acceptable in Our sight. (GWB 7)

BESEECH ye the one true God to grant that ye may taste the savour of such deeds as are performed in His path, and partake of the sweetness of such humility and submissiveness as are shown for His sake. (GWB 9)

LAY not on any soul a load which ye would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things ye would not desire for yourselves. This is My best counsel unto you, did ye but observe it. (GWB 128)

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. (GWB 204)

O SON of Spirit ! The best beloved of all things in My sight is justice ; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest

Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbour. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behoveth thee to be. Verily, justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes. (HWA 2)

WHOSO cleaveth to justice, can, under no circumstances, transgress the limits of moderation. (GWB 342)

BEWARE lest the desires of the flesh and of a corrupt inclination provoke divisions among you. Be ye as the fingers of one hand, the members of one body. (PDC 118)

BLESSED are the learned that pride not themselves on their attainments; and well is it with the righteous that mock not the sinful, but rather conceal their misdeeds, so that their own shortcomings may remain veiled to men's eyes. (GWB 315)

O SON of Man! Rejoice in the gladness of thine heart, that thou mayest be worthy to meet Me and to mirror forth My beauty. (HWA 36)

LET truthfulness and courtesy be your adorning.
(GWB 305)

CLEAVE unto that which draweth you together and
uniteth you. (GWB 217)

HE is the true servant of God, 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. (ADJ 19)

SHOULD a man wish to adorn himself with the ornaments of the earth, to wear its apparels, or partake of the benefits it can bestow, no harm can befall him, if he alloweth nothing whatsoever to intervene between him and God, for God hath ordained every good thing, whether created in the heavens or in the earth, for such of His servants as truly believe in Him. Eat ye, O people, of the good things which God hath allowed you, and deprive not yourselves from His wondrous bounties. Render thanks and praise unto Him, and be of them that are truly thankful. (ADJ 28)

God hath verily made chastity to be a crown for the

heads of His handmaidens. Great is the blessedness of that handmaiden that hath attained unto this great station. (ADJ 27)

O EMIGRANTS ! The tongue I have designed for the mention of Me, defile it not with detraction. If the fire of self overcome you, remember your own faults and not the faults of My creatures, inasmuch as everyone of you knoweth his own self better than he knoweth others. (HWP 66)

O SON of Earth ! Know, verily, the heart wherein the least remnant of envy yet lingers, shall never attain My everlasting dominion, nor inhale the sweet savours of holiness breathing from My kingdom of sanctity. (HWP 6)

O SON of My Handmaid ! Guidance hath ever been given by words, and now it is given by deeds. Everyone 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 own deeds. In this wise We counsel you in this holy and resplendent tablet. (HWP 76)

THAT one indeed is a man who, to-day, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. (GWB 250)

BY the righteousness of God ! Whoso openeth his lips in this Day and maketh mention of the name of His Lord, the hosts of Divine inspiration shall descend upon him from the heaven of My name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. On him shall also descend the Concourse on high, each bearing aloft a chalice of pure light. Thus hath it been fore-ordained in the realm of God's Revelation, by the behest of Him who is the All-Glorious, the Most Powerful. (GWB 280)

IF any differences arise amongst you, behold Me standing before your face, and overlook the faults of one another for My name's sake and as a token of your love for My manifest and resplendent Cause. (GWB 315)

THE movement itself from place to place, when undertaken for the sake of God, hath always exerted, and can now exert, its influence in the world. In the Books of old the station of them that have voyaged far and near in order to guide the servants of God hath been set forth and written down. (ADJ 70)

O PEOPLE of God ! Do not busy yourselves in your own concerns ; let your thoughts be fixed upon that which will rehabilitate the fortunes of mankind and sanctify the hearts and souls of men. This can best be achieved through pure and holy deeds, through a virtuous life and a goodly behaviour. (GWB 93)

BURN away, wholly for the sake of the Well-Beloved, the veil of self with the flame of the undying Fire, and with faces joyous and beaming with light, associate with your neighbour. (GWB 316)

CONSORT with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship. (GWB 95)

LET your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self. (GWB 94)

ARISE, O people, and, by the power of God's might, resolve to gain the victory over your own selves, that haply the whole earth may be freed and sanctified from its servitude to the gods of its idle fancies—gods that have inflicted such loss upon, and are responsible for the misery of, their wretched worshippers. These idols form the obstacle that impeded man in his efforts to advance in the path of perfection. (GWB 93)

THE well-being of mankind, its peace and security are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established. (WOB 203)

RELIGION is, verily, the chief instrument for the establishment of order in the world, and of tranquillity among its peoples. (WOB 203)

TRUSTWORTHINESS is the greatest door to the security and tranquillity of mankind. The stability of every affair always depends on it, and the worlds of honour, glory, and affluence are illuminated by its light. (SBS 125)

ALL men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization. (GWB 215)

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. (GWB 213)

IT is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens. (GWB 250)

IF the rulers and kings of the earth, the symbols of the power of God, exalted be His glory, arise and resolve to

dedicate themselves to whatever will promote the highest interests of the whole of humanity, the reign of justice will assuredly be established amongst the children of men, and the effulgence of its light will envelop the whole earth. (GWB 213)

IT is incumbent upon them who are in authority to exercise moderation in all things. Whatsoever passeth beyond the limits of moderation will cease to exert a beneficial influence. (GWB 216)

THE structure of world stability and order hath been reared upon, and will continue to be sustained by, the twin pillars of reward and punishment. (GWB 219)

TRUE liberty consisteth in man's submission unto My commandments, little as ye know it. Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty, attain unto perfect liberty. Happy is the man that hath apprehended the Purpose of God in whatever He hath revealed from the Heaven of His Will, that pervadeth all created things. (GWB 336)

CLEANSE from your hearts the love of worldly things, from your tongues every remembrance except His remembrance, from your entire being whatsoever may deter you

from beholding His face, or may tempt you to follow the promptings of your evil and corrupt inclinations. Let God be your fear, O people, and be ye of them that tread the path of righteousness. (GWB 275)

THE virtues and attributes pertaining unto God are all evident and manifest, and have been mentioned and described in all the heavenly Books. Among them are trustworthiness, truthfulness, purity of heart while communing with God, forbearance, resignation to whatever the Almighty hath decreed, contentment with the things His Will hath provided, patience, nay, thankfulness in the midst of tribulation, and complete reliance, in all circumstances, upon Him. These rank, according to the estimate of God, among the highest and most laudable of all acts. All other acts are, and will remain, secondary and subordinate unto them.

BE generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbour, 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. (GWB 285)

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

IT is clear that the honour and exaltation of man must be something more than material riches ; material comforts are only a branch, but the root of the exaltation of man is the good attributes and virtues which are the adornments of his reality. These are the divine appearances, the heavenly bounties, the sublime emotions, the love and knowledge of God ; universal wisdom, intellectual perception, scientific discoveries, justice, equity, truthfulness, benevolence, natural courage, and innate fortitude ; the respect for rights and the keeping of agreements and covenants ; rectitude in all circumstances ; serving the truth under all conditions ; the sacrifice of one’s life for the good of all people ; kindness and esteem for all nations ; obedience to the teachings of God ; service in the Divine Kingdom ; the guidance of the people, and the education of the nations and races. This is the prosperity of the human world ! This is the exaltation of man in the world ! This is eternal life and heavenly honour ! (SAQ 90)

THE only difference between members of the human family is that of degree. Some are like children who are ignorant and must be educated until they arrive at maturity. Some are like the sick and must be treated with tenderness

and care. None are bad or evil ! We must not feel repelled by these poor children. We must treat them with great kindness, teaching the ignorant and tenderly nursing the sick. (PT 138)

IF only men would search out truth, they would find themselves united. (PT 110)

WHEN you meet those whose opinions differ from your own, do not turn away your face from them. All are seeking truth, and there are many roads leading thereto. Truth has many aspects, but it remains always and for ever one. (PT 47)

WHEREVER you find the attributes of God love that person, whether he be of your family or of another. Shed the light of a boundless love on every human being whom you meet, whether of your country, your race, your political party, or of any other nation, colour, or shade of political opinion. (PT 33)

RELIGIOUS, racial, political, and patriotic prejudice are the destroyers of human society. As long as these prejudices last the world of humanity will not attain to poise and perfection. As long as these threatening clouds are in the sky of humanity, the sun of reality cannot dawn. (SBS 191)

IF you desire with all your heart friendship with every race on earth, your thought, spiritual and positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing stronger and stronger, until it reaches the minds of all men. (PT 25)

THE diversity in the human family should be the cause of love and harmony, as it is in music where many different notes blend together in the making of a perfect chord. If you meet those of different race and colour to yourself, do not mistrust them and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality, but rather be glad and show them kindness. Think of them as different coloured roses growing in the beautiful garden of humanity, and rejoice to be among them. (PT 47)

AT present, Universal Peace is a matter of great importance, but unity of conscience is essential, so that the foundation of this matter may become secure, its establishment firm and its edifice strong. (BPP 12)

WHEN travelling and journeying throughout the world, wherever one finds construction, it is the result of fellowship and love, while everything that is in ruin shows the effect of enmity and hatred. (BPP 24)

A THOUGHT of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love. (PT 24)

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. (PT 23)

LOVE is light in whatsoever house it may shine and enmity is darkness in whatsoever abode it dwell. (BPP 30)

A HUMBLE workman who commits an injustice is as much to blame as a renowned tyrant. (PT 141)

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. (PT 165)

BE kind in truth, not only in appearance and outwardly. (BPP 29)

DO not be content with showing friendship in words alone ; let your heart burn with loving kindness for all who may cross your path. (PT 11)

A MAN who does great good and talks not of it is on the way to perfection. (PT 12)

THE wrong in the world continues to exist just because people talk only of their ideals, and do not strive to put them into practice. If actions took the place of words, the world's misery would very soon be changed into comfort. (PT 12)

TRUTHFULNESS is the foundation of all human virtues. Without truthfulness, progress and success in all the worlds of God are impossible for any soul. When this holy attribute is established in man, all the divine qualities will also be acquired. (ADJ 22)

THE worst of qualities and the most odious of attributes, which is the foundation of all evil, is lying. No worse or more blameworthy quality than this can be imagined to exist ; it is the destroyer of all human perfections, and the cause of innumerable vices. There is no worse characteristic than this ; it is the foundation of all evils. Notwithstanding all this, if a doctor consoles a sick man by saying : " Thank God you are better, and there is hope of your recovery," though these words are contrary to the truth, yet they may become the consolation of the patient and the turning-point of the illness. This is not blameworthy. (SAQ 251)

USE your knowledge always for the benefit of others. (PT 37)

LET your ambition be the achievement on earth of a Heavenly Civilization. (PT 90)

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 ! (SAQ 157)

LEAVE all thought of self, and strive only to be obedient and submissive to the will of God. (PT 48)

HE is a true Bahá'í who strives by day and by night to progress and advance along the path of human endeavour, whose cherished desire is so to live and act as to enrich and illumine the world ; whose source of inspiration is the Essence of Divine perfection ; whose aim in life is to conduct himself so as to be the cause of infinite progress. Only when he attains unto such perfect gifts can it be said of him that he is a Bahá'í. (SBS 332)

ALL created things have their degree or stage of maturity. The period of maturity in the life of a tree is the time of its fruitbearing. . . . The animal attains a stage of full growth and completeness, and in the human kingdom, man reaches his maturity when the light of his intelligence attains its greatest power and development. . . . Similarly, there are periods and stages in the collective life of humanity. At one time it was passing through its stage of childhood, at another its period of youth, but now it has entered its long predicted phase of maturity, the evidences of which are everywhere apparent. . . . That which was applicable to human needs during the early history of the race can neither meet nor satisfy the demands of this day, this period of newness and consummation. Humanity has emerged

from its former state of limitation and preliminary training. Man must now become imbued with new virtues and powers, new moral standards, new capacities. New bounties, perfect bestowals, are awaiting and already descending upon him. The gifts and blessings of the period of youth, although timely and sufficient during the adolescence of mankind, are now incapable of meeting the requirements of its maturity. (WOB 164)

KEY TO REFERENCES

ADJ	The Advent of Divine Justice. Shoghi Effendi.
BPP	Bahá'í Peace Programme. 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
ESW	Epistle to the Son of the Wolf. Bahá'u'lláh.
GWB	Gleanings From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.
HWA	Hidden Words in Arabic or Persian. The numbers
HWP	refer to paragraphs, not pages, as in other references.
KI	Kitáb-i-Iqán. Bahá'u'lláh.
MFC	Mysterious Forces of Civilization. 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
PDC	The Promised Day is Come. Shoghi Effendi.
PT	Paris Talks. 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
SAQ	Some Answered Questions. 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
SBS	Selections from Bahá'í Scripture. Compilation.
TF	Tablet to Auguste Forel. 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
WOB	The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. Shoghi Effendi.