

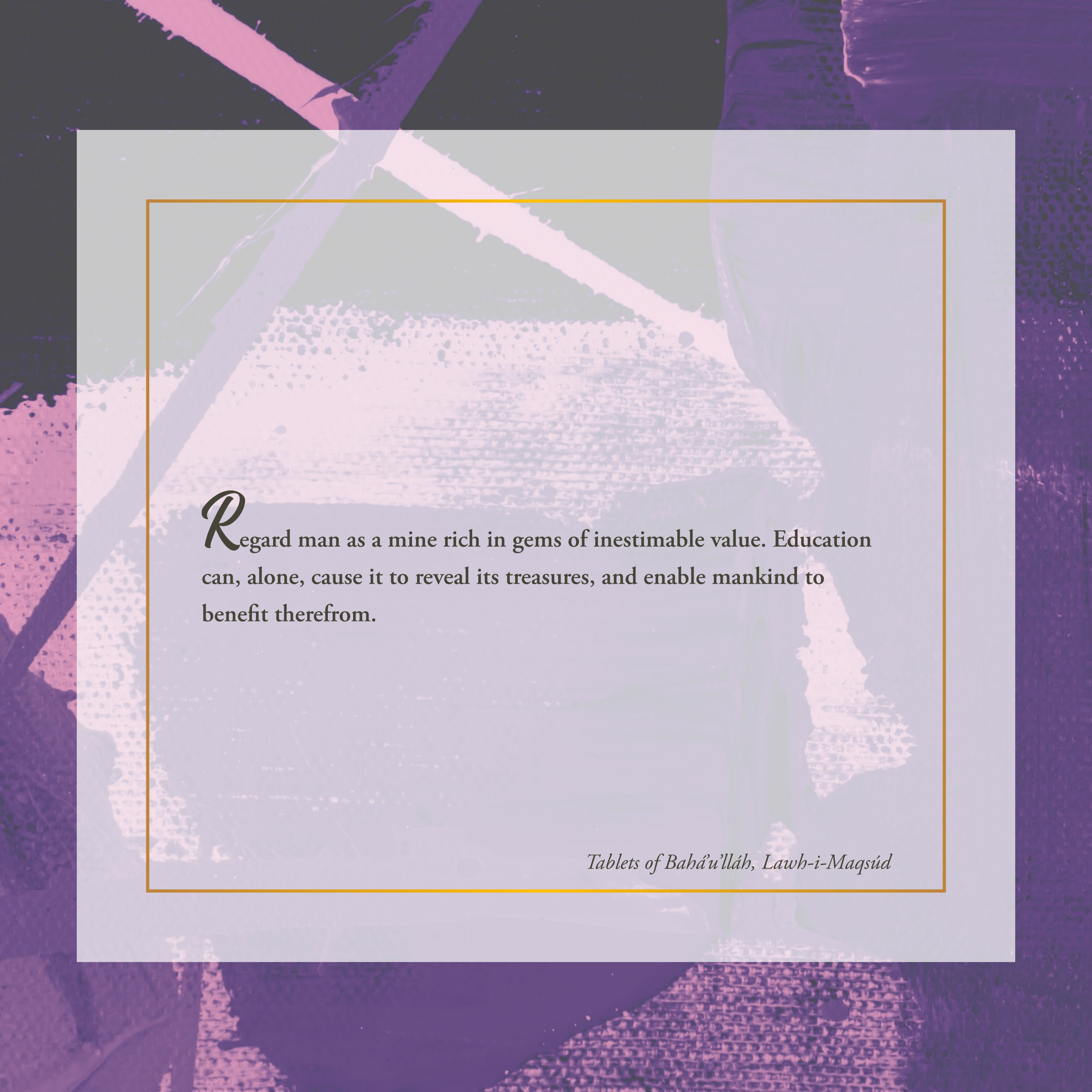
THE ETERNAL EXAMPLE

Education

QUOTATIONS | STORIES | REFLECTIONS
[CLICK HERE FOR AUDIO VERSION](#)




QUOTATIONS



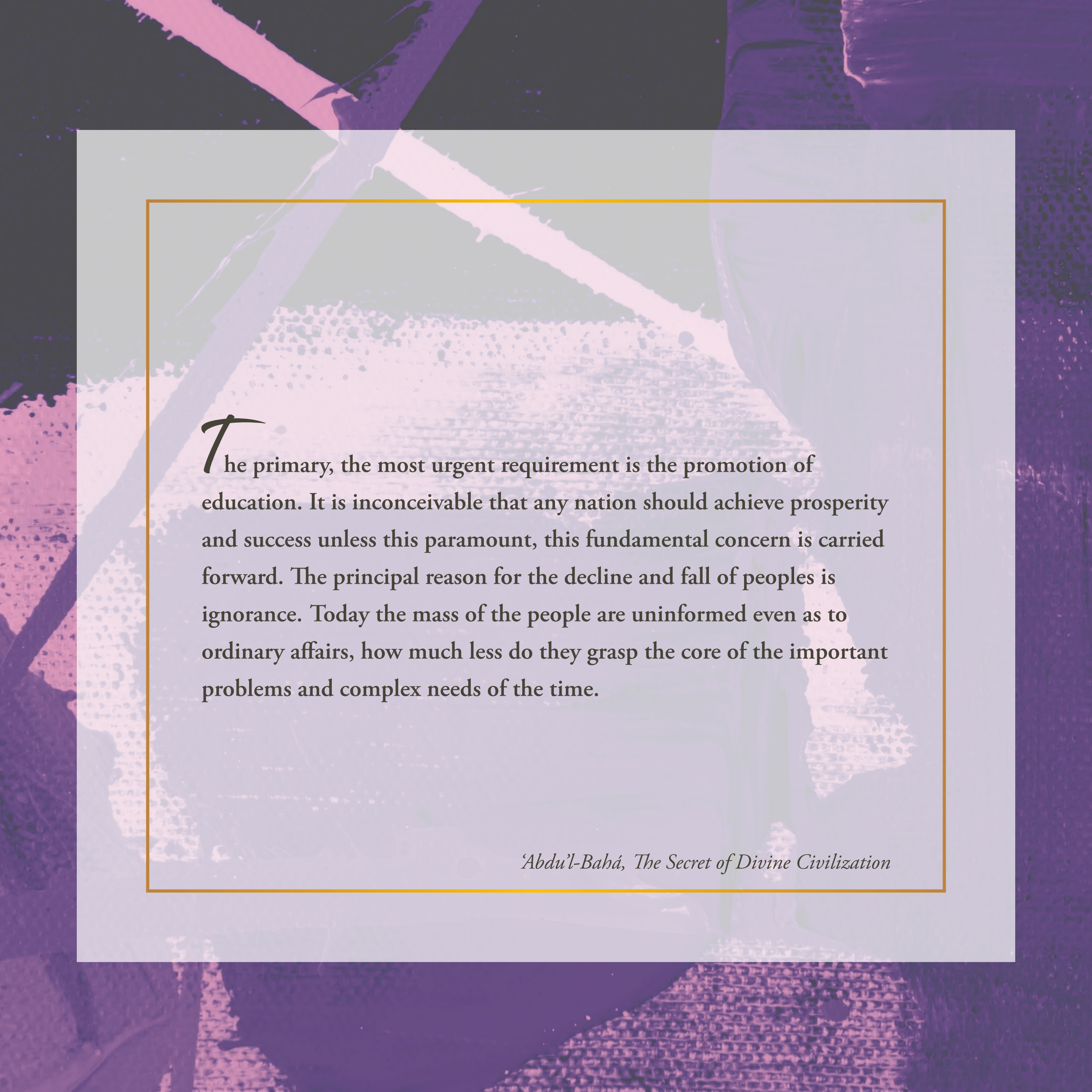
Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom.

Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Lawh-i-Maqsúd



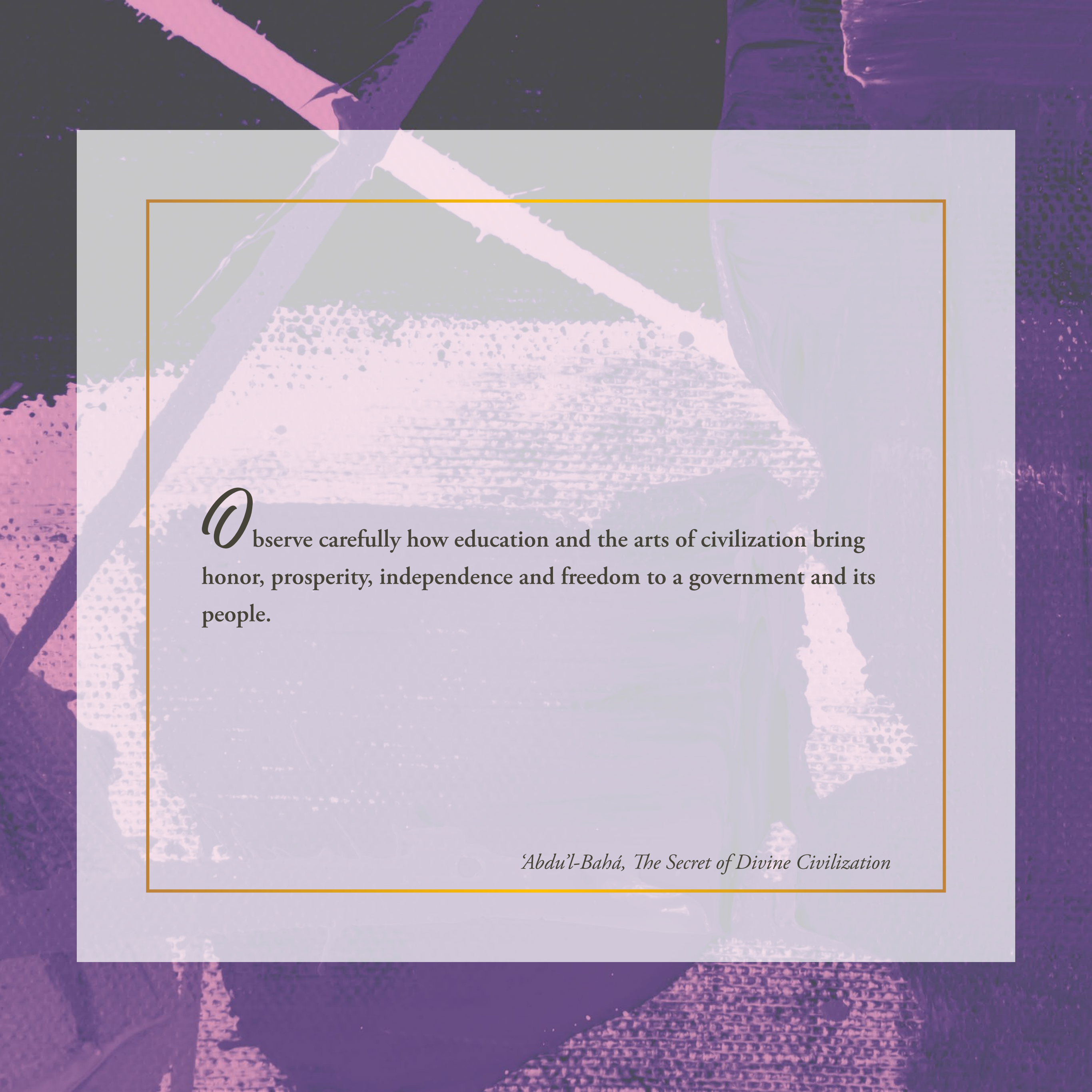
Bahá'u'lláh has announced that inasmuch as ignorance and lack of education are barriers of separation among mankind, all must receive training and instruction. Through this provision the lack of mutual understanding will be remedied and the unity of mankind furthered and advanced. Universal education is a universal law.

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



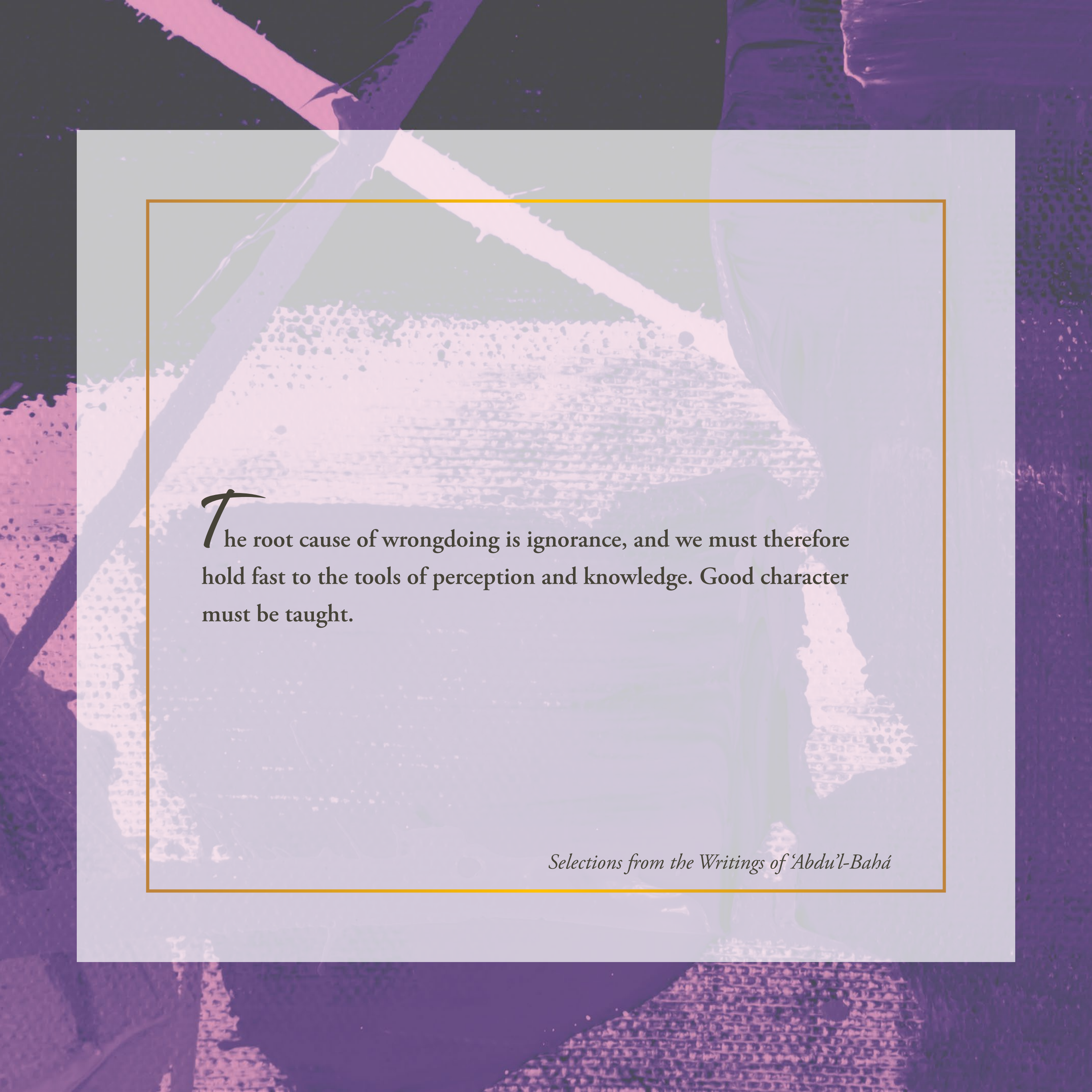
*T*he primary, the most urgent requirement is the promotion of education. It is inconceivable that any nation should achieve prosperity and success unless this paramount, this fundamental concern is carried forward. The principal reason for the decline and fall of peoples is ignorance. Today the mass of the people are uninformed even as to ordinary affairs, how much less do they grasp the core of the important problems and complex needs of the time.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization



Observe carefully how education and the arts of civilization bring honor, prosperity, independence and freedom to a government and its people.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization



*T*he root cause of wrongdoing is ignorance, and we must therefore hold fast to the tools of perception and knowledge. Good character must be taught.

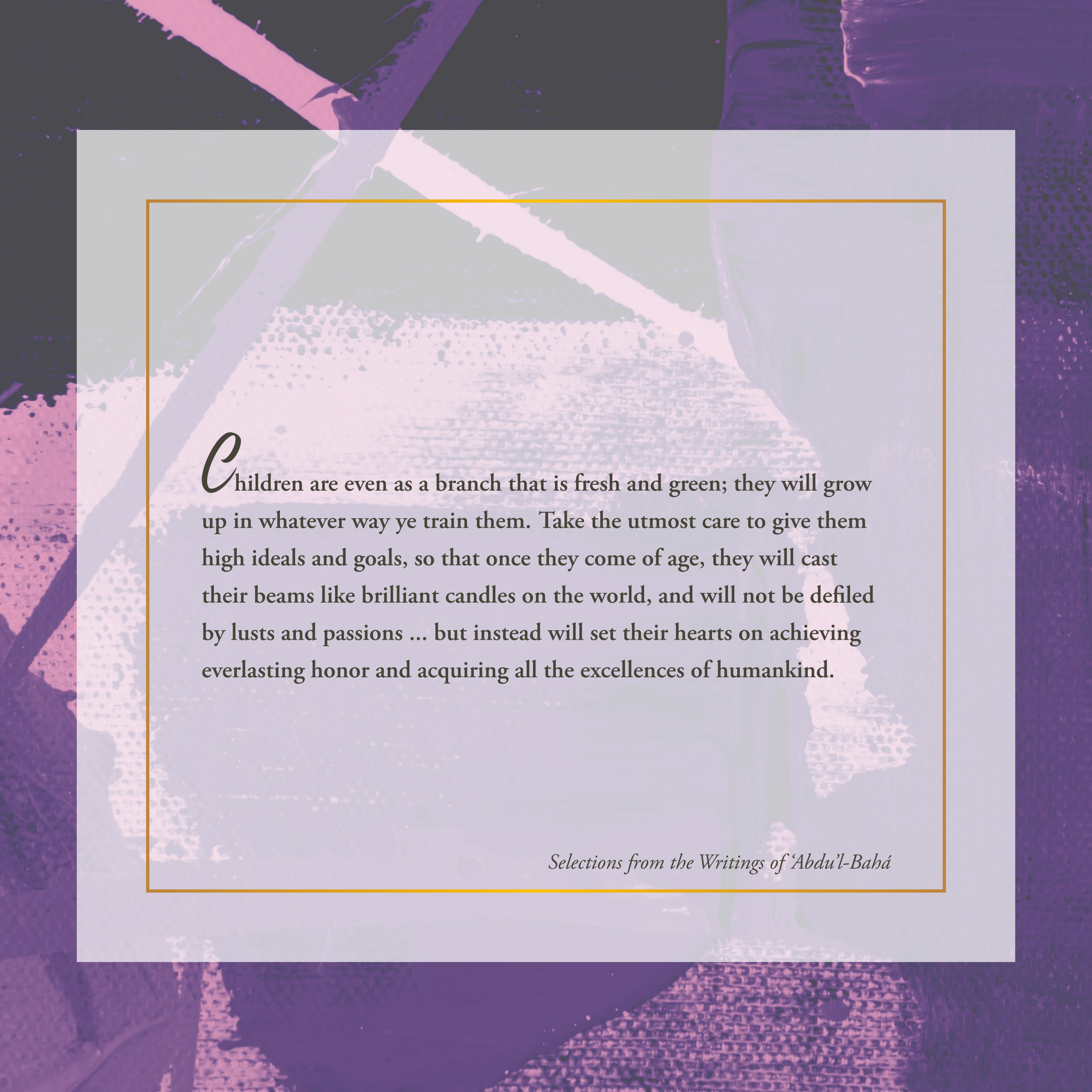
Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Exert every effort to acquire the various branches of knowledge and true understanding. Strain every nerve to achieve both material and spiritual accomplishments.

Encourage the children from their earliest years to master every kind of learning, and make them eager to become skilled in every art—the aim being that through the favouring grace of God, the heart of each one may become even as a mirror disclosing the secrets of the universe, penetrating the innermost reality of all things; and that each may earn world-wide fame in all branches of knowledge, science and the arts.

Certainly, certainly, neglect not the education of the children. Rear them to be possessed of spiritual qualities, and be assured of the gifts and favours of the Lord.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, from a Tablet—translated from the Persian



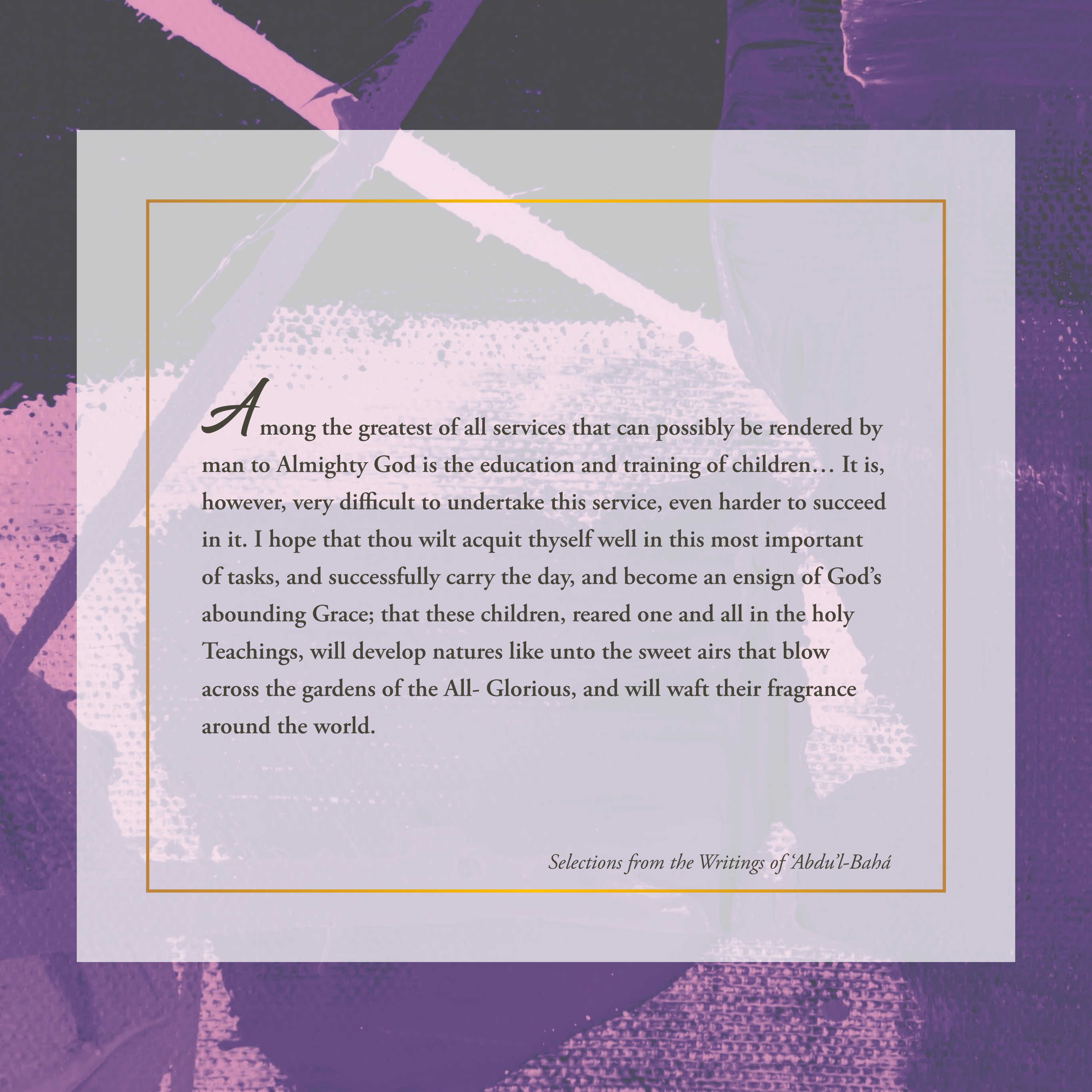
*C*hildren are even as a branch that is fresh and green; they will grow up in whatever way ye train them. Take the utmost care to give them high ideals and goals, so that once they come of age, they will cast their beams like brilliant candles on the world, and will not be defiled by lusts and passions ... but instead will set their hearts on achieving everlasting honor and acquiring all the excellences of humankind.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

...*A*ccording to the Divine commandments, every child must learn reading and writing, and acquire such branches of knowledge as are useful and necessary, as well as learning an art or skill. The utmost care must be devoted to these matters; any neglect of them, any failure to act on them, is not permissible...

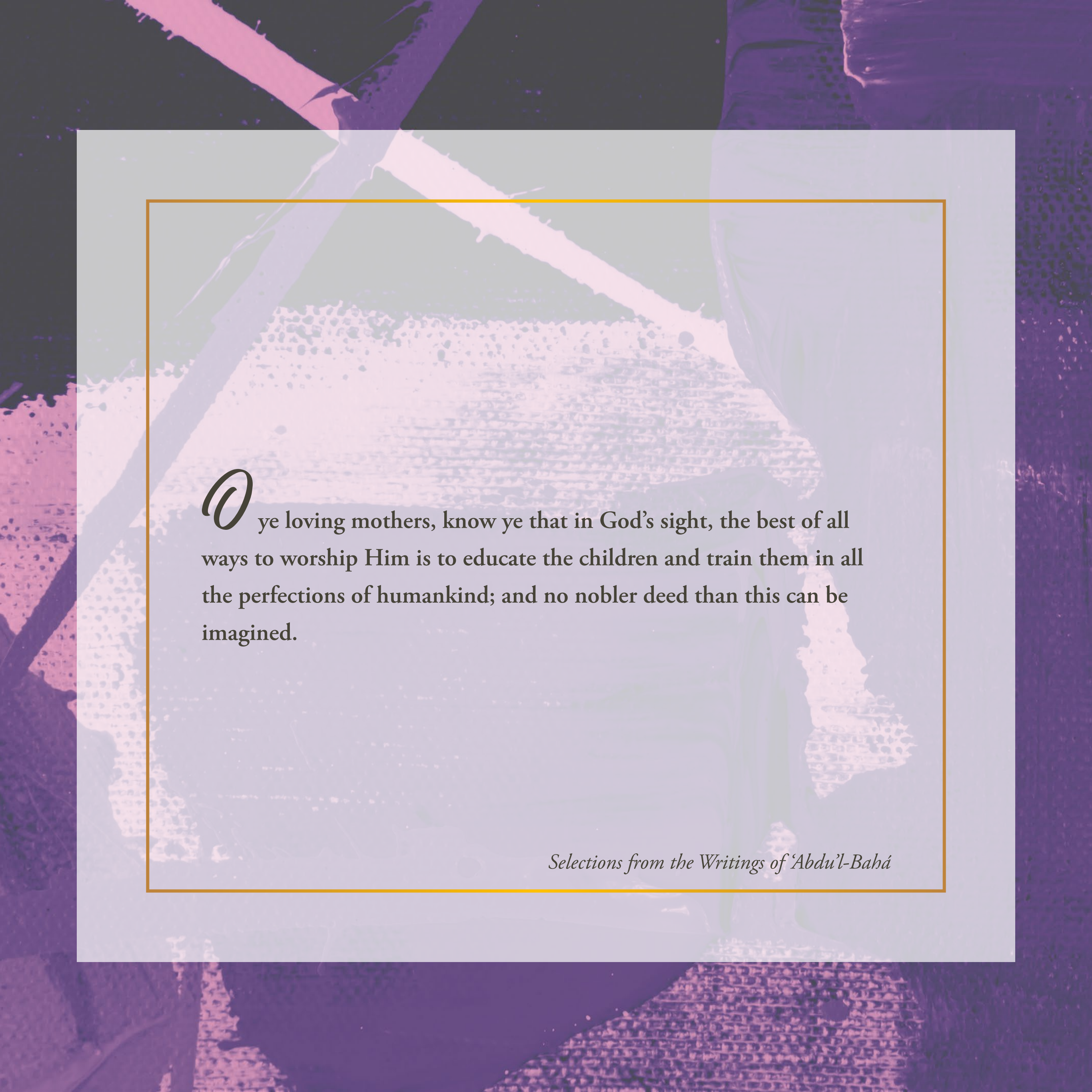
The purport is this, that to train the character of humankind is one of the weightiest commandments of God, and the influence of such training is the same as that which the sun exerteth over tree and fruit. Children must be most carefully watched over, protected and trained; in such consisteth true parenthood and parental mercy.

Abdu'l-Bahá , from a Tablet translated from the Arabic and Persian



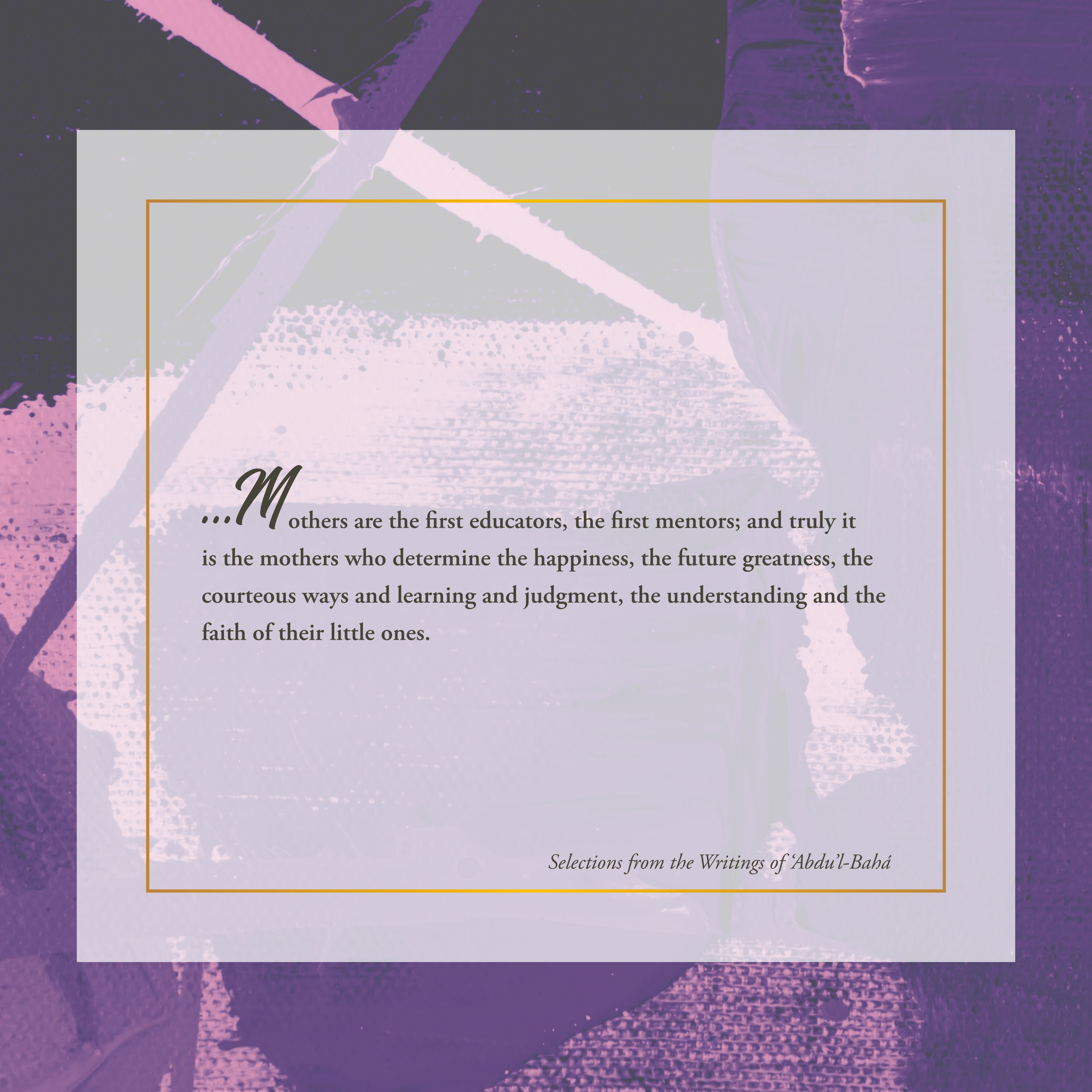
*A*mong the greatest of all services that can possibly be rendered by man to Almighty God is the education and training of children... It is, however, very difficult to undertake this service, even harder to succeed in it. I hope that thou wilt acquit thyself well in this most important of tasks, and 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.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá




O ye loving mothers, know ye that in God's sight, the best of all ways to worship Him is to educate the children and train them in all the perfections of humankind; and no nobler deed than this can be imagined.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá



...*M*others are the first educators, the first mentors; and truly it is the mothers who determine the happiness, the future greatness, the courteous ways and learning and judgment, the understanding and the faith of their little ones.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá




...**M**ost important of all is the education of girl children, for these girls will one day be mothers, and the mother is the first teacher of the child. In whatever way she reareth the child, so will the child become, and the results of that first training will remain with the individual throughout his entire life.... It is therefore clear that the education of girls is of far greater consequence than that of boys. This fact is extremely important, and the matter must be seen to with the greatest energy and dedication.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, from a Tablet—translated from the Arabic and Persian

*F*or the inner reality of man is a demarcation line between the shadow and the light, a place where the two seas meet; it is the lowest point on the arc of descent, and therefore is it capable of gaining all the grades above. With education it can achieve all excellence; devoid of education it will stay on, at the lowest point of imperfection.

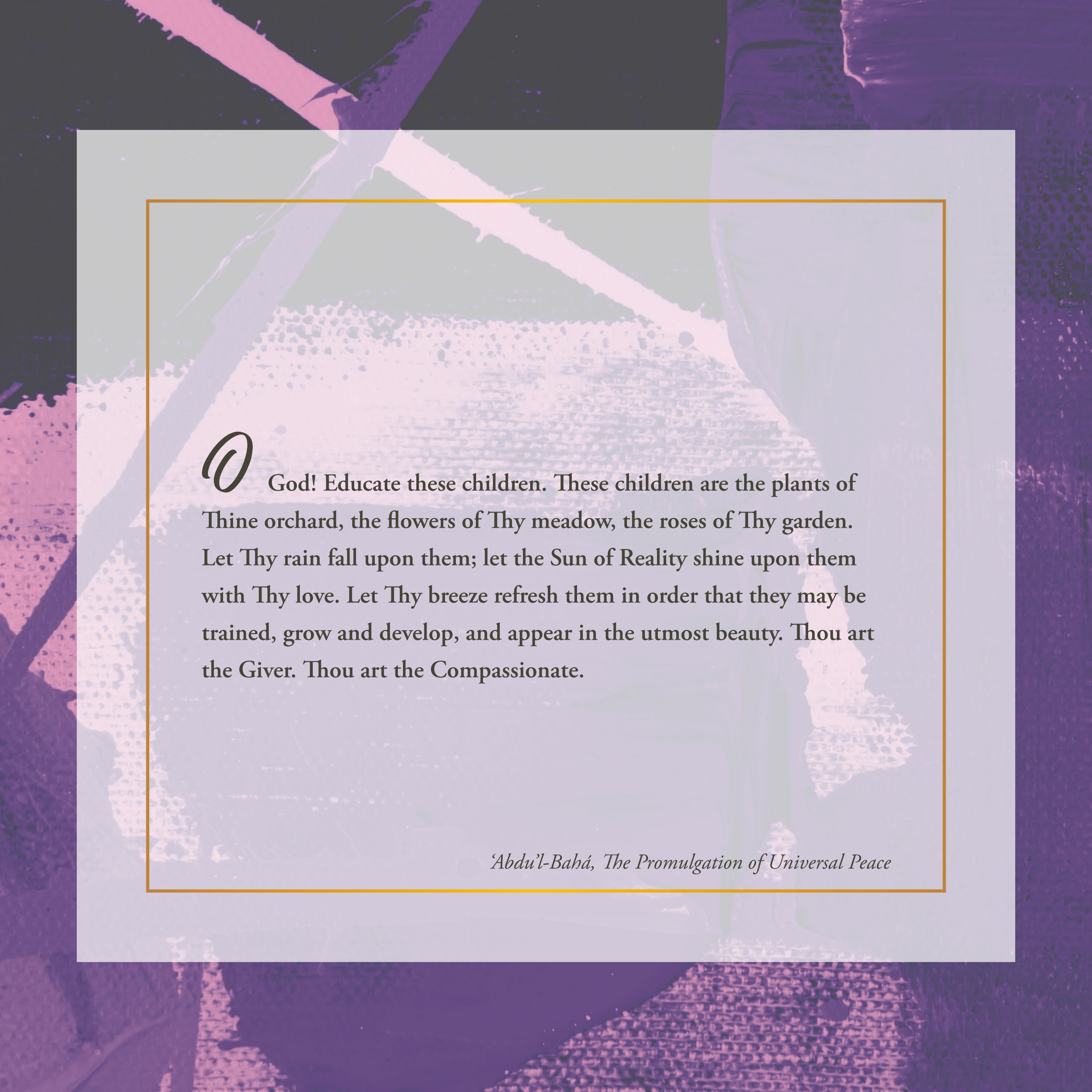
Every child is potentially the light of the world—and at the same time its darkness; wherefore must the question of education be accounted as of primary importance. From his infancy, the child must be nursed at the breast of God's love, and nurtured in the embrace of His knowledge, that he may radiate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

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá



*T*he education of each child is compulsory... In addition to this widespread education each child must be taught a profession, art, or trade, so that every member of the community will be enabled to earn his own livelihood. Work done in the spirit of service is the highest form of worship...

Abdu'l-Bahá on Divine Philosophy



God! Educate these children. These children are the plants of Thy orchard, the flowers of Thy meadow, the roses of Thy garden. Let Thy rain fall upon them; let the Sun of Reality shine upon them with Thy love. Let Thy breeze refresh them in order that they may be trained, grow and develop, and appear in the utmost beauty. Thou art the Giver. Thou art the Compassionate.

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



STORIES

As the living embodiment of the Baha'i principle of universal education, Abdu'l-Bahá championed learning everywhere he went. He placed the utmost importance on ensuring that all had access, that all could unlock their inherent capacities. While still a prisoner in Akka, He set up a school for the children of the prisoners - asking those Baha'is who were educated and skilled in a variety of disciplines, to pass their knowledge on. Dr. Youness Khan-i-Afrukhtih, a trained doctor who was serving as Abdu'l-Bahá's interpreter at the time, was asked by Abdu'l-Bahá to teach English at this new school. He recollects:

(continued on next page)

“*T*he room was prepared, benches and desks were brought in and I began the service with which I had been honoured by the Master. There were some twenty students divided into two groups. Lessons began and before long rapid progress was achieved. The children enjoyed quite a few benefits in their training, appropriate to the prevailing conditions of austerity and hardship in the Most Great Prison. In addition to the study of Persian, English, mathematics and other lessons, they had to master a trade or vocation. Despite a rampant scarcity of all goods, each child had to have a desk. Training in shoe-making, carpentry, and tailoring were more readily available to the children and therefore most of them were already engaged as apprentices in these trades. The Master paid a great deal of attention to all facets of education of the young.

(continued on next page)


Each and every one of them, regardless of age or any other consideration was educated under His direct and close supervision. The young men...also received the same education. And while in their childhood they had been deprived of the opportunity to study foreign languages, here they received training in Arabic, literature, calligraphy and penmanship.” ...

“While I was engaged in teaching English, I noted that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s desire for the education of the children was so intense that despite the overwhelming pressures of His all important work, to our amazement He found time to attend to the most minute details of their work. In addition to His personal visits every few weeks, which included His enquiring into each pupil’s progress in school and reviewing the results of their quarterly exams, He spoke to them at length every Friday about the significance of their education and training.”

Adapted from Memories of Nine Years in ‘Akká, by Youness Afroukhteh pp. 159-160




REFLECTIONS



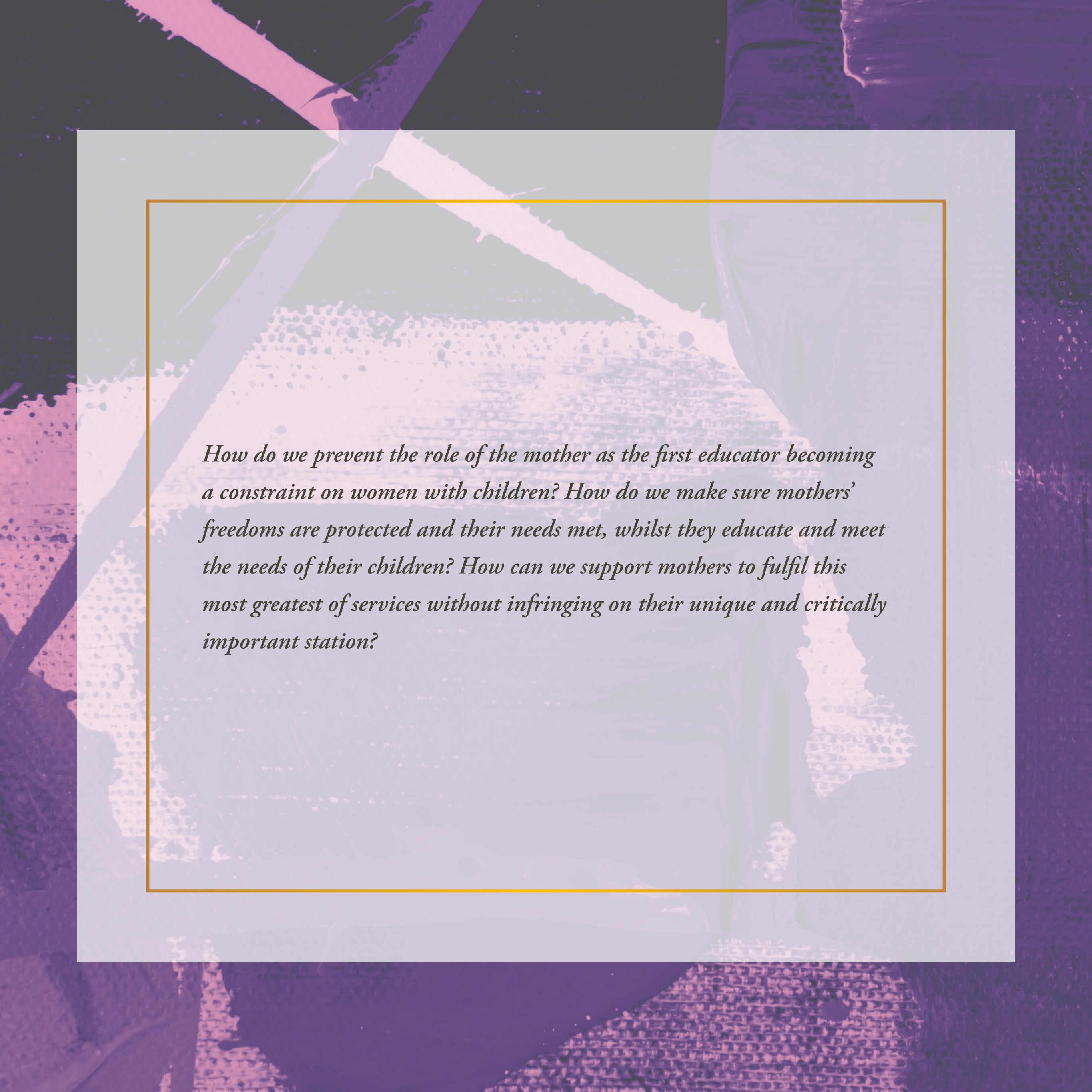
According to the quotations, what is the purpose of education? Does the education we currently receive in most of the world differ in its aims?



What knowledge and skills do we need if we are to face the challenges of our current age?



What is the significance of prioritising girls' education? In a place where all children are able to access free schooling, what does it mean for the education of girls to come first? Apart from school, what other types of education should be prioritised for girls?

A woman in a white dress is shown from the waist up, holding a young child. The woman's face is partially visible on the right side of the frame. A large, white, stylized question mark is superimposed over the center of the image, partially overlapping the woman and the child. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting.

How do we prevent the role of the mother as the first educator becoming a constraint on women with children? How do we make sure mothers' freedoms are protected and their needs met, whilst they educate and meet the needs of their children? How can we support mothers to fulfil this most greatest of services without infringing on their unique and critically important station?



[CLICK HERE FOR PLAIN TEXT VERSION](#)

For more resources please visit elevateworld.org