

THE ETERNAL EXAMPLE

Connection

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The image features a background of marbled paper with intricate, swirling patterns in shades of grey, white, and black. A solid dark green rectangular area is overlaid on the left side of the page. A thin, bright yellow border frames the entire page, including the green area. The word "QUOTATIONS" is centered in the green area in a white, all-caps, sans-serif font.

QUOTATIONS

O Children of Men! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light!

The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

*T*he great and fundamental teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are the oneness of God and unity of mankind. This is the bond of union among Bahá'ís all over the world. They become united among themselves, then unite others. It is impossible to unite unless united. Christ said, “Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?” ...

Now must we, likewise, bind ourselves together in the utmost unity, be kind and loving to each other, sacrificing all our possessions, our honour, yea, even our lives for each other. Then will it be proved that we have acted according to the teachings of God, that we have been real believers in the oneness of God and unity of mankind.

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

O handmaid of God, peace must first be established among individuals, until it leadeth in the end to peace among nations. Wherefore...strive ye with all your might to create, through the power of the Word of God, genuine love, spiritual communion and durable bonds among individuals. This is your task.

Selections From the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Should one soul from amongst the believers meet another, it must be as though a thirsty one with parched lips has reached to the fountain of the water of life, or a lover has met his true beloved. For one of the greatest divine wisdoms regarding the appearance of the holy Manifestations is this: The souls may come to know each other and become intimate with each other; the power of the love of God may make all of them the waves of one sea, the flowers of one rose garden, and the stars of one heaven. ...

My thoughts are turned towards you, and my heart leaps within me at your mention. Could ye know how my soul glows with your love, so great a happiness would flood your hearts as to cause you to become enamored with each other.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan

Endeavour to become the cause of the attraction of souls rather than to enforce minds...Show what love is, what kindness is, what true severance is and generosity. This is the important thing for you to do. Act in accordance with the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh...Now is the time for you to live in accordance with His words. Let your deeds be the real translation of their meaning.

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

*T*he body politic today is greatly in need of a physician. It is similar to a human body afflicted with severe ailments. A doctor diagnoses the case and prescribes treatment. He does not prescribe, however, until he has made the diagnosis. The disease which afflicts the body politic is lack of love and absence of altruism. In the hearts of men no real love is found, and the condition is such that, unless their susceptibilities are quickened by some power so that unity, love and accord may develop within them, there can be no healing, no agreement among mankind. Love and unity are the needs of the body politic today. Without these there can be no progress or prosperity attained. Therefore, the friends of God must adhere to the power which will create this love and unity in the hearts of the sons of men...

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The spiritual teachings of the religion of God can alone create this love, unity and accord in human hearts.

Therefore, hold to these heavenly agencies which God has provided so that through the love of God this soul-bond may be established, this heart-attachment realized and the light of the reality of unity be reflected from you throughout the universe.

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

*T*he surface of the earth is one native land, and that native land was provided for all. God has not set these boundaries and race limitations. Why should imaginary barriers which God has not originally destined be made a cause of contention? God has created and provided for all. He is the Preserver of all, and all are submerged in the ocean of His mercy. Not a single soul is deprived. Inasmuch as we have such a loving God and Creator, why should we be at war with each other? Now that His light is shining universally, why should we cast ourselves into darkness? As His table is spread for all His children, why should we deprive each other of its sustenance? As His effulgence is shining upon all, why should we seek to live among the shadows?

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There is no doubt that the only cause is ignorance and that the result is perdition. Discord deprives humanity of the eternal favours of God; therefore, we must forget all imaginary causes of difference and seek the very fundamentals of the divine religions in order that we may associate in perfect love and accord and consider humankind as one family, the surface of the earth as one nationality and all races as one humanity.

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

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy. O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

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O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind. O God! Establish the Most Great Peace. Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together. O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

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

O ye who have turned your faces toward the Exalted Beauty! By night, by day, at morningtide and sunset, when darkness draweth on, and at early light I remember, and ever have remembered, in the realms of my mind and heart, the loved ones of the Lord. I beg of Him to bestow His confirmations upon those loved ones, dwellers in that pure and holy land, and to grant them successful outcomes in all things: that in their character, their behaviour, their words, their way of life, in all they are and do, He will make them to achieve distinction among men; that He will gather them into the world community, their hearts filled with ecstasy and fervour and yearning love, with knowledge and certitude, with steadfastness and unity, their faces beauteous and bright.

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O ye beloved of the Lord! This day is the day of union, the day of the ingathering of all mankind. ‘Verily God loveth those who, as though they were a solid wall, do battle for His Cause in serried lines!’ Note that He saith ‘in serried lines’—meaning crowded and pressed together, one locked to the next, each supporting his fellows. To do battle, as stated in the sacred verse, doth not, in this greatest of all dispensations, mean to go forth with sword and spear, with lance and piercing arrow—but rather weaponed with pure intent, with righteous motives, with counsels helpful and effective, with godly attributes, with deeds pleasing to the Almighty, with the qualities of heaven. It signifieth education for all mankind, guidance for all men, the spreading far and wide of the sweet savours of the spirit, the promulgation of God’s proofs, the setting forth of arguments conclusive and divine, the doing of charitable deeds.

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Whensoever holy souls, drawing on the powers of heaven, shall arise with such qualities of the spirit, and march in unison, rank on rank, every one of those souls will be even as one thousand, and the surging waves of that mighty ocean will be even as the battalions of the Concourse on high. What a blessing that will be—when all shall come together, even as once separate torrents, rivers and streams, running brooks and single drops, when collected together in one place will form a mighty sea. And to such a degree will the inherent unity of all prevail, that the traditions, rules, customs and distinctions in the fanciful life of these populations will be effaced and vanish away like isolated drops, once the great sea of oneness doth leap and surge and roll.

I swear by the Ancient Beauty, that at such a time overwhelming grace will so encircle all, and the sea of grandeur will so overflow its shores, that the narrowest strip of water will grow wide as an endless sea, and every merest drop will be even as the shoreless deep.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

O Thou compassionate Lord, Thou Who art generous and able! We are servants of Thine sheltered beneath Thy providence. Cast Thy glance of favour upon us. Give light to our eyes, hearing to our ears, and understanding and love to our hearts. Render our souls joyous and happy through Thy glad tidings. O Lord! Point out to us the pathway of Thy kingdom and resuscitate all of us through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Bestow upon us life everlasting and confer upon us never-ending honour. Unify mankind and illumine the world of humanity. May we all follow Thy pathway, long for Thy good pleasure and seek the mysteries of Thy kingdom. O God! Unite us and connect our hearts with Thine indissoluble bond. Verily, Thou art the Giver, Thou art the Kind One and Thou art the Almighty.

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

O my God! O my God! Verily, I invoke Thee and supplicate before Thy threshold, asking Thee that all Thy mercies may descend upon these souls. Specialize them for Thy favor and Thy truth.

O Lord! Unite and bind together the hearts, join in accord all the souls, and exhilarate the spirits through the signs of Thy sanctity and oneness. O Lord! Make these faces radiant through the light of Thy oneness. Strengthen the loins of Thy servants in the service of Thy kingdom.

O Lord, Thou possessor of infinite mercy! O Lord of forgiveness and pardon! Forgive our sins, pardon our shortcomings, and cause us to turn to the kingdom of Thy clemency, invoking the kingdom of might and power, humble at Thy shrine and submissive before the glory of Thine evidences.

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O Lord God! Make us as waves of the sea, as flowers of the garden, united, agreed through the bounties of Thy love. O Lord! Dilate the breasts through the signs of Thy oneness, and make all mankind as stars shining from the same height of glory, as perfect fruits growing upon Thy tree of life.

Verily, Thou art the Almighty, the Self-Subsistent, the Giver, the Forgiving, the Pardoner, the Omniscient, the One Creator.

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



STORIES

*T*here is the story of the coal miner in California who had walked many miles to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Who, of course spoke that evening as He always did through an interpreter. The coal miner became more and more impatient. Finally, unable to stand it any longer, he leaned toward the man sitting next to him. “Why does that man continually interrupt the Master?” he asked. The man explained, “Abdu’l-Bahá is speaking in Persian, it must be translated.” “Translated!” the coal miner was outraged. “Nothing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá says needs translating - anybody can understand Him.”

Reginald Grant Barrow, Mother's Stories: Stories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Early Believers told by Muriel Ives Barrow Newhall to her son, p. 38.



REFLECTIONS

What efforts can we make to truly become closer to one another? What are some of the barriers to this?

What do you think it was about 'Abdu'l-Bahá that allowed Him to be understood even though He was speaking a different language? How can we cultivate those same qualities?

How can we make sure that our connections are not superficial? What does it mean to be “the fountain of the water of life” for one another?



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