



MEDITATIONS ON

DISCERNING

*Truth*

IN MEDIA

ELEVATE

① Thou kind Lord!

We are servants of Thy Threshold, taking shelter at Thy holy Door.  
We seek no refuge save only this strong pillar,  
turn nowhere for a haven but unto Thy safekeeping.  
Protect us, bless us, support us, make us such that we shall love  
but Thy good pleasure, utter only Thy praise, follow only the pathway of truth,  
that we may become rich enough to dispense with all save Thee,  
and receive our gifts from the sea of Thy beneficence,  
that we may ever strive to exalt Thy Cause and to spread Thy sweet savors  
far and wide, that we may become oblivious of self and occupied only with Thee,  
and disown all else and be caught up in Thee.

O Thou Provider, O Thou Forgiver!  
Grant us Thy grace and loving-kindness, Thy gifts and Thy bestowals,  
and sustain us, that we may attain our goal.  
Thou art the Powerful, the Able, the Knower, the Seer;  
and, verily, Thou art the Generous, and, verily, Thou art the All-Merciful,  
and, verily, Thou art the Ever-Forgiving,  
He to Whom repentance is due,  
He Who forgiveth even the most grievous of sins.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

*A*ll the nations of the world have to investigate after truth independently and turn their eyes from the moribund blind imitations of the past ages entirely. Truth is one when it is independently investigated, it does not accept division. Therefore the independent investigation of truth will lead to the oneness of the world of humanity.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

*K*nowing Truth, thy heart no more Will ache with error...this fair ship of Truth  
Should bear thee safe and dry across the sea Of thy transgressions.

Bhagavad Gita

*T*he first teaching is that man should investigate reality, for reality is contrary to dogmatic interpretations and imitations of ancestral forms of belief to which all nations and peoples adhere so tenaciously... Therefore, all souls should consider it incumbent upon them to investigate reality. Reality is one; and when found, it will unify all mankind.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

*I*f a fool be associated with a wise man even all his life,  
he will perceive the truth as little as a spoon perceives the taste of soup.  
If an intelligent man be associated for one minute only with a wise man,  
he will soon perceive the truth,  
as the tongue perceives the taste of soup.

Buddha

① 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 behooveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to  
thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes.

Bahá'u'lláh

*A*mong the favourable signs are the steadily growing strength of the steps towards world order taken initially near the beginning of this century... and the spontaneous spawning of widening networks of ordinary people seeking understanding through personal communication.

The scientific and technological advances occurring in this unusually blessed century portend a great surge forward in the social evolution of the planet, and indicate the means by which the practical problems of humanity may be solved. They provide, indeed, the very means for the administration of the complex life of a united world.

Yet barriers persist. Doubts, misconceptions, prejudices, suspicions and narrow self-interest beset nations and peoples in their relations one to another.

Universal House of Justice



*I*t is useful to bear in mind that the Internet is a reflection of the world around us, and we find in its infinitude of pages the same competing forces of integration and disintegration that characterise the tumult in which humanity is caught up.

Universal House of Justice

*O*ne conspicuous symptom of society's deepening malaise is the steady descent of public discourse into greater rancour and enmity, reflecting entrenched partisan points of view.

A prevalent feature of such contemporary discourse is how political disagreements rapidly degenerate into invective and ridicule.

However, what particularly differentiates the present age from those that preceded it is how so much of this discourse occurs in full view of the world.

Social media and related communication tools tend to give the greatest exposure to all that is controversial, and the very same tools allow individuals, in an instant, to disseminate more widely whatever catches their attention and to register their support or opposition to various sentiments, whether explicitly or tacitly.

The unparalleled ease with which a person can join in such public debate and the nature of the technology make momentary lapses of judgement and incautious actions more likely and their residue more enduring.

Universal House of Justice

*T*he media have both a powerful influence on people's attitudes and perceptions and a weighty responsibility to contribute to social integration. Currently, a great deal of media attention is focussed on the seemingly insurmountable differences that divide peoples and nations, and little attention is given to evidence that these differences can be overcome. A serious, global discourse must be undertaken to explore the use of existing and rapidly emerging media technologies to foster hope and promote social integration and development. The media have a responsibility to help people understand that diversity, often a source of conflict, can also be a powerful resource for social development. An important beginning would be to eliminate stereotyping based on religion, culture, gender, race, class, nationality and ethnicity from media programming. Then by focussing on constructive, unifying and cooperative undertakings, the media could demonstrate humanity's capacity to work together to meet the enormous challenges facing it.

Bahá'í International Community

Since...the challenge is the empowerment of humankind through a vast increase in access to knowledge, the strategy that can make this possible must be constructed around an ongoing and intensifying dialogue between science and religion.

It is - or by now should be - a truism that, in every sphere of human activity and at every level, the insights and skills that represent scientific accomplishment must look to the force of spiritual commitment and moral principle to ensure their appropriate application.

People need, for example, to learn how to separate fact from conjecture - indeed to distinguish between subjective views and objective reality; the extent to which individuals and institutions so equipped can contribute to human progress, however, will be determined by their devotion to truth and their detachment from the promptings of their own interests and passions.

Another capacity that science must cultivate in all people is that of thinking in terms of process, including historical process; however, if this intellectual advancement is to contribute ultimately to promoting development, its perspective must be unclouded by prejudices of race, culture, sex, or sectarian belief.

*T*he freedom to investigate the purpose of existence and to develop the endowments of human nature that make it achievable requires protection.

Human beings must be free to know.

That such freedom is often abused and such abuse grossly encouraged by features of contemporary society does not detract in any degree from the validity of the impulse itself.

Bahá'í International Community

**W**hat an extraordinary situation now obtains, when no one, hearing a claim advanced, asks himself what the speaker's real motive might be, and what selfish purpose he might not have hidden behind the mask of words. You find, for example, that an individual seeking to further his own petty and personal concerns, will block the advancement of an entire people. To turn his own water mill, he will let the farms and fields of all the others parch and wither. To maintain his own leadership, he will everlastingly direct the masses toward that prejudice and fanaticism which subvert the very base of civilisation...  
Open your eyes! Pay heed!  
Release yourselves from this blind following of the bigots, this senseless imitation which is the principal reason why men fall away into paths of ignorance and degradation. See the true state of things.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

*W*hen 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 forever one.  
Do not allow difference of opinion,  
or diversity of thought to separate you from your fellow-men,  
or to be the cause of dispute, hatred and strife in your hearts.  
Rather, search diligently for the truth and make all men your friends.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

*E*very word is endowed with a spirit,  
therefore the speaker or expounder should carefully deliver his words  
at the appropriate time and place,  
for the impression which each word maketh is clearly evident and perceptible. The  
Great Being saith:

One word may be likened unto fire, another unto light,  
and the influence which both exert is manifest in the world.

Therefore an enlightened man of wisdom  
should primarily speak with words as mild as milk,  
that the children of men may be nurtured and edified thereby  
and may attain the ultimate goal of human existence  
which is the station of true understanding and nobility.

Baha'u'lláh



*T*he followers of the Blessed Beauty must be conscious and conscientious users of any technology they decide to utilise and must apply insight and spiritual discipline. They should look to the lofty standards of the Cause to guide them at all times in the way they express themselves.

Universal House of Justice

*T*he unity of the human race, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded...

The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples.

Shoghi Effendi

*T*herefore it is imperative that we should renounce our own particular prejudices and superstitions if we earnestly desire to seek the truth.

Unless we make a distinction in our minds between dogma, superstition and prejudice on the one hand, and truth on the other, we cannot succeed.

When we are in earnest in our search for anything we look for it everywhere.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Lauded be Thy Name, O Lord our God! Thou art in truth the Knower of things unseen. Ordain for us such good as Thine all-embracing knowledge can measure. Thou art the sovereign Lord, the Almighty, the Best-Beloved. All praise be unto Thee, O Lord! We shall seek Thy grace on the appointed Day and shall put our whole reliance in Thee, Who art our Lord. Glorified art Thou, O God! Grant us that which is good and seemly that we may be able to dispense with everything but Thee. Verily, Thou art the Lord of all worlds. O God! Recompense those who endure patiently in Thy days, and strengthen their hearts to walk undeviatingly in the path of Truth. Grant then, O Lord, such goodly gifts as would enable them to gain admittance into Thy blissful Paradise. Exalted art Thou, O Lord God. Let Thy heavenly blessings descend upon homes whose inmates have believed in Thee. Verily, unsurpassed art Thou in sending down divine blessings. Send forth, O God, such hosts as would render Thy faithful servants victorious. Thou dost fashion the created things through the power of Thy decree as Thou pleasest. Thou art in truth the Sovereign, the Creator, the All-Wise. Say: God is indeed the Maker of all things. He giveth sustenance in plenty to whomsoever He willeth. He is the Creator, the Source of all beings, the Fashioner, the Almighty, the Maker, the All-Wise. He is the Bearer of the most excellent titles throughout the heavens and the earth and whatever lieth between them. All do His bidding, and all the dwellers of earth and heaven celebrate His praise, and unto Him shall all return.

1. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in *Bahá'í Prayers: A Selection of Prayers Revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá.* ↵
2. Excerpt from Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá published in *Japan Will Turn Ablaze!*, (Bahá'í Publishing Trust of Japan, 1992), p.35. ↵
3. *Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter IV, translated by Arnold, Sir Edwin. ↵
4. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982), p.372. ↵
5. Buddha, *The Dhammapada*, Chapter 5. ↵
6. Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words*, from the Arabic no.2. ↵
7. The Universal House of Justice, from a message dated October 1985 to the Peoples of the World. ↵
8. From a letter dated 9 April 2008 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer. ↵
9. From a letter dated 27 April 2017 written by the Universal House of Justice to an individual. ↵
10. Baha'i International Community, *The Role of Education, Media and the Arts in Social Development.* ↵
11. Bahá'í International Community Office of Public Information, 'The Prosperity of Humankind', commissioned by the Universal House of Justice, 3 March 1995. ↵
12. *Ibid.* ↵
13. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization.* ↵
14. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 53. ↵
15. Baha'u'llah, *Lawh-i-Maqsúd.* ↵
16. From a message dated 01 December 2019 written by the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies. ↵

17. Shoghi Effendi, from a letter dated 11 March 1936, in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 203–204. ↵
18. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 137. ↵
19. Selections from the Writings of the Báb. ↵

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