

# Demystifying Shoghi Effendi's ADVENT of DIVINE JUSTICE

## Condensed ADJ and Deepening

This deepening and condensed version of ADJ is intended to encourage you to action, just as the Guardian originally intended in his pre-World War II letter to the North American Bahá'ís. The first part condenses The Advent of Divine Justice text, so it is easier to understand as a whole. The condensed version minimizes text that is repetitive or not particularly relevant today; thus, the ADJ text is reduced to about half of the original and can be read aloud in about 2 hours. Or just read the **highlighted** or **underlined** text, which will take respectively, about one or a half hour, allow extra time for reflection, comments and discussion. The interpretive purpose-oriented headers and outline below are unique to this deepening; they are clearly not authoritative.

The deepening is in a visual presentation format and focuses on the ADJ's solutions with present day suggestions for creating your own personal and/or group plan of action. Expect this deepening to take 2 hours plus consultation.

*this is an individual initiative effort of H. Bau, 2020.*

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### THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE (1939) – Condensed Version (2020)

#### INTRODUCTION – Greetings to the American and Canadian Bahá'ís

**Backdrop:** Overview of pre-World War II conditions  
Spiritual descendants of the Dawnbreakers

#### PROBLEM – OLD WORLD ORDER: the transition from the Adamic to Bahá'í cycle and war

Old World Order vs. the Bahá'ís  
Persian Old World Order vs. the Dawnbreakers and Bahá'ís  
Old American/Canadian Order vs. the Bahá'ís

#### SOLUTIONS – BAHÁ'Í NEW WORLD ORDER with INTERNAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH as a FOUNDATION for EXTERNAL MATERIAL EXPANSION

##### Spiritual Growth – the Bahá'í Double Crusade vs. Old World Order evils

Rectitude of conduct  
Chaste and holy life  
Freedom of racial prejudice, “the most vital and challenging issue”  
freedom from racial discrimination, racial harmony,  
supreme and corresponding efforts  
Double Crusade summary

**External Expansion – Call to Teach:** Universal participation, the “appointed time”  
**For Teaching and Pioneering Success:** Study the writings, language and  
culture; individual initiative; additional teaching tips; promote diversity

**Pioneering:** First Stage, Call for pioneers to new locales  
Second Stage: Illuminate the Americas as Apostles of Bahá'u'lláh

**Special Roles** – Bahá'í Women, Bahá'í Youth, and Panama

#### CONCLUSION – Encouragement and Assurances of Success: Divine assistance and Day of God Destiny of America

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## THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE – condensed version

### INTRODUCTION - GREETINGS

To the beloved of God and the handmaids of the Merciful throughout the United States and Canada. Best-beloved brothers and sisters in the love of Bahá'u'lláh:

It would be difficult indeed to adequately express the feelings of irrepressible joy and exultation that flood my heart every time I pause to contemplate the ceaseless evidences of the dynamic energy which animates the stalwart pioneers of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh in the execution of the Plan committed to their charge...

### INTRODUCTION - OVERVIEW of PRE-WORLD WAR II CONDITIONS

...they who are holding aloft the banner of so pervasive a Faith, so challenging a Cause, find themselves affected by...world-shaking forces. Little wonder if they find that in the midst of this whirlpool of contending passions their freedom has been curtailed, their tenets contemned, their institutions assaulted, their motives maligned, their authority jeopardized, their claim rejected...

A world, torn with conflicting passions, and perilously disintegrating from within, finds itself confronted...by the rising fortunes of an infant Faith, a Faith that, at times, seems to be drawn into its controversies, entangled by its conflicts, eclipsed by its gathering shadows, and overpowered by the mounting tide of its passions... The strongholds of such a Faith, one by one and day after day, are...being successively isolated, assaulted and captured. As the lights of liberty flicker and go out, as the din of discord grows louder and louder every day, as the fires of fanaticism flame with increasing fierceness in the breasts of men, as the chill of irreligion creeps relentlessly over the soul of mankind... the limbs and organs...the body of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh appear...to have become afflicted with the crippling influences that now hold in their grip the whole of the civilized world.

How clearly and strikingly the following words of `Abdu'l-Bahá are being demonstrated at this hour: "The darkness of error that has enveloped the East and the West is, in this most great cycle, battling with the light of Divine Guidance... The hosts of the world, whether material, cultural or political are from every side launching their assault, for the Cause is great, very great. Its greatness is, in this day, clear and manifest to men's eyes."

### INTRODUCTION - SPIRITUAL DESCENDANTS of the DAWNBREAKERS

The one chief remaining citadel, the mighty arm which still raises aloft the standard of an unconquerable Faith, is none other than the blessed community of the followers of the Most Great Name in the North American continent...

Let anyone inclined to either belittle the unique station conferred upon this community, or to question the role it will be called upon to play in the days to come, ponder the implication of these pregnant and highly illuminating words uttered by `Abdu'l-Bahá... "The continent of America...is, in the eyes of the one true God, the land wherein the splendors of His light shall be revealed, where the mysteries of His Faith shall be unveiled, where the righteous will abide, and the free assemble..."

The community of the organized promoters of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the American continent--the spiritual descendants of the dawn-breakers of an heroic Age, who by their death proclaimed the birth of that Faith-- must, in turn, usher in, not by their death but through living sacrifice, that promised World Order, the shell ordained to enshrine that priceless jewel, the world civilization, of

which the Faith itself is the sole begetter. While its sister communities are bending beneath the tempestuous winds that beat upon them from every side, this community, preserved by the immutable decrees of the omnipotent Ordainer and deriving continual sustenance from the mandate with which the Tablets of the Divine Plan have invested it, is now busily engaged in laying the foundations and in fostering the growth of those institutions which are to herald the approach of the Age destined to witness the birth and rise of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

A community...having to contend...with the forces of corruption, of moral laxity, and ingrained prejudice-- such a community...has, by virtue of the celestial potency with which an all-loving Master has abundantly endowed it, lent an impetus to the onward march of the Cause it has espoused which the combined achievements of its coreligionists in the West have failed to rival..

What other community...has been instrumental in fixing the pattern...to those administrative institutions that constitute the vanguard of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh? What other community has been capable of...the continued extension of the framework within...those nascent institutions? What other community has proved itself to be fired by so noble a vision, or willing to rise to such heights of self-sacrifice, or ready to achieve so great a measure of solidarity, as to be able to raise, in so short a time and in the course of such crucial years, an edifice that can well deserve to be regarded as the greatest contribution ever made by the West to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh?... What other community has produced pioneers combining to such a degree the essential qualities of audacity, of consecration, of tenacity, of self-renunciation, and unstinted devotion, that have prompted them to abandon their homes, and forsake their all, and scatter over the surface of the globe, and hoist in its uttermost corners the triumphant banner of Bahá'u'lláh? ...

Such a matchless and brilliant record of service... deserves to rank as a memorable chapter in the history of the Formative Period of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh... To overrate the significance of these manifold services would be well-nigh impossible. To appraise correctly their value, and dilate on their merits and immediate consequences, is a task which only a future Bahá'í historian can properly discharge. I can only for the present place on record my profound conviction that a community capable of showing forth such deeds, of evincing such a spirit, of rising to such heights, cannot but be already possessed of such potentialities as will enable it to vindicate, in the fullness of time, its right to be acclaimed as the chief creator and champion of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

Magnificent as has been this record, reminiscent as it is, in some of its aspects, of the exploits with which the dawn-breakers of an heroic Age have proclaimed the birth of the Faith itself, the task associated with the name of this privileged community is, far from approaching its climax, only beginning to unfold. What the American believers have, within the space of almost fifty years, achieved is infinitesimal when compared to the magnitude of the tasks ahead of them. The rumblings of that catastrophic upheaval, which is to proclaim, at one and the same time, the death-pangs of the old order and the birth-pangs of the new, indicate both the steady approach, as well as the awe-inspiring character, of those tasks...

...The opening of the second century of the Bahá'í era must needs disclose greater vistas, usher in further stages, and witness the initiation of plans more far-reaching than any as yet conceived. The Plan on which is now focused the attention, the aspirations, and the resources of the entire community of the American believers should be viewed as a mere beginning, as a trial of strength, a stepping-stone to a crusade of still greater magnitude, if the duties and responsibilities with which the Author of the Divine Plan has invested them are to be honorably and entirely fulfilled...

I can only...attempt to survey the possibilities of the future: The election of the International House of Justice and its establishment in the Holy Land...; the gradual erection of the various dependencies of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West, and the intricate issues involving the establishment and the extension of the structural basis of Bahá'í community life...; the precautionary and defensive measures to be devised, coordinated, and carried out to counteract the full force of the inescapable attacks which the organized efforts of ecclesiastical organizations of various denominations will progressively launch and relentlessly pursue; and, last but not least, the multitudinous issues that must be faced...to enable a sore-tried Faith to pass through the successive stages of unmitigated obscurity, of active repression, and of complete emancipation...to be followed by its establishment and recognition as a State religion, which in turn must give way to its assumption of the rights and prerogatives associated with the Bahá'í state...which must ultimately culminate in the emergence of the worldwide Bahá'í Commonwealth, animated wholly by the spirit, and operating solely in direct conformity with the laws and principles of Bahá'u'lláh.

The challenge offered by these opportunities the American believers, I feel confident, will, in addition to their answer to the teaching call voiced by `Abdu'l-Bahá in His Tablets, unhesitatingly take up, and will, with their traditional fearlessness, tenacity, and efficiency, so respond to it as to confirm, before all the world, their title and rank as the champion-builders of the mightiest institutions of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Dearly beloved friends! Though the task be long and arduous, yet the prize which the All-Bountiful Bestower has chosen to confer upon you is of such preciousness that neither tongue nor pen can befittingly appraise it. Though the goal towards which you are now so strenuously striving be distant, and as yet undisclosed to men's eyes, yet its promise lies firmly embedded in the authoritative and unalterable utterances of Bahá'u'lláh. Though the course He has traced for you seems, at times, lost in the threatening shadows with which a stricken humanity is now enveloped, yet the unfailing light He has caused to shine continually upon you is of such brightness that no earthly dusk can ever eclipse its splendor. Though small in numbers, and circumscribed as yet in your experiences, powers, and resources, yet the Force which energizes your mission is limitless in its range and incalculable in its potency. Though the enemies which every acceleration in the progress of your mission must raise up be fierce, numerous, and unrelenting, yet the invisible Hosts which, if you persevere, must, as promised, rush forth to your aid, will, in the end, enable you to vanquish their hopes and annihilate their forces. Though the ultimate blessings that must crown the consummation of your mission be undoubted, and the Divine promises given you firm and irrevocable, yet the measure of the goodly reward which every one of you is to reap must depend on the extent to which your daily exertions will have contributed to the expansion of that mission and the hastening of its triumph.

### PROBLEM – OLD WORLD ORDER vs. the BAHÁ'ÍS

Dearly beloved friends! Great as is my love and admiration for you...I feel it nevertheless incumbent upon me to utter, at this juncture, a word of warning. The glowing tributes, so repeatedly and deservedly paid to the capacity, the spirit, the conduct, and the high rank, of the American believers, both individually and as an organic community, must, under no circumstances, be confounded with the characteristics and nature of the people from which God has raised them up. A sharp distinction between that community and that people must be made, and resolutely and fearlessly upheld, if we wish to give due recognition to the transmuting power of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, in its impact on the lives and standards of those who have chosen to enlist under His banner. Otherwise, the supreme and

distinguishing function of His Revelation, which is none other than the calling into being of a new race of men, will remain wholly unrecognized and completely obscured.

How often have the Prophets of God, not excepting Bahá'u'lláh Himself, chosen to appear, and deliver their Message in countries and amidst peoples and races, at a time when they were either fast declining, or had already touched the lowest depths of moral and spiritual degradation... To contend that the innate worthiness, the high moral standard, the political aptitude, and social attainments of any race or nation is the reason for the appearance in its midst of any of these Divine Luminaries would be an absolute perversion of historical facts, and would amount to a complete repudiation of the undoubted interpretation placed upon them, so clearly and emphatically, by both Bahá'u'lláh and `Abdu'l-Bahá.

How great, then, must be the challenge to those who, belonging to such races and nations, and having responded to the call which these Prophets have raised, to unreservedly recognize and courageously testify to this indubitable truth, that not by reason of any racial superiority, political capacity, or spiritual virtue which a race or nation might possess, but rather as a direct consequence of its crying needs, its lamentable degeneracy, and irremediable perversity, has the Prophet of God chosen to appear in its midst, and with it as a lever has lifted the entire human race to a higher and nobler plane of life and conduct. For it is precisely under such circumstances, and by such means that the Prophets have, from time immemorial, chosen and were able to demonstrate their redemptive power to raise from the depths of abasement and of misery, the people of their own race and nation, empowering them to transmit in turn to other races and nations the saving grace and the energizing influence of their Revelation.

#### **PROBLEM – PERSIAN OLD WORLD ORDER vs. the DAWNBREAKERS and BAHÁ'ÍS**

In the light of this fundamental principle it should always be borne in mind...that the primary reason why the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh chose to appear in Persia, and to make it the first repository of their Revelation, was because, of all the peoples and nations of the civilized world, that race and nation had, as so often depicted by `Abdu'l-Bahá, sunk to such ignominious depths, and manifested so great a perversity, as to find no parallel among its contemporaries. For no more convincing proof could be adduced demonstrating the regenerating spirit animating the Revelations proclaimed by the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh than their power to transform what can be truly regarded as one of the most backward, the most cowardly, and perverse of peoples into a race of heroes, fit to effect in turn a similar revolution in the life of mankind. To have appeared among a race or nation which by its intrinsic worth and high attainments seemed to warrant the inestimable privilege of being made the receptacle of such a Revelation would in the eyes of an unbelieving world greatly reduce the efficacy of that Message, and detract from the self-sufficiency of its omnipotent power. The contrast so strikingly presented in the pages of Nabil's Narrative between the heroism that immortalized the life and deeds of the Dawn-Breakers and the degeneracy and cowardice of their defamers and persecutors is in itself a most impressive testimony to the truth of the Message of Him Who had instilled such a spirit into the breasts of His disciples. For any believer of that race to maintain that the excellence of his country and the innate nobility of its people were the fundamental reasons for its being singled out as the primary receptacle of the Revelations of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh would be untenable in the face of the overwhelming evidence afforded so convincingly by that Narrative.

#### **PROBLEM – OLD AMERICAN/CANADIAN ORDER vs. the BAHÁ'ÍS**



To a lesser degree this principle must of necessity apply to the country which has vindicated its right to be regarded as the cradle of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. So great a function, so noble a role, can be regarded as no less inferior to the part played by those immortal souls who, through their sublime renunciation and unparalleled deeds, have been responsible for the birth of the Faith itself. Let not, therefore, those who are to participate so predominantly in the birth of that world civilization, which is the direct offspring of their Faith, imagine for a moment that for some mysterious purpose or by any reason of inherent excellence or special merit Bahá'u'lláh has chosen to confer upon their country and people so great and lasting a distinction. It is precisely by reason of the patent evils which, notwithstanding its other admittedly great characteristics and achievements, an excessive and binding materialism has unfortunately engendered within it that the Author of their Faith and the Center of His Covenant have singled it out to become the standard-bearer of the New World Order envisaged in their writings. It is by such means as this that Bahá'u'lláh can best demonstrate to a heedless generation His almighty power to raise up from the very midst of a people, immersed in a sea of materialism, a prey to one of the most virulent and long-standing forms of racial prejudice, and notorious for its political corruption, lawlessness and laxity in moral standards, men and women who, as time goes by, will increasingly exemplify those essential virtues of self-renunciation, of moral rectitude, of chastity, of indiscriminating fellowship, of holy discipline, and of spiritual insight that will fit them for the preponderating share they will have in calling into being that World Order and that World Civilization of which their country, no less than the entire human race, stands in desperate need. Theirs will be the duty and privilege, in their capacity first as the establishers of one of the most powerful pillars sustaining the edifice of the Universal House of Justice, and then as the champion-builders of that New World Order of which that House is to be the nucleus and forerunner, to inculcate, demonstrate, and apply those twin and sorely needed principles of Divine justice and order-principles to which the political corruption and the moral license, increasingly staining the society to which they belong, offer so sad and striking a contrast.

## **SOLUTION - BAHÁ'Í NEW WORLD ORDER with INTERNAL and EXTERNAL GROWTH**

Observations such as these, however distasteful and depressing they may be, should not, in the least, blind us to those virtues and qualities of high intelligence, of youthfulness, of unbounded initiative, and enterprise which the nation as a whole so conspicuously displays, and which are being increasingly reflected by the community of the believers within it. Upon these virtues and qualities, no less than upon the elimination of the evils referred to, must depend, to a very great extent, the ability of that community to lay a firm foundation for the country's future role in ushering in the Golden Age of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

How great, therefore, how staggering the responsibility that must weigh upon the present generation of the American believers, at this early stage in their spiritual and administrative evolution, to weed out, by every means in their power, those faults, habits, and tendencies which they have inherited from their own nation, and to cultivate, patiently and prayerfully, those distinctive qualities and characteristics that are so indispensable to their effective participation in the great redemptive work of their Faith. Incapable as yet, in view of the restricted size of their community and the limited influence it now wields, of producing any marked effect on the great mass of their countrymen, let them focus their attention, for the present, on their own selves, their own individual needs, their own personal deficiencies and weaknesses, ever mindful that every intensification of effort on their part will better equip them for the time when they will be called upon to eradicate in their turn such evil tendencies from the lives and the hearts of the entire body of their fellow-citizens. Nor must they

overlook the fact that the World Order, whose basis they, as the advance-guard of the future Bahá'í generations of their countrymen, are now laboring to establish, can never be reared unless and until the generality of the people to which they belong has been already purged from the divers ills, whether social or political, that now so severely afflict it...

...the imponderable, the spiritual, factors, which are bound up with their own individual and inner lives, and with which are associated their human and social relationships, are no less urgent and vital, and demand constant scrutiny, continual self-examination and heart-searching on their part, lest their value be impaired or their vital necessity be obscured or forgotten.

## SOLUTIONS – the BAHÁ'Í DOUBLE CRUSADE vs. the OLD WORLD ORDER

Of these spiritual prerequisites of success, which constitute the bedrock on which the security of all teaching plans, Temple projects, and financial schemes, must ultimately rest, the following stand out as preeminent and vital, which the members of the American Bahá'í community will do well to ponder. Upon the extent to which these basic requirements are met, and the manner in which the American believers fulfill them in their individual lives, administrative activities, and social relationships, must depend the measure of the manifold blessings which the All-Bountiful Possessor can vouchsafe to them all. These requirements are none other than a high sense of moral rectitude in their social and administrative activities, absolute chastity in their individual lives, and complete freedom from prejudice in their dealings with peoples of a different race, class, creed, or color.

The first is specially, though not exclusively, directed to their elected representatives...The second is mainly and directly concerned with the Bahá'í youth, who can contribute so decisively to the virility, the purity, and the driving force of the life of the Bahá'í community... The third should be the immediate, the universal, and the chief concern of all and sundry members of the Bahá'í community, of whatever age, rank, experience, class, or color, as all, with no exception, must face its challenging implications, and none can claim, however much he may have progressed along this line, to have completely discharged the stern responsibilities which it inculcates.

A rectitude of conduct, an abiding sense of undeviating justice, unobscured by the demoralizing influences which a corruption-ridden political life so strikingly manifests; a chaste, pure, and holy life, unsullied and unclouded by the indecencies, the vices, the false standards, which an inherently deficient moral code tolerates, perpetuates, and fosters; a fraternity freed from that cancerous growth of racial prejudice, which is eating into the vitals of an already debilitated society--these are the ideals which the American believers must, from now on, individually and through concerted action, strive to promote, in both their private and public lives, ideals which are the chief propelling forces that can most effectively accelerate the march of their institutions, plans, and enterprises, that can guard the honor and integrity of their Faith, and subdue any obstacles that may confront it in the future.

## SOLUTIONS – DOUBLE CRUSADE: RECTITUDE of CONDUCT

This rectitude of conduct, with its implications of justice, equity, truthfulness, honesty, fair-mindedness, reliability, and trustworthiness, must distinguish every phase of the life of the Bahá'í community. "The companions of God," Bahá'u'lláh Himself has declared, "are, in this day, the lump that must leaven the peoples of the world. They must show forth such trustworthiness, such truthfulness and perseverance, such deeds and character that all mankind may profit by their example."...

"O army of God!" writes `Abdu'l-Bahá, "Through the protection and help vouchsafed by the Blessed Beauty...ye must conduct yourselves in such a manner that ye may stand out distinguished and brilliant as the sun among other souls. Should any one of you enter a city, he should become a center of attraction by reason of his sincerity, his faithfulness and love, his honesty and fidelity, his truthfulness and loving-kindness towards all the peoples of the world, so that the people of that city may cry out and say: `This man is unquestionably a Bahá'í, for his manners, his behavior, his conduct, his morals, his nature, and disposition reflect the attributes of the Bahá'ís.' Not until ye attain this station can ye be said to have been faithful to the Covenant and Testament of God." "The most vital duty, in this day...is to purify your characters, to correct your manners, and improve your conduct. The beloved of the Merciful must show forth such character and conduct among His creatures, that the fragrance of their holiness may be shed upon the whole world, and may quicken the dead...." "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."

Such a rectitude of conduct...must reveal itself in the uncompromising adherence of all, whether young or old, to the clearly enunciated and fundamental principles laid down by `Abdu'l-Bahá in His addresses, and to the laws and ordinances revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in His Most Holy Book. It must be demonstrated in the impartiality of every defender of the Faith against its enemies, in his fair-mindedness in recognizing any merits that enemy may possess, and in his honesty in discharging any obligations he may have towards him...

So great and transcendental is this principle of Divine justice, a principle that must be regarded as the crowning distinction of all Local and National Assemblies, in their capacity as forerunners of the Universal House of Justice, that Bahá'u'lláh Himself subordinates His personal inclination and wish to the all-compelling force of its demands and implications..."The light of men is Justice," He moreover states, "Quench it not with the contrary winds of oppression and tyranny. The purpose of justice is the appearance of unity among men." ... "O people of God!...That which traineth the world is Justice, for it is upheld by two pillars, reward and punishment. These two pillars are the sources of life to the world." "Justice and equity," is yet another assertion, "are two guardians for the protection of man. They have appeared arrayed in their mighty and sacred names to maintain the world in uprightness and protect the nations." "Bestir yourselves, O people," is His emphatic warning, "in anticipation of the days of Divine justice, for the promised hour is now come. Beware lest ye fail to apprehend its import, and be accounted among the erring."...

"The canopy of existence," He further explains, "resteth upon the pole of justice, and not of forgiveness, and the life of mankind dependeth on justice and not on forgiveness."

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

## SOLUTIONS – DOUBLE CRUSADE: CHASTE and HOLY LIFE



As to a chaste and holy life, it should be regarded as no less essential a factor that must contribute its proper share to the strengthening and vitalization of the Bahá'í community, upon which must in turn depend the success of any Bahá'í plan or enterprise... All of them, be they men or women, must, at this threatening hour when the lights of religion are fading out, and its restraints are one by one being abolished, pause to examine themselves, scrutinize their conduct, and with characteristic resolution arise to purge the life of their community of every trace of moral laxity that might stain the name, or impair the integrity, of so holy and precious a Faith.

A chaste and holy life must be made the controlling principle in the behavior and conduct of all Bahá'ís, both in their social relations with the members of their own community, and in their contact with the world at large... It must be closely and continually identified with the mission of the Bahá'í youth, both as an element in the life of the Bahá'í community, and as a factor in the future progress and orientation of the youth of their own country.

Such a chaste and holy life, with its implications of modesty, purity, temperance, decency, and clean-mindedness, involves no less than the exercise of moderation in all that pertains to dress, language, amusements, and all artistic and literary avocations. It demand[s] daily vigilance in the control of one's carnal desires and corrupt inclinations. It calls for the abandonment of a frivolous conduct, with its excessive attachment to trivial and often misdirected pleasures. It requires total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks, from opium, and from similar habit-forming drugs...

..."Disencumber yourselves...of all attachment to this world and the vanities thereof. Beware that ye approach them not, inasmuch as they prompt you to walk after your own lusts and covetous desires, and hinder you from entering the straight and glorious Path."..."A race of men...incomparable in character, shall be raised up which, with the feet of detachment, will tread under all who are in heaven and on earth, and will cast the sleeve of holiness over all that hath been created from water and clay." "The civilization," is His grave warning, "so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences, will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men.... If carried to excess, civilization will prove as prolific a source of evil as it had been of goodness when kept within the restraints of moderation." "He hath chosen out of the whole world the hearts of His servants...and made them each a seat for the revelation of His glory. Wherefore, sanctify them from every defilement, that the things for which they were created may be engraven upon them. This indeed is a token of God's bountiful favor."...

It must be remembered...that the maintenance of such a high standard of moral conduct is not to be associated or confused with any form of asceticism, or of excessive and bigoted puritanism. The standard inculcated by Bahá'u'lláh seeks, under no circumstances, to deny anyone the legitimate right and privilege to derive the fullest advantage and benefit from the manifold joys, beauties, and pleasures with which the world has been so plentifully enriched by an All-Loving Creator. "Should a man," Bahá'u'lláh Himself reassures us, "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 whatever 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..."

## **SOLUTIONS – DOUBLE CRUSADE: FREEDOM from RACIAL PREJUDICE**

As to racial prejudice, the corrosion of which, for well-nigh a century, has bitten into the fiber, and attacked the whole social structure of American society, it should be regarded as constituting the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá'í community at the present stage of its evolution.

The ceaseless exertions which this issue of paramount importance calls for, the sacrifices it must impose, the care and vigilance it demands, the moral courage and fortitude it requires, the tact and sympathy it necessitates, invest this problem, which the American believers are still far from having satisfactorily resolved, with an urgency and importance that cannot be overestimated. White and Negro, high and low, young and old, whether newly converted to the Faith or not, all who stand identified with it must participate in, and lend their assistance, each according to his or her capacity, experience, and opportunities, to the common task of fulfilling the instructions, realizing the hopes, and following the example, of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Whether colored or noncolored, neither race has the right, or can conscientiously claim, to be regarded as absolved from such an obligation, as having realized such hopes, or having faithfully followed such an example. A long and thorny road, beset with pitfalls, still remains untraveled, both by the white and the Negro exponents of the redeeming Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. On the distance they cover, and the manner in which they travel that road, must depend, to an extent which few among them can imagine, the operation of those intangible influences which are indispensable to the spiritual triumph of the American believers and the material success of their newly launched enterprise.

Let them call to mind, fearlessly and determinedly, the example and conduct of 'Abdu'l-Bahá while in their midst. Let them remember His courage, His genuine love, His informal and indiscriminating fellowship, His contempt for and impatience of criticism, tempered by His tact and wisdom. Let them revive and perpetuate the memory of those unforgettable and historic episodes and occasions on which He so strikingly demonstrated His keen sense of justice, His spontaneous sympathy for the downtrodden, His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race, His overflowing love for its members, and His displeasure with those who dared to flout His wishes, to deride His methods, to challenge His principles, or to nullify His acts.

## **SOLUTIONS – DOUBLE CRUSADE: FREEDOM from RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

To discriminate against any race, on the ground of its being socially backward, politically immature, and numerically in a minority, is a flagrant violation of the spirit that animates the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The consciousness of any division or cleavage in its ranks is alien to its very purpose, principles, and ideals. Once its members have fully recognized the claim of its Author, and, by identifying themselves with its Administrative Order, accepted unreservedly the principles and laws embodied in its teachings, every differentiation of class, creed, or color must automatically be obliterated, and never be allowed, under any pretext, and however great the pressure of events or of public opinion, to reassert itself. If any discrimination is at all to be tolerated, it should be a discrimination not against, but rather in favor of the minority, be it racial or otherwise... every organized community enlisted under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh should feel it to be its first and inescapable obligation to nurture, encourage, and safeguard every minority belonging to any faith, race, class, or nation within it... priority should unhesitatingly be accorded the party representing the minority, and this for no other reason except to stimulate and encourage it, and afford it an opportunity to further the interests of the community. In the light of this principle, and bearing in mind the extreme desirability of having the minority elements participate and share responsibility in the conduct of Bahá'í activity, it should be the duty of every Bahá'í community so to arrange its affairs that in cases where individuals belonging to the divers minority elements within it are already qualified and fulfill the necessary requirements, Bahá'í representative institutions, be they Assemblies, conventions, conferences, or committees, may have represented on them as many of these divers elements, racial or otherwise, as possible. The adoption of such a course, and faithful adherence

to it, would not only be a source of inspiration and encouragement to those elements that are numerically small and inadequately represented, but would demonstrate to the world at large the universality and representative character of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and the freedom of His followers from the taint of those prejudices which have already wrought such havoc in the domestic affairs, as well as the foreign relationships, of the nations.

Freedom from racial prejudice, in any of its forms, should, at such a time as this when an increasingly large section of the human race is falling a victim to its devastating ferocity, be adopted as the watchword of the entire body of the American believers... It should be deliberately cultivated through the various and everyday opportunities, no matter how insignificant, that present themselves...

## **SOLUTIONS - DOUBLE CRUSADE: RACIAL HARMONY**

"O ye discerning ones!" Bahá'u'lláh has written, "Verily, the words which have descended from the heaven of the Will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness." "We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations...that all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled."..."Bahá'u'lláh...once compared the colored people to the black pupil of the eye surrounded by the white. In this black pupil is seen the reflection of that which is before it, and through it the light of the spirit shineth forth."...

"In the estimation of God...there is no distinction of color; all are one in the color and beauty of servitude to Him. Color is not important; the heart is all-important...He whose morals and virtues are praiseworthy is preferred in the presence of God; he who is devoted to the Kingdom is most beloved. In the realm of genesis and creation the question of color is of least importance."..."If you meet...those of a different race and color from yourself, do not mistrust them, and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality, but rather be glad and show them kindness." "In the world of being,..."the meeting is blessed when the white and colored races meet together with infinite spiritual love and heavenly harmony. When such meetings are established, and the participants associate with each other with perfect love, unity and kindness, the angels of the Kingdom praise them, and the Beauty of Bahá'u'lláh addresseth them, 'Blessed are ye! Blessed are ye!'" "When a gathering of these two races is brought about," He likewise asserts, "that assemblage will become the magnet of the Concourse on high, and the confirmation of the Blessed Beauty will surround it." "Strive earnestly," He again exhorts both races, "and put forth your greatest endeavor toward the accomplishment of this fellowship and the cementing of this bond of brotherhood between you. Such an attainment is not possible without will and effort on the part of each; from one, expressions of gratitude and appreciation; from the other, kindness and recognition of equality. Each one should endeavor to develop and assist the other toward mutual advancement.... Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind. For the accomplishment of unity between the colored and white will be an assurance of the world's peace." "I hope," He thus addresses members of the white race, "that ye may cause that downtrodden race to become glorious, and to be joined with the white race, to serve the world of man with the utmost sincerity, faithfulness, love, and purity. This opposition, enmity, and prejudice among the white race and the colored cannot be effaced except through faith, assurance, and the teachings of the Blessed Beauty." "This question of the union of the white and the black is very important," He warns, "for if it is not realized, ere long great difficulties will arise, and harmful results will follow." "If this matter remaineth without change," is yet another

warning, "enmity will be increased day by day, and the final result will be hardship and may end in bloodshed."

## SOLUTIONS - RACE ISSUES: SUPREME and CORRESPONDING EFFORTS

A tremendous effort is required by both races if their outlook, their manners, and conduct are to reflect...the spirit and teachings of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Casting away once and for all the fallacious doctrine of racial superiority, with all its attendant evils...and welcoming and encouraging the intermixture of races, and tearing down the barriers that now divide them, they should each endeavor, day and night, to fulfill their particular responsibilities in the common task which so urgently faces them. Let them, while each is attempting to contribute its share to the solution of this perplexing problem, call to mind the warnings of `Abdu'l-Bahá, and visualize, while there is yet time, the dire consequences that must follow if this challenging and unhappy situation that faces the entire American nation is not definitely remedied.

Let the white make a supreme effort in their resolve to contribute their share to the solution of this problem, to abandon once for all their usually inherent and at times subconscious sense of superiority, to correct their tendency towards revealing a patronizing attitude towards the members of the other race, to persuade them through their intimate, spontaneous and informal association with them of the genuineness of their friendship and the sincerity of their intentions, and to master their impatience of any lack of responsiveness on the part of a people who have received, for so long a period, such grievous and slow-healing wounds. Let the Negroes, through a corresponding effort on their part, show by every means in their power the warmth of their response, their readiness to forget the past, and their ability to wipe out every trace of suspicion that may still linger in their hearts and minds. Let neither think that the solution of so vast a problem is a matter that exclusively concerns the other. Let neither think that such a problem can either easily or immediately be resolved. Let neither think that they can wait confidently for the solution of this problem until the initiative has been taken, and the favorable circumstances created, by agencies that stand outside the orbit of their Faith. Let neither think that anything short of genuine love, extreme patience, true humility, consummate tact, sound initiative, mature wisdom, and deliberate, persistent, and prayerful effort, can succeed in blotting out the stain which this patent evil has left on the fair name of their common country. Let them rather believe, and be firmly convinced, that on their mutual understanding, their amity, and sustained cooperation, must depend, more than on any other force or organization operating outside the circle of their Faith, the deflection of that dangerous course so greatly feared by `Abdu'l-Bahá, and the materialization of the hopes He cherished for their joint contribution to the fulfillment of that country's glorious destiny.

## SOLUTIONS - DOUBLE CRUSADE: SUMMARY

Dearly beloved friends! A rectitude of conduct...; a holiness and chastity...; an interracial fellowship completely purged from the curse of racial prejudice...--these are the weapons which the American believers can and must wield in their double crusade, first to regenerate the inward life of their own community, and next to assail the long-standing evils that have entrenched themselves in the life of their nation. The perfection of such weapons, the wise and effective utilization of every one of them, more than the furtherance of any particular plan, or the devising of any special scheme, or the accumulation of any amount of material resources, can prepare them for the time when the Hand of Destiny will have directed them to assist in creating and in bringing into operation that World Order which is now incubating within the worldwide administrative institutions of their Faith.

In the conduct of this twofold crusade the valiant warriors struggling in the name and for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh must, of necessity, encounter stiff resistance, and suffer many a setback. Their own instincts, no less than the fury of conservative forces, the opposition of vested interests, and the objections of a corrupt and pleasure-seeking generation, must be reckoned with, resolutely resisted, and completely overcome. As their defensive measures for the impending struggle are organized and extended, storms of abuse and ridicule, and campaigns of condemnation and misrepresentation, may be unloosed against them. Their Faith, they may soon find, has been assaulted, their motives misconstrued, their aims defamed, their aspirations derided, their institutions scorned, their influence belittled, their authority undermined, and their Cause, at times, deserted by a few who will either be incapable of appreciating the nature of their ideals, or unwilling to bear the brunt of the mounting criticisms which such a contest is sure to involve. "Because of `Abdu'l-Bahá," the beloved Master has prophesied, "many a test will be visited upon you. Troubles will befall you, and suffering afflict you."

Let not, however, the invincible army of Bahá'u'lláh...be afraid of any criticism that might be directed against it. Let it not be deterred by any condemnation with which the tongue of the slanderer may seek to debase its motives. Let it not recoil before the threatening advance of the forces of fanaticism, of orthodoxy, of corruption, and of prejudice that may be leagued against it. The voice of criticism is a voice that indirectly reinforces the proclamation of its Cause. Unpopularity but serves to throw into greater relief the contrast between it and its adversaries, while ostracism is itself the magnetic power that must eventually win over to its camp the most vociferous and inveterate amongst its foes... So complete a transformation, so startling a reversal of attitude, can only be effected if that chosen vehicle which is designed to carry the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the hungry, the restless, and unshepherded multitudes is itself thoroughly cleansed from the defilements which it seeks to remove.

It is upon you,...my best-beloved friends, that I wish to impress not only the urgency and imperative necessity of your holy task, but also the limitless possibilities which it possesses of raising to such an exalted level not only the life and activities of your own community, but the motives and standards that govern the relationships existing among the people to which you belong. Undismayed by the formidable nature of this task, you will, I am confident, meet as befits you the challenge of these times, so fraught with peril, so full of corruption, and yet so pregnant with the promise of a future so bright that no previous age in the annals of mankind can rival its glory.

Dearly beloved friends! I have attempted, in the beginning of these pages, to convey an idea of the glorious opportunities as well as the tremendous responsibilities which, as a result of the persecution of the far-flung Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, now face the community of the American believers, at so critical a stage in the Formative Period of their Faith, and in so crucial an epoch in the world's history. I have dwelt sufficiently upon the character of the mission which in a not too distant future that community must, through the impelling force of circumstances, arise and carry out. I have uttered the warning which I felt would be necessary to a clearer understanding, and a better discharge, of the tasks lying ahead of it. I have set forth, and stressed as far as it was in my power, those exalted and dynamic virtues, those lofty standards, which, difficult as they are to attain, constitute nonetheless the essential requirements for the success of those tasks. A word, I believe, should now be said in connection with the material aspect of their immediate task, upon the termination of which, at its appointed time, must depend not only the unfoldment of the subsequent stages in the Divine Plan envisaged by `Abdu'l-Bahá, but also the acquisition of those capacities which will qualify them to discharge, in the fullness of time, the duties and responsibilities demanded by that greater mission which it is their privilege to perform.



## SOLUTIONS – MATERIAL EXPANSION: SEVEN-YEAR PLAN and CALL to TEACH

The Seven Year Plan, with its twofold aspects of Temple ornamentation and extension of teaching activity, embracing both the Northern and Southern American continents, is now well advanced into its second year... The successive steps designed to facilitate...the work...in connection with the exterior ornamentation of the Temple have for the most part been taken. The final phase which is to mark the triumphant conclusion of a thirty-year old enterprise has at long last been entered... The uninterrupted continuation to its very end of so laudable an enterprise is now assured...

The teaching aspect of the Plan must now be pondered. Its challenge must be met, and its requirements studied, weighed, and fulfilled. Superb and irresistible as is the beauty of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West...it should be regarded, at the present time, as no more than an instrument for a more effective propagation of the Cause and a wider diffusion of its teachings. In this respect it should be viewed in the same light as the administrative institutions of the Faith which are designed as vehicles for the proper dissemination of its ideals, its tenets, and its verities.

## SOLUTIONS – CALL to TEACH: UNIVERSAL PARTICIPATION and “APPOINTED TIME”

It is, therefore, to the teaching requirements of the Seven Year Plan that the community of the American believers must henceforth direct their careful and sustained attention. The entire community must, as one man, arise to fulfill them. To teach the Cause of God, to proclaim its truths, to defend its interests, to demonstrate, by words as well as by deeds, its indispensability, its potency, and universality, should at no time be regarded as the exclusive concern or sole privilege of Bahá'í administrative institutions, be they Assemblies, or committees. All must participate, however humble their origin, however limited their experience, however restricted their means, however deficient their education, however pressing their cares and preoccupations, however unfavorable the environment in which they live... "Teach ye the Cause of God, O people of Bahá, for God hath prescribed unto everyone the duty of proclaiming His Message, and regardeth it as the most meritorious of all deeds."

...How often--and the early history of the Faith in the land of its birth offers many a striking testimony-- have the lowliest adherents of the Faith, unschooled and utterly inexperienced, and with no standing whatever, and in some cases devoid of intelligence, been capable of winning victories for their Cause, before which the most brilliant achievements of the learned, the wise, and the experienced have paled...

"The Báb...hath said: 'Should a tiny ant desire, in this day, to be possessed of such power as to be able to unravel the abstrusest and most bewildering passages of the Qur'án, its wish will no doubt be fulfilled...' If so helpless a creature can be endowed with so subtle a capacity, how much more efficacious must be the power released through the liberal effusions of the grace of Bahá'u'lláh!"

The field is indeed so immense, the period so critical, the Cause so great, the workers so few, the time so short, the privilege so priceless, that no follower of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, worthy to bear His name, can afford a moment's hesitation. That God-born Force, irresistible in its sweeping power, incalculable in its potency, unpredictable in its course, mysterious in its workings, and awe-inspiring in its manifestations--a Force which, as the Báb has written, "vibrates within the innermost being of all created things," and which, according to Bahá'u'lláh, has through its "vibrating influence," "upset the equilibrium of the world and revolutionized its ordered life"--such a Force, acting even as a two-edged sword, is, under our very eyes, sundering, on the one hand, the age-old ties which for centuries have held together the fabric of civilized society, and is unloosing, on the other, the bonds that still

fetter the infant and as yet unemancipated Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The undreamt-of opportunities offered through the operation of this Force--the American believers must now rise, and fully and courageously exploit them. "The holy realities of the Concourse on high," writes `Abdu'l-Bahá, "yearn, in this day, in the Most Exalted Paradise, to return unto this world, so that they may be aided to render some service to the threshold of the Abhá Beauty, and arise to demonstrate their servitude to His sacred Threshold."

A world, dimmed by the steadily dying-out light of religion, heaving with the explosive forces of a blind and triumphant nationalism; scorched with the fires of pitiless persecution, whether racial or religious; deluded by the false theories and doctrines that threaten to supplant the worship of God and the sanctification of His laws; enervated by a rampant and brutal materialism; disintegrating through the corrosive influence of moral and spiritual decadence; and enmeshed in the coils of economic anarchy and strife--such is the spectacle presented to men's eyes, as a result of the sweeping changes which this revolutionizing Force, as yet in the initial stage of its operation, is now producing in the life of the entire planet.

So sad and moving a spectacle...cannot but deepen their faith, and excite their enthusiastic eagerness to arise and display...their capacity to play their part in the work of universal redemption proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh. Every instrument in the administrative machinery which, in the course of several years, they have so laboriously erected must be fully utilized, and subordinated to the end for which it was created. The Temple, that proud embodiment of so rare a spirit of self-sacrifice, must likewise be made to play its part, and contribute its share to the teaching campaign designed to embrace the entire Western Hemisphere.

The opportunities which the turmoil of the present age presents...must...be exploited for the purpose of spreading far and wide the knowledge of the redemptive power of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and for enlisting fresh recruits in the ever-swelling army of His followers. So precious an opportunity, so rare a conjunction of favorable circumstances, may never again recur. Now is...the appointed time, for the American believers, the vanguard of the hosts of the Most Great Name, to proclaim...their capacity and readiness to rescue a fallen and sore-tried generation that has rebelled against its God and ignored His warnings, and to offer it that complete security which only the strongholds of their Faith can provide.

## **SOLUTIONS – FOUNDATIONS for SUCCESS in TEACHING and PIONEERING**

The teaching campaign, inaugurated throughout the states of the North American Republic and the Dominion of Canada, acquires, therefore, an importance, and is invested with an urgency, that cannot be overestimated. Launched on its course through the creative energies released by the Will of `Abdu'l-Bahá, and sweeping across the Western Hemisphere through the propelling force which it is generating, it must...be carried out in conformity with certain principles, designed to insure its efficient conduct, and to hasten the attainment of its objective.

Those who participate in such a campaign...must, as an essential preliminary to the discharge of their duties, thoroughly familiarize themselves with the various aspects of the history and teachings of their Faith. In their efforts to achieve this purpose they must study for themselves, conscientiously and painstakingly, the literature of their Faith, delve into its teachings, assimilate its laws and principles, ponder its admonitions, tenets and purposes, commit to memory certain of its exhortations and prayers, master the essentials of its administration, and keep abreast of its current affairs and latest developments. They must strive to obtain...a sound knowledge of the history and tenets of

Islám--the source and background of their Faith... They must devote special attention to the investigation of those institutions and circumstances that are directly connected with the origin and birth of their Faith, with the station claimed by its Forerunner, and with the laws revealed by its Author.

Having acquired, in their essentials, these prerequisites of success in the teaching field, they must, whenever they contemplate undertaking any specific mission in the countries of Latin America, endeavor, whenever feasible, to acquire a certain proficiency in the languages spoken by the inhabitants of those countries, and a knowledge of their customs, habits, and outlook... `Abdu'l-Bahá...has written..."The teachers traveling in different directions...must know the language of the country in which they will enter...

...It is the bounden duty of every American believer, as the faithful trustee of `Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, to initiate, promote, and consolidate, within the limits fixed by the administrative principles of the Faith, any activity he or she deems fit to undertake for the furtherance of the Plan. Neither the threatening world situation, nor any consideration of lack of material resources, of mental equipment, of knowledge, or of experience-- desirable as they are--should deter any prospective pioneer teacher from arising independently, and from setting in motion the forces which, `Abdu'l-Bahá has repeatedly assured us, will, once released, attract even as a magnet the promised and infallible aid of Bahá'u'lláh. Let him not wait for any directions, or expect any special encouragement, from the elected representatives of his community, nor be deterred by any obstacles which his relatives, or fellow-citizens may be inclined to place in his path, nor mind the censure of his critics or enemies. "Be unrestrained as the wind," is Bahá'u'lláh's counsel to every would-be teacher of His Cause, "while carrying the Message of Him Who hath caused the dawn of Divine Guidance to break..." "And when he determineth to leave his home, for the sake of the Cause of his Lord," Bahá'u'lláh,... referring to such a teacher, has revealed, "let him put his whole trust in God, as the best provision for his journey, and array himself with the robe of virtue... If he be kindled with the fire of His love, if he forgoeth all created things, the words he uttereth shall set on fire them that hear him."

Having on his own initiative, and undaunted by any hindrances with which either friend or foe may, unwittingly or deliberately, obstruct his path, resolved to arise and respond to the call of teaching, let him carefully consider every avenue of approach which he might utilize in his personal attempts to capture the attention, maintain the interest, and deepen the faith, of those whom he seeks to bring into the fold of his Faith. Let him survey the possibilities which the particular circumstances in which he lives offer him... Let him also attempt to devise such methods as association with clubs, exhibitions, and societies, lectures on subjects akin to the teachings and ideals of his Cause such as temperance, morality, social welfare, religious and racial tolerance, economic cooperation, Islám, and Comparative Religion, or participation in social, cultural, humanitarian, charitable, and educational organizations and enterprises which, while safeguarding the integrity of his Faith, will open up to him a multitude of ways and means whereby he can enlist successively the sympathy, the support, and ultimately the allegiance of those with whom he comes in contact. Let him...bear in mind the claims which his Faith is constantly making upon him to preserve its dignity, and station, to safeguard the integrity of its laws and principles, to demonstrate its comprehensiveness and universality, and to defend fearlessly its manifold and vital interests. Let him consider the degree of his hearer's receptivity... Let him remember the example set by `Abdu'l-Bahá, and His constant admonition to shower such kindness upon the seeker, and exemplify to such a degree the spirit of the teachings he hopes to instill into him, that the recipient will be spontaneously impelled to identify himself with the Cause embodying such teachings. Let him refrain, at the outset, from insisting on such laws and observances as might impose

too severe a strain on the seeker's newly awakened faith, and endeavor to nurse him...into full maturity...to proclaim his unqualified acceptance of whatever has been ordained by Bahá'u'lláh. Let him, as soon as that stage has been attained, introduce him to the body of his fellow-believers...to enable him to contribute his share to the enrichment of its...communities. Let him not be content until he has infused into his spiritual child so deep a longing as to impel him to arise independently, in his turn, and devote his energies to the quickening of other souls, and the upholding of the laws and principles laid down by his newly adopted Faith.

Let every participator in the continent-wide campaign initiated by the American believers, and particularly those engaged in pioneer work in virgin territories, bear in mind the necessity of keeping in close and constant touch with those responsible agencies...to...insure the smooth and speedy functioning of the teaching machinery of their Administrative Order...

Upon every participator in this concerted effort...rests the spiritual obligation to make of the mandate of teaching, so vitally binding upon all, the all-pervading concern of his life. In his daily activities and contacts, in all his journeys, whether for business or otherwise, on his holidays and outings, and on any mission he may be called upon to undertake, every bearer of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh should consider it not only an obligation but a privilege to scatter far and wide the seeds of His Faith, and to rest content in the abiding knowledge that whatever be the immediate response to that Message, and however inadequate the vehicle that conveyed it, the power of its Author will, as He sees fit, enable those seeds to germinate, and in circumstances which no one can foresee enrich the harvest which the labor of His followers will gather...

Let anyone who feels the urge among the participators in this crusade, which embraces all the races, all the republics, classes and denominations of the entire Western Hemisphere, arise, and, circumstances permitting, direct in particular the attention, and win eventually the unqualified adherence, of the Negro, the Indian, the Eskimo, and Jewish races to his Faith. No more laudable and meritorious service can be rendered the Cause of God, at the present hour, than a successful effort to enhance the diversity of the members of the American Bahá'í community by swelling the ranks of the Faith through the enrollment of the members of these races. A blending of these highly differentiated elements of the human race, harmoniously interwoven into the fabric of an all-embracing Bahá'í fraternity, and assimilated through the dynamic processes of a divinely appointed Administrative Order, and contributing each its share to the enrichment and glory of Bahá'í community life, is surely an achievement the contemplation of which must warm and thrill every Bahá'í heart... when divers shades of thought, temperament and character, are brought together under the power and influence of one central agency, the beauty and glory of human perfection will be revealed and made manifest. Naught but the celestial potency of the Word of God, which ruleth and transcendeth the realities of all things, is capable of harmonizing the divergent thoughts, sentiments, ideas, and convictions of the children of men." "I hope," is the wish expressed by `Abdu'l-Bahá, "that ye may cause that downtrodden race [Negro] to become glorious, and to be joined with the white race to serve the world of man with the utmost sincerity, faithfulness, love and purity." "One of the important questions," He also has written, "which affect the unity and the solidarity of mankind is the fellowship and equality of the white and colored races." "You must attach great importance," writes `Abdu'l-Bahá in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, "to the Indians, the original inhabitants of America..." "If it is possible," `Abdu'l-Bahá has also written, "send ye teachers to other portions of Canada; likewise, dispatch ye teachers to Greenland and the home of the Eskimos..." "Praise be to God," writes `Abdu'l-Bahá, "that whatsoever hath been announced in the Blessed Tablets unto the Israelites, and the things explicitly written in the letters of `Abdu'l-Bahá, are all being fulfilled... The Ancient Beauty hath in His sacred

Tablets explicitly written that the day of their abasement is over. His bounty will overshadow them, and this race will day by day progress, and be delivered from its age-long obscurity and degradation."

## **SOLUTIONS – EXPANSION: PIONEERING FIRST STAGE, CALL for PIONEERS**

Let those who are holding administrative positions in their capacity as members of either the National Spiritual Assembly, or of the national, the regional, or local teaching committees, continually bear in mind the vital and urgent necessity of insuring...the formation...of groups, however small and rudimentary, and of providing every facility within their power to enable these newly formed nuclei to evolve, swiftly and along sound lines, into properly functioning, self-sufficient, and recognized Assemblies... To implant...the banner of Bahá'u'lláh in the heart of these virgin territories, to erect the structural basis of His Administrative Order in their cities and villages, and to establish a firm and permanent anchorage for its institutions in the minds and hearts of their inhabitants, constitute...the first and most significant step in the successive stages through which the teaching campaign...must pass. Whereas the external ornamentation of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, under this same Plan, has now entered the final phase in its development, the teaching campaign is still in its initial stages... The effort required is prodigious, the conditions under which these preliminary establishments are to be made are often unattractive and unfavorable, the workers who are in a position to undertake such tasks limited, and the resources they can command meager and inadequate. And yet, how often has the pen of Bahá'u'lláh assured us that "should a man, all alone, arise in the name of Bahá, and put on the armor of His love, him will the Almighty cause to be victorious, though the forces of earth and heaven be arrayed against him."... Let those who resolve to be the first to hoist the standard of such a Cause, under such conditions, and in such territories, nourish their souls with the sustaining power of these words, and, "putting on the armor of His love," a love which must "wax stronger" as they persevere in their lonesome task, arise to adorn with the tale of their deeds the most brilliant pages ever written in their country's spiritual history.

... `Abdu'l-Bahá, in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, has written, "in most of the states and cities of the United States...His fragrances are diffused...yet in some of the states the Standard of Unity is not yet upraised as it should be... Through the concerted efforts of all the friends the Standard of Unity must needs be unfurled in those states, and the Divine teachings promoted, so that these states may also receive their portion of the heavenly bestowals and a share of the Most Great Guidance." "The future of the Dominion of Canada," He, in another Tablet of the Divine Plan, has asserted, "is very great, and the events connected with it infinitely glorious. The eye of God's loving-kindness will be turned towards it, and it shall become the manifestation of the favors of the All-Glorious." "Again I repeat,...that the future of Canada, whether from a material or a spiritual standpoint, is very great."

## **SOLUTIONS – SECOND STAGE: ILLUMINATE the AMERICAS**

No sooner is this initial step taken, involving as it does the formation of at least one nucleus in each of these virgin states and provinces in the North American continent, than the machinery for a tremendous intensification of Bahá'í concerted effort must be set in motion...for the awakening of the nations of Latin America to the Call of Bahá'u'lláh. Not until this second phase of the teaching campaign, under the Seven Year Plan, has been entered can the campaign be regarded as fully launched... So powerful will be the effusions of Divine grace that will be poured forth upon a valiant community...that its members will find themselves overpowered by the evidences of their regenerative power.



...It should not, for a moment, be forgotten that Central and Southern America...are destined to play an increasingly important part in the shaping of the world's future destiny. With the world contracting into a neighborhood, and the fortunes of its races, nations and peoples becoming inextricably interwoven, the remoteness of these states of the Western Hemisphere is vanishing, and the latent possibilities in each of them are becoming increasingly apparent.

When this second stage in the progressive unfoldment of teaching activities and enterprises, under the Seven Year Plan, is reached, and the machinery required for its prosecution begins to operate, the American believers, the stout-hearted pioneers of this mighty movement, must, guided by the unfailing light of Bahá'u'lláh, and in strict accordance with the Plan laid out by `Abdu'l-Bahá, and acting under the direction of their National Spiritual Assembly, and assured of the aid of the Inter-America Committee, launch an offensive against the powers of darkness, of corruption, and of ignorance, an offensive that must extend to the uttermost end of the Southern continent, and embrace within its scope each of the twenty nations that compose it.

Let some...set their faces, and direct their steps towards those distant climes, those virgin fields, those unsundered cities, and bend their energies to capture the citadels of men's hearts--hearts, which, as Bahá'u'lláh has written, "the hosts of Revelation and of utterance can subdue"... Let them not tarry...but...arise to usher in the opening phase of what will come to be regarded as one of the most glorious chapters in the international history of their Faith. Let them..."teach their own selves, that their speech may attract the hearts of their hearers." Let them regard the triumph of their Faith as their "supreme objective." Let them not "consider the largeness or smallness of the receptacle"... Let them "disencumber themselves of all attachment to this world and the vanities thereof,"...Let their "souls be aglow with the flame of the undying Fire...in such wise that the waters of the universe shall be powerless to cool down its ardor."... Let them "unloose their tongues and proclaim unceasingly His Cause."... Let them "beware lest they contend with anyone, nay strive to make him aware of the truth with kindly manner and most convincing exhortation." Let them...accept whatever response their words may evoke in their hearers." Let them not, for one moment, forget that the "Faithful Spirit shall strengthen them through its power," and that "a company of His chosen angels shall go forth with them, as bidden by Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Wise." Let them ever bear in mind "how great is the blessedness that awaiteth them that have attained the honor of serving the Almighty," and remember that "such a service is indeed the prince of all goodly deeds, and the ornament of every goodly act."

And, finally, let these soul-stirring words of Bahá'u'lláh, as they pursue their course throughout the length and breadth of the southern American continent, be ever ready on their lips...: "O wayfarer in the path of God! Take thou thy portion of the ocean of His grace, and deprive not thyself of the things that lie hidden in its depths... A dewdrop out of this ocean would...suffice to enrich them with the bounty of God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. With the hands of renunciation draw forth from its life-giving waters, and sprinkle therewith all created things, that they may be cleansed from all man-made limitations, and may approach the mighty seat of God... Be not grieved if thou performest it thyself alone. Let God be all-sufficient for thee... Proclaim the Cause of thy Lord unto all who are in the heavens and on the earth. Should any man respond to thy call, lay bare before him the pearls of the wisdom of the Lord...and be thou of them that truly believe. And should anyone reject thy offer, turn thou away from him, and put thy trust and confidence in the Lord of all worlds... 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 foreordained in the realm of God's Revelation, by the behest of Him Who is the All-Glorious, the Most Powerful."

Let these words of `Abdu'l-Bahá...ring likewise in their ears..."O ye apostles of Bahá'u'lláh!... Behold the portals which Bahá'u'lláh hath opened before you! Consider how exalted and lofty is the station you are destined to attain; how unique the favors with which you have been endowed."... "The full measure of your success is as yet unrevealed, its significance still unapprehended. Ere long ye will, with your own eyes, witness how brilliantly every one of you, even as a shining star, will radiate in the firmament of your country the light of Divine Guidance, and will bestow upon its people the glory of an everlasting life."... Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious. Should success crown your enterprise, America will assuredly evolve into a center from which waves of spiritual power will emanate, and the throne of the Kingdom of God will, in the plenitude of its majesty and glory, be firmly established."

...the Seven Year Plan involves...no more than the formation of at least one center in each of the Central and South American Republics. The hundredth anniversary of the birth of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh should witness...the laying, in each of these countries, of a foundation, however rudimentary, on which the rising generation of the American believers may...be able to build. Theirs will be the task, in the course of successive decades, to extend and reinforce those foundations, and...establish independent and properly constituted local Assemblies, and thereby erect the framework of the Administrative Order of their Faith. The erection of such a framework is primarily the responsibility of those whom...have converted to the Divine Message. It is a task which must involve...the setting up of the entire machinery of the Administrative Order in conformity with the spiritual and administrative principles...of every established Bahá'í community throughout the world... This, however, is a task that concerns those who, at a later period, must arise to further a work which, to all intents and purposes, has not yet been effectively started.

To pave the way, in a more systematic manner, for the laying of the necessary foundation on which such permanent national and local institutions can be reared and securely established is a task that will very soon demand the concentrated attention of the prosecutors of the Seven Year Plan...

I can only, in my desire to be of some service to those who are to assume such tremendous responsibilities, and to suffer such self-denial, attempt to offer a few helpful suggestions... To this work...the energies of the entire community must be resolutely consecrated. The number of Bahá'í teachers, be they settlers or travelers, must be substantially increased. The material resources to be placed at their disposal must be multiplied... no opportunity should be neglected, and no effort spared, to lay as broad and solid a basis as possible for the progress and development of the greatest teaching enterprise ever launched by the American Bahá'í community.

"Books and pamphlets...must be either translated or composed in the languages of these countries and islands, to be circulated in every part and in all directions."

Every...traveling teacher or settler, should...make it his chief and constant concern to mix, in a friendly manner, with all sections of the population, irrespective of class, creed, nationality, or color, to familiarize himself with their ideas, tastes, and habits, to study the approach best suited to them, to concentrate, patiently and tactfully, on a few who have shown marked capacity and receptivity, and to endeavor, with extreme kindness, to implant such love, zeal, and devotion in their hearts as to enable them to become in turn self-sufficient and independent promoters of the Faith in their respective localities. ...Beware lest ye deal unkindly with him. A kindly tongue is the lodestone of the

hearts of men. It is the bread of the spirit, it clotheth the words with meaning, it is the fountain of the light of wisdom and understanding."

...Through the kindness shown them, or any literature which may be given them, or any connection which they may establish with them, the American believers can thereby sow such seeds in their hearts as might, in future circumstances, germinate and yield the most unexpected results. Care...should, at all times, be exercised, lest in their eagerness...they frustrate their purpose, and turn away, through any act that might be misconstrued as an attempt to proselytize...those whom they wish to win over to their Cause.

I would particularly direct my appeal to those American believers...who may find it possible, whatever be their calling or employment...to establish permanently their residence in such countries as may offer them a reasonable prospect of earning the means of livelihood. They will by their action be relieving the continually increasing pressure on their Teaching Fund... Should they find it impossible to take advantage of so rare and sacred a privilege, let them...appoint a deputy who, on that believer's behalf, will arise and carry out so noble an enterprise. "Center your energies," are Bahá'u'lláh's words, "in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation, whose power hath caused the foundations of the mightiest structures to quake, every mountain to be crushed into dust, and every soul to be dumbfounded."

As to those who have been able to leave their homes and country,...It should be one of their chief aims to keep...in constant touch with the National Committee specifically entrusted with the promotion of their work, and to cooperate...with their fellow-believers in those countries... Through the performance of their first duty they will derive the necessary stimulus and obtain the necessary guidance that will enable them to prosecute effectively their mission, and will also, through their regular reports to that committee, be imparting to the general body of their fellow-believers the news of the latest developments in their activities. By fulfilling their other duty, they will insure the smooth efficiency, facilitate the progress, and avert any untoward incidents that might handicap the development of their common enterprise...

It would, no doubt, be of exceptional importance and value, particularly in these times when the various restrictions imposed in those countries make it difficult for a considerable number of Bahá'í pioneers to establish their residence and earn their livelihood in those states, if certain ones among the believers, whose income, however slender, provides them with the means of an independent existence, would so arrange their affairs as to be able to reside indefinitely in those countries. The sacrifices involved, the courage, faith, and perseverance it demands, are no doubt very great. Their value, however, can never be properly assessed at the present time, and the limitless reward which they who demonstrate them will receive can never be adequately depicted. "They that have forsaken their country," is Bahá'u'lláh's own testimony, "for the purpose of teaching Our Cause-- these shall the Faithful Spirit strengthen through its power.." The solid achievements, spiritual as well as administrative, which in the far-away continent of Australasia, and more recently in Bulgaria, representative believers from both Canada and the United States have accomplished, proclaim in terms unmistakable the nature of those prizes which, even in this world, such sterling heroism is bound to win. "Whoso," Bahá'u'lláh, in a memorable passage, extolling those of His loved ones who have "journeyed through the countries in His Name and for His praise," has written, "hath attained their presence will glory in their meeting, and all that dwell in every land will be illumined by their memory."

## SOLUTIONS - SPECIAL ROLE of BAHÁ'Í WOMEN, BAHÁ'Í YOUTH and PANAMA

I am moved...as I am reminded of the share which, ever since the inception of the Faith in the West, the handmaidens of Bahá'u'lláh...have had in opening up, single-handed, so many, such diversified, and widely scattered countries over the whole surface of the globe, not only to pay a tribute to such apostolic fervor as is truly reminiscent of those heroic men who were responsible for the birth of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, but also to stress the significance of such a preponderating share which the women of the West have had and are having in the establishment of His Faith throughout the whole world. "Among the miracles," `Abdu'l-Bahá Himself has testified, "which distinguish this sacred Dispensation is this, that women have evinced a greater boldness than men when enlisted in the ranks of the Faith."... The "boldness" which...has characterized their accomplishments in the past must suffer no eclipse as they stand on the threshold of still greater and nobler accomplishments. Nay rather, it must, in the course of time and throughout the length and breadth of the vast and virgin territories of Latin America, be more convincingly demonstrated, and win for the beloved Cause victories more stirring than any it has as yet achieved.

To the Bahá'í youth of America, moreover, I feel a word should be addressed in particular, as I survey the possibilities which a campaign of such gigantic proportions has to offer to the eager and enterprising spirit that so powerfully animates them in the service of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Though lacking in experience and faced with insufficient resources, yet the adventurous spirit which they possess, and the vigor, the alertness, and optimism they have thus far so consistently shown, qualify them to play an active part in arousing the interest, and in securing the allegiance, of their fellow youth in those countries. No greater demonstration can be given to the peoples of both continents of the youthful vitality and the vibrant power animating the life, and the institutions of the nascent Faith of Bahá'u'lláh than an intelligent, persistent, and effective participation of the Bahá'í youth, of every race, nationality, and class, in both the teaching and administrative spheres of Bahá'í activity.... I hope, and indeed pray, that such a participation may not only redound to the glory, the power, and the prestige of the Faith, but may also react so powerfully on the spiritual lives, and galvanize to such an extent the energies of the youthful members of the Bahá'í community, as to empower them to display, in a fuller measure, their inherent capacities, and to unfold a further stage in their spiritual evolution under the shadow of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

...I feel it my duty to draw the special attention of those to whom it has been entrusted to the urgent needs of, and the special position enjoyed by, the Republic of Panama, both in view of its relative proximity to the heart and center of the Faith in North America, and of its geographical position as the link between two continents. "All the above countries," `Abdu'l-Bahá, referring to the Latin States in one of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, has written, "have importance, but especially the Republic of Panama, wherein the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans come together through the Panama Canal. It is a center for travel and passage from America to other continents of the world, and in the future it will gain most great importance."... The teachings, once established there, will unite the East and the West, the North and the South." So privileged a position surely demands the special and prompt attention of the American Bahá'í community. With the Republic of Mexico already opened up to the Faith..., the southward penetration of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh into a neighboring country is but a natural and logical step... No efforts should be spared, and no sacrifice be deemed too great, to establish even though it be a very small group in a Republic occupying, both spiritually and geographically, so strategic a position... Preference...should be given by all would-be pioneers...to the spiritual needs of this privileged Republic, though every effort should, at the same time, be exerted to introduce the Faith, however tentatively, to the Republics of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and

Costa Rica which would link it, in an unbroken chain, with its mother Assemblies in the North American continent. Obstacles, however formidable, should be surmounted, the resources of the Bahá'í treasury should be liberally expended on its behalf, and the ablest and most precious exertions should be consecrated to the cause of its awakening... It will create limitless opportunities, galvanize the efforts, and reinvigorate the life, of those who will have accomplished this feat, and infuse immense courage and boundless joy into the hearts of the isolated groups and individuals in the neighboring and distant Republics, and exert intangible yet powerful spiritual influences on the life and future development of its people.

## **CONCLUSION – ENCOURAGEMENT and ASSURANCES of SUCCESS**

Such, dearly beloved friends, is the vista that stretches before the eyes, and challenges the resources, of the American Bahá'í community in these, the concluding years of the First Century of the Bahá'í Era. Such are the qualities and qualifications demanded of them for the proper discharge of their responsibilities and duties. Such are the requirements, the possibilities, and the objectives of the Plan that claims every ounce of their energy. Who knows but that these few remaining, fast-fleeting years, may not be pregnant with events of unimaginable magnitude, with ordeals more severe than any that humanity has as yet experienced, with conflicts more devastating than any which have preceded them. Dangers, however sinister, must, at no time, dim the radiance of their new-born faith. Strife and confusion, however bewildering, must never befog their vision. Tribulations, however afflictive, must never shatter their resolve. Denunciations, however clamorous, must never sap their loyalty. Upheavals, however cataclysmic, must never deflect their course. The present Plan, embodying the budding hopes of a departed Master, must be pursued, relentlessly pursued... Such simultaneous processes of rise and of fall, of integration and of disintegration, of order and chaos, with their continuous and reciprocal reactions on each other, are but aspects of a greater Plan, one and indivisible, whose Source is God, whose author is Bahá'u'lláh, the theater of whose operations is the entire planet, and whose ultimate objectives are the unity of the human race and the peace of all mankind.

Reflections such as these should steel the resolve of the entire Bahá'í community, should dissipate their forebodings, and arouse them to rededicate themselves to every single provision of that Divine Charter whose outline has been delineated for them by the pen of `Abdu'l-Bahá. The Seven Year Plan, as already stated, is but the initial stage, a stepping-stone to the unfoldment of the implications of this Charter. The impulse, originally generated through the movement of that pen...must, in the opening years of the next century, be further accelerated, and impel the American Bahá'í community to launch further stages in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan, stages that will carry it far beyond the shores of the Northern Hemisphere, into lands and among peoples where that community's noblest acts of heroism are to be performed.

Let anyone inclined to doubt the course which this enviable community is destined to follow, turn to and meditate upon these words of `Abdu'l-Bahá, enshrined, for all time, in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, and addressed to the entire community of the believers of the United States and Canada: "The full measure of your success...is as yet unrevealed, its significance still unapprehended. Ere long, ye will, with your own eyes, witness how brilliantly every one of you, even as a shining star, will radiate, in the firmament of your country, the light of Divine Guidance, and will bestow upon its people the glory of an everlasting life..." The range of your future achievements still remains undisclosed. I fervently hope that in the near future the whole earth may be stirred and shaken by the results of your achievements. The hope...which `Abdu'l-Bahá cherishes for you is that the same success which has attended your efforts in America may crown your endeavors in other parts of the world, that through



you the fame of the Cause of God may be diffused throughout the East and the West, and the advent of the Kingdom of the Lord of Hosts be proclaimed in all the five continents of the globe." "The moment...this Divine Message is carried forward by the American believers from the shores of America, and is propagated throughout the continents of Europe, of Asia, of Africa, and of Australasia, and as far as the islands of the Pacific, this community will find itself securely established upon the throne of an everlasting dominion. Then will all the peoples of the world witness that this community is spiritually illumined and divinely guided. Then will the whole earth resound with the praises of its majesty and greatness."

No reader of these words...can expect a community that has been raised so high, and endowed so richly, to remain content with any laurels it may win in the immediate future. To rest upon such laurels would indeed be tantamount to a betrayal of the trust placed in that community by `Abdu'l-Bahá. To cut short the chain of victories that must lead it on to that supreme triumph when "the whole earth may be stirred and shaken" by the results of its achievements would shatter His hopes... To forfeit the honor of proclaiming "the advent of the Kingdom of the Lord of Hosts" in "all the five continents of the globe" would silence those "praises of its majesty and greatness" that otherwise would echo throughout "the whole earth."

...Nay rather the present generation of this blessed, this repeatedly blessed, community will go from strength to strength, and will hand on, as the first century draws to a close, to the generations that must succeed it in the second the torch of Divine Guidance, undimmed by the tempestuous winds that must blow upon it, that they in turn, faithful to the wish and mandate of `Abdu'l-Bahá, may carry that torch, with that self-same vigor, fidelity, and enthusiasm, to the darkest and remotest corners of the earth.

## **CONCLUSION – ENCOURAGEMENT and ASSURANCES: DIVINE ASSISTANCE**

Dearly beloved friends! I can do no better, eager as I am to extend to every one of you any assistance in my power that may enable you to discharge more effectively your divinely appointed, continually multiplying duties, than to direct your special attention, at this decisive hour, to these immortal passages, gleaned in part from the great mass of Bahá'u'lláh's unpublished and untranslated writings. Whether in His revelation of the station and functions of His loved ones, or His eulogies of the greatness of His Cause, or His emphasis on the paramount importance of teaching, or the dangers which He foreshadows, the counsels He imparts, the warnings He utters, the vistas He discloses, and the assurances and promises He gives, these dynamic and typical examples of Bahá'u'lláh's sublime utterance, each having a direct bearing on the tasks which actually face or lie ahead of the American Bahá'í community, cannot fail to produce on the minds and hearts of any one of its members, who approaches them with befitting humility and detachment, such powerful reactions as to illuminate his entire being and intensify tremendously his daily exertions.

"O friends! Be not careless of the virtues with which ye have been endowed, neither be neglectful of your high destiny..." "O people of Bahá! Ye are the breezes of spring that are wafted over the world. Through you We have adorned the world of being with the ornament of the knowledge of the Most Merciful. Through you the countenance of the world hath been wreathed in smiles, and the brightness of His light shone forth. Cling ye to the Cord of steadfastness, in such wise that all vain imaginings may utterly vanish. Speed ye forth from the horizon of power, in the name of your Lord, the Unconstrained, and announce unto His servants, with wisdom and eloquence, the tidings of this Cause, whose splendor hath been shed upon the world of being. Beware lest anything withhold you

from observing the things prescribed unto you by the Pen of Glory... O people of Bahá! The river that is Life indeed hath flowed for your sakes. Quaff ye in My name, despite them that have disbelieved in God, the Lord of Revelation. We have made you to be the hands of Our Cause. Render ye victorious this Wronged One, Who hath been sore-trying in the hands of the workers of iniquity. He, verily, will aid everyone that aideth Him, and will remember everyone that remembereth Him... "Blessed are the people of Bahá! God beareth Me witness! They are the solace of the eye of creation..." "By the sorrows which afflict the beauty of the All-Glorious! Such is the station ordained for the true believer that if to an extent smaller than a needle's eye the glory of that station were to be unveiled to mankind, every beholder would be consumed away in his longing to attain it. For this reason it hath been decreed that in this earthly life the full measure of the glory of his own station should remain concealed from the eyes of such a believer." "If the veil be lifted, and the full glory of the station of those who have turned wholly towards God, and in their love for Him renounced the world, be made manifest, the entire creation would be dumbfounded."

### **CONCLUSION - ENCOURAGEMENT and ASSURANCES: DAY of GOD**

"Verily I say! No one hath apprehended the root of this Cause. It is incumbent upon everyone, in this day, to perceive with the eye of God, and to hearken with His ear. Whoso beholdeth Me with an eye besides Mine own will never be able to know Me. None among the Manifestations of old, except to a prescribed degree, hath ever completely apprehended the nature of this Revelation."... "How great is the Cause, how staggering the weight of its Message!" "In this most mighty Revelation all the Dispensations of the past have attained their highest, their final consummation." "That which hath been made manifest in this preeminent, this most exalted Revelation, stands unparalleled in the annals of the past, nor will future ages witness its like." "The purpose underlying all creation is the revelation of this most sublime, this most holy Day, the Day known as the Day of God, in His Books and Scriptures--the Day which all the Prophets, and the Chosen Ones, and the holy ones, have wished to witness..." "Every Prophet hath announced the coming of this Day, and every Messenger hath groaned in His yearning for this Revelation--a revelation which, no sooner had it been revealed than all created things cried out saying, 'The earth is God's, the Most Exalted, the Most Great!'"... "This Day a door is open wider than both heaven and earth. The eye of the mercy of Him Who is the Desire of the worlds is turned towards all men. An act, however infinitesimal, is, when viewed in the mirror of the knowledge of God, mightier than a mountain. Every drop proffered in His path is as the sea in that mirror..." "The world of being shineth, in this Day, with the resplendency of this Divine Revelation. All created things extol its saving grace, and sing its praises. The universe is wrapt in an ecstasy of joy and gladness. The Scriptures of past Dispensations celebrate the great Jubilee that must needs greet this most great Day of God. Well is it with him that hath lived to see this Day, and hath recognized its station." "This Day a different Sun hath arisen, and a different Heaven hath been adorned with its stars and its planets. The world is another world, and the Cause another Cause..." "This is the Day whereon human ears have been privileged to hear what He Who conversed with God [Moses] heard upon Sinai, what He Who is the Friend of God [Muhammad] heard when lifted up towards Him, what He Who is the Spirit of God [Jesus] heard as He ascended unto Him, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting." "This Day is God's Day, and this Cause His Cause. Happy is he who hath renounced this world, and clung to Him Who is the Dayspring of God's Revelation." "This is the King of Days, the Day that hath seen the coming of the Best Beloved, He Who through all eternity hath been acclaimed the Desire of the World..." Great is the blessedness of him who hath attained, through the sweet savor of these days, unto everlasting life, and who, with the most great steadfastness, hath arisen to aid the Cause of Him Who is the King of Names. Such a man is as the

eye to the body of mankind."... "This Day is different from other days, and this Cause different from other causes. Entreat ye the one true God that He may deprive not the eyes of men from beholding His signs, nor their ears from hearkening unto the shrill voice of the Pen of Glory."... "God the true One is My Witness! This is the Day whereon it is incumbent upon everyone that seeth to behold, and every ear that hearkeneth to hear, and every heart that understandeth to perceive, and every tongue that speaketh to proclaim unto all who are in heaven and on earth, this holy, this exalted, and all-highest Name." "Say, O men! This is a matchless Day. Matchless must, likewise, be the tongue that celebrateth the praise of the Desire of all nations, and matchless the deed that aspireth to be acceptable in His sight. The whole human race hath longed for this Day, that perchance it may fulfill that which well beseemeth its station and is worthy of its destiny."

"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 worldwide regeneration."... "It is in Our power, should We wish it, to enable a speck of floating dust to generate, in less than the twinkling of an eye, suns of infinite, of unimaginable splendor, to cause a dewdrop to develop into vast and numberless oceans, to infuse into every letter such a force as to empower it to unfold all the knowledge of past and future ages."...

..."Great, great is the Cause! The hour is approaching when the most great convulsion will have appeared. I swear by Him Who is the Truth! It shall cause separation to afflict everyone, even those who circle around Me."... "Grieve thou not over those that have busied themselves with the things of this world, and have forgotten the remembrance of God, the Most Great. By Him Who is the Eternal Truth! The day is approaching when the wrathful anger of the Almighty will have taken hold of them. He, verily, is the Omnipotent, the All-Subduing, the Most Powerful. He shall cleanse the earth from the defilement of their corruption, and shall give it for an heritage unto such of His servants as are nigh unto Him."... "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."

..."Say: O people of God! Beware lest the powers of the earth alarm you, or the might of the nations weaken you, or the tumult of the people of discord deter you, or the exponents of earthly glory sadden you. Be ye as a mountain in the Cause of your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the Unconstrained." "Say: Beware, O people of Bahá, lest the strong ones of the earth rob you of your strength, or they who rule the world fill you with fear. Put your trust in God, and commit your affairs to His keeping. He, verily, will, through the power of truth, render you victorious, and He, verily, is powerful to do what He willeth, and in His grasp are the reins of omnipotent might." "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." "Let not the happenings of the world sadden you. I swear by God! The sea of joy yearneth to attain your presence, for every good thing hath been created for you, and will, according to the needs of the times, be revealed unto you." "O my servants! Sorrow not if, in these days and on this earthly plane, things contrary to your wishes have been ordained and manifested by God, for days of blissful joy, of heavenly delight, are assuredly in store for you. Worlds, holy and spiritually glorious, will be unveiled to your eyes. You are destined by Him, in this world and hereafter, to partake of their benefits, to share in their joys, and to obtain a portion of their sustaining grace. To each and every one of them you will, no doubt, attain."

"This is the day in which to speak. It is incumbent upon the people of Bahá to strive, with the utmost patience and forbearance, to guide the peoples of the world to the Most Great Horizon. Every body

calleth aloud for a soul. Heavenly souls must needs quicken, with the breath of the Word of God, the dead bodies with a fresh spirit... O servants! The triumph of this Cause hath depended, and will continue to depend, upon the appearance of holy souls, upon the showing forth of goodly deeds, and the revelation of words of consummate wisdom." "Center your energies in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation, whose power hath caused the foundations of the mightiest structures to quake, every mountain to be crushed into dust, and every soul to be dumbfounded." "Let your principal concern be to rescue the fallen from the slough of impending extinction, and to help him embrace the ancient Faith of God. Your behavior towards your neighbor should be such as to manifest clearly the signs of the one true God, for ye are the first among men to be re-created by His Spirit, the first to adore and bow the knee before Him, the first to circle round His throne of glory."... Unloose your tongues, and proclaim unceasingly His Cause. This shall be better for you than all the treasures of the past and of the future, if ye be of them that comprehend this truth."... Erelong will God adorn the beginning of the Book of Existence with the mention of His loved ones who have suffered tribulation in His path, and journeyed through the countries in His name and for His praise. Whoso hath attained their presence will glory in their meeting, and all that dwell in every land will be illumined by their memory." "Vie ye with each other in the service of God and of His Cause. This is indeed what profiteth you in this world, and in that which is to come..." "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."... "I swear by God! That which hath been destined for him who aideth My Cause excelleth the treasures of the earth."... If any man were to arise to defend, in his writings, the Cause of God against its assailants, such a man, however inconsiderable his share, shall be so honored in the world to come that the Concourse on high would envy his glory..." "Please God ye may all be strengthened to carry out that which is the Will of God, and may be graciously assisted to appreciate the rank conferred upon such of His loved ones as have arisen to serve Him and magnify His name. Upon them be the glory of God, the glory of all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth, and the glory of the inmates of the most exalted Paradise, the heaven of heavens."...

"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." "The day is approaching when God will have, by an act of His Will, raised up a race of men the nature of which is inscrutable to all save God, the All-Powerful, the Self-Subsisting."

## CONCLUSION - DESTINY of AMERICA

One more word in conclusion. Among some of the most momentous and thought-provoking pronouncements ever made by `Abdu'l-Bahá, in the course of His epoch-making travels in the North American continent, are the following: "May this American Democracy be the first nation to establish the foundation of international agreement. May it be the first nation to proclaim the unity of mankind. May it be the first to unfurl the Standard of the Most Great Peace."... For America hath developed powers and capacities greater and more wonderful than other nations... The American nation is equipped and empowered to accomplish that which will adorn the pages of history, to become the

envy of the world, and be blest in both the East and the West for the triumph of its people... The American continent gives signs and evidences of very great advancement. Its future is even more promising, for its influence and illumination are far-reaching. It will lead all nations spiritually."...

...it is becoming increasingly evident that the nation as a whole...is gravitating...towards such associations and policies, wherein...her true destiny must lie. Both the community of the American believers, who are aware of that Source, and the great mass of their countrymen, who have not as yet recognized the Hand that directs their destiny, are contributing...to the realization of the hopes, and the fulfillment of the promises...of `Abdu'l-Bahá.

The world is moving on. Its events are unfolding ominously and with bewildering rapidity. The whirlwind of its passions is swift and alarmingly violent. The New World is being insensibly drawn into its vortex... Dangers, undreamt of and unpredictable, threaten it both from within and from without... America, willingly or unwillingly, must face and grapple with this new situation... `Abdu'l-Bahá's counsel...comes to mind, with peculiar appropriateness and force: You can best serve your country if you strive, in your capacity as a citizen of the world...

That the world is beset with perils, that dangers are now accumulating and are actually threatening the American nation, no clear-eyed observer can possibly deny. The earth is now transformed into an armed camp... The light of religion is dimmed and moral authority disintegrating. The nations of the world have, for the most part, fallen a prey to battling ideologies... Agitated multitudes in these countries seethe with discontent, are armed to the teeth, are stampeded with fear, and groan beneath the yoke of tribulations engendered by political strife, racial fanaticism, national hatreds, and religious animosities. "The winds of despair," Bahá'u'lláh has unmistakably affirmed, "are, alas, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divides and afflicts the human race is daily increasing. The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned."...

Then, and only then, will the American nation, molded and purified in the crucible of a common war...be in a position to raise its voice in the councils of the nations, itself lay the cornerstone of a universal and enduring peace, proclaim the solidarity, the unity, and maturity of mankind, and assist in the establishment of the promised reign of righteousness on earth. Then, and only then, will the American nation, while the community of the American believers within its heart is consummating its divinely appointed mission, be able to fulfill the unspeakably glorious destiny ordained for it by the Almighty, and immortally enshrined in the writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá. Then, and only then, will the American nation accomplish "that which will adorn the pages of history," "become the envy of the world and be blest in both the East and the West."

SHOGHI December 25, 1938

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Reading these condensed versions of *The Advent of Divine Justice* is not the same as studying the whole book; the Guardian's full letter contains much more background, especially on the pre-World War II conditions, and also many details, nuances and areas of emphasis. When studying the whole ADJ book, consider dividing the text into manageable sections to better absorb its message...

H.B.