

Not to Be Proud

Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Translated



Not to Be Proud

*"Take heed lest pride deter you from recognizing the Source of Revelation, lest the things of this world shut you out as by a veil from Him Who is the Creator of heaven. Arise, and serve Him Who is the Desire of all nations, Who hath created you through a word from Him, and ordained you to be, for all time, the emblems of His sovereignty."*¹

*"Take heed lest pride debar thee from recognizing the Dayspring of Divine Revelation, lest earthly desires shut thee out, as by a veil, from the Lord of the Throne above and of the earth below. Thus counseleth thee the Pen of the Most High. He, verily, is the Most Gracious, the All-Bountiful."*²

*"fear God, and be not of the prideful."*³

*Put away the garment of vainglory, and divest yourselves of the attire of haughtiness."*⁴

*"Pride not yourselves in your glory, and be not ashamed of abasement. By My beauty! I have created all things from dust, and to dust will I return them again."*⁵

"Humility exalteth man to the heaven of glory and power, whilst pride abaseth him to the depths of wretchedness and degradation..."

Every man of discernment, while walking upon the earth, feeleth indeed abashed, inasmuch as he is fully aware that the thing which is the source of his prosperity, his wealth, his might, his exaltation, his advancement and power is, as ordained by God, the very earth which is trodden beneath the feet of all men. There can be no doubt that whoever is cognizant of this truth, is cleansed and sanctified from all pride, arrogance, and vainglory...

Beware that ye allow not . . . pride and conceit to deter you from turning unto the poor and the desolate...

1. Baha'u'llah, The Most Holy Book, para 82

2. Baha'u'llah, The Most Holy Book, para 86

3. Baha'u'llah, The Most Holy Book, para 148

4. Bahá'u'lláh, The Persian Hidden Words no. 47

5. Bahá'u'lláh, The Persian Hidden Words no. 48



TRANSLATION

As to him who turneth aside, and swelleth with pride, after that the clear tokens have come unto him, from the Revealer of signs, his work shall God bring to naught...

We behold it, in this day, at the mercy of rulers, so drunk with pride that they cannot discern clearly their own best advantage, much less recognize a Revelation so bewildering and challenging as this...

In brief, the pride and vanity of certain of the peoples of the world have made havoc of true understanding, and laid waste the home of justice and of equity.”⁶

“At every juncture We have restated Our theme, that all that hath been recorded in these verses may, by the leave of God, be made clear unto thee, and that thou mayest become independent of those who are plunged in the darkness of self and who tread the valley of arrogance and pride, and be of them that move within the paradise of everlasting life...

These people, however, have turned aside from all this and placed instead their affections upon that which accordeth with their own corrupt inclinations. Thus do they roam in the wilderness of arrogance and pride...

Know, moreover, that should one who hath attained unto these stations and embarked upon these journeys fall prey to pride and vainglory, he would at that very moment come to naught and return to the first step without realizing it.”⁷

“They should conduct themselves in such manner that the earth upon which they tread may never be allowed to address to them such words as these: “I am to be preferred above you. For witness, how patient I am in bearing the burden which the husbandman layeth upon me. I am the instrument that continually imparteth unto all beings the blessings with which He Who is the Source of all grace hath entrusted me. Notwithstanding the honor conferred upon me, and the unnumbered evidences of my wealth -- a wealth that supplieth the needs of all creation -- behold the measure of my humility, witness with what absolute submissiveness I allow myself to be trodden beneath the feet of men.”⁸

“Consequently, such behavior can be attributed to naught save the petty-mindedness of such souls as tread the valley of arrogance and pride, are lost in the wilds of remoteness, walk in the ways of their idle fancy, and follow the dictates of the leaders of their faith. Their chief concern is mere opposition; their sole desire is to ignore the truth.”⁹

“Behold, how a mere shepherd was so carried away by the ecstasy of the words of God that he was able to gain admittance into the habitation of his Best-Beloved, and was united to Him

6. Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

7. Bahá'u'lláh, Gems of Divine Mysteries

8. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh V

9. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh XIII

Who is the Lord of Mankind, whilst they who prided themselves on their knowledge and wisdom strayed far from His path and remained deprived of His grace.”¹⁰

“Beware that ye swell not with pride before God, and disdainfully reject His loved ones.”¹¹

“Take heed lest pride deter you from recognizing the Source of Revelation, lest the things of this world shut you out as by a veil from Him Who is the Creator of heaven.”¹²

“Erelong shall your days pass away, as shall pass away the days of those who now, with flagrant pride, vaunt themselves over their neighbor. Soon shall ye be gathered together in the presence of God, and shall be asked of your doings, and shall be repaid for what your hands have wrought, and wretched the abode of the wicked doers!”¹³

“It behoveth not, therefore, him who was created from dust, who will return unto it, and will again be brought forth out of it, to swell with pride before God, and before His loved ones, to proudly scorn them, and be filled with disdainful arrogance. Nay, rather it behoveth thee and those like thee to submit yourselves to them Who are the Manifestations of the unity of God, and to defer humbly to the faithful, who have forsaken their all for the sake of God, and have detached themselves from the things which engross men's attention, and lead them astray from the path of God, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised. Thus do We send down upon you that which shall profit you and profit them that have placed their whole trust and confidence in their Lord.”¹⁴

“What is it of which ye can rightly boast? Is it on your food and your drink that ye pride yourselves, on the riches ye lay up in your treasures, on the diversity and the cost of the ornaments with which ye deck yourselves? If true glory were to consist in the possession of such perishable things, then the earth on which ye walk must needs vaunt itself over you, because it supplieth you, and bestoweth upon you, these very things, by the decree of the Almighty. In its bowels are contained, according to what God hath ordained, all that ye possess. From it, as a sign of His mercy, ye derive your riches. Behold then your state, the thing in which ye glory! Would that ye could perceive it! Nay! By Him Who holdeth in His grasp the kingdom of the entire creation! Nowhere doth your true and abiding glory reside except in your firm adherence unto the precepts of God, your wholehearted observance of His laws, your resolution to see that they do not remain unenforced, and to pursue steadfastly the right course.”¹⁵

¹⁰. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh XXXV

¹¹. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh LXVI

¹². Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh CV

¹³. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh CXIII

¹⁴. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh CXIII

¹⁵. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh CXVIII

*"He must never seek to exalt himself above any one, must wash away from the tablet of his heart every trace of pride and vain-glory, must cling unto patience and resignation, observe silence and refrain from idle talk."*¹⁶

*"Blessed are the learned that pride not themselves on their attainments; and well is it with the righteous that mock not the sinful, but rather conceal their misdeeds, so that their own shortcomings may remain veiled to men's eyes."*¹⁷

"Therefore, no one should glorify himself over another; no one should manifest pride or superiority toward another; no one should look upon another with scorn and contempt; and no one should deprive or oppress a fellow creature."¹⁸

"The teacher should not consider himself as learned and others ignorant. Such a thought breedeth pride, and pride is not conducive to influence."¹⁹

". . . for with learning cometh arrogance and pride, and it bringeth on error and indifference to God."²⁰

"It is indeed strange that instead of offering thanks for this bounty, which truly derives from the grace of Almighty God, by arising as one in gratitude and enthusiasm and praying that these noble purposes will daily multiply, some, on the contrary, whose reason has been corrupted by personal motives and the clarity of whose perception has been clouded by self-interest and conceit; whose energies are devoted to the service of their passions, whose sense of pride is perverted to the love of leadership, have raised the standard of opposition and waxed loud in their complaints."²¹



¹⁶. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh CXXV

¹⁷. Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh CXLV

¹⁸. Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Talk at Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons 1700 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

¹⁹. Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, no. 15

²⁰. Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá, no. 72

²¹. Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization