

O ye who are steadfast in the Covenant! The pilgrim...

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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O ye who are steadfast in the Covenant! The pilgrim hath made mention of each one of you, and hath asked for a separate letter addressed to each, but this wanderer in the wilderness of God's love is withheld from correspondence by a thousand preoccupations and concerns; and since out of the easts and the wests of the earth there poureth a mounting flood of letters upon him, it would be impossible to send a separate letter to each one, wherefore this one letter is addressed to each of you, that it may, as sealed wine, rejoice your souls and warm your hearts.

O ye steadfast loved ones! The grace of God is beating down upon mankind, even as the rains in spring, and the rays of the manifest Light have made this earth to be the envy of heaven. But alas, the blind are deprived of this bounty, the heedless are closed off from it, the withered despair of it, the faded are dying away — so that even as flooding waters, this endless stream of grace passeth back into its primal source in a hidden sea. Only a few receive this grace and take their share of it. Wherefore, let us put our hopes in whatever the strong arm of the Beloved can bring about.

We trust that in a time to come the slumberers will waken, and the heedless will be made aware, and the excluded will become initiates in the mysteries. Now must the friends work on with heart and soul and put forth a mighty effort, until the ramparts of dissension are toppled down and the glories of the oneness of humanity lead all to unity.

Today the one overriding need is unity and harmony among the beloved of the Lord, for they should have among them but one heart and soul and should, so far as in them lieth, unitedly withstand the hostility of all the peoples of the world; they must bring to an end the benighted prejudices of all nations and religions and must make known to every member of the human race that all are the leaves of one branch, the fruits of one bough.



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Until such time, however, as the friends establish perfect unity among themselves, how can they summon others to harmony and peace?

That soul which hath itself not come alive,
Can it then hope another to revive?

Reflect ye as to other than human forms of life and be ye admonished thereby: those clouds that drift apart cannot produce the bounty of the rain, and are soon lost; a flock of sheep, once scattered, falleth prey to the wolf, and birds that fly alone will be caught fast in the claws of the hawk. What greater demonstration could there be that unity leadeth to flourishing life, while dissension and withdrawing from the others, will lead only to misery; for these are the sure ways to bitter disappointment and ruin.

The holy Manifestations of God were sent down to make visible the oneness of humanity. For this did They endure unnumbered ills and tribulations, that a community from amongst mankind's divergent peoples could gather within the shadow of the Word of God and live as one, and could, with delight and grace, demonstrate on earth the unity of humankind. Therefore must the desire of the friends be this, to bring together and unify all peoples, that all may receive a generous drink of this pure wine from this cup that is "tempered at the camphor fountain."^[^] Let them make the differing populations to be as one and induce the hostile and murderous kindreds of the earth to love one another instead. Let them loose from their shackles the captives of sensual desires and cause the excluded to become intimates of the mysteries. Let them give to the bereft a share of the blessings of these days; let them guide the portionless to inexhaustible treasure. This grace can come about through words and ways and deeds that are of the Unseen Kingdom but, lacking such, it can never be. {id="lcu" type="par" language="en"} [1]: Qur'án 76:5.

The confirmations of God are the surety for these blessings; the sacred bounty of God bestoweth these great gifts. The friends of God are supported by the Kingdom on high and they win their victories through the massed armies of the most great guidance. Thus for them every difficulty will be made smooth, every problem will most easily be solved.

Note ye how easily, where unity existeth in a given family, the affairs of that family are conducted; what progress the members of that family make, how they prosper in the world. Their concerns are in order, they enjoy comfort and tranquillity, they are secure, their position is assured, they come to be envied by all. Such a family but addeth to its stature and its lasting honor, as day succeedeth day. And if we widen out the sphere of unity a little to include the inhabitants of a village who seek to be loving and united, who associate with and are kind to one another, what great advances they will be seen to make, how secure and protected they will be. Then let us widen out the sphere a little more, let us take the inhabitants of a city, all of them together: if they establish the

strongest bonds of unity among themselves, how far they will progress, even in a brief period, and what power they will exert. And if the sphere of unity be still further widened out, that is, if the inhabitants of a whole country develop peaceable hearts, and if with all their hearts and souls they yearn to cooperate with one another and to live in unity, and if they become kind and loving to one another, that country will achieve undying joy and lasting glory. Peace will it have, and plenty, and vast wealth.

Note then: if every clan, tribe, community, every nation, country, territory on earth should come together under the single-hued pavilion of the oneness of mankind, and by the dazzling rays of the Sun of Truth should proclaim the universality of man; if they should cause all nations and all creeds to open wide their arms to one another, establish a World Council, and proceed to bind the members of society one to another by strong mutual ties, what would happen then? There is no doubt whatsoever that the divine Beloved, in all His endearing beauty, and with Him a massive host of heavenly confirmations and human blessings and bestowals, would appear in His full glory before the assemblage of the world.

Wherefore, O ye beloved of the Lord, bestir yourselves, do all in your power to be as one, to live in peace, each with the others: for ye are all the drops from but one ocean, the foliage of one tree, the pearls from a single shell, the flowers and sweet herbs from the same one garden. And achieving that, strive ye to unite the hearts of those who follow other faiths.

For one another must ye give up even life itself. To every human being must ye be infinitely kind. Call none a stranger; think none to be your foe. Be ye as if all men were your close kin and honored friends. Walk ye in such wise that this fleeting world will change into a splendor and this dismal heap of dust become a palace of delights. Such is the counsel of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, this hapless servant.

