

XXXVII. PEACE

Compiled from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Abdu'l

Original English



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1. The Ministers of the House of Justice to Promote Peace

"First: It is incumbent upon the ministers of the House of Justice to promote the Lesser Peace so that the people of the earth may be relieved from the burden of exorbitant expenditures. This matter is imperative and absolutely essential, inasmuch as hostilities and conflict lie at the root of affliction and calamity."

(Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 89)

1. The Time and Means Through which the Lesser and the Most Great Peace Will Be Established

"With reference to the question you have asked concerning the time and means through which the Lesser and Most Great Peace, referred to by Bahá'u'lláh, will be established, following the coming World War. Your view that the Lesser Peace will come about through the political efforts of the states and nations of the world, and independently of any direct Bahá'í plan or effort, and the Most Great Peace established through the instrumentality of the believers, and by the direct operation of the laws and principles revealed by Bahá'u'lláh and the functioning of the Universal House of Justice as the supreme organ of the Bahá'í super-state — your view on this subject is quite correct and in full accord with the pronouncements of the Guardian as embodied in the 'Unfoldment of World Civilization'."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, March 14, 1939)

1. Unless the Message of Bahá'u'lláh Reaches into the Hearts of Men and Transforms Them, There Can Be No Peace

"Indeed when we see the increasing darkness in the world today we can fully realize that unless the Message of Bahá'u'lláh reaches into the hearts of men and transforms them, there can be no peace and no spiritual progress in the future."

"His constant hope is that the believers will conduct themselves, individually and in their Bahá'í Community life, in such a manner as to attract the attention of others to the Cause. The world is not only starving for lofty principles and ideals, it is, above all, starving for a shining example which the Bahá'ís can and must provide."



ORIGINAL

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, February 22, 1945)

1. **Predictions of Peace, Prophecy of Daniel — 1335 Days**

"Now concerning the verse in Daniel, the interpretation whereof thou didst ask, namely, 'Blessed is he who cometh unto the thousand three hundred and thirty five days'. These days must be reckoned as solar and not lunar years. For according to this calculation a century will have elapsed from the dawn of the Sun of Truth, then will the teachings of God be firmly established upon the earth, and the Divine [pg 433] Light shall flood the world from the East even unto the West. Then, on this day, will the faithful rejoice."

(Abdu'l-Bahá: From a Tablet to a Kurdish friend: The Passing of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 31, Shoghi Effendi and Lady Blomfield)

"...The 1335 days is figured according to the solar calendar, but in adjusting the 1335 days, one must take into consideration the time at which the prophecies were given and change them into solar time, which would bring the date to* "

"There is one thing of importance for the Bahá'ís to understand; and that is, that this prophecy refers to happenings within the Faith, not occurrences outside the Faith. It refers specifically to the spread of the Faith over the face of the earth. This will be accomplished when the Bahá'í Faith is firmly established in all the virgin areas outlined in the Ten-Year Crusade, and the other goals of the Crusade are completed. Thus it behooves us to work day and night in order to accomplish this glorious goal."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, May 4, 1946: Some Extracts from Letters written on behalf of the Guardian on the subject of the Prophecy of Daniel: A Compilation from the World Centre to the compiler)

1. **Prerequisite to Peace**

"The prerequisite to real success is a harmonious gathering. When the friends begin to have peace at home they can teach the people to have peace between the nations and classes."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, April 27, 1926)

1. **Radiation of Thought Will Not Bring Peace**

"I might add that he does not believe any radiations of thought or healing, from any group, is going to bring peace. Prayer, no doubt, will help the world, but what it needs is to accept Bahá'u'lláh's system so as to build up the World Order on a new foundation, a divine foundation!..."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, June 6, 1948: Extracts From the Guardian's Letters, Spiritualism, Reincarnation and Related Subjects, p. 8: A Compilation from the World Centre, February 1970)

1. No Greater Bliss Than to Find One Has Become the Cause of Peace

"...Is any larger bounty conceivable than this, that an individual, looking within himself, should find that by the confirming grace of God he has become the cause of peace and well-being, of happiness and advantage to his fellowmen. No, by the one true God, there is no greater bliss, no more complete delight."

(Abdu'l-Bahá: Secret of Divine Civilization, pp. 2-3)

1. Volition and Action Are Necessary Before International Peace Can Be Established.

"All of us know that international peace is good, that it is conducive to human welfare and the glory of man, but volition and action are necessary before it can be established. Action is essential. Inasmuch as this century is a century of light, capacity for action is assured to mankind. Necessarily the divine principles will be spread among men [pg 434] until the time of action arrives. Surely this has been so, and truly the time and conditions are ripe for action now."

(Abdu'l-Bahá: The Promulgation of Universal Peace, 1982 ed., p. 121)

1. Every Means that Produces War Must Be Checked

"In short, every means that produces war must be checked and the causes that prevent the occurrence of war be advanced — so that physical conflict may become an impossibility. On the other hand, every country must be properly delimited, its exact frontiers marked, its national integrity secured, its permanent independence protected, and its vital interests honoured by the family of nations. These services ought to be rendered by an impartial, international Commission. In this manner all causes of friction and differences will be removed. And in case there should arise some disputes between them, they could arbitrate before the Parliament of Man, the representatives of which should be chosen from among the wisest and most judicious men of all the nations of the world."

(Abdu'l-Bahá: Star of the West, Vol. V, pp 115-116, cited in Peace, A Compilation from the Universal House of Justice, August 1985)

1. Every Century Holds the Solution of One Predominating Problem

"Every century holds the solution of one predominating problem. Although there may be many problems, yet one of the innumerable problems will loom large and become the most important of all. ...in this luminous century the greatest bestowal of the world of humanity is Universal Peace, which must be founded, so that the realm of creation may obtain composure, the East and the West, which include in their arms the five continents of the globe, may embrace each other, mankind may rest beneath the tent of oneness of the world of humanity, and the flag of universal peace may wave over all the regions...."

(Abdu'l-Bahá: Star of the West, Vol. V, pp. 115-117)

1. Do Not Rest Until the Peace Foretold by the Prophets is Permanently Established

"The world is in great turmoil, and what is most pathetic is that it has learned to keep away from God, Who alone can save it and alleviate its sufferings. It is our duty, we who have been trusted with the task of applying the divine remedy given by Bahá'u'lláh, to concentrate our attention upon the consummation of this task and not rest until the peace foretold by the Prophets of God is permanently established."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, December 9, 1931: Peace, op. cit.)

1. To Disregard the Bahá'í Solution for Peace is to Build on Foundations of Sand

"...He is firmly convinced that through perseverance and concerted action the cause of Peace will eventually triumph over all the dark forces which threaten the welfare and progress of the world to-day. But such purely human attempts are undoubtedly ineffective unless inspired and guided by the power of faith. Without the assistance of God, as given through the message of Bahá'u'lláh, peace can never be safely and adequately established. To disregard the Bahá'í solution for world peace is to build on foundations of sand. To accept and apply it is to make peace not a mere dream, or an ideal, but a living reality. This is the point which the Guardian wishes you [pg 435] to develop, to emphasize again and again, and to support by convincing arguments. The Bahá'í peace program is, indeed, not only one way of attaining that goal. It is not even relatively the best. It is, in the last resort, the sole effective instrument for the establishment of the reign of peace in this world. This attitude does not involve any total repudiation of other solutions offered by various philanthropists. It merely shows their inadequacy compared to the Divine Plan for the unification of the world. We cannot escape the truth that nothing mundane can in the last resort be enduring, unless supported and sustained through the power of God."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, September 25, 1933: Ibid.)

1. The Unification of Mankind is Assured by Bahá'u'lláh and No Power Can Prevent It

"Whatever our shortcomings may be, and however formidable the forces of darkness which besiege us to-day, the unification of mankind as outlined and ensured by the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh will in the fullness of time be firmly and permanently established. This is Bahá'u'lláh's promise, and no power on earth can in the long run prevent or even retard its adequate realization. The friends should, therefore, not lose hope, but fully conscious of their power and their role they should persevere in their mighty efforts for the extension and the consolidation of Bahá'u'lláh's universal dominion on earth."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, November 6, 1933: Ibid.)

1. Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings Will Establish a Universal Consciousness and a Universal Way of Life

"The Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh will establish a new way of life for humanity. Those who are Bahá'ís must endeavour to establish this way of life just as rapidly as possible. Now that the hour has arrived when the Bahá'í Faith is gaining prominence, and is being viewed and reviewed by so many peoples, it is necessary that the adherents of the Faith should live up to the high ideals of the Faith in every way. In this way they can demonstrate that the Bahá'í Faith does create a new

way of life, which brings to the individual a complete association with the Will of God, and thus the establishment of a peaceful and universal society. Divisional attachments are of man, while universal service is of God."

"The Guardian is now anxious that all the friends achieve a universal consciousness and a universal way of life."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, November 20, 1955: Ibid.)

1. **Peace Will Come**

"It is true that Abdu'l-Bahá made statements linking the establishment of the unity of nations to the twentieth century. For example: '...The fifth candle is the unity of nations — a unity which, in this century, will be securely established, causing all the peoples of the world to regard themselves as citizens of one common fatherland....' And, in 'The Promised Day is Come', following a similar statement quoted from 'Some Answered Questions', Shoghi Effendi makes this comment: 'This is the stage which the world is now approaching, the stage of world unity, which, as Abdu'l-Bahá assures us, will, in this century, be securely established.'" [pg 436]

"There is also this statement from a letter written in 1946 to an individual believer on behalf of the beloved Guardian by his secretary:

'...All we know is that the Lesser and the Most Great Peace will come — their exact dates we do not know. The same is true as regards the possibility of a future war; we cannot state dogmatically it will or will not take place — all we know is that mankind must suffer and be punished sufficiently to make it turn to God.'"

(From a letter of the Universal House of Justice, July 29, 1974: Ibid.)

1. **The Aims and Purpose of the Faith Are to Eliminate War and Establish Peace and Unity**

"...the Bahá'í Faith aims to eliminate all war, including nuclear. The fundamental purpose of our Faith is unity and the establishment of peace. This goal, which is the longing of people throughout an increasingly insecure world, can only be achieved through the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Since it is only the Bahá'ís who can give these Teachings to mankind, the friends must weigh carefully how they will spend their time and energy and guard against associating with activities which unduly distract them from their primary responsibility of sharing the Message of Bahá'u'lláh."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, July 4, 1982: Ibid.)

1. **Nuclear Disarmament**

"At the present time, the subject of nuclear disarmament has become very much a political issue, with demonstrations taking place not only in the United States but also in England and some western European countries. To single out nuclear disarmament falls short of the Bahá'í

position and would involve the Faith in the current disputes between nations. It is very clear that Bahá'ís believe disarmament, not only of nuclear weapons but of biological, chemical and all other forms, is essential."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, January 12, 1983: Ibid.)

1. The Transition from the Present System of National Sovereignty to a System of World Government

"Concerning the transition from the present system of national sovereignty to a system of the world government, the House of Justice fully agrees with your view that the Bahá'ís must now do all in their power to promote this transition. This requires several related activities, all of which are goals of the present Seven Year Plan. One is the establishment as rapidly as possible of firmly grounded efficiently functioning Local Spiritual Assemblies in every part of the world, so that seekers everywhere will have a point of reference to which they can turn for guidance and for the Teachings of the Faith. A second is the deepening of the believers, of all ages, in their understanding of and obedience to the Teachings. A third is the proclamation of the Faith to all strata of society, and in particular to those in authority and to leaders of thought so that those who hold the direction of peoples in their hands will learn accurately about the nature and tenets of the Faith and will grow to respect it and implement its principles. A fourth is the promotion of Bahá'í scholarship, so that an increasing number of believers will be able to analyse the problems of mankind in every field and to show how the Teachings solve them. A fifth is the development of relations [pg 437] between the Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations both directly with the highest U.N. institutions and at a grass-roots level in areas of rural development, education, etc."

"As you are no doubt aware, the Guardian indicated that the development of mankind from its present chaotic condition to the stage of the Bahá'í World Commonwealth would be a long and gradual one. The coming into existence of a World Authority and the initiation of the Lesser Peace is one major transformation in this process, and will be followed by other stages of the development of the Faith as outlined by Shoghi Effendi in his writings. Undoubtedly, as these developments are taking place, the counsel the institutions of the Faith can give to governments, the pattern of world administration offered by the Bahá'í community and the great humanitarian projects which will be launched under the aegis of the Universal House of Justice will exercise a great influence on the course of progress."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, January 19, 1983: Ibid.)

1. Bahá'ís Are Not Pacifists

"...It is true that Bahá'ís are not pacifists since we uphold the use of force in the service of justice and upholding law. But we do not believe that war is ever necessary and its abolition is one of the essential purposes and brightest promises of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation. His specific command to the kings of the earth is: 'Should any one among you take up arms against another, rise ye all against him, for this is naught but manifest justice.' (Tablet to Queen Victoria, 'The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh', p. 13) The beloved Guardian has explained that the unity of mankind implies the establishment of a world commonwealth, a world federal system, '...liberated from the curse of

war and its miseries ... in which Force is made the servant of Justice...' whose world executive 'backed by an international Force ... will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth.' This is obviously not war but the maintenance of law and order on a world scale. Warfare is the ultimate tragedy of disunity among nations where no international authority exists powerful enough to restrain them from pursuing their own limited interests. Bahá'ís therefore ask to serve their countries in non-combatant ways during such fighting; they will doubtless serve in such an international Force as Bahá'u'lláh envisions, whenever it comes into being."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, September 11, 1984: Ibid.)

1. The Lesser Peace Will Initially Be a Political Unity

"Bahá'u'lláh's principal mission in appearing at this time in human history is the realization of the oneness of mankind and the establishment of peace among the nations; therefore, all the forces which are focused on accomplishing these ends are influenced by His Revelation. We know, however, that peace will come in stages. First, there will come the Lesser Peace, when the unity of nations will be achieved, then gradually the Most Great Peace — the spiritual as well as social and political unity of mankind, when the Bahá'í World Commonwealth, operating in strict accordance with the laws and ordinances of the Most Holy Book of the Bahá'í Revelation, will have been established through the efforts of the Bahá'ís."

"As to the Lesser Peace, Shoghi Effendi has explained that this will initially be a political unity arrived at by decision of the governments of various nations; it will not be established by direct action of the Bahá'í community. This does not mean, [pg 438] however, that the Bahá'ís are standing aside and waiting for the Lesser Peace to come before they do something about the peace of mankind. Indeed, by promoting the principles of the Faith, which are indispensable to the maintenance of peace, and by fashioning the instruments of the Bahá'í Administrative Order, which we are told by the beloved Guardian is the pattern for future society, the Bahá'ís are constantly engaged in laying the groundwork for a permanent peace, the Most Great Peace being their ultimate goal."

"The Lesser Peace itself will pass through stages: at the initial stage the governments will act entirely on their own without the conscious involvement of the Faith; later on, in God's good time, the Faith will have a direct influence on it in ways indicated by Shoghi Effendi in his 'The Goal of a New World Order'. In connection with the steps that will lead to this latter stage, the Universal House of Justice will certainly determine what has to be done, in accordance with the guidance in the Writings, such as the passage you quoted from 'Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh', page 102. In the meantime, the Bahá'ís will undoubtedly continue to do all in their power to promote the establishment of peace."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, January 31, 1985: Ibid.) [pg 439]

