

SERVICE

Say: Tribulation is a horizon unto My Revelation. The day star of grace shineth above it, and sheddeth a light which neither the clouds of men's idle fancy nor the vain imaginations of the aggressor can obscure.

Follow thou the footsteps of thy Lord, and remember His servants even as He doth remember thee, undeterred by either the clamor of the heedless ones or the sword of the enemy....Spread abroad the sweet savors of thy Lord, and hesitate not, though it be for less than a moment, in the service of His Cause. The day is approaching when the victory of thy Lord, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Bountiful, will be proclaimed.

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 42)

XLIII. O Afnán, O thou that hast branched from Mine ancient Stock! My glory and My loving-kindness rest upon thee. How vast is the tabernacle of the Cause of God! It hath overshadowed all the peoples and kindreds of the earth, and will, ere long, gather together the whole of mankind beneath its shelter.

Thy day of service is now come. Countless Tablets bear the testimony of the bounties vouchsafed unto thee. Arise for the triumph of My Cause, and, through the power of thine utterance, subdue the hearts of men. Thou must show forth that which will ensure the peace and the well-being of the miserable and the down-trodden. Gird up the loins of thine endeavor, that perchance thou mayest release the captive from his chains, and enable him to attain unto true liberty.

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 92)

It is incumbent upon every man of insight and understanding to strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action....That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. The Great Being saith: Blessed and happy is he that ariseth to promote the best interests of the peoples and kindreds of the earth. In another passage He hath proclaimed: It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 250)

By the righteousness of God! 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.

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.

Walk thou in their way, and let no one dismay thee. Be of them whom the tumult of the world, however much it may agitate them in the path of their Creator, can never sadden, whose purpose the blame of the blamer will never defeat.

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 280)

Wherefore, be thankful to God, for having strengthened thee to aid His Cause, for having made the flowers of knowledge and understanding to spring forth in the garden of thine heart. Thus hath His grace encompassed thee, and encompassed the whole of creation. Beware, lest thou allow anything whatsoever to grieve thee. Rid thyself of all attachment to the vain allusions of men, and cast behind thy back the idle and subtle disputations of them that are veiled from God. Proclaim, then, that which the Most Great Spirit will inspire thee to utter in the service of the Cause of thy Lord, that thou mayest stir up the souls of all men and incline their hearts unto this most blessed and all-glorious Court....

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 303)

CXLIV. The Pen of the Most High hath decreed and imposed upon every one the obligation to teach this Cause....God will, no doubt, inspire whosoever detacheth himself from all else but Him, and will cause the pure waters of wisdom and utterance to gush out and flow copiously from his heart. Verily, thy Lord, the All-Merciful, is powerful to do as He willeth, and ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth.

Wert thou to consider this world, and realize how fleeting are the things that pertain unto it, thou wouldst choose to tread no path except the path of service to the Cause of thy Lord. None would have the power to deter thee from celebrating His praise, though all men should arise to oppose thee.

Go thou straight on and persevere in His service. Say: O people! The Day, promised unto you in all the Scriptures, is now come. Fear ye God, and withhold not yourselves from recognizing the One Who is the Object of your creation. Hasten ye unto Him. Better is this for you than the world and all that is therein. Would that ye could perceive it!

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 314)

CLVII. They that have forsaken their country for the purpose of teaching Our Cause - these shall the Faithful Spirit strengthen through its power. A company of Our chosen angels shall go forth with them, as bidden by Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Wise. How great the blessedness that awaiteth him that hath attained the honor of serving the Almighty! By My life! No act, however great, can compare with it, except such deeds as have been ordained by God, the All-Powerful, the Most Mighty. Such a service is, indeed, the prince of all goodly deeds, and the ornament of every goodly act. Thus hath it been ordained by Him Who is the Sovereign Revealer, the Ancient of Days.

Whoso ariseth to teach Our Cause must needs detach himself from all earthly things, and regard, at all times, the triumph of Our Faith as his supreme objective. This hath, verily, been decreed in the Guarded Tablet. And when he determineth to leave his home, for the sake of the Cause of his Lord, let him put his whole trust in God, as the

best provision for his journey, and array himself with the robe of virtue. Thus hath it been decreed by God, the Almighty, the All-Praised.

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. Verily, thy Lord is the Omniscient, the All-Informed. Happy is the man that hath heard Our voice, and answered Our call. He, in truth, is of them that shall be brought nigh unto Us.

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 334)

Say: True liberty consisteth in man's submission unto My commandments, little as ye know it. Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty, attain unto perfect liberty. Happy is the man that hath apprehended the Purpose of God in whatever He hath revealed from the Heaven of His Will, that pervadeth all created things. Say: The liberty that profiteth you is to be found nowhere except in complete servitude unto God, the Eternal Truth. Whoso hath tasted of its sweetness will refuse to barter it for all the dominion of earth and heaven.

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 336)

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(A Synopsis and Codification of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Page: 25)

Lift up your voices and sing out the song of the Kingdom. Spread far and wide the precepts and counsels of the loving Lord, so that this world will change into another world, and this darksome earth will be flooded with light, and the dead body of mankind will arise and live; so that every soul will ask for immortality, through the holy breaths of God.

Soon will your swiftly-passing days be over, and the fame and riches, the comforts, the joys provided by this rubbish-heap, the world, will be gone without a trace. Summon ye, then, the people to God, and invite humanity to follow the example of the Company on high. Be ye loving fathers to the orphan, and a refuge to the helpless, and a treasury for the poor, and a cure for the ailing. Be ye the helpers of every victim of oppression, the patrons of the disadvantaged. Think ye at all times of rendering some service to every member of the human race. Pay ye no heed to aversion and rejection, to disdain, hostility, injustice: act ye in the opposite way. Be ye sincerely kind, not in appearance only. Let each one of God's loved ones centre his attention on this: to be the Lord's mercy to man; to be the Lord's grace. Let him do some good to every person whose path he crosseth, and be of some benefit to him. Let him improve the character of each and all, and reorient the minds of men. In this way, the light of divine guidance will shine

forth, and the blessings of God will cradle all mankind: for love is light, no matter in what abode it dwelleth; and hate is darkness, no matter where it may make its nest. O friends of God! That the hidden Mystery may stand revealed, and the secret essence of all things may be disclosed, strive ye to banish that darkness for ever and ever.
(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 3)

11. Service to the friends is service to the Kingdom of God, and consideration shown to the poor is one of the greatest teachings of God.
(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 27)

As to my station, it is that of the servant of Bahá; 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the visible expression of servitude to the Threshold of the Abhá Beauty.
(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 55)

34. O thou who are serving the world of humanity! Thy letter was received and from its contents we felt exceedingly glad. It was a decisive proof and a brilliant evidence. It is appropriate and befitting that in this illumined age - the age of the progress of the world of humanity - we should be self-sacrificing and should serve the human race.
(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 67)

'If only the friends could realise it, the glory of Our Faith is not that people with unique abilities do the work of the Cause, but that it is done by the sacrifice of loving and devoted souls who arise selflessly to undertake work they feel themselves incompetent, sometimes, to achieve. God works through them and endows them with gifts they did not dream they could ever possess.'
(Shoghi Effendi, written on his behalf)

Do not feel discourag[ed] if your labours do not always yield an abundant fruitage. For a quick and rapidly-won success is not always the best and the most lasting. The harder you strive to attain your goal, the greater will be the confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh, and the more certain you can feel to attain success. Be cheerful, therefore, and exert yourself with full faith and confidence. For Bahá'u'lláh has promised His Divine assistance to everyone who arises with a pure and detached heart to spread His holy Word, even though he may be bereft of every human knowledge and capacity, and notwithstanding the forces of darkness and of opposition which may be arrayed against him. The goal is clear, the path safe and certain, and the assurances of Bahá'u'lláh as to the eventual success of our efforts quite emphatic. Let us keep firm, and whole-heartedly carry on the great work which He has entrusted into our hands.
(From a letter dated 3 February 1937 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

My name is 'Abdu'l-Bahá, my identity is 'Abdu'l-Bahá, my qualification is 'Abdu'l-Bahá, my reality is 'Abdu'l-Bahá, my praise is 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Thraldom to the Blessed Perfection is my glorious and refulgent diadem; and servitude to all the human race is my perpetual religion. Through the bounty and favor of the Blessed Perfection, 'Abdu'l-

Bahá is the Ensign of the Most-Great-Peace, which is waving from the Supreme Apex; and through the gift of the Greatest name, he is the Lamp of Universal Salvation, which is shining with the light of the love of God. The Herald of the Kingdom is he, so that he may awaken the people of the East and of the West. The Voice of Friendship, Uprightness, Truth and Reconciliation is he, so as to cause acceleration throughout all regions. No name, no title, no mention, no commendation hath he nor will ever have except 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This is my longing. This is my supreme apex. This is my greatest yearning. This is my eternal life. This is my everlasting glory! Express ye the same thing which is issued from my pen. This is the duty of all. Consequently the friends of God must assist and help 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the adoration of the True One; in the servitude to the human race; in the well-being of the human world and in divine love and kindness. (Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 430)

O servant of God! Faith is the magnet which draws the confirmation of the Merciful One. Service is the magnet which attracts the heavenly strength. I hope thou wilt attain both. (Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 62)

1150. Service as Magnet for Divine Confirmations

"...There is nothing that brings success in the Faith like service. Service is the magnet which draws the divine confirmations. Thus, when a person is active, they are blessed by the Holy Spirit. When they are inactive, the Holy Spirit cannot find a repository in their being, and thus they are deprived of its healing and quickening rays."

[From letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, July 12, 1952: Living the Life, p. 18]

1151. Assistance of Hosts of Divine Concourse

"...An individual must center his whole heart and mind on service to the Cause, in accordance with the high standards set by Bahá'u'lláh. When this is done, the hosts of the Supreme Concourse will come to the assistance of the individual, and every difficulty and trial will gradually be overcome."

[From letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, October 6, 1954: Living the Life, p. 19]

1152. Not Give Impression of Being Fanatics

"You ask about 'spiritual indigestion': Bahá'ís should seek to be many - sided, normal and well balanced, mentally and spiritually. We must not give the impression of being fanatics but at the same time we must live up to our principles."

[From letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, March 12, 1946: Living the Life, p. 12]

(Lights of Guidance, Page: 424)

Universal Education

574. The ninth admonition is in regard to education. All the children must be educated so that there will not remain one single individual without an education. In cases of

inability on the part of the parents through sickness, death, etc., the state must educate the child. In addition to this widespread education, each child must be taught a profession or trade so that each individual member of the body politic will be enabled to earn his own living and at the same time serve the community. Work done in the spirit of service is worship. From this universal system of education misunderstandings will be expelled from amongst the children of men.

(Bahá'í Scriptures, Page: 281)

O maid-servant of God! If thou seekest eternal glory, let thyself be humble and meek in the presence of the beloved of God; make thyself the servant of all, and serve all alike. The service of the friends belongs to God, not to them. Strive to become a source of harmony, spirituality and joyfulness to the hearts of the friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful. This is a cause of great satisfaction to 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

(Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 61)

37. O ye dear friends of 'Abdu'l-Bahá! A blessed letter hath been received from you, telling of the election of a Spiritual Assembly. It hath rejoiced my heart to know that, God be praised, the friends in that area, with absolute unity, fellowship and love, have held this new election and were successful in voting for souls who are sanctified, are favoured at the Holy Threshold and are well known amongst the friends to be staunch and firm in the Covenant.

Now must those elected representatives arise to serve with spirituality and joy, with purity of intent, with strong attraction to the fragrances of the Almighty, and well supported by the Holy Spirit. Let them raise up the banner of guidance, and as soldiers of the Company on high, let them exalt God's Word, spread abroad His sweet savours, educate the souls of men, and promote the Most Great Peace.

Truly, blessed souls have been elected. The moment I read their names, I felt a thrill of spiritual joy to know that, praised be God, persons have been raised up in that country who are servants of the Kingdom, and ready to lay down their lives for Him Who hath neither likeness nor peer.

(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 77)

CXLIV. The Pen of the Most High hath decreed and imposed upon every one the obligation to teach this Cause....God will, no doubt, inspire whosoever detacheth himself from all else but Him, and will cause the pure waters of wisdom and utterance to gush out and flow copiously from his heart. Verily, thy Lord, the All-Merciful, is powerful to do as He willeth, and ordaineth whatsoever He pleaseth.

Wert thou to consider this world, and realize how fleeting are the things that pertain unto it, thou wouldst choose to tread no path except the path of service to the Cause of thy Lord. None would have the power to deter thee from celebrating His praise, though all men should arise to oppose thee.

Go thou straight on and persevere in His service. Say: O people! The Day, promised unto you in all the Scriptures, is now come. Fear ye God, and withhold not yourselves from recognizing the One Who is the Object of your creation. Hasten ye unto Him.

Better is this for you than the world and all that is therein. Would that ye could perceive it!

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 313)

"We are glad you are free," I said.

Again the wondrous smile. "Freedom is not a matter of place. It is a condition. I was thankful for the prison and the lack of liberty was very pleasing to me, for those days were passed in the path of service under the utmost difficulties and trials, bearing fruits and results.

"Unless one accepts dire vicissitudes he will not attain. To me prison is freedom; troubles rest me; incarceration is an open court; death is life and to be despised is honor. Therefore, I was happy all that time in prison. When one is released from the prison of self, that is indeed freedom, for self is the greater prison. When this release takes place, one can never be imprisoned. They used to put my feet in stocks so," and he put out his feet before him to illustrate and laughed as though it were a joke he enjoyed.

"I would say to the guard 'You cannot imprison me, for here I have light and air and bread and water. There will come a time when my body will be in the ground and I shall have neither light nor air nor food nor water, but even then i shall not be imprisoned.' The afflictions which come to humanity sometimes tend to center the consciousness upon the limitations. This is a veritable prison. Release comes by making of the will a door through which the confirmations of the spirit come."

(The Advent of Divine Justice, Page: 22)

Looking at me he said, "Never have I united anyone in marriage before, except my own daughters, but as I love you much, and you have rendered a great service to the Kingdom of Abhá, both in this country and in other lands, I will perform your marriage ceremony today. It is my hope hat you may both continue in the blessed path of service."

('Abdu'l-Bahá in London, Page: 78)

"May joy be increased to you as the years go by, and may you become thriving trees bearing delicious and fragrant fruits which are the blessings in the path of service."

('Abdu'l-Bahá in London, Page: 78)

The greater the range of their collective enterprises, the mightier the effusion of the Abhá grace from on high, a grace that will sustain, protect, guide and cheer them as they tread the stormy yet glorious path of service for the furtherance of their beloved Cause.

(Dawn of a New Day, Page: 131)

May the Almighty guide every step you take in the path of service, and enable you to proclaim the verities of His Faith, and contribute effectively to the consolidation of its newly-born institutions.

(Dawn of a New Day, Page: 196)

May the almighty abundantly reward you for your labours, guide every step you take in the path of service, and aid you to extend continually the range of your accomplishments, and contribute effectively to the consolidation of the nascent institutions of our beloved Faith,

Your true brother,

Shoghi

(The Light of Divine Guidance, Page: 174)

May the Almighty guide your steps in the path of service, remove all obstacles from your path, and enable you to extend the range of your meritorious services, and win great victories in the days to come,

Your true brother,

Shoghi

(The Light of Divine Guidance, Page: 277)

We assure the youth that we are mindful of the many important decisions they must make as they tread the path of service to Bahá'u'lláh. We will offer our ardent supplications at the Holy Threshold that all will be divinely guided and that they will attract the blessings of the All-Merciful.

Deepest Bahá'í love,

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

(Messages from the Universal House of Justice -- 1968-1973, Page: 20)

218. O ye close and dear friends of 'Abdu'l-Bahá!

In the Orient scatter perfumes,

And shed splendours on the West.

Carry light unto the Bulgar,

And the Slav with life invest.

One year after the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, there came this verse from the lips of the Centre of the Covenant. The Covenant-breakers found it strange indeed, and they treated it with scorn. Yet, praised be God, its effects are now manifest, its power revealed, its import clear; for by God's grace, today both East and West are trembling for joy, and now, from sweet waftings of holiness, the whole earth is scented with musk.

The Blessed Beauty, in unmistakable language, hath made this promise in His Book:

'We behold you from Our realm of glory, and shall aid whosoever will arise from the triumph of Our Cause with the hosts of the Concourse on high and a company of Our favoured angels.' [Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, LXXII]

God be thanked, that promised aid hath been vouchsafed, as is plain for all to see, and it shineth forth as clear as the sun in the heavens.

Wherefore, O ye friends of God, redouble your efforts, strain every nerve, till ye triumph in your servitude to the Ancient Beauty, the Manifest Light, and become the cause of spreading far and wide the rays of the Day-Star of Truth. Breathe ye into the world's worn and wasted body the fresh breath of life, and in the furrows of every region sow ye holy seed. Rise up to champion this Cause; open your lips and teach. In the meeting-

place of life be ye a guiding candle; in the skies of this world be dazzling stars; in the gardens of unity be birds of the spirit, singing of inner truths and mysteries. Expend your every breath of life in this great Cause and dedicate all your days to the service of Bahá, so that in the end, safe from loss and deprivation, ye will inherit the heaped-up treasures of the realms above. For the days of a man are full of peril and he cannot rely on so much as a moment more of life; and still the people, who are even as a wavering mirage of illusions, tell themselves that in the end they shall reach the heights. Alas for them! The men of bygone times hugged these same fancies to their breasts, until a wave flicked over them and they returned to dust, and they found themselves excluded and bereft - all save those souls who had freed themselves from self and had flung away their lives in the pathway of God. Their bright star shone out in the skies of ancient glory, and the handed-down memories of all the ages are the proof of what I say.

Wherefore, rest ye neither day nor night and seek no ease. Tell ye the secrets of servitude, follow the pathway of service, till ye attain the promised succour that cometh from the realms of God.

(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 270)

XLIII. O Afnán, O thou that hast branched from Mine ancient Stock! My glory and My loving-kindness rest upon thee. How vast is the tabernacle of the Cause of God! It hath overshadowed all the peoples and kindreds of the earth, and will, erelong, gather together the whole of mankind beneath its shelter. Thy day of service is now come. Countless Tablets bear the testimony of the bounties vouchsafed unto thee. Arise for the triumph of My Cause, and, through the power of thine utterance, subdue the hearts of men. Thou must show forth that which will ensure the peace and the well-being of the miserable and the down-trodden. Gird up the loins of thine endeavor, that perchance thou mayest release the captive from his chains, and enable him to attain unto true liberty.

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 92)

O my spiritual loved ones! Praise be to God, ye have thrust the veils aside and recognized the compassionate Beloved, and have hastened away from this abode to the placeless realm. Ye have pitched your tents in the world of God, and to glorify Him, the Self-Subsistent, ye have raised sweet voices and sung songs that pierced the heart. Well done! A thousand times well done! For ye have beheld the Light made manifest, and in your reborn beings ye have raised the cry, 'Blessed be the Lord, the best of all creators!' Ye were but babes in the womb, then were ye sucklings, and from a precious breast ye drew the milk of knowledge, then came ye to your full growth, and won salvation. Now is the time for service, and for servitude unto the Lord. Release yourselves from all distracting thoughts, deliver the Message with an eloquent tongue, adorn your assemblages with praise of the Beloved, till bounty shall descend in overwhelming floods and dress the world in fresh greenery and blossoms. This streaming bounty is even the counsels, admonitions, instructions, and injunctions of Almighty God.

(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 317)

5. O SON OF DUST! Verily I say unto thee: Of all men the most negligent is he that disputeth idly and seeketh to advance himself over his brother. Say, O brethren! (The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 23)

Say: Let truthfulness and courtesy be your adorning. Suffer not yourselves to be deprived of the robe of forbearance and justice, that the sweet savors of holiness may be wafted from your hearts upon all created things. Say: Beware, O people of Bahá, lest ye walk in the ways of them whose words differ from their deeds. Strive that ye may be enabled to manifest to the peoples of the earth the signs of God, and to mirror forth His commandments. Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind, for the professions of most men, be they high or low, differ from their conduct. It is through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth. Happy is the man that heedeth My counsel, and keepeth the precepts prescribed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 305)

O ye lovers of God! Be kind to all peoples; care for every person; do all ye can to purify the hearts and minds of men; strive ye to gladden every soul. To every meadow be a shower of grace, to every tree the water of life; be as sweet musk to the sense of humankind, and to the ailing be a fresh, restoring breeze. Be pleasing waters to all those who thirst, a careful guide to all who have lost their way; be father and mother to the orphan, be loving sons and daughters to the old, be an abundant treasure to the poor. Think ye of love and good fellowship as the delights of heaven, think ye of hostility and hatred as the torments of hell. (Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 244)

....That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. The Great Being saith: Blessed and happy is he that ariseth to promote the best interests of the peoples and kindreds of the earth. In another passage He hath proclaimed: It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens. (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 250)

There is no greater result than bonds of service in the divine Kingdom and attainment to the good pleasure of the Lord. Therefore, I desire that your hearts may be directed to the Kingdom of God, that your intentions may be pure and sincere, your purposes turned toward altruistic accomplishment unmindful of your own welfare; nay, rather, may all your intentions center in the welfare of humanity, and may you seek to sacrifice yourselves in the pathway of devotion to mankind. Even as Jesus Christ forfeited His life, may you, likewise, offer yourselves in the threshold of sacrifice for the betterment of the world; and just as Bahá'u'lláh suffered severe ordeals and calamities nearly fifty years for you, may you be willing to undergo difficulties and withstand catastrophes for humanity in general. May you bear these trials and tests most willingly and joyously, for

every night is followed by a day, and every day has a night. Every spring has an autumn, and every autumn has its spring.

(The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Page: 54)

In one of the Tablets these words have been revealed: O people of God! Do not busy yourselves in your own concerns; let your thoughts be fixed upon that which will rehabilitate the fortunes of mankind and sanctify the hearts and souls of men. This can best be achieved through pure and holy deeds, through a virtuous life and a goodly behavior. Valiant acts will ensure the triumph of this Cause, and a saintly character will reinforce its power. Cleave unto righteousness, O people of Bahá! This, verily, is the commandment which this wronged One hath given unto you, and the first choice of His unrestrained Will for every one of you.

(Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Page: 93)

80. O thou who art turning thy face to God! Thy letter was received. From its contents it became known that thy wish is to serve the poor. What wish better than this! Those souls who are of the Kingdom eagerly wish to be of service to the poor, to sympathize with them, to show kindness to the miserable and to make their lives fruitful. Happy art thou that thou hast such a wish.

Convey on my behalf to thy two children the utmost kindness and love. Their letters have been received but, as I have no time, separate letters cannot be written at present. Show them on my behalf the utmost kindness.

(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Page: 115)

Three Fields of Service Open to Youth

Three great fields of service lie open before young Bahá'ís, in which they will simultaneously be remaking the character of human society and preparing themselves for the work they can undertake later in their lives.

First, the foundation of all their other accomplishments, is their study of the teachings, the spiritualization of their lives, and the forming of their characters in accordance with the standards of Bahá'u'lláh. As the moral standards of the people around us collapse and decay, whether of the centuries-old civilizations of the East, the more recent cultures of Christendom and Islam, or of the rapidly changing tribal societies of the world, the Bahá'ís must increasingly stand out as pillars of righteousness and forbearance. The life of a Bahá'í will be characterized by truthfulness and decency; he will walk uprightly among his fellowmen, dependent upon none save God, yet linked by bonds of love and brotherhood with all mankind; he will be entirely detached from the loose standards, the decadent theories, the frenetic experimentation, the desperation of present-day society, will look upon his neighbors with a bright and friendly face, and be a beacon light and a haven for all those who would emulate his strength of character and assurance of soul.

The second field of service, which is linked intimately with the first, is teaching the Faith, particularly to their fellow youth, among whom are some of the most open and seeking minds in the world. Not yet having acquired all the responsibilities of a family or a long-

established home and job, youth can the more easily choose where they will live and study or work. In the world at large young people travel hither and thither seeking amusement, education, and experiences. Bahá'í youth, bearing the incomparable treasure of the World of God for this Day, can harness this mobility into service for mankind and can choose their places of residence, their areas of travel, and their types of work with the goal in mind of how they can best serve the Faith.

The third field of service is the preparation by youth for their later years. It is the obligation of a Bahá'í to educate his children; likewise it is the duty of the children to acquire knowledge of the arts and sciences and to learn a trade or a profession whereby they, in turn, can earn their living and support their families. This, for a Bahá'í youth, is in itself a service to God, a service, moreover, which can be combined with teaching the Faith and often with pioneering. The Bahá'í community will need men and women of many skills and qualifications; for, as it grows in size the sphere of its activities in the life of society will increase and diversify. Let Bahá'í youth, therefore, consider the best ways in which they can use and develop their native abilities for the service of mankind and the Cause of God, whether this be as farmers, teachers, doctors, artisans, musicians, or any one of the multitude of livelihoods that are open to them.

(Wellspring of Guidance -- Messages 1963-1968, Page: 94)