

Fostering Spiritual Consciousness

*ye must rise above the horizon of firmness and steadfastness...in such wise that...
the gloom of fear and consternation may be entirely obliterated, and the light of assurance
may dawn above the manifest horizon and shine resplendently.*

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

1. The virtues and attributes pertaining unto God are all evident and manifest, and have been mentioned and described in all the heavenly Books. Among them are trustworthiness, truthfulness, purity of heart while communing with God, forbearance, resignation to whatever the Almighty hath decreed, contentment with the things His Will hath provided, patience, nay, thankfulness in the midst of tribulation, and complete tranquility, in all circumstances, upon Him. These rank, according to the estimate of God, among the highest and most laudable of all acts. All other acts are, and will ever remain, secondary and subordinate unto them....

The spirit that animateth the human heart is the knowledge of God, and its truest adorning is the recognition of the truth that “He doeth whatsoever He willeth, and ordaineth that which He pleaseth.” Its raiment is the fear of God, and its perfection steadfastness in His Faith. Thus God instructeth whosoever seeketh Him. He, verily, loveth the one that turneth towards Him. There is none other God but Him, the Forgiving, the Most Bountiful. All praise be to God, the Lord of all worlds.

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh: CXXXIV.

2. Methinks that I hear the Voice of the Holy Spirit calling from behind Me saying: Vary Thou Thy theme, and alter Thy tone, lest the heart of him who hath fixed his gaze upon Thy face be saddened. Say: I have through the grace of God and His might besought the help of no one in the past, neither will I seek the help of anyone in the future. He it is Who aided Me, through the power of truth, during the days of My banishment in ‘Iráq. He it is Who overshadowed Me with His protection at a time when the kindreds of the earth were contending with Me. He it is Who enabled Me to depart out of the city, clothed with such majesty as none, except the denier and the malicious, can fail to admit.

Say: My army is My reliance on God; My people, the force of My confidence in Him. My love is My standard, and My companion the remembrance of God, the Sovereign Lord of all, the Most Powerful, the All-Glorious, the Unconditioned.

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh: XV.

3. I beseech Thee, by Thy name through which Thou turnest restlessness into tranquility, fear into confidence, weakness into strength, and abasement into glory, that Thou of Thy grace wilt aid me and Thy servants to exalt Thy name, to deliver Thy Message, and to proclaim Thy Cause, in such wise that we may remain unmoved by either the assaults of the transgressors or the wrath of the infidels, O Thou Who art my Well-Beloved!

Prayers and Meditations of Bahá’u’lláh: CXXVI.

4. Arise to aid thy Lord at all times and in all circumstances, and be thou one of His helpers. Admonish, then, the people to lend a hearing ear to the words which the Spirit of God hath uttered in this irradiant and resplendent Tablet. Say: Sow not, O people, the seeds of dissension amongst men, and contend not with your neighbor. Be patient under all conditions, and place your whole trust and confidence in God. Aid ye your Lord with the sword of wisdom and of utterance. This indeed well becometh the station of man. To depart from it would be unworthy of God, the Sovereign Lord of all, the Glorified. The people, however, have been led astray, and are truly of the heedless.

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh: CXXXVI.

5. Place not thy reliance on thy treasures. Put thy whole confidence in the grace of God, thy Lord. Let Him be thy trust in whatever thou doest, and be of them that have submitted themselves to His Will. Let Him be thy helper and enrich thyself with His treasures, for with Him are the treasures of the heavens and of the earth. He bestoweth them upon whom He will, and from whom He will He withholdeth them. There is none other God but Him, the All-Possessing, the All-Praised. All are but paupers at the door of His mercy; all are helpless before the revelation of His sovereignty, and beseech His favours.

*Bahá’u’lláh, Summons of the Lord of Hosts
/ Súriy-i-Mulúk*

6. O army of God! When calamity striketh, be ye patient and composed. However afflictive your sufferings may be, stay ye undisturbed, and with perfect confidence in the abounding grace of God, brave ye the tempest of tribulations and fiery ordeals.

O YE servants of the Sacred Threshold! The triumphant hosts of the Celestial Concourse, arrayed and marshaled in the Realms above, stand ready and expectant to assist and assure victory to that valiant horseman who with confidence spurs on his charger into the arena of service. Well is it with that fearless warrior, who armed with the power of true Knowledge, hastens unto the field, disperses the armies of ignorance, and scatters the hosts of error, who holds aloft the Standard of Divine Guidance, and sounds the Clarion of Victory. By the righteousness of the Lord! He hath achieved a glorious triumph and obtained the true victory.

O ye loved ones of God! Be ye firm of foot, and fixed of heart, and through the power of the Blessed Beauty's help, stand ye committed to your purpose. Serve ye the Cause of God. Face ye all nations of the world with the constancy and the endurance of the people of Bahá, that all men may be astounded and ask how this could be, that your hearts are as wellsprings of confidence and faith, and as mines so rich in the love of God.

Selection from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá:
35, 208, 188.

7. ...man is the possessor of a degree of attraction which is conscious and spiritual. Here is an immeasurable advance. In the human kingdom spiritual susceptibilities come into view, love exercises its superlative degree, and this is the cause of human life.

The proof is clear that in all degrees and kingdoms unity and agreement, love and fellowship are the cause of life, whereas dissension, animosity and separation are ever conducive to death. Therefore, we must strive with life and soul in order that day by day unity and agreement may be increased among mankind and that love and affinity may become more resplendently glorious and manifest.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace: 92.

8. Just as the animal is more noble than the vegetable and mineral, so man is superior to the animal. The animal is bereft of ideality—that is to say, it is a captive of the world of nature and not in touch with that which lies within and beyond nature; it is without spiritual susceptibilities, deprived of the attractions of consciousness, unconscious of the world of God and incapable of deviating from the law of nature. It is different with man. Man is possessed of the emanations of

consciousness; he has perception, ideality and is capable of discovering the mysteries of the universe. All the industries, inventions and facilities surrounding our daily life were at one time hidden secrets of nature, but the reality of man penetrated them and made them subject to his purposes. According to nature's laws they should have remained latent and hidden; but man, having transcended those laws, discovered these mysteries and brought them out of the plane of the invisible into the realm of the known and visible. How wonderful is the spirit of man!

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace: 85.

9. Man's life has its springtime and is endowed with marvellous glory. The period of youth is characterized by strength and vigour and stands out as the choicest time in human life. Therefore you should strive day and night so that endowed with heavenly strength, inspired with brilliant motives and aided by His celestial power and heavenly grace and confirmation, you may become the ornaments of the world of humanity, and pre-eminent among those who are initiated into true learning and the love of God. You must be distinguished amidst men by your sanctity and detachment, loftiness of purpose, magnanimity, determination, noble-mindedness, tenacity, the elevation of your aims and your spiritual qualities; that you may become the means of exaltation and glory for the Cause of God and the dawning-places of His heavenly bestowals; that you may conduct yourselves in conformity with the counsels and exhortations of the Blessed Beauty—may my life be offered up for His loved ones—and by reflecting Bahá'í qualities and attributes, you may stand out distinguished from others. 'Abdu'l-Bahá eagerly anticipates that each one of you may become even as a fearless lion moving in the pastures of human perfection and a musk-laden breeze wafting over the meads of virtue.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í Prayers and Tablets for Children

10. As for you, O ye lovers of God, make firm your steps in His Cause, with such resolve that ye shall not be shaken though the direst of calamities assail the world. By nothing, under no conditions, be ye perturbed. Be ye anchored fast as the high mountains, be stars that dawn over the horizon of life, be bright lamps in the gatherings of unity, be souls humble and lowly in the presence of the friends, be innocent in heart. Be ye symbols of guidance and lights of godliness, severed from the

world, clinging to the handhold that is sure and strong, spreading abroad the spirit of life, riding the Ark of salvation. Be ye daysprings of generosity, dawning-points of the mysteries of existence, sites where inspiration alighteth, rising-places of splendors, souls that are sustained by the Holy Spirit, enamored of the Lord, detached from all save Him, holy above the characteristics of humankind, clothed in the attributes of the angels of heaven, that ye may win for yourselves the highest bestowal of all, in this new time, this wondrous age.

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: 199.

11. In a day such as this, when the tempests of trials and tribulations have encompassed the world, and fear and trembling have agitated the planet, ye must rise above the horizon of firmness and steadfastness with illumined faces and radiant brows in such wise that, God willing, the gloom of fear and consternation may be entirely obliterated, and the light of assurance may dawn above the manifest horizon and shine resplendently.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, cited in the March 2020 message of the Universal House of Justice

12. GLORIFIED be Thy name, O Lord my God! I beseech Thee by Thy power that hath encompassed all created things, and by Thy sovereignty that hath transcended the entire creation, and by Thy Word which was hidden in Thy wisdom and whereby Thou didst create Thy heaven and Thy earth, both to enable us to be steadfast in our love for Thee and in our obedience to Thy pleasure, and to fix our gaze upon Thy face, and celebrate Thy glory. Empower us, then, O my God, to spread abroad Thy signs among Thy creatures, and to guard Thy Faith in Thy realm. Thou hast ever existed independently of the mention of any of Thy creatures, and wilt remain as Thou hast been for ever and ever. In Thee I have placed my whole confidence, unto Thee I have turned my face, to the cord of Thy loving providence I have clung, and towards the shadow of Thy mercy I have hastened. Cast me not as one disappointed out of Thy door, O my God, and withhold not from me Thy grace, for Thee alone do I seek. No God is there beside Thee, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Bountiful.

Praise be to Thee, O Thou Who art the Beloved of them that have known Thee!

Bahá'u'lláh

Your Personal Prayers

Reflection on the Texts

Discussion

In a 2020 message, the world-governing body of the Bahá'í Faith encouraged us to “strengthen bonds of friendship” and “to foster among themselves and those known to them spiritual consciousness and qualities of tranquillity, confidence, and reliance on God.”

Share some personal examples of how we are

- Strengthening bonds of friendship
- Fostering qualities of spiritual consciousness
 - tranquillity
 - confidence
 - reliance on God