

REFERENCES – ESSAY 14

“The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.” (Baha’u’llah)

“It ill beseemeth thee to turn thy gaze unto former or more recent times. Make thou mention of this Day and magnify that which hath appeared therein. It will in truth suffice all mankind. Indeed expositions and discourses in explanation of such things cause the spirits to be chilled.” (Baha’u’llah)

“This is the most great unity, and its results are lasting if humanity adheres to it; but mankind has hitherto violated it, adhering to sectarian or other limited unities such as racial, patriotic or unity of self-interests ...” (‘Abdu’l-Baha)

“... in these days when sinister, uncontrollable forces are deepening the cleavage sundering peoples, nations, creeds, and classes ... abstain individually, collectively in word, action, informally as well as in all official utterances and publications from assigning blame, taking sides, however indirectly, in recurring political crises now agitating, ultimately engulfing human society.” (Shoghi Effendi)

“Ultimately, obedience to government has a bearing on the unity of the Baha’i community itself. ... Shoghi Effendi stated that individual Baha’is should not become immersed in the ‘faulty systems of the world’ or judge their government as ‘just or unjust—for each believer would be sure to hold a different viewpoint, and ... a hotbed of dissension would spring up and destroy our unity.’” (The Universal House of Justice)

“By becoming involved in political disputes, the Baha’is instead of changing the world or helping it, would themselves be lost and destroyed. The world situation is so confused, and moral issues which were once clear have become so mixed up with selfish and battling factions, that the best way Baha’is can serve the highest

interests of their country ... is to sacrifice their political pursuits and ... fully support the divine system of Baha'u'llah." (The Universal House of Justice)

"Even if such a community were to focus the entirety of its resources on the problem of racial prejudice, even if it were able to heal itself to some extent of that cancerous affliction, in the face of such a monumental social challenge the impact would be inconsequential. Therefore, the friends must effectively assess the forces at work in their society and, beginning in neighborhoods and clusters, contribute their share to the process of learning and systematization which, as their numbers, knowledge, and influence grow, will transform their lives, families, and communities." (The Universal House of Justice)

"Racism ... cannot be rooted out by contest and conflict. It must ... not designate anyone as 'other'. ... It is not possible for you to effect the transformation envisioned by Baha'u'llah merely by adopting the perspectives, practices, concepts, criticisms, and language of contemporary society. Your approach, instead, will be distinguished by maintaining a humble posture of learning ... consulting to harmonize differing views and shape collective action, and marching forward with unbreakable unity in serried lines." (The Universal House of Justice)

"It is not for a Baha'i, in offering social commentary, to vilify specific individuals, organizations, or governments or to make attacks on them." (The Universal House of Justice)

"A tremendous effort is required by both races if their outlook, their manners, and conduct are to reflect, in this darkened age, the spirit and teachings of the Faith of Baha'u'llah.' ... 'Let neither think that the solution of so vast a problem is a matter that exclusively concerns the other.' ... 'Each one should endeavor to develop and assist the other toward mutual advancement' ... 'Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind'". (quoted by The Universal House of Justice)

"... must obey the kings with the utmost sincerity and fidelity, and (Baha'u'llah) hath forbidden them to interfere at all with political problems. He hath even prohibited the believers from discussing political affairs." ('Abdu'l-Baha)

" ... refrain from involvement in political controversies and conflicts of all kinds. 'Speak thou no word of politics' was the counsel of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to one believer, adding, 'Except to speak well of them, make thou no mention of the earth's kings, and the worldly governments thereof.'" (The Universal House of Justice)

"... ultimately, it is systematic, determined, and selfless action undertaken within the wide embrace of the Plan's framework that is the most constructive response of every concerned believer to the multiplying ills of a disordered society." (The Universal House of Justice)

"... It is not for a Baha'i, in offering social commentary, to vilify specific individuals, organizations, or governments or to make attacks on them." (The Universal House of Justice)

"... and 'Abdu'l-Baha enjoined Baha'is to be obedient to the government of their land. Unity, order, and cooperation are the basis for sound and lasting change. Even civil disobedience, in the form of a conscious decision to violate the law to effect social change, is not acceptable for Baha'is-whatever merit it appears to have had in particular political settings. Ultimately, obedience to government has a bearing on the unity of the Baha'i community itself. In a letter written on his behalf, Shoghi Effendi stated that individual Baha'is should not become immersed in the 'faulty systems of the world' or judge their government as 'just or unjust-for each believer would be sure to hold a different viewpoint, and within our own Baha'i fold a hotbed of dissension would spring up and destroy our unity.'" (The Universal House of Justice)

"In their reflections on how to contribute to the betterment of the world, Baha'is will undoubtedly recognize that demonstrations are not the only, or even the most effective, means available to them.

... the House of Justice explained to your National Assembly that the scope of the Five Year Plan offers ample opportunities for believers to address the social concerns of their communities and society as a whole. The Plan's activities for sustained growth and community building lie at the heart of a broad scheme for social transformation." (The Universal House of Justice)

"'Every person must have an occupation, a trade or a craft,' explains the Master, 'so that he may carry other people's burdens, and not himself be a burden to others.' The poor are urged by Baha'u'llah to 'exert themselves and strive to earn the means of livelihood', while they who are possessed of riches 'must have the utmost regard for the poor'." (The Universal House of Justice)

"Examining one's life to determine what is a necessity and then discharging with joy one's obligation in relation to the law of Ḥuqúqu'lláh is an indispensable discipline to bring one's priorities into balance, purify whatever wealth one possesses, and ensure that the share which is the Right of God provides for the greater good. At all times, contentment and moderation, benevolence and fellow feeling, sacrifice and reliance on the Almighty are qualities that befit the God-fearing soul." (The Universal House of Justice)

"Beloved Friends: The extremes of wealth and poverty in the world are becoming ever more untenable. As inequity persists, so the established order is seen to be unsure of itself, and its values are being questioned. Whatever the tribulations that a conflicted world must confront in the future, we pray that the Almighty will help His loved ones to overcome every obstacle in their path and assist them to serve humanity. The larger the presence of a Baha'i community in a population, the greater its responsibility to find ways of addressing the root causes of the poverty in its surroundings. Although the friends are at the early stages of learning about such work and of contributing to the related discourses, the community-building process of the Five Year Plan is creating everywhere the ideal environment in which to accrue knowledge and experience, gradually but consistently, about the

higher purpose of economic activity.” (The Universal House of Justice)

“For almost two centuries, and particularly the last four decades of relentless oppression, the Bahá’ís in Iran have remained forward-looking, dynamic, vibrant, and committed to serving Iranian society. They have refused to allow apprehension and anxiety to take hold or let any calamity perturb their hearts. They have drawn on the highest reservoirs of solidarity and collaboration and responded to oppression with constructive resilience, eschewing despair, surrender, resentment, and hate and transcending mere survival, to transform conditions of ignorance and prejudice and win the respect and collaboration of their fair-minded countrymen. Those believers in the United States who have labored so persistently to promote race unity, especially the African American friends, should appreciate in their own efforts over the years the same expression of constructive resilience, born of their great love for Bahá’u’lláh, and see in the recent turmoil opportunity rather than obstacle. They cannot, as you know, respond to the current reality in the manner consuming most of their fellow citizens; they must, by word and by deed, elevate the existing conversation and set in motion constructive approaches that will prove ever more effective over time. Shoghi Effendi has explained that such problems as are now being witnessed are inevitable as the process of disintegration advances. ‘All humanity’, a letter written on his behalf observes, ‘is disturbed and suffering and confused; we cannot expect to not be disturbed and not to suffer—but we don’t have to be confused.’ The way forward has never been clearer, particularly with the new initiative of your National Assembly to organize these matters within the proven framework for action guiding the Bahá’í world’s systematic endeavors.” (The Universal House of Justice)

“It is not possible for you to effect the transformation envisioned by Bahá’u’lláh merely by adopting the perspectives, practices, concepts, criticisms, and language of contemporary society.” (The Universal House of Justice)

"I desire distinction for you. The Bahá'ís must be distinguished from others of humanity. But this distinction must not depend upon wealth—that they should become more affluent than other people. I do not desire for you financial distinction. It is not an ordinary distinction I desire; not scientific, commercial, industrial distinction. For you I desire spiritual distinction—that is, you must become eminent and distinguished in morals. In the love of God you must become distinguished from all else. You must become distinguished for loving humanity, for unity and accord, for love and justice. In brief, you must become distinguished in all the virtues of the human world—for faithfulness and sincerity, for justice and fidelity, for firmness and steadfastness, for philanthropic deeds and service to the human world, for love toward every human being, for unity and accord with all people, for removing prejudices and promoting international peace. Finally, you must become distinguished for heavenly illumination and for acquiring the bestowals of God. I desire this distinction for you. This must be the point of distinction among you." (‘Abdu’l-Bahá)

"However, if a person be graciously favoured to offer a pennyworth—nay, even less—in the path of God, this would in His sight be preferable and superior to all the treasures of the earth. (Baha’u’llah, Huququ’llah Compilation)

"Such souls as comply with the injunction of God prescribed in the Book are regarded as most excellent in the estimation of God. There can be no doubt that whatsoever is revealed from the heaven of divine commandment is by virtue of His wisdom and is in the best interests of the people themselves. ... If the offering be but a single grain it is regarded as the crowning glory of all the harvests of the world." (Baha’u’llah, Huququ’llah Compilation)

"It is essential for certain people to receive aid, and others need attention and care, but all this must take place by the leave of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting." (Baha’u’llah, Huququ’llah Compilation)

"... by observing it (Huququ'llah) one will be raised to honour inasmuch as it will serve to purify one's possessions and will impart blessing, and added prosperity. However, the people are as yet ignorant of its significance." (Baha'u'llah, Huququ'llah Compilation)

"It is clear and evident that the payment of the Right of God is conducive to prosperity, to blessing, and to honour and divine protection." (Baha'u'llah, Huququ'llah Compilation)

"... the treasures laid up by kings and queens are not worthy of mention, nor will they be acceptable in the Presence of God. However, a grain of mustard offered by His loved ones will be extolled in the exalted court of His holiness and invested with the ornament of His acceptance." (Baha'u'llah, Huququ'llah Compilation)

"This fixed money offering, however, causeth the people to become firm and steadfast and draweth Divine increase upon them." ('Abdu'l-Baha, Huququ'llah Compilation)

"... The more this interrelationship is strengthened and expanded, the more will human society advance in progress and prosperity. Indeed without these vital ties it would be wholly impossible for the world of humanity to attain true felicity and success. ... This is the basic principle on which the institution of Huqúqu'lláh is established ..." ('Abdu'l-Baha, Huququ'llah Compilation)

"Know thou, moreover, that those who faithfully serve the All-Merciful will be enriched by Him out of His heavenly treasury, and that the Huqúq offering is but a test applied by Him unto His servants and maidservants. Thus every true and sincere believer will offer Huqúq to be expended for the relief of the poor, the disabled, the needy, and the orphans, and for other vital needs of the Cause of God ..." ('Abdu'l-Baha, Huququ'llah Compilation)

"... (Huququ'llah) will provide material resources essential for the advancement of the human race." (The Universal House of Justice, Huququ'llah Compilation)

"... give rise to a transformation of society far beyond our present capacity to comprehend." (The Universal House of Justice, Huququ'llah Compilation)

"...(Huququ'llah is) a source of inestimable blessings for all humanity." (The Universal House of Justice)

"... (Huququ'llah) will also contribute toward the solution of economic problems." (The Universal House of Justice)

"Speak thou no word of politics; thy task concerneth the life of the soul, for this verily leadeth to man's joy in the world of God. Except to speak well of them, make thou no mention of the earth's kings, and the worldly governments thereof. Rather, confine thine utterance to spreading the blissful tidings of the Kingdom of God, and demonstrating the influence of the Word of God, and the holiness of the Cause of God. Tell thou of abiding joy and spiritual delights, and godlike qualities, and of how the Sun of Truth hath risen above the earth's horizons: tell of the blowing of the spirit of life into the body of the world." ('Abdu'l-Baha)

"The attitude of the Bahá'ís must be two-fold, complete obedience to the government of the country they reside in, and no interference whatsoever in political matters or questions. What the Master's statement really means is obedience to a duly constituted government, whatever that government may be in form. We are not the ones, as individual Bahá'ís, to judge our government as just or unjust—for each believer would be sure to hold a different viewpoint, and within our own Bahá'í fold a hotbed of dissension would spring up and destroy our unity. We must build up our own Bahá'í system, and leave the faulty systems of the world to go their way. We cannot change them through becoming involved in them; on the contrary, they will destroy us." (Shoghi Effendi)

"...He Who is the Eternal Truth - exalted be His glory - hath made the fulfillment of every undertaking on earth dependent on material means." (Bahá'u'lláh)

"In one of His Tablets Bahá'u'lláh refers to this Law as ranking in importance immediately after the two great obligations of recognition of God and steadfastness in His Cause ..." (Research Dept., at the request of the Universal House of Justice)

"Think not that We have revealed unto you a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, We have unsealed the choice Wine with the fingers of might and power. To this beareth witness that which the Pen of Revelation hath revealed. Meditate upon this, O men of insight!" (Baha'u'llah)

"Direct thine attention to the holy Tablets; read thou ... the Most Holy Book. Then wilt thou see that today these heavenly Teachings are the remedy for a sick and suffering world, and a healing balm for the sores on the body of mankind. They are the spirit of life, the ark of salvation, the magnet to draw down eternal glory, the dynamic power to motivate the inner self of man. ('Abdu'l-Baha)

(Quotes by Shoghi Effendi or The Universal House of Justice may have been written on behalf of.)