

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

November 4, 2023

To the American Bahá'í community  
for the Feast of Qudrat

Dearly loved Friends,

Recent news of the tragic events in the Holy Land, together with the ongoing strife and bloodshed unfolding in other parts of the world, has caused anguish in the hearts of those who yearn for peace and prosperity for all peoples. The followers of Bahá'u'lláh share this heartache, as it is our highest aspiration to realize His vision of the oneness of humanity.

Numerous passages in the Bahá'í writings make it abundantly clear that these tribulations are the result of the world's failure to recognize that essential oneness. Yet they also assure us that the end result will be the forging of a new world order, founded upon the spiritual principles enshrined in God's Revelation for today.

A recent, notable example is the Universal House of Justice's message dated January 18, 2019, which carries forward into our generation a description of the ongoing historical process, set in motion by the advent of Bahá'u'lláh and so memorably elucidated by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith decades ago, whereby humanity as a whole, in an alternating process of crisis and victory, is being gradually but inevitably propelled towards its great destiny. That message is attached for your ease of reference, and we encourage the friends everywhere, once again, to give it careful study. We hope you will find it helpful in understanding the present difficulties and the manner in which we, as Bahá'ís, should respond; a few selected excerpts follow.

The January 18 letter opens with a brilliant, succinct review of the stages we have collectively traversed towards a greater consciousness of the need for world unity since the end of World War I. Each step forward, however, has been punctuated by setbacks as the forces of reaction rallied and reasserted themselves. In our own time, such forces once again appear to be in the ascendant:

Thus do the forces of disintegration regroup and gain ground. So be it. The unification of humanity is unstoppable by any human force; the promises made by the prophets of old and by the Author of the Cause of God Himself testify to this truth. Yet the course humanity takes to achieve its destiny may very well be tortuous. The tumult raised by the contending peoples of the earth threatens to drown out the voices of those noble-minded souls in every society who call for an end to conflict and struggle. As long as that call goes unheeded, there is no reason to doubt that the world's current state of disorder and confusion will worsen—possibly with catastrophic consequences—until a chastened humanity sees fit to take another significant step, perhaps this time decisive, towards enduring peace.

Universal peace is the destination towards which humanity has been moving throughout the ages under the influence of the Word of God that has been progressively imparted by the Creator to His creation. Shoghi Effendi described humanity's advance towards a new, global stage in its collective life in terms of

social evolution, “an evolution that has had its earliest beginnings in the birth of family life, its subsequent development in the achievement of tribal solidarity, leading in turn to the constitution of the city-state, and expanding later into the institution of independent and sovereign nations.” Now, with the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, the human race stands on the threshold of its maturity. World unity is finally possible. A global order that unifies the nations with the assent of humanity is the only adequate answer to the destabilizing forces that threaten the world.

The House of Justice acknowledges the feelings that motivate the believers, yet also instructs us as to how we must respond:

A heart that has embraced love for the whole of humanity will certainly be pained when confronted by the suffering that so many endure because of disunity. But the friends of God cannot shut themselves off from the increasing turmoil of the society that surrounds them; they must guard themselves, too, from becoming enmeshed in its conflicts or falling into its adversarial methods. No matter how bleak conditions may appear at any given time, no matter how dismal the immediate prospects for bringing about unity, there is no cause for despair. The distressing state of the world can only spur us to redouble our commitment to constructive action. “These are not days of prosperity and triumph” cautions Bahá'u'lláh. “The whole of mankind is in the grip of manifold ills. Strive, therefore, to save its life through the wholesome medicine which the almighty hand of the unerring Physician hath prepared.”

The Supreme Body then goes on to describe the ways in which we work—chiefly through pursuit of the series of Plans—to apply the teachings of the Divine Physician to the life of society. Such activities, devoid of partisanship, competition, and any sense of “othering,” constitute our best possible response to the needs of a sorely tried age, and the greatest hope for humanity’s eventual salvation.

Beloved friends, we hope your reflections on the Supreme Body’s 2019 message, and on the innumerable other writings of our Faith, will provide the clarity and inspiration required to continue your tireless labors for the welfare of the world. Be assured of our unceasing prayers on your behalf.

With warmest Bahá'í love,  
NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES



Kenneth E. Bowers  
Secretary