

REFLECTIONS ON THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE

Of these spiritual prerequisites of success, which constitute the bedrock on which the security of all **teaching plans, Temple projects, and financial schemes**, must ultimately rest, ***the following stand out as preeminent and vital, which the members of the American Bahá'í community will do well to ponder.***

Upon the extent to which these basic requirements are met, and the manner in which the American believers fulfill them in their

1. *individual lives,*
2. *administrative activities, and*
3. *social relationships,*

must depend the measure of the manifold blessings which the All-Bountiful Possessor can vouchsafe to them all.

These requirements are none other than a

- ***high sense of moral rectitude in their social and administrative activities,***
 - ***absolute chastity in their individual lives, and***
 - ***complete freedom from prejudice in their dealings with peoples of a different race, class, creed, or color.***
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1. **The first is specially, though not exclusively, directed to their elected representatives**, whether local, regional, or national, who, in their capacity as the custodians and members of the nascent institutions of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, ***are shouldering the chief responsibility in laying an unassailable foundation for that Universal House of Justice*** which, as its title implies, is to be

- a. the ***exponent and guardian of that Divine Justice***
- b. which ***can alone insure the security*** of, and
- c. ***establish the reign of law and order*** in, a strangely disordered world.

2. **The second is mainly and directly concerned with the Bahá'í youth**, who can contribute so decisively to

- 32 a. the *virility*,
33 b. the *purity*, and
34 c. the *driving force* of the life of the Bahá'í community, and **upon**
35 **whom must depend**
36 d. **the future orientation of its destiny**, and
37 e. the *complete unfoldment of the potentialities* with which God has
38 endowed it.

39 **3. The third should be the immediate, the universal, and the chief concern**
40 **of all and sundry members of the Bahá'í community**, of whatever

- 41 a. *age*,
42 b. *rank*,
43 c. *experience*,
44 d. *class*, or
45 e. *color*,

46 as all, **with no exception**, must face its challenging implications, and **none**
47 **can claim**, however much he may have progressed along this line, to have
48 **completely discharged the stern responsibilities which it inculcates.**

49 1. **A rectitude of conduct, an abiding sense of undeviating justice**,
50 unobscured by the demoralizing influences which a corruption-ridden
51 political life so strikingly manifests;

52 2. **a chaste, pure, and holy life**, unsullied and unclouded by

- 53 • the *indecencies*,
54 • the *vices*,
55 • the *false standards*, which an inherently deficient moral code
56 ○ *tolerates*,
57 ○ *perpetuates*, and
58 ○ *fosters*;

59 **3. a fraternity freed from that cancerous growth of racial prejudice, which is**
60 **eating into the vitals of an already debilitated society—**

61 **these are the ideals** which the American believers must, from now on,
62 individually and through concerted action, strive to promote, in both their
63 private and public lives, **ideals which are the chief propelling forces**

- 64 • that can **most effectively accelerate the march** of their institutions, plans,
65 and enterprises,
66 • that can **guard the honor and integrity of their Faith**, and
67 • **subdue any obstacles** that may confront it in the future.

✓ **A Rectitude of Conduct** ✓ **A Holiness and Chastity** ✓
 ✓ **An Interracial Fellowship**

“*these are the weapons which the American believers can and must wield in their double crusade,*”

The perfection of such weapons, the wise and effective utilization of every one of them, more than

- ✗ the furtherance of any particular plan, or
- ✗ the devising of any special scheme, or
- ✗ the accumulation of any amount of material resources,

can prepare them for the time when the Hand of Destiny will have directed them to assist in creating and in bringing into operation that World Order which is now incubating within the worldwide administrative institutions of their Faith.

A Message from Barbara Talley ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE
 SHOGHI EFFENDI

68

69 Dearly beloved friends!

70 **A rectitude of conduct** which, in all its manifestations, offers a striking contrast
 71 to the deceitfulness and corruption that characterize the political life of the
 72 nation and of the parties and factions that compose it;

73 **a holiness and chastity** that are diametrically opposed to the moral laxity and
 74 licentiousness which defile the character of a not inconsiderable proportion of
 75 its citizens;

76 **an interracial fellowship** completely purged from the curse of racial prejudice
 77 which stigmatizes the vast majority of its people –

78 **these are the weapons** which the American believers **can** and **must** wield in
 79 **their double crusade,**

- 80
- **first** to *regenerate the inward life of their own community,* and

81 • **next** to *assail the long-standing evils that have entrenched themselves in*
82 *the life of their nation.*

83 The perfection of such weapons, the wise and effective utilization of every one
84 of them,

- 85 • *more than the furtherance of any particular plan,*
- 86 • *or the devising of any special scheme,*
- 87 • *or the accumulation of any amount of material resources,*

88 can prepare them for the time when the Hand of Destiny will have directed
89 them to **assist in creating and in bringing into operation that World Order**
90 which is now incubating within the worldwide administrative institutions of
91 their Faith.

92 In the conduct of this twofold crusade, *the valiant warriors struggling in the*
93 *name and for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh must, of necessity, encounter stiff*
94 *resistance, and suffer many a setback.*

95 Their own instincts, no less than

- 96 1. the *fury* of *conservative forces,*
- 97 2. the *opposition* of *vested interests,* and
- 98 3. the *objections* of *a corrupt and pleasure-seeking generation* must
99 • *be reckoned with,*
100 • *resolutely resisted,* and
101 • *completely overcome.*

102 **As** their defensive measures for the impending struggle are organized and
103 extended,

- 104 • *storms of abuse and ridicule,* and
- 105 • *campaigns of condemnation and misrepresentation,* may be
106 unloosed against them.

- 107
- 108 1. Their *Faith,* they may soon find, has been *assaulted,*
- 109 2. their *motives* misconstrued,
- 110 3. their *aims* defamed,
- 111 4. their *aspirations* derided,

- 112 5. their *institutions scorned*,
- 113 6. their *influence belittled*,
- 114 7. their *authority undermined*, and
- 115 8. their *Cause*, at times, *deserted* by a few who will either be
- 116 a. *incapable* of appreciating the nature of their ideals, or
- 117 b. *unwilling* to bear the brunt of the mounting criticisms which such a
- 118 contest is sure to involve.

119 "*Because of 'Abdu'l-Bahá,*" *the beloved Master has prophesied,*

- 120 • *"many a test will be visited upon you.*
- 121 • *Troubles will befall you, and*
- 122 • *suffering afflict you."*
- 123 • **Let not**, however, *the invincible army of Bahá'u'lláh*, who in the West,
- 124 and at one of its potential storm centers is to fight, in His name and for
- 125 His sake, one of its fiercest and most glorious battles, *be afraid of any*
- 126 *criticism that might be directed against it.*
- 127 • **Let it not be deterred** by any *condemnation* with which the tongue of the
- 128 slanderer may seek to debase its motives.
- 129 • **Let it not recoil** before the *threatening advance of the forces*
- 130 ○ of *fanaticism*,
- 131 ○ of *orthodoxy*,
- 132 ○ of *corruption*, and
- 133 ○ of *prejudice* that may be leagued against it.

134 The *voice of criticism* is a voice that indirectly *reinforces the proclamation of its*

135 *Cause.*

136 *Unpopularity* but *serves to throw into greater relief the contrast* between it and

137 its adversaries,

138 while *ostracism is itself the magnetic power that must eventually win* over to

139 its camp the most vociferous and inveterate amongst its foes.

140 Already in the land where the greatest battles of the Faith have been fought,

141 and its most rapacious enemies have lived,

- 142 • the *march* of *events*,
- 143 • the slow yet steady *infiltration* of its *ideals*, and

- 144 • the *fulfillment* of its *prophecies*,
145 have resulted not only
146 • in *disarming* and
147 • in *transforming* the character of some of its most redoubtable enemies,
148 but also
149 • in *securing* their firm and unreserved allegiance to its Founders.

150 *So complete a transformation,*
151 *so startling a reversal of attitude,*

152 can only be effected if that *chosen vehicle* which is designed to carry the
153 Message of Bahá'u'lláh to

- 154 • the *hungry*,
155 • the *restless*, and
156 • *unshepherded*

157 multitudes is *itself thoroughly cleansed from the defilements* which it seeks to
158 remove.

159 *It is upon you, therefore, my best-beloved friends, that I wish to impress not*
160 *only*

- 161 • the *urgency* and
162 • imperative *necessity* of your holy task, but also
163 • the *limitless possibilities* which it possesses of raising to such an exalted
164 level not only the life and activities of your own community, but
165 • the *motives* and *standards* that govern the relationships existing among
166 the people to which you belong.

167 Undismayed by the formidable nature of this task, you will, I am confident,
168 meet as befits you the challenge of these times,

- 169 • *so fraught with peril*,
170 • *so full of corruption*, and yet
171 • *so pregnant with the promise of a future so bright that no previous age in*
172 *the annals of mankind can rival its glory.*

173 (Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 41-42)

174 *Annotated and formatted for study by Barbara Talley for Foundation Hall. This is an excerpt from the*
175 *Advent of Divine Justice.*