

The Advent of Divine Justice Shoghi Effendi

Dearly beloved friends! *A rectitude of conduct* which, in all its manifestations, offers a striking contrast to the deceitfulness and corruption that characterize the political life of the nation and of the parties and factions that compose it; *a holiness and chastity* that are diametrically opposed to the moral laxity and licentiousness which defile the character of a not inconsiderable proportion of its citizens; *an interracial fellowship* completely purged from the curse of racial prejudice which stigmatizes the vast majority of its people—***these are the weapons which the American believers can and must wield in their double crusade, first to regenerate the inward life of their own community, and next to assail the long-standing evils that have entrenched themselves in the life of their nation.***

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.

In the conduct of this twofold crusade the valiant warriors struggling in the name and for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh must, of necessity, encounter stiff resistance, and suffer many a setback. Their own instincts, no less than the fury of conservative forces, the opposition of vested interests, and the objections of a corrupt and pleasure-seeking generation, must be reckoned with, resolutely resisted, and completely overcome.

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

- storms of abuse and ridicule, and
- campaigns of condemnation and misrepresentation, may be unloosed against them.
- Their Faith, they may soon find, has been assaulted,
- their motives misconstrued,
- their aims defamed,
- their aspirations derided,
- their institutions scorned,
- their influence belittled,

Highlighting, bolding, and additional spaces between paragraphs have been added to assist in virtual reading and study.

- their authority undermined, and
- their Cause, at times, deserted by a few who will either be incapable of appreciating the nature of their ideals, or unwilling to bear the brunt of the mounting criticisms which such a contest is sure to involve.

“Because of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,” the beloved Master has prophesied, “many a test will be visited upon you. Troubles will befall you, and suffering afflict you.”

Let not, however, the invincible army of Bahá’u’lláh, who in the West, and at one of its potential storm centers is to fight, in His name and for His sake, one of its fiercest and most glorious battles, be afraid of any criticism that might be directed against it. Let it not be deterred by any condemnation with which the tongue of the slanderer may seek to debase its motives. Let it not recoil before the threatening advance of the forces of fanaticism, of orthodoxy, of corruption, and of prejudice that may be leagued against it.

The voice of criticism is a voice that indirectly reinforces the proclamation of its Cause. Unpopularity but serves to throw into greater relief the contrast between it and its adversaries, while ostracism is itself the magnetic power that must eventually win over to its camp the most vociferous and inveterate amongst its foes. Already in the land where the greatest battles of the Faith have been fought, and its most rapacious enemies have lived, the march of events, the slow yet steady infiltration of its ideals, and the fulfillment of its prophecies, have resulted not only in disarming and in transforming the character of some of its most redoubtable enemies, but also in securing their firm and unreserved allegiance to its Founders. So complete a transformation, so startling a reversal of attitude, can only be effected if that chosen vehicle which is designed to carry the Message of Bahá’u’lláh to the hungry, the restless, and unshepherded multitudes is itself thoroughly cleansed from the defilements which it seeks to remove.

It is upon you, therefore, my best-beloved friends, that I wish to impress not only the urgency and imperative necessity of your holy task, but also the limitless possibilities which it possesses of raising to such an exalted level not only the life and activities of your own community, but the motives and standards that govern the relationships existing among the people to which you belong. Undismayed by the formidable nature of this task, you will, I am confident, meet as befits you the challenge of these times, so fraught with peril, so full of corruption, and yet so pregnant with the promise of a future so bright that no previous age in the annals of mankind can rival its glory.