



1817 - 2017

THE TWO-HUNDREDTH
ANNIVERSARY OF
THE BIRTH OF
BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Son of Man! I loved thy creation, hence I created thee. Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may give thee My Spirit, and fill thy soul with the spirit of life.

ONE GOD...

Bahá'u'lláh teaches us that God is unknowable in His Essence:

'To every discerning and illuminated heart it is evident that God, the unknowable Essence, the divine Being, is immensely exalted beyond every human attribute, such as corporeal existence, ascent and descent, egress and regress. Far be it from His glory that human tongue should adequately recount His praise, or that human heart comprehend His fathomless mystery. He is and hath ever been veiled in the ancient eternity of His Essence...'

Although man can never reach God, he is not deprived of knowing Him. From time to time a Human Being appears on earth who is the Manifestation of God. All the perfection, the bounty, and the splendour that come from God are visible in the Holy Manifestation, like the sun which is resplendent in a clear polished mirror. To say that these Mirrors are the Manifestation of the Sun of Truth does not mean that the Sun has descended from its heights of glory and incorporated into the Mirror. What is meant is this: All that humanity knows, discovers, and understands of the names and attributes and perfections of God refers to His Holy Manifestations.

ONE FAITH...

Although God's existence is beyond our understanding, His love touches our lives and our beings ceaselessly. The way this love flows to us is through His Eternal Covenant, as God never leaves us alone and without guidance.

"O Son of Man! I loved thy creation, hence I created thee. Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may name thy name and fill thy soul with the spirit of life."

The Bahá'í Faith is a world religion whose purpose is to unite all the races and peoples in one universal Cause and one common Faith. The traditions of almost every people include the promise of a future when peace and harmony will be established on earth and humankind will live in prosperity. Bahá'ís are followers of Bahá'u'lláh, Who we believe is the Promised One of all ages, Whose Teachings will enable humanity to build a new world.

Thou art the Mighty and the Powerful.

"This is the Day in which God's most excellent favours have been poured out upon me"

ONE HUMANITY...

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illuminated through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy.

O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind.

O God! Establish the Most Great Peace.

Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together.

O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful. Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

“O COMPANION OF MY THRONE!

Hear no evil, and see no evil, abase not thyself, neither sigh and weep. Speak no evil, that thou mayest not hear it spoken unto thee, and magnify not the faults of others that thine own faults may not appear great; and wish not the abasement of anyone, that thine own abasement be not exposed. Live then the days of thy life, that are less than a fleeting moment, with thy mind stainless, thy heart unsullied, thy thoughts pure, and thy nature sanctified, so that, free and content, thou mayest put away this mortal frame, and repair unto the mystic paradise and abide in the eternal kingdom for evermore.

Bahá'u'lláh

*Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together
Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind. O God!*

THE LIFE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Bahá'u'lláh was born in 1817 in Tehran, the capital city of Persia (Iran), and devoted Himself to the upliftment and education of the people. He proclaimed the oneness of the world of humanity and taught that all are created and nourished by the one loving and merciful God.

The kings of the East and the priesthood of Persia arose against Bahá'u'lláh, for they did not find their personal interests advanced by His Teachings. He was persecuted, mocked, and put in chains. In Persia, His properties and possessions were taken away. First, there was banishment from Persia to Baghdad, then to Constantinople, then to Adrianople, and finally, to the prison-fortress of 'Akká.

Throughout all these ordeals, He remained cheerful. His enemies made every effort to lessen His greatness, but His fame grew day by day. Surrounded by enemies, He did nothing to protect Himself – on the contrary, in His spiritual might and power He was at all times visible before the faces of men.

During His lifetime He was intensely active. His energy was unlimited. Scarcely one night was passed in restful sleep. He suffered that selflessness and service might be made manifest in the world of humanity, that peace would be established, that faith be strengthened, that the

human mind be developed to its fullest capacity, and that all people might truly reflect God-like qualities in their lives. Bahá'u'lláh was truly a Manifestation of God and a Universal Educator of humanity.

*Leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of
Thy knowledge, and cheer their hearts by Thy love*

Thou art the Compassionate

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S TEACHINGS

Bahá'u'lláh brought a number of Teachings that, together, make the establishment of peace possible.

Among these Teachings is the independent investigation of reality. If people are allowed to investigate truth, they will come to see the oneness of humanity. Prejudices of all kinds – race, class, colour, creed, nation, gender and degree of material civilization – are causes of strife. If we accept to investigate reality rather than blindly imitate the beliefs of the past, we will arise to abolish every form of prejudice.

Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings on religion make a clear distinction between true religion and superstition. True religion must be in harmony with science and reason. Religion must be the cause of fellowship and love. If it becomes the cause of discord and hatred, then it is better to be without it.

Also among Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings is the equality of men and women. We may think of the world of humanity as a bird – one wing is women and the other men. Both wings have to be equally developed for the bird to fly.

*Thou hast created all humanity
from the same stock.*

O Thou, kind Father, God

Other Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh shed light on the importance of universal education, the benefits of adopting a universal language, the necessity of seeking spiritual solutions to economic problems and the absolute necessity for justice in the governance of human affairs. Humanity, created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization, must be freed from the captivity of the world of materialism, because true civilization needs a balance of the spiritual and the material; this balance is a prerequisite of human happiness.

BAHÁ'Í PRAYERS

O God! Educate these children. These children are the plants of Thine orchard, the flowers of Thy meadow, the roses of Thy garden. Let Thy rain fall upon them; let the Sun of Reality shine upon them with Thy love. Let Thy breeze refresh them in order that they may be trained, grow and develop, and appear in the utmost beauty. Thou art the Giver. Thou art the Compassionate.

Educate these children.

O Lord! Make this youth radiant, and confer Thy bounty upon this poor creature. Bestow upon him knowledge, grant him added strength at the break of every morn and guard him within the shelter of Thy protection so that he may be freed from error, may devote himself to the service of Thy Cause, may guide the wayward, lead the hapless, free the captives and awaken the heedless, that all may be blessed with Thy remembrance and praise. Thou art the Mighty and the Powerful.

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose. May they follow Thy commandments and abide in Thy law. Help them, O God, in their endeavour, and grant them strength to serve Thee. O God! Leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of Thy knowledge, and cheer their hearts by Thy love. Verily, Thou art their Helper and their Lord.

Thou art the Giver

*These children are the plants of Thine orchard,
the flowers of Thy meadow, the roses of Thy garden.*

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Devotional gatherings where people from different backgrounds come together in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere to say prayers for the betterment of their communities.

Circles of study, open to all, that enable people from any background to advance on an equal footing to explore the application of the Bahá'í Teachings to their individual and collective lives, and through acts of service, learn the skills to build new communities.

Junior youth groups that channel the surging energies of 11- to 15- year olds in order to develop their character, by empowering them through social interaction, study and service projects, to become active members of their local community.

Children's classes that nurture the tender hearts and minds of children, helping them to develop spiritual qualities such as kindness, generosity and patience, and how to apply them in their lives, through prayers, quotations, songs, stories, games, artwork, and family activities.

School visits to deliver assemblies and class workshops that explore themes such as the oneness of humankind, unity in diversity, and the life of Bahá'u'lláh.