

17 October 2017

To the Bahá'ís of Iran

By now, you will have read our message dated October 2017 addressed to the multitude of people throughout the world who are celebrating the bicentenary of the Birth of the Abhá Beauty. Millions of souls, in more than 240 independent countries, territories, and islands, are reflecting upon the implications of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh, the outstanding Son of the sacred land of Iran. Surely, every insightful and illumined Iranian will view with pride a commemoration on such an unprecedented scale held to honour a Personage from that land. The diversity of races and ethnicities of these people is so vast as to portend the fulfilment of the unity of the human race, the ultimate goal of His Revelation.

What a wonder is this! Fair-minded historians of course know why a distinguished Person from the Núrí family—inhabitants of Mázinarán—born in Tehran, descended from the ancient kings of Persia, One who held His native land in such special affection, was forced to leave His country. Forty years of exile did not diminish in the slightest His connection to that land. With tender love and benevolence for His compatriots, Bahá'u'lláh set about establishing a united, vibrant, and progressive community composed of people from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. Through the dispatch of Tablets, the sending of teachers, and the messages of loving kindness conveyed through those who flocked to His presence in the prison-city of 'Akká in the Holy Land, He assisted the people of Iran who, in His words, are “adorned with the ornaments of talent and capacity” to nurture that God-given capacity.

Such were the achievements of your spiritual forebears that today people all over the world are able to benefit from the radiant light of the divine teachings. The first among these is a strong emphasis on goodly character and rectitude of conduct. Bahá'u'lláh describes spirituality and morality as the sure foundation for a progressive society and the solid basis for the protection and soundness of the social order and for the advancement of the common good. The Bahá'í teachings clarify, for example, that trustworthiness and truthfulness enhance the ability for collective undertakings, advance industry and the economy, and ensure the progress of other constructive endeavours. No nation can achieve prosperity and salvation without the refinement of character. If morality were to dominate, success in all aspects would be guaranteed because thoughts would become illumined; individual and collective relations strengthened; moral courage enhanced; arts, sciences, and rationality promoted; commerce advanced; and spiritual and material welfare and mutual respect and freedom for all would become the pivot of policies for the management of affairs. Thus would a nation be transformed into another creation. How numerous are the groups, the world over, who claim to be in the forefront of working for social progress, yet, because of their lack of adherence to trustworthiness and truthfulness, are in fact striking an axe to the root of their societies. Their actions are the embodiment of what has been stated in the Qur'án: “They demolish their homes with their own hands.”

As we have discussed in our recent messages, the essence of the other teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the unity of humankind, the plan and the path for its realization, a new conception of religion commensurate with the stage of humanity's coming maturity, and the founding of necessary provisions for the prosperity of the world on the basis of unity, justice, and peace. The Bahá'í Writings explain this important point that the fruits of religion must be the promotion of oneness and solidarity, and that if instead it should become the cause of conflict and contention, its absence is certainly preferable. Your conversations with your friends, colleagues, and neighbours during these blessed days will undoubtedly be a reminder of the fact that today the highest ideals of all the peoples of Iran are but a reflection of the same ideals that have been a motivating force in your life and that of your spiritual forebears. History testifies that the main difficulties

confronting the Iranian nation at the time of the appearance of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh—difficulties that still persist—included ethnic conflict, religious contention, social decline, and the challenge of reconciling modernity and tradition. Countless people in the world see in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh a remedy for these and other contemporary ills of humanity. It is the joy and the hope generated by efforts to translate His teachings into action that are attracting millions to observe these celebrations. Imagine if Iranians, even setting religious considerations aside and purely for the sake of their nation, would decide to act in accordance with the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, how much hardship would be prevented, how much progress would be achieved, and how much comfort and general prosperity would be attained. And the glory of Iran—a promise according to repeated statements in the Bahá'í Writings—would surely be realized.

Recall, beloved friends, the dream of the father of Bahá'u'lláh when his Son was a child of tender years. Let us then raise our hands in gratitude to the Threshold of Almighty God that we are able to witness with our physical eyes clear indications that no earthly power can thwart the Divine Will. You are constantly remembered in our prayers in the Holy Shrines.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]