

Some Vital Bahai Principles

Compiled from the words of Abdu'l-Baha

I. THE ONENESS OF THE WORLD OF HUMANITY

“Baha’u’llah addresses Himself to the world of men, saying, ‘Ye are all leaves of one tree and the fruits of one garden.’ That is, the world of existence is none other than one tree, and the nations or peoples are like unto the different branches or limbs thereof, and human individuals are similar to the fruits and blossoms thereof. While in all past religious books and epistles, the world of humanity has been divided into two parts; one called the people of the Book, or the Pure Tree, and the other, the Evil Tree. One half of the people of the world were looked upon as belonging to the faithful, and the other as belonging to the irreligious and the infidel; one half of the people were consigned to the mercy of the Creator, and the other half were considered as objects of the wrath of their Maker. But Baha’u’llah proclaimed the Oneness of the World of humanity—He submerged all mankind in the Sea of Divine Generosity.”

II. INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION OF TRUTH

“No man should follow blindly his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears, and investigate Truth in order that he may find the Truth; whereas the religion of forefathers and ancestors is based upon blind imitation—man should investigate the Truth.”

III. THE FOUNDATION OF ALL RELIGION IS ONE

“The foundation underlying all the Divine precepts is that One Reality. It must needs be Reality, and Reality is One, not multiple. Therefore the foundation of the Divine Religions is one. But we can see that certain forms have come in, certain imitations of forms and ceremonials have crept in. They are heretical, they are accidental, because they differ; hence they cause differences among religions. But if we set aside these imitations and seek the Reality of the Foundation we shall all agree, because religion is One and not multiple.”

IV. RELIGION MUST BE THE CAUSE OF UNITY AMONG MANKIND

“Every religion is the greatest divine effulgence, the cause of life amongst men, the cause of the honor of humanity, and is productive of the life everlasting amongst humankind. Religion is not for enmity or hatred. It is not for tyranny or injustice. If religion be the cause of enmity and rancor, if it should prove the cause of alienating men, assuredly non-religion would be better. For religion and the teachings which appertain to it are as a course of treatment. What is the object of any course of treatment? It is cure and healing. But if the outcome of a course of treatment should be productive of mere diagnosis and discussion of symptoms, the abolition of it is evidently preferable. In this sense, abandoning religion would be a step toward unity.”

V. RELIGION MUST BE IN ACCORD WITH SCIENCE AND REASON

“Religion must be reasonable; it must agree perfectly with science, so that science shall sanction religion and religion sanction science. The two must be brought together, indissolubly in the Reality. Down to the present Day it has been customary for man to accept a thing because it was called religion, even though it were not in accord with human reason.”

VI. THE EQUALITY OF MEN AND WOMEN

“This is peculiar to the teachings of Baha’u’llah, for all former religious systems placed men above women. Daughters and sons must follow the same form of study and the same education. Having one course of education promotes unity among mankind.”

VII. THE ABOLITION OF ALL PREJUDICES OF WHATEVER NATURE

“It is established that all the prophets of God have come to unite the children of men and not to disperse them, and to put in action the law of love and not enmity. Consequently we must throw aside all these prejudices, the racial prejudice, the patriotic prejudice, the religious and political prejudices. We must become the cause of unity of the human race.”

VIII. UNIVERSAL PEACE

“That all men and nations shall make peace; that there shall be Universal Peace amongst governments, Universal Peace amongst religions, Universal Peace amongst races, Universal Peace amongst the denizens of all regions. Today in the world of humanity the most important matter is the question of Universal Peace. The realization of this principle is the crying need of the time.”

IX. ALL MANKIND SHOULD PARTAKE OF KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION

“All mankind should partake of both knowledge and education, and this partaking of knowledge and of education is one of the necessities of religion. The education of each child is obligatory. If there are no parents, the community must look after the child. Each person should have his part of the sciences.”

X. THE SOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC QUESTION

“No religious books of the past Prophets speak of the Economic question, while the economic problem has been thoroughly solved in the Teachings of Baha’u’llah. Certain regulations are revealed which insure the welfare and well being of all humanity. Just as the rich man enjoys his rest and his pleasures surrounded by luxuries, the poor man must likewise have a home, be provided with sustenance, and not be in want. Until this is effected happiness is impossible. All are equal in the estimation of God; their rights are one and there is no distinction for any soul ; all are protected beneath the justice of God.”

XI. A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

“The oneness of language, namely that a universal language shall be adopted which shall be taught by all the schools and academies of the world. A committee appointed by national bodies shall select a suitable language to be used as a means of communication, and that language shall be taught in all the schools of the world in order that everyone shall need but two languages, his national tongue and the universal language. All will acquire the international language.”

XII. A UNIVERSAL TRIBUNAL

“A tribunal which will be under the power of God, under the protection of all men. Each one must obey the decisions of this tribunal, in order to arrange the difficulties of every nation.”

“About fifty years ago in the Book of Akdas, Baha’u’llah commanded the people to establish the Universal Peace and summoned, all the nations to the Divine Banquet of International Arbitration so that the questions of boundaries, of national honor and property and of vital interests between nations might be decided by an arbitral court of justice.”

“Remember these precepts were given more than half a century ago—at that moment no one spoke of Universal Peace—nor of any of these principles, but Baha’u’llah proclaimed them to all the sovereigns of the world. They are the spirit of this age; the light of this age; they are the well-being of this age.”