

Cover

HAPPINESS



**Jewels from the Words
of
'Abdu'l-Bahá**

Title Page

HAPPINESS

Jewels from the Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

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<https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/>
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Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá
The Secret of Divine Civilization
The Promulgation of Universal Peace
Paris Talks

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Bahá'í Faith

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Words of Bahá'u'lláh

If ye be aware of a certain truth,
if ye possess a jewel,
of which others are deprived,
share it with them in a language
of utmost kindness
and goodwill. ¹

¹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*: www.bahai.org/r/722589456

Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

1

It is the wish of our heavenly Father that every heart should rejoice and be filled with happiness, that we should live together in felicity and joy. ²

2

Be happy and joyous because the bestowals of God are intended for you and the life of the Holy Spirit is breathing upon you. ³

3

O God! Refresh and gladden my spirit. Purify my heart. Illumine my powers. I lay all my affairs in Thy hand. Thou art my guide and my refuge. I will no longer be sorrowful and grieved; I will be a happy and joyful being. O God! I will no longer be full of anxiety, nor will I let trouble harass me. I will not dwell on the unpleasant things of life.

O God! Thou art more friend to me than I am to myself. I dedicate myself to Thee, O Lord. ⁴

4

Man is, in reality, a spiritual being, and only when he lives in the spirit is he truly happy. ⁵

5

Happiness consisteth of two kinds: physical and spiritual. The physical happiness is limited; its utmost duration is one day, one month, one year. It hath no result. Spiritual happiness is eternal and unfathomable. This kind of happiness appeareth in one's soul with the love of God and suffereth one to attain to the virtues and perfections of the world of humanity. Therefore, endeavour as much

² *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/560661249

³ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/330385666

⁴ *Bahá'í Prayers; A Selection of Prayers Revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Bab, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Wilmette, Ill: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982 ed.), p. 152.

⁵ *Paris Talks*: www.bahai.org/r/535193753

as thou art able in order to illumine the lamp of thy heart by the light of love. ⁶

6

As to material happiness, it never exists; nay it is but imagination, an image reflected in mirrors, a spectre and shadow. Consider the nature of material happiness. It is something which but slightly removes one's afflictions; yet the people imagine it to be joy, delight, exultation and blessing. All the material blessings, including food, drink, etc., tend only to allay thirst, hunger and fatigue. They bestow no delight on the mind nor pleasure on the soul; nay they furnish only the bodily wants. So this kind of happiness has no real existence. ⁷

7

As to spiritual happiness, this is the true basis of the life of man because life is created for happiness, not for sorrow; for pleasure, not for grief. Happiness is life; sorrow is death. Spiritual happiness is life eternal. This is a light which is not followed by darkness. This is an honour which is not followed by shame. This is a life that is not followed by death. This is an existence that is not followed by annihilation. This great blessing and precious gift is obtained by man only through the guidance of God. ⁸

8

A bird perches upon the loftiest branch and builds there its nest with consummate beauty and skill. All the grains and seeds of the meadows are its wealth and food; all the fresh water of mountain springs and rivers of the plain are for its enjoyment. Truly, this is the acme of material happiness, to which even a human creature cannot attain. This is the honor of the animal kingdom. But the honor of the human kingdom is the attainment of spiritual happiness in the human world, the acquisition of the knowledge and love of God. The honor allotted to man is the acquisition of the supreme virtues of the human world. This is his real happiness and felicity. But if material

⁶ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 468.

⁷ *Star of the West* (Oxford: George Ronald Publisher, bound vols, 1978), 7,163.

⁸ *Star of the West* 35.2

happiness and spiritual felicity be conjoined, it will be “delight upon delight.”⁹

9

In this world we are influenced by two sentiments, Joy and Pain....¹⁰ There is no human being untouched by these two influences; but all the sorrow and the grief that exist come from the world of matter—the spiritual world bestows only the joy!¹¹

10

Joy gives us wings! In times of joy our strength is more vital, our intellect keener, and our understanding less clouded.¹²

11

One who is imprisoned by desires is always unhappy; the children of the Kingdom have unchained themselves from their desires. Break all fetters and seek for spiritual joy and enlightenment; then, though you walk on this earth, you will perceive yourselves to be within the divine horizon.¹³

12

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.¹⁴

13

I beg of God that ye will be bringers of joy, even as are the angels in Heaven.¹⁵

⁹ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/102518045

¹⁰ *Paris Talks*: www.bahai.org/r/929046719

¹¹ *Paris Talks*: www.bahai.org/r/938578718

¹² *Paris Talks*: www.bahai.org/r/606696514

¹³ *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London; Addresses and Notes of Conversations*, comp, and ed. Eric Hammond (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982 ed.), p. 87.

¹⁴ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/795322256

¹⁵ *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*: www.bahai.org/r/295885198

14

O Thou compassionate Lord, Thou Who art generous and able! We are servants of Thine sheltered beneath Thy providence. Cast Thy glance of favor upon us. Give light to our eyes, hearing to our ears, and understanding and love to our hearts. Render our souls joyous and happy through Thy glad tidings. O Lord! Point out to us the pathway of Thy kingdom and resuscitate all of us through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Bestow upon us life everlasting and confer upon us never-ending honor. ¹⁶

15

Spiritual happiness is light, while sorrow is darkness.

This happiness is glad-tidings, while sorrow is disappointment.

This happiness is the Kingdom, while sorrow is the earthly world.

This happiness is life, while sorrow is non-existence.

This happiness is the fundamental basis from which man is created, worlds are originated, the contingent beings have existence and the world of God appears like unto the appearance of the sun at midday.

This happiness is but the love of God. ¹⁷

16

The spirit is changeless, indestructible. The progress and development of the soul, the joy and sorrow of the soul, are independent of the physical body. ¹⁸

17

When we find truth, constancy, fidelity, and love, we are happy.... ¹⁹

¹⁶ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/006580604

¹⁷ *Star of the West*, 7,163.

¹⁸ *Paris Talks*: www.bahai.org/r/851921831

¹⁹ *Paris Talks*: www.bahai.org/r/232471605

18

When love is realized and the ideal spiritual bonds unite the hearts of men, the whole human race will be uplifted, the world will continually grow more spiritual and radiant and the happiness and tranquillity of mankind be immeasurably increased. ²⁰

19

.... the happiness and greatness, the rank and station, the pleasure and peace, of an individual have never consisted in his personal wealth, but rather in his excellent character, his high resolve, the breadth of his learning, and his ability to solve difficult problems. ²¹

20

Man is the life of the world, and the life of man is the spirit. The happiness of the world depends upon man, and the happiness of man is dependent upon the spirit. ²²

21

The honor of man is through the attainment of the knowledge of God; his happiness is from the love of God; his joy is in the glad tidings of God; his greatness is dependent upon his servitude to God. ²³

22

True happiness depends on spiritual good and having the heart ever open to receive the Divine Bounty. ²⁴

23

Spiritual progress is through the breaths of the Holy Spirit and is the awakening of the conscious soul of man to perceive the reality of Divinity. Material progress ensures the happiness of the human

²⁰ *Foundations of World Unity; Compiled from Addresses and Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Wilmette, Ill: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1979 ed.), p. 19.

²¹ *The Secret of Divine Civilization*: www.bahai.org/r/137443519

²² *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/220024050

²³ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/568183350

²⁴ *Paris Talks*: www.bahai.org/r/032260883

world. Spiritual progress ensures the happiness and eternal continuance of the soul. ²⁵

24

Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and like the chosen ones of God, vie with his fellows in service to the good of all... ²⁶

25

The sublimity of man is his attainment of the knowledge of God. The bliss of man is the acquiring of heavenly bestowals, which descend upon him in the outflow of the bounty of God. The happiness of man is in the fragrance of the love of God. ²⁷

26

When a man turns his face to God he finds sunshine everywhere. All men are his brothers. ²⁸

27

Your utmost desire must be to confer happiness upon each other. Each one must be the servant of the others, thoughtful of their comfort and welfare. In the path of God one must forget himself entirely. He must not consider his own pleasure but seek the pleasure of others. He must not desire glory nor gifts of bounty for himself but seek these gifts and blessings for his brothers and sisters. ²⁹

28

I want you to be happy..., to laugh, smile and rejoice in order that others may be made happy by you. ³⁰

²⁵ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/571510216

²⁶ *The Secret of Divine Civilization*: www.bahai.org/r/908350003

²⁷ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/080928132

²⁸ *Paris Talks*: www.bahai.org/r/025790622

²⁹ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/477829896

³⁰ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/000750473

29

Be thou happy and well-pleased and arise to offer thanks to God, in order that thanksgiving may conduce to the increase of bounty. ³¹

30

If we are not happy and joyous at this season, for what other season shall we wait and for what other time shall we look? ³²

31

If you do not smile now, for what time will you await and what greater happiness could you expect? This is the springtime of manifestation. The vernal shower has descended from the cloud of divine mercy; the life-giving breeze of the Holy Spirit is wafting the perfume of blossoms. From field and meadow rises a fragrant breath of thanksgiving like pure incense ascending to the throne of God. The world has become a new world; souls are quickened, spirits renewed, refreshed. Truly it is a time for happiness. ³³

32

Be calm, be strong, be grateful, and become a lamp full of light, that the darkness of sorrows be annihilated, and the sun of everlasting joy arise from the dawning place of heart and soul, shining brightly. ³⁴

³¹ *Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás*, comp. Albert R. Windust (Chicago, III: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1915), II, 483.

³² *Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás*, comp. Albert R. Windust (Chicago, III: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1916), III, 641.

³³ *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: www.bahai.org/r/889743033

³⁴ *Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás*, 11,405.

About 'Abdu'l-Bahá

(1844-1921)

'Abdu'l-Bahá, known to his followers as 'The Master', is one of the most revered spiritual figures of our time. His life and teachings are today a source of inspiration to millions of people throughout the world. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh, founder of the Bahá'í Faith, who taught that the world is entering a stage when the unity and harmony of all peoples will be established and the essential oneness of all religions will become recognised.

'Abdu'l-Bahá's life was dedicated to the service of humanity and the promotion of his father's great mission. He is regarded as the perfect exemplar of the noble virtues and spiritual qualities which, Bahá'u'lláh taught, it is our purpose in life to acquire. When still a young child of tender years he was condemned, with his father, to a lifetime of bitter persecution, exile and imprisonment by the religious and civil authorities of his day. Despite the cruelty and suffering inflicted upon him, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's great love and compassion for the downtrodden and oppressed earned him the title 'Father of the Poor' and his wisdom and reputation drew countless pilgrims from four continents to the prison city of 'Akká in the Holy Land, where he was incarcerated.

Upon his release from captivity in 1908, and despite his advanced years and failing health, 'Abdu'l-Bahá embarked on a series of epic journeys to spread the Bahá'í teachings in the West. His message of hope and vision of universal peace challenges the traditional prejudices and rivalries of nation, race, class and religion, and transcends the barriers of time and place, encouraging us all to walk the spiritual path with practical feet.