

Virtues

The following selections are taken from a Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh's entitled "Words of Wisdom":

1. In the Name of God, the Exalted, the Most High

The source of all good is trust in God, submission unto His command, and contentment with His holy will and pleasure. ...

The essence of religion is to testify unto that which the Lord hath revealed, and follow that which He hath ordained in His mighty Book.

2. The source of all glory is acceptance of whatsoever the Lord hath bestowed, and contentment with that which God hath ordained.

The essence of love is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but Him, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord.

3. True remembrance is to make mention of the Lord, the All-Praised, and forget aught else beside Him.

True reliance is for the servant to pursue his profession and calling in this world, to hold fast unto the Lord, to seek naught but His grace, inasmuch as in His Hands is the destiny of all His servants.

4. The essence of detachment is for man to turn his face towards the courts of the Lord, to enter His Presence, behold His Countenance, and stand as witness before Him.

The essence of understanding is to testify to one's poverty, and submit to the Will of the Lord, the Sovereign, the Gracious, the All-Powerful.

5. The source of courage and power is the promotion of the Word of God, and steadfastness in His Love.

The essence of charity is for the servant to recount the blessings of his Lord, and to render thanks unto Him at all times and under all conditions.

6. The essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds...

The essence of true safety is to observe silence, to look at the end of things and to renounce the world.

7. The beginning of magnanimity is when man expendeth his wealth on himself, on his family and on the poor among his brethren...

The essence of wealth is love for Me; whoso loveth Me is the possessor of all things, and he that loveth Me not is indeed of the poor and needy. This is that which the Finger of Glory and Splendour hath revealed.

8. The source of all evil is for man to turn away from his Lord and set his heart on things ungodly.

The most burning fire is to question the signs of God, to dispute idly that which He hath revealed, to deny Him and carry one's self proudly before Him.

9. The source of all learning is the knowledge of God, exalted be His Glory, and this cannot be attained save through the knowledge of His Divine Manifestation. The essence of abasement is to pass out from under the shadow of the Merciful and seek the shelter of the Evil One.

10. The source of error is to disbelieve in the One true God, rely upon aught else but Him, and flee from His Decree. True loss is for him whose days have been spent in utter ignorance of his self.

11. The essence of all that We have revealed for thee is Justice, is for man to free himself from idle fancy and imitation, discern with the eye of oneness His glorious handiwork, and look into all things with a searching eye. Thus have We instructed thee, manifested unto thee Words of Wisdom, that thou mayest be thankful unto the Lord, thy God, and glory therein amidst all peoples.

12. Beware lest ye shed the blood of any one. Unsheathe the sword of your tongue from the scabbard of utterance, for therewith ye can conquer the citadels of men's hearts. We have abolished the law to wage holy war against each other. (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 25)

13. Every word is endowed with a spirit, therefore the speaker or expounder should carefully deliver his words at the appropriate time and place, for the impression which each word maketh is clearly evident and perceptible... One word may be likened unto fire, another unto light, and the influence which both exert is manifest in the world. Therefore an enlightened man of wisdom should primarily speak with words as mild as milk, that the children of men may be nurtured and edified thereby and may attain the ultimate goal of human existence which is the station of true understanding and nobility....

14. One word is like unto springtime causing the tender saplings of the rose-garden of knowledge to become verdant and flourishing, while another word is even as a deadly poison. It behoveth a prudent man of wisdom to speak with utmost leniency and forbearance so that the sweetness of his words may induce everyone to attain that which befitteth man's station. (Tablets of Baha'u'llah, pages 172-173)

15. Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer to the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 93)

16. Consort with all men, O people of Baha, in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship. 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 good-will. If it be accepted, if it fulfill

its purpose, your object is attained. If anyone should refuse it, leave him unto himself, and beseech God to guide him. Beware lest ye deal unkindly with him. A kindly tongue is the lodestone of the hearts of men. It is the bread of the spirit, it clotheth the words with meaning, it is the fountain of the light of wisdom and understanding.
(Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 15)

17. Adorn yourselves with the raiment of goodly deeds. He whose deeds attain unto God's good pleasure is assuredly of the people of Baha and is remembered before His throne. Assist ye the Lord of all creation with works of righteousness, and also through wisdom and utterance.
(Baha'u'llah: The Kitab-i-Aqdas, page 45)

18. O Lord! I am single, alone and lowly. For me there is no support save Thee, no helper except Thee and no sustainer beside Thee. Confirm me in Thy service, assist me with the cohorts of Thy angels, make me victorious in the promotion of Thy Word and suffer me to speak out Thy wisdom amongst Thy creatures. Verily, Thou art the helper of the weak and the defender of the little ones, and verily Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and the Unconstrained.
(Compilations, Baha'i Prayers, p. 187)

19. O God! O God! Behold me! Notwithstanding my lowliness and my lack of capacity and ability, I am bent upon the accomplishment of the greatest works, aiming to promote Thy Word amongst the republics and resolved to spread Thy teachings amongst all mankind. Far be it from me to become confirmed in this work save Thou mayest assist me with the breaths of the Holy Spirit! Make me victorious through the armies of Thy Supreme Kingdom and encircle me with Thy confirmations, which shall make the moth the eagle, the drop the river and the seas, and the scintillas the suns and the moons!

O Lord! Confirm me with Thy insuperable power and Thy penetrating potency, so that my tongue may speak out Thy praises and glorifications amongst Thy creatures, and my heart become overflowed with the wine of Thy love and knowledge. Verily, Thou art the powerful to do that which Thou willest, and Thou art might over all things!
(Baha'i Scriptures, p. 513)

20. It is at such times that the friends of God avail themselves of the occasion, seize the opportunity, rush forth and win the prize. If their task is to be confined to good conduct and advice, nothing will be accomplished. They must speak out, expound the proofs, set forth clear arguments, draw irrefutable conclusions establishing the truth of the manifestation of the Sun of Reality.
(The Compilation of Compilations vol II, p. 299)

21. In this wondrous Dispensation the favours of the Glorious Lord are vouchsafed unto the handmaidens of the Merciful. Therefore, they should, like unto men, seize the prize and excel in the field, so that it will be proven and made manifest that the penetrative influence of the Word of God in this new Dispensation hath caused women to be equal with men, and that in the arena of tests they will outdo others. Therefore, the true

bondsmen of the Blessed Beauty must be revived by the spirit of detachment, and refreshed by the breezes of attraction. With hearts overflowing with the love of God, with souls gladdened by the heavenly glad-tidings, and with extreme humility and lowliness, let them speak out with eloquent speech, and praise and glorify the Great Lord, for they are the manifestations of His bounty and adorned with the crown of splendour.
(The Compilation of Compilations vol II, p. 396)

22. Now is the time to speak forth and to deliver speeches, the time to teach and to give testimony. Loosen thy tongue, expound the truths, and establish the validity of the verse: "The All-Merciful hath taught the Qur'án." The Holy Spirit speaketh through the innermost essence of the human tongue, God's Spirit which desireth communion with the human soul unfoldeth the truths, the Faithful Spirit writeth down and the Spirit of the Ancient of Days confirmeth. I swear by that Peerless Beauty, Who is in the Unseen Kingdom, that when the leaves loose their tongues in praise and glorification of the All-Loving Lord, and in teaching the Cause of the Kind Lord, the concourse of the Kingdom and the inmates of the Unseen Realms will give ear, and cry out with exclamations of extreme joy and jubilation.

Glory be upon thee and upon every handmaiden who is steadfast in the Covenant.
(The Compilation of Compilations vol II, p. 397)

23. Believe thou in God, and keep thine eyes fixed upon the exalted Kingdom; be thou enamoured of the Abha Beauty; stand thou firm in the Covenant; yearn thou to ascend into the Heaven of the Universal Light. Be thou severed from this world, and reborn through the sweet scents of holiness that blow from the realm of the All-Highest. Be thou a summoner to love, and be thou kind to all the human race. Love thou the children of men and share in their sorrows. Be thou of those who foster peace. Offer thy friendship, be worthy of trust. Be thou a balm to every sore, be thou a medicine for every ill. Bind thou the souls together. Recite thou the verses of guidance. Be engaged in the worship of thy Lord, and rise up to lead the people aright. Loose thy tongue and teach, and let thy face be bright with the fire of God's love. Rest thou not for a moment, seek thou to draw no easeful breath. Thus mayest thou become a sign and symbol of God's love, and a banner of His grace.

(Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 26)

24. When delivering the glad tidings, speak out and say: the Promised One of all the world's peoples hath now been made manifest. For each and every people, and every religion, await a Promised One, and Bahá'u'lláh is that One Who is awaited by all; and therefore the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh will bring about the oneness of mankind, and the tabernacle of unity will be upraised on the heights of the world, and the banners of the universality of all humankind will be unfurled on the peaks of the earth. When thou dost loose thy tongue to deliver this great good news, this will become the means of teaching the people.

(Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 101)