

## Workshop 1: *A Mighty Spiritual Enterprise*

### Quotations

**A**nd yet, is not the object of every Revelation to effect a transformation in the whole character of mankind, a transformation that shall manifest itself, both outwardly and inwardly, that shall affect both its inner life and external conditions? For if the character of mankind be not changed, the futility of God's universal Manifestation would be apparent.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán: The Book of Certitude*)

**T**he work advancing in every corner of the globe today represents the latest stage of the ongoing Bahá'í endeavour to create the nucleus of the glorious civilization enshrined in His teachings, the building of which is an enterprise of infinite complexity and scale, one that will demand centuries of exertion by humanity to bring to fruition. There are no shortcuts, no formulas. Only as effort is made to draw on insights from His Revelation, to tap into the accumulating knowledge of the human race, to apply His teachings intelligently to the life of humanity, and to consult on the questions that arise will the necessary learning occur and capacity be developed.

(*Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world, Ridván 2010*)

**T**hough that goal [penetration of the divine light into all the remaining territories of the globe] is far from being fulfilled, the light already blazes intensely in many a region. In some countries it shines in every cluster. In the land where that inextinguishable light was first ignited, it burns bright despite those who would snuff it out. In diverse nations it achieves a steady glow across whole neighbourhoods and villages, as candle after candle in heart after heart is lighted by the Hand of Providence; it illuminates thoughtful conversation at every level of human interaction; it casts its beams upon a myriad initiatives taken to promote the well-being of a people. And in every instance it radiates from a faithful believer, a vibrant community, a loving Spiritual Assembly—each a beacon of light against the gloom.

(*Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world, Ridván 2011*)

**W**e greet you with immense affection on this special day, an occasion for calling to mind the power of the Covenant, that power which “pulsateth in the body of the contingent world” and forges enduring bonds of love among the believers. In the months since Ridván, we have seen the evidences of this dynamic power in the unified activity of Bahá'u'lláh's followers, led so ably by the institutions of the Cause in each continent and country, as the friends everywhere have sought with characteristic creativity and determination to minister to the needs of an ailing world. Your resilience and your unwavering commitment to the well-being of those around you, persistent through all difficulties, have filled us with tremendous hope.

(*The Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world, 25 November 2020*)

### Questions

- a) Processes of disintegration not only create space for the emergence of new ways of organizing the world, they also do much to increase the receptivity of the masses to receive Bahá'u'lláh's Message. What can be said about the current state of receptivity in New Zealand?
  - b) What role does the power of the Covenant play in our endeavours? What are some of the characteristics that the House of Justice has observed in the community of Bahá'u'lláh's followers since last Ridván?
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## Quotations

**T**he coming global endeavour to which the friends will be summoned calls for the application of proven strategies, systematic action, informed analysis, and keen insight. Yet above all, it is a spiritual enterprise, and its true character should never be obscured. The urgency to act is impelled by the world's desperate condition. All that the followers of Bahá'u'lláh have learned in the last twenty years must culminate in the accomplishments of the next five.

(The Universal House of Justice, in a message dated 29 December 2015 to the Conference of the Continental Boards of Counsellors)

**A** few, unaware of the power latent in human endeavour, consider this matter as highly impracticable, nay even beyond the scope of man's utmost efforts. Such is not the case, however. On the contrary, thanks to the unfailing grace of God, ...nothing whatsoever can be regarded as unattainable. Endeavour, ceaseless endeavour, is required. Nothing short of an indomitable determination can possibly achieve it. Many a cause which past ages have regarded as purely visionary, yet in this day has become most easy and practicable. Why should this most great and lofty Cause -- the day-star of the firmament of true civilization and the cause of the glory, the advancement, the well-being and the success of all humanity -- be regarded as impossible of achievement? Surely the day will come when its beauteous light shall shed illumination upon the assemblage of man.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, pp. 66-67)

## Question

- a) Share your reflections on the spiritual nature of the enterprise that the global Baha’i community is engaged in.