

## **ADVERSITY and HARDSHIP**

No comfort can be secured by any soul in this world, from monarch down to the most humble commoner. If once this life should offer a man a sweet cup, a hundred bitter ones will follow; such is the condition of this world. The wise man, therefore, doth not attach himself to this mortal life and doth not depend on it; at some moments, even, he eagerly wisheth for death that he may thereby be freed from these sorrows and afflictions.

Abdul-Baha

Behold the disturbances which, for many a long year, have afflicted the earth, and perturbation that hath seized its peoples. It hath either been ravaged by war, or tormented by sudden and unforeseen calamities. Though the world is encompassed with misery and distress, yet no man hath paused to reflect what the cause or source of that may be. Whenever the True Counsellor uttered a word in admonishment, lo, they all denounced Him as a mover of mischief and rejected His claim. How bewildering, how confusing is such behaviour!

Baha'u'llah

Were men to abide by and observe the divine Teachings, every trace of evil would be banished from the face of the earth.

Tablets of Baha'u'llah

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity.

Gleanings 285

They who have been inebriated with the wine of Thy knowledge, these, verily, hasten to meet every manner of adversity in their longing to pass into Thy presence.

Prayers and Meditations 7

O SON OF MAN!

The true lover yearneth for tribulation even as doth the rebel for forgiveness and the sinful for mercy.

O SON OF MAN!

If adversity befall thee not in My path, how canst thou walk in the ways of them that are content with My pleasure? If trials afflict thee not in thy longing to meet Me, how wilt thou attain the light in thy love for My beauty?

HW A50

O SON OF MAN!

My calamity is My providence, outwardly it is fire and vengeance, but inwardly it is light and mercy. Hasten thereunto that thou mayest become an eternal light and an immortal spirit. This is My command unto thee, do thou observe it.

HW A51

Glory be to Thee, O my God! But for the tribulations which are suffered in Thy path, how could Thy true lovers be recognised; and were it not for the trials which are borne for love of Thee, how could the station of such as yearn for Thee be revealed? Thy might beareth me witness! The companions of all who adore Thee are the tears they shed, and the comforters of such as seek Thee are the groans they utter, and the food of them who haste to meet Thee is the fragments of their broken hearts...

Prayer #30

The hearts that yearn after Thee, O my God, are burnt up with the fire of their longing for Thee, and the eyes of them that love Thee weep sore by reason of their crushing separation from Thy court, and the voice of the lamentation of such as have set their hopes on Thee hath gone forth throughout Thy dominions.

Thou hast Thyself, O my God, protected them by Thy sovereign might, from both extremities. But for the burning of their souls and the sighing of their hearts, they would be drowned in the midst of their tears, and but for the flood of their tears they would be burnt up by the fire of their hearts and the heat of their souls. Methinks they are like the angels which Thou hast created of snow and of fire...

Thy glory is my witness! At each daybreak they who love Thee wake to find the cup of woe set before their faces, because they have believed in Thee and acknowledged Thy signs...

Help them through Thy strengthening grace. I beseech Thee, O my God, to suffer patiently in their love for Thee, and unveil to their eyes what Thou hast decreed for them behind the Tabernacle of Thine unfailing protection...

Prayers and Meditations of Baha'u'llah Page 120

Nothing save that which profiteth them can befall my loved ones.

Baha'u'llah ADJ 69

All the sorrow and the grief that exist come from the world of matter - the spiritual world bestows only the joy!

Abdul Baha  
The Reality of Man 20

Sorrow not if, in these days and on this earthly plane, things contrary to your wishes have been ordained and manifested by God, for days of blissful joy, of heavenly delight, are assuredly in store for you. Worlds, holy and spiritually glorious, will be unveiled to your eyes. You are destined by Him, in this world and hereafter, to partake of their benefits, to share in their joys, and to obtain a portion of their sustaining grace. To each and every one of them you will, no doubt, attain.

Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah P 329

If there is no pain this journey will never end.

The Valley of Love

Men who suffer not attain no perfection.

Paris Talks 51

Know ye that trials and tribulations have, from time immemorial, been the lot of the chosen Ones of God and His beloved, and such of His servants as are detached from all else but Him...

Gleanings 129

Be thou neither grieved nor despondent over what hath come to pass. This trouble overtook thee as thou didst walk the path of God, wherefore it should bring thee joy. We addressed the friends in writing ere this, and made a verbal statement as well, to the effect that the friends in the West will unquestionably have their share of the calamities befalling the friends in the East. It is inevitable that, walking the pathway of Baha'u'llah, they too will become targets for persecution by the oppressors...Now ye, as well, must certainly become my partners to some slight degree, and accept your share of tests and sorrows. But these episodes shall pass away, while that abiding glory and eternal life shall remain unchanged for-ever. Moreover, these afflictions shall be the cause of great advancement.

WAB 238

O thou servant of God! Do not grieve at the afflictions and calamities that have befallen thee. All calamities and afflictions have been created for man so that he may spurn this mortal world - a world to which he is much attached. When he experienceth severe trials and hardships, then his nature will recoil and he will desire the eternal realm - a realm which is sanctified from all afflictions and calamities. Such is the case with the man who is wise...Praise thou God that thou hast been tried and hast experienced such a test. Be patient and grateful. Turn thy face to the divine Kingdom and strive that thou mayest acquire merciful

characteristics... Endeavour to become indifferent to the pleasures of this world and to its comfort, to remain firm and steadfast in the Covenant and to promulgate the Cause of God. WAB 239

The world and its vanities, and its glory, and whatever delights it can offer, are all, in the sight of God, as worthless as, nay, even more contemptible than, dust and ashes...The things of the earth ill beseem you. Cast them away unto such as desire them.

Gleanings 304

The world is but a show vain and empty, a mere nothing, bearing the semblance of reality. Set not your affections on it.

Gleanings 328

Know ye that by "the world" is meant your unawareness of Him Who is your Maker, and your absorption in aught else but Him...Whatsoever detereth you, in this Day, from loving God is nothing but the world. Flee it, that ye may be numbered with the blest.

Gleanings 276

Isa 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these [things].

The evil spirit, Satan or whatever is interpreted as evil, refers to the lower nature in man. This baser nature is symbolised in various ways...God has never created an evil spirit; all such ideas and nomenclature are symbols expressing the mere human or earthly nature of man.

Abdul Baha Addresses and Tablets

Watch over yourselves, for the Evil One is lying in wait, ready to entrap you...The Evil One is he that hindereth the rise and obstructeth the spiritual progress of the children of men.

Gleanings 94

Light requires darkness.  
Life requires death.  
Hot requires cold.

Health requires disease.  
Knowledge requires ignorance.  
Wealth requires poverty.  
Peace requires war.  
Good requires evil.  
Godliness requires ungodliness.

1. Forgiveness - Somebody must do you a wrong, somebody must hurt you. How else can you show your ability to forgive.
2. Kindness - Somebody must be in need for you to show kindness.
3. Justice - For you to show justice, injustice must exist.
4. Wisdom - The want of knowledge must exist for you to show wisdom.
5. Faithfulness - Requires the presence of many distractions and temptations.
6. Chastity - For this to be discerned you must confront a lack of chastity.
7. The ability to discern the right path to God - Requires that many paths, many conflicting religions and philosophies shall exist. Thereby the true seeker may be discerned.
8. Patience under trials and tribulations - Requires many trials and tribulations.
9. Peace-makers - To be distinguished as a peace-maker you must encounter a battle.

As to the soul of man after death, it remains in the degree of purity to which it has evolved during life in the physical body.

'Abdu'l-Baha PUT 66-67

Know ye of a certainty, that the powers of the Kingdom of Abha are with you...Not for one moment are ye alone, not for a second are ye left to your selves.  
(Mighty River)