

Is World Peace a Dream or a Destiny?

We see the stirrings of a new dawn in human history. Throughout all ages, dictators have dominated the world. Recently we have seen them falling like autumn leaves. "After President Roosevelt offered a flowery toast to Premier Stalin as a lover of peace, the Soviets awaited a toast by Churchill. Churchill growled in a whisper, 'But Stalin does not want peace.' But at the urging of his staff, he rose and said, 'To Premier Stalin, whose conduct of foreign policy manifests a desire for peace.' Then, away from the translator, he muttered, 'A piece of Poland, a piece of Czechoslovakia, a piece of Romania.'" The age of those dictators is finally coming to an end.

The Bahá'í Faith teaches that world peace is inevitable, and that genuine peace can only come through world unity. If the various nations, religions, and races were unified, there would be no reason for war. But without unity, war or preparation for war will continue.

Had humanity responded fully and promptly to Bahá'u'lláh's plan for peace, the wars of the 20th Century—the most deadly in human history—would not have happened. Similarly, if

the world awakens to the relevance and urgency of the Bahá'í teachings now, the forces that generate war will disappear. War is a symptom of a disease: The disease is disunity. As soon as Bahá'u'lláh's unifying remedy is applied, the disease will vanish.

The well-being of mankind, its peace and security are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established...Soon will the present day Order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead.¹

Bahá'u'lláh

A captain once invited three friends—a Jew, a Christian, and a Muslim—to his ship. While the three were sitting on the deck enjoying the scenery, a huge wave threw them into the sea. They panicked and began shouting and moving in different directions. The captain came quickly to their rescue. He grabbed the hair of the first one. But it came off; it was a wig. Then he got hold of the arm of the second one. But it came off; it too was artificial. Finally he reached for the leg of the third one. You guessed it, that too came off. The three were near drowning, and each of them was crying in desperation, "Save me, save me!" The captain shouted back, "I will, only if you stick together!" The human race can only survive if its members stick together.

The only thing the world has in common at this point in history is "isms:"

sectarian-ism, race-ism, sex-ism, national-ism, and commun-ism. All these isms must change into one-ism.

Recognition of the oneness of the human race is the backbone of lasting peace. We live on a fragile spacecraft. Our survival depends on cooperation; we need each other. We need someone to sing and someone to hear; someone to complain and someone to listen; someone to cry and someone to wipe away the tears; someone to tell jokes and someone to laugh; and someone to get sick and someone to offer a cure. A doctor told a young patient that her tonsils had to be removed. The patient asked, "Will removing them damage my health?" "No, your tonsils serve no purpose" the doctor told her. "Why then did God give them to me?" asked the inquiring patient. "Well, I think He gave them to you so that I can afford my next vacation!"

We all have a responsibility to do our share to free the human race from the scourge of war. ***We should not underestimate our capacity to change the world.*** What brings about the change, what generates love and peace and unity, is always God's Power. We need to empty ourselves and, like reeds, allow God's Voice to awaken and enchant us—and to echo that Voice until it is heard in every part of the world by every citizen of our planet. Let us pray that the powers we lay at the service of arms may be elevated to

a higher purpose: creating hope, beauty, and happiness in our lives. Without this elevation, we will perish in despair.

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1. *The Bahá'í Peace Program*, Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1967, p. 23.



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