

43) Personal Covenant to Collective Knowledge



Mea culpa, no other or institution is accountable for this student work. By what Medium does the Lesser Peace unfold to the Most Great Peace?

O Kings of the earth! We see you increasing every year your expenditures, and laying the burden thereof on your subjects. This, verily, is wholly and grossly unjust. Fear the sighs and tears of this Wronged One, and lay not excessive burdens on your peoples. Do not rob them to rear palaces for yourselves; nay rather choose for them that which ye choose for yourselves. Thus We unfold to your eyes that which profiteth you, if ye but perceive. Your people are your treasures. Beware lest your rule violate the commandments of God, and ye deliver your wards to the hands of the robber. By them ye rule, by their means ye subsist, by their aid ye conquer. Yet, how disdainfully ye look upon them! How strange, how very strange!

Now that ye have refused the Most Great Peace, hold ye fast unto this, the Lesser Peace, that haply ye may in some degree better your own condition and that of your dependents. The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh, 2005

Most Great Peace had the popular interpretation by the larger Baha'i community that is was the golden age of the Baha'i faith was when nearly everybody on earth would be a Baha'i and all the governments would follow the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and all the religions recognize each other is the same religion. Humanity will have achieved true unity. It was taken to be the world wide Victory of the Bahá'í Cause.

However, this quote from the Tablet to the Kings, Bahá'u'lláh indicates it may have another meaning. Because the kings of the Earth "have refused the Most Great Peace", so Bahá'u'lláh is offering to them the Lesser Peace as an alternative. How could the Kings have rejected the Most Great Peace, as popularly interpreted above, when it was not occurred to reject?

From early Baha'i writings, including those in the collection Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, the popular understanding of the Lesser Peace was that it is a time of international agreement that would put an end to international war. A statement from the Seven Candles of Unity was pointed at as indication that the Lesser Peace would occur in the 20th century. This caused many a substantial confusion, because, well into the 21st century, we are still engaged in multiple wars at this time.

The fifth candle is the unity of nations—a unity which, in this century, will be securely established, causing all the peoples of the world to regard themselves as citizens of one common fatherland. `Abdu'l-Bahá

When war continued after the 20th century, this student also experienced a bit of confusion and disappointment. This thesis is a sorting to understand what happened to the Lesser Peace.

There fore, we may have not fully understood the meaning of Lesser Peace or Most Geat Peace. This student is fond of Alí's Tablet of Glorification. https://bahai-library.com/imam-ali_khutbat_iftikhar The first and foremost meaning of divine scripture pertains to the Manifestation, as the Holy Spirit, Primal Will. So a concept in scripture like Most Great Peace has a meaning pertaining to the Holy Spirit, The Primal Will, the Manifestation. Then by inductive reasoning, a personal relationship with Bahá'u'lláh is the Most Great Peace. He is what

the kings of the earth refused. The Lesser Peace is therefore ...

The station of `Abdu'l-Bahá was "publicly" accepted by the our encounter with Him as the mass media documents profusely attest. Bahá'u'lláh has invited the kings, on behalf of their dependents to "cleave to the Lesser Peace". The kings did not, how ever, we the beneficiaries have.

This student's review of the literature has brought this personal understanding of The Most Great Peace mentioned in the Tablet to the Kings. The kings did not personally recognize that the Bahá'u'lláh as the Manifestation of this age. Personal recognition of Bahá'u'lláh is the Most Great Peace. Or even more succinctly, Bahá'u'lláh is the Most Great Peace. This, then, allows for understanding that the Lesser Peace is collective recognition of the Bahá'í principles, of the Bahá'í teachings. Or even more succinctly, `Abdu'l-Bahá is the Lesser Peace.

Now that ye have refused the Most Great Peace (Bahá'u'lláh) , hold ye fast unto this, the Lesser Peace (Abdu'l-Bahá) that haply ye may in some degree better your own condition and that of your dependents.

These principles were firmly established in the Century of Light. These principles were established by `Abdu'l-Bahá during his 1910-1914 travels to the west. And the international peace between nations is now the understanding, as a dominant thought of humanity ... that war is a bad idea. `Abdu'l-Bahá taught, explained, exemplified, inspired, pointed to, encouraged the teachings and principles of Bahá'u'lláh with every deed and breath. He is the Bahá'í principles.

The 12 Bahá'í principles:

1. Independent investigation of truth
2. Oneness of the world of humanity (the pivotal principle)
3. The fundamental unity of all religions
4. The necessity of religion's being the cause of unity
5. The harmony of religion, science, and reason
6. The equality of men and women
7. The abandonment of all prejudices
8. Universal peace
9. Universal education
10. A spiritual solution to the economic problem
11. A universal auxiliary language
12. An international tribunal.

We know `Abdu'l-Bahá is the Exemplar of the Bahá'í teachings; Bahá'u'lláh bestowed that title

upon Him. In His talks given and His personhood publicly exposed all across Europe and the North America, He correlated the social impact of a personal relationship with Bahá'u'lláh to the unfolding of the Most Great Peace and Lesser Peace accomplished by the collective acceptance of the principle teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Baha'i world community is no longer only focusing on announcing these principles because humanity by and large has heard these principles, and they are accepted by them. Humanity has yet to re-cognize their true Source. So the crowd of humanity is now moving civilization in the direction of the Lesser Peace. The Baha'i community is integrated with the world community , similar to "the leaven which leaveneth the bread", and pressing forward and learning the skills of spiritual community building based on the principles of service, prayer gatherings, meaningful purposeful conversation, consultative learning, and building a world civilization based on the principles stated above.

Human creatures have reached a degree of physical, material perfection. It is now time that we move towards spiritual and intellectual perfection. We are slower than our impatience demands. It is the personal covenant that we make with the Manifestation that unfolds as changes to the collective spiritual state of humanity, as the Most Great Peace the kings rejected.

"There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self." - Aldous Huxley

Aldous, our much loved historic thinker, the source of power and inspiration for personal transformation lies in our relation with the divine Sources of Truth, the Manifestations. How strange these times humanity is delaying re-cognition our Sources?

Elderly Baha'i student,
Clyde Arthur Keys