

The Promises and Assurances

INTRODUCTION: *Approaching the threshold...*

The promises and assurances of Bahá'u'lláh to His believers inspire confidence and guarantee success in all our endeavors to help develop a meaningful, peaceful, and happy world. He promises the appearance of “*divine beings*” of such spiritual character as to evoke wonderment and astonishment. Souls with outstanding spiritual traits who can, and will, teach and serve with marvelous courage, and demonstrate a remarkable steadfastness. He promises all who arise to teach His Cause, the assistance of the Concourse on high, and assures us of ultimate success and victory. May the following sacred verses inspire confidence in teaching and service, and a steady resolve to remain firm and steadfast on the Path.



*“O My Servant! Obey Me and I shall make thee like unto Myself.
I say ‘Be,’ and it is, and thou shalt say ‘Be,’ and it shall be.”*
— Bahá'u'lláh

OBJECTIVE: *A look to the horizon...*

Facilitator

Review the following objective with the participants:

The objective of this study is to become informed, inspired, and strengthened by the promises and assurances of Bahá'u'lláh.

THE STUDY PROCESS: *Attaining the water of life...*

Facilitator

Review the following study process with the participants. Then study the numbered quotations that follow, one at a time as described below.

1. **READING:** *A drink from the cup of guidance...*

A. Read the quotation out loud in its entirety.

2. **CONFIRMING MEANING:** *A spray from the fountain of light...*

To better understand certain words used in the quotation, take turns with the following:

A. Each participant **choose a word** from the quotation and **state it** for the whole group to hear. (Like a fun game – pick a word!) Then...

- B. Read out loud the sentence that contains the **word** you selected, **while substituting for that word**, its given phrase, definition, or synonym from the boxes below the quotation.
- C. Repeat A and B above until everyone is satisfied with their understanding of the words.
- D. **Read the quotation** out loud again in its entirety.

3. **FINDING VALUE: *Gem-like discoveries...***

In the tradition of the “talking circle” ask the participants to take turns sharing, one at a time, in a round, **WHAT WAS PERSONALLY MOST MEANINGFUL FROM THE QUOTATION AND WHY.** (Remember show and tell?) Remind the participants that *whatever* is shared should be considered as a valid perspective, and that in this *exploratory study* there are no right or wrong perceptions and no lesser or greater understandings. All are therefore asked to avoid comments, corrections, or judgments on the perceived insights of others. This is not a time for questions and answers, it is an exercise for the purpose of bonding hearts by sharing and receiving personal heartfelt perspectives without discussion.

QUOTATIONS: *Within the meadows of Thy nearness...*

1. *The day is approaching when God will have, by an act of His Will, raised up a race of men the nature of which is inscrutable to all save God, the All-Powerful, the Self-Subsisting. He shall purify them from the defilement of idle fancies and corrupt desires, shall lift them up to the heights of holiness, and shall cause them to manifest the signs of His sovereignty and might upon earth. Thus hath it been ordained by God, the All-Glorious, the All-Loving.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 6)

corrupt: morally degenerate or perverted
defilement: corruption, violation, and desecration of what is sacred
desires: cravings for enjoyment or satisfaction
fancies: unreal and unreasonable notions invented in the mind
idle: worthless and useless
inscrutable: not easily understood; unfathomable
manifest: make known, evident, or obvious
nature: character and disposition

ordained: established by command or order
purify: cleanse from fault, blame, and sin
race of men: a class or kind of people unified by common interests, habits, or characteristics
Self-Subsisting: One able to be and exist without the aid of another
signs: indications of the presence or existence
sovereignty: all-encompassing, all-pervading, and supreme spiritual influence and power

2. *I swear by the one true God! This is the day of those who have detached themselves from all but Him, the day of those who have recognized His unity, the day whereon God createth, with the hands of His power, divine beings and imperishable essences, every one of whom will cast the world and all that is therein behind him, and will wax so steadfast in the Cause of God that every wise and understanding heart will marvel.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, cited by Shoghi Effendi in *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 85)

beings: living souls
cast: rid himself of by throwing
day: specified time, age, or period
detached: in their heart, disconnected
divine: God inspired; holy; sacred
essences: beings possessing or exhibiting their permanent, real, or ultimate nature
imperishable: ever living and enduring
marvel: be filled with surprise, wonder, and astonishment

recognized: formally accepted and acknowledged
steadfast: steady and unwavering
unity: being as one and the same; “*The essence of belief in Divine unity consisteth in regarding Him Who is the Manifestation of God and Him Who is the invisible, the inaccessible, the unknowable Essence as one and the same.*” (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 167)
wax: grow in strength and duration

3. *There lay concealed within the Holy Veil, and prepared for the service of God, a company of His chosen ones who shall be manifested unto men, who shall aid His Cause, who shall be afraid of no one, though the entire human race rise up and war against them. These are the ones who, before the gaze of the dwellers on earth and the denizens of heaven, shall arise and, shouting aloud, acclaim the name of the Almighty, and summon the children of men to the path of God, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, cited by Shoghi Effendi in *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 85)

acclaim: recognize with enthusiasm and praise
Cause: zealously advocated and upheld System of belief [the Bahá'í Faith]
chosen ones: followers of the Manifestation during the time of His Dispensation
concealed: hidden from exposure or recognition
denizens: inhabitants or residents
dwellers: residents with their attention directed

manifested: made known, evident, or obvious
path: life directed towards the way
service: performance of beneficial deeds and works
summon: call upon for a specified action
Veil: “*This is the Decree of God, concealed ere now within the veil of impenetrable mystery.*” (Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 37)

4. *Verily, We behold you from Our realm of glory, and shall aid whosoever will arise for the triumph of Our Cause with the hosts of the Concourse on high and a company of Our favoured angels.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 39)

aid: give help and assistance to
angels: spiritual or heavenly beings considered superior to man in power and intelligence; “The meaning of ‘angels’ is the confirmations of God and His celestial powers.” (‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *SWAB*, p. 81)
arise: actively come forth
behold: look upon and observe
Cause: zealously advocated and upheld System of belief [the Bahá'í Faith]
Concourse on high: souls gathered together from the higher spiritual realm

favoured: specially advantaged and gifted
hosts: multiple supporters and attendants; “*In this Most Great Revelation goodly deeds and a praiseworthy character are regarded as the hosts of God, likewise is His blessed and holy Word.*” (Bahá'u'lláh, *TOB*, p. 256)
Our: used by one in authority to denote himself
realm: place or sphere of reality
triumph: conquest of success and victory
We: used by one in authority to denote himself

5. *By the righteousness of God! Whoso openeth his lips in this Day and maketh mention of the name of his Lord, the hosts of Divine inspiration shall descend upon him from the heaven of My name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. On him shall also descend the Concourse on high, each bearing aloft a chalice of pure light. Thus hath it been foreordained in the realm of God’s Revelation, by the behest of Him Who is the All-Glorious, the Most Powerful.*

(*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 280)

All-Knowing: sole One completely informed, knowledgeable, and understanding
All-Wise: sole One with complete wisdom and understanding
bearing aloft: holding up to a great height
behest: authoritative command or order
chalice: drinking cup or goblet
Concourse on high: souls gathered together from the higher spiritual realm
descend: suddenly come; suddenly appear
Divine: God given

foreordained: set forth in advance
heaven: sublime or exalted place or condition
hosts: multiple supporters and attendants; “*In this Most Great Revelation goodly deeds and a praiseworthy character are regarded as the hosts of God, likewise is His blessed and holy Word.*” (Bahá'u'lláh, *Fountain of Wisdom*, p. 234 ¶17.91)
inspiration: power, influence, and guidance
light: illuminating spiritual knowledge
maketh mention: calls to someone’s attention

6. *By God besides Whom is none other God! Should any one arise for the triumph of Our Cause, him will God render victorious though tens of thousands of enemies be leagued against him. And if his love for Me wax stronger, God will establish his ascendancy over all the powers of earth and heaven. Thus have We breathed the spirit of power into all regions.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, cited in *The Power of Divine Assistance*, p. 204)

arise: actively come forth
ascendancy: controlling influence; domination
breathed: instilled or infused
Cause: zealously advocated and upheld System of belief [the Bahá'í Faith]

leagued: united with common interests or goals
Our: used by one in authority to denote himself
render: cause to become
triumph: conquest of success and victory
wax: in strength and duration grows

7. *For whosoever standeth firm and steadfast in this holy, this glorious, and exalted Revelation, such power shall be given him as to enable him to face and withstand all that is in heaven and on earth. Of this God is Himself a witness.*

(*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 330)

enable: provide the means and opportunity for
firm: certain and unchangeable under pressure
power: abilities to produce effects or to influence things or people

standeth: maintains a state
steadfast: steady and unwavering
witness: one to furnish evidence or proof

8. *Arise to further My Cause, and to exalt My Word amongst men. We are with you at all times, and shall strengthen you through the power of truth. We are truly almighty. Whoso hath recognized Me, will arise and serve Me with such determination that the powers of earth and heaven shall be unable to defeat his purpose.*

(*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 137)

almighty: with absolute power over all
arise: actively come forth
determination: definite and firm resolve
exalt: highly praise, elevate, and glorify
further: help promote and advance
power: influence and force

recognized: formally accepted and acknowledged
serve: perform beneficial deeds or works [for]
strengthen: make stronger and more durable
We: used by one in authority to denote himself
Word: Revelation of God; today, Bahá'u'lláh's Writings

9. *The whole earth is now in a state of pregnancy. The day is approaching when it will have yielded its noblest fruits, when from it will have sprung forth the loftiest trees, the most enchanting blossoms, the most heavenly blessings.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, cited by Shoghi Effendi in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 5)

blessings: special benefits of happiness and welfare
enchanting: deeply moving and charmingly influential
fruits: results, outcomes, or consequences

loftiest: greatest and highest
noblest: superior in excellence or value
pregnancy: having possibilities for significant meaningfulness, quality, and development
yielded: given in return as a natural outcome

10. *The day is approaching when God will have exalted His Cause and magnified His testimony in the eyes of all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth. Place, in all circumstances, Thy whole trust in Thy Lord, and fix Thy gaze upon Him, and turn away from all them that repudiate His truth. Let God, Thy Lord, be Thy sufficing succourer and helper. We have pledged Ourselves to secure Thy triumph upon earth and to exalt Our Cause above all men....*

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 194)

Cause: zealously advocated and upheld System of belief [the Bahá'í Faith]
circumstances: conditions and situations
day: specified time, age, or period
exalt: raise to an elevated and glorified state
exalted: raised to an elevated and glorified state
fix: set firmly
gaze: steady, intent, and eager attention
magnified: caused to be held in great esteem and respect

Our: used by one in authority to denote himself
pledged: given a binding promise from
repudiate: refuse to accept
secure: make sure, certain, and guarantee
succourer: one to give aid and relief
sufficing: competent and capable
testimony: divine decree attested in the sacred Writings [of Bahá'u'lláh]
triumph: success and victory
trust: absolute and assured reliance

11. *The day is approaching when that which God hath purposed will have prevailed and thou shalt behold the earth transformed into the all-glorious paradise. Thus hath it been inscribed by the Pen of Revelation upon this weighty Tablet.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 144)

behold: see or observe
inscribed: written or engraved
paradise: place of blissful and delightful happiness
Pen of Revelation: refers to the instrumentation of the Manifestation of God, Bahá'u'lláh

prevailed: gained dominance and control through strength and triumph
purposed: intended or determined
Tablet: divinely revealed Scripture
transformed: changed in condition and character
weighty: serious and greatly important

12. *Grieve thou not at men's failure to apprehend the Truth. Ere long thou shalt find them turning towards God, the Lord of all mankind. We have indeed, through the potency of the Most Sublime Word, encompassed the whole world, and the time is approaching when God will have subdued the hearts of all that dwell on earth. He is in truth the Omnipotent, the All-Powerful.*

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Fountain of Wisdom*, pp. 241-42 ¶17.115)

apprehend: come to know and appreciate
encompassed: surrounded and included
ere: before
grieve: distress, suffer, and sorrow
Omnipotent: infinitely powerful and influential
potency: influential power and force

subdued: conquered and brought into compliance
sublime: awe inspiring because of supreme spiritual, intellectual, or moral worth
Word: Revelation of God; today, Bahá'u'lláh's Writings

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APPLICATION: *Showing forth divine light...*

Facilitator

Read through #1 together and proceed as stated. Then take time for the participants to write out their individual plans for action in #2. (these are not shared) When everyone has finished, move on to the closing reading.

1. IMAGINING THE POSSIBILITIES: *Visions of radiant lights...*

Bahá'u'lláh wrote: “*It is incumbent upon every man of insight and understanding to strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action....*” Imagine how the Bahá'í Teachings in this study class could be translated into reality and action. Take turns sharing the possibilities. Begin your statements with: “*One could....*” Suggest as many ideas as you want.

2. DECIDING ACTION: *Mirroring forth a beam of light...*

From your experience in this study class on *The Promises and Assurances*, describe what **you** are inspired to put into reality and action. ***I will make conscious efforts to...*** _____

My next step will be... _____

CLOSING MEDITATION: *A heart song...*

A promise from Bahá'u'lláh, conveyed by `Abdu'l-Bahá.

O phoenix of that immortal flame kindled in the sacred Tree! Bahá'u'lláh — may my life, my soul, my spirit be offered up as a sacrifice unto His lowly servants — hath, during His last days on earth, given the most emphatic promise that, through the outpourings of the grace of God and the aid and assistance vouchsafed from His Kingdom on high, souls will arise and holy beings appear who, as stars, would adorn the firmament of divine guidance; illumine the dayspring of loving-kindness and bounty; manifest the signs of the unity of God; shine with the light of sanctity and purity; receive their full measure of divine inspiration; raise high the sacred torch of faith; stand firm as the rock and immovable as the mountain; and grow to become luminaries in the heavens of His Revelation, mighty channels of His grace, means for the bestowal of God's bountiful care, heralds calling forth the name of the One true God, and establishers of the world's supreme foundation.

These shall labour ceaselessly, by day and by night, shall heed neither trials nor woe, shall suffer no respite in their efforts, shall seek no repose, shall disregard all ease and comfort, and, detached and unsullied, shall consecrate every fleeting moment of their lives to the diffusion of the divine fragrance and the exaltation of God's holy Word. Their faces will radiate heavenly gladness, and their hearts be filled with joy. Their souls will be inspired, and their foundation stand secure. They shall scatter in the world, and travel throughout all regions. They shall raise their voices in every assembly, and adorn and revive every gathering. They shall speak in every tongue, and interpret every hidden meaning. They shall reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom, and manifest unto everyone the signs of God. They shall burn brightly even as a candle in the heart of every assembly, and beam forth as a star upon every horizon. The gentle breezes wafted from the garden of their hearts shall perfume and revive the souls of men, and the revelations of their minds, even as showers, will reinvigorate the peoples and nations of the world.

I am waiting, eagerly waiting for these holy ones to appear; and yet, how long will they delay their coming? My prayer and ardent supplication, at eventide and at dawn, is that these shining stars may soon shed their radiance upon the world, that their sacred countenances may be unveiled to mortal eyes, that the hosts of divine assistance may achieve their victory, and the billows of grace, rising from His oceans above, may flow upon all mankind. Pray ye also and supplicate unto Him that through the bountiful aid of the Ancient Beauty these souls may be unveiled to the eyes of the world.

The glory of God rest upon thee, and upon him whose face is illumined with that everlasting light that shineth from His Kingdom of Glory. (*Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá*, pp. 251-52)