

Baha'i Quotations on Family First

The Baha'i Writings of Baha'u'llah, Abdu'l-Baha and the Guardian Shoghi Effendi all place great emphasis on the importance of the family. The most interesting facet is that this emphasis is placed at even a higher level than the participation of a Baha'i married person in Bahai activities. The unity of the family is the most important. The following is a selection from those Writings on this theme.

"The relationship between husband and wife must be viewed in the context of the Bahá'í ideal of family life. Bahá'u'lláh came to bring unity to the world, and a fundamental unity is that of the family. Therefore, one must believe that the Faith is intended to strengthen the family, not weaken it, and one of the keys to the strengthening of unity is loving consultation."

(Compilations, Lights of Guidance, p. 220)

"If love and agreement are manifest in a single family, that family will advance, become illumined and spiritual; but if enmity and hatred exist within it destruction and dispersion are inevitable."

(Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i World Faith - Abdu'l-Baha Section, p. 229)

"The Bahá'í teachings on sexual morality centre on marriage and the family as the bedrock of the whole structure of human society and are designed to protect and strengthen that divine institution."

(Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 223)

"2150. Note ye how easily, where unity existeth in a given family, the affairs of that family are conducted; what progress the members of that family make, how they prosper in the world. Their concerns are in order, they enjoy comfort and tranquillity, they are secure, their position is assured, they come to be envied by all. Such a family but addeth to its stature and its lasting honour, as day succeedeth day...."

("Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá", sec. 221, p. 279) 381

(also Compilations, The Compilation of Compilations vol II, p. 380)

“2152. Question: What is the attitude of your belief toward the family?”

Answer: According to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh the family, being a human unit, must be educated according to the rules of sanctity. All the virtues must be taught the family. The integrity of the family bond must be constantly considered, and the rights of the individual members must not be transgressed. The rights of the son, the father, the mother -- none of them must be transgressed, none of them must be arbitrary. Just as the son has certain obligations to his father, the father, likewise, has certain obligations to his son. The mother, the sister and other members of the household have their certain prerogatives. All these rights and prerogatives must be conserved, yet the unity of the family must be sustained. The injury of one shall be considered the injury of all; the comfort of each, the comfort of all; the honor of one, the honor of all.”

(*"The Promulgation of Universal Peace: Talks Delivered by 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His Visit to the United States and Canada in 1912" p. 168*)

(Compilations, The Compilation of Compilations vol II, p. 381)

“2156. It is one of the essential teachings of the Faith that unity should be maintained in the home. Of course this does not mean that any member of the family has a right to influence the faith of any other member; and if this is realized by all the members, then it seems certain that unity would be feasible.”

(Compilations, The Compilation of Compilations vol II, p. 382)

“2160. In considering the problems that you and your wife are experiencing, the House of Justice points out that the unity of your family should take priority over any other consideration. Bahá'u'lláh came to bring unity to the world, and a fundamental unity is that of the family. Therefore, we must believe that the Faith is intended to strengthen the family, not weaken it. For example, service to the Cause should not produce neglect of the family. It is important for you to arrange your time so that your family life is harmonious and your household receives the attention it requires.”

(Compilations, The Compilation of Compilations vol II, p. 383)

734. Keys to Strengthening of Family

"The relationship between husband and wife must be viewed in the context of the Bahá'í ideal of family life. Bahá'u'lláh came to bring unity to the world, and a fundamental unity is that of the family. Therefore, one must believe that the Faith is intended to strengthen the family, not weaken it, and one of the keys to the strengthening of unity is loving consultation. The atmosphere within a Bahá'í family as within the community as a whole should express 'the keynote of the Cause of God' which, the beloved Guardian has stated, 'is not dictatorial authority but humble fellowship, not arbitrary power, but the spirit of frank and loving consultation'."

(From letter of the Universal House of Justice December 28, 1980 to the National Spiritual Assembly of New Zealand)

(Compilations, Lights of Guidance, p. 220)

"The Guardian deeply regrets the hostile attitude of some members of your family towards the Cause you have arisen to serve, and he feels that you should do everything in your power to avoid antagonizing them -- short, of course, of giving up your Faith and becoming inactive in it. "

(Compilations, Lights of Guidance, p. 224)