

# DEEP DIVE

Using the Inner processes to understand  
Freedom from Racial Prejudice  
The Reflection process

# Prayer

O Thou Whose tests are a healing medicine to such as are nigh unto Thee, Whose sword is the ardent desire of all them that love Thee, Whose dart is the dearest wish of those hearts that yearn after Thee, Whose decree is the sole hope of them that have recognized Thy truth! I implore Thee, by Thy divine sweetness and by the splendors of the glory of Thy face, to send down upon us from Thy retreats on high that which will enable us to draw nigh unto Thee. Set, then, our feet firm, O my God, in Thy Cause, and enlighten our hearts with the effulgence of Thy knowledge, and illumine our breasts with the brightness of Thy names.

***Bahá'u'lláh***

# Land Acknowledgement

Halton as we know it today, is rich in history and modern traditions of many First Nations and the Métis. From the Anishinabe to the Attawandaron, the Haudenosaunee, and the Métis - these lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped in Indigenous history.

As we gather today on these treaty lands we have the responsibility to honour and respect the four directions, land, waters, plants, animals, ancestors that walked before us, and all the wonderful elements of creation that exist.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation for sharing their traditional territory with us.

# Walk with us, our true brother Shoghi

Close your eyes, relax, imagine that you were summoned into a room where there are two comfortable chairs. You take a seat and wait patiently.

2. The door opens and Abdu'l-Baha walks in. He sits down next to you, greets you and says,

**O SON OF BEING!**

**Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O servant. Bahá'u'lláh**

3. Abdu'l-Baha asks about your day and you decide what standard you wish to work on.

4. Beloved Abdul Baha, in this year, the Centenary of your passing, guide us, keep us steadfast and ask our true brother Shoghi for his help on this road.

# Our purpose in this work

“Here is something I learned from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá which I feel should not be forgotten. His life was not really His life alone; it was the life of every one of us. It was an example for every one of us. A new generation of Bahá’ís is being attracted to the Faith, and a new generation is growing up within the Bahá’í community. They will acquire knowledge of the Faith from books. But this is a living Faith. The Manifestation of God has appeared and initiated a new era. Bahá’ís have lived and worked and died for this Cause. The Faith is not something extraneous; it is not merely something beautiful, logical, just and fair – it is the very blood and fibre of our being, our very life. If men and women all over the world were to arise in ever increasing numbers and make ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s way of life their own, each pursuing His path with zest and confidence, what would the world be like? Would not these individuals be a new race of men?” Aziz Yazdi, *The Baha’i World*

# Our purpose – the oneness of humanity

We have never been left alone.

Baha'u'llah gave us the gift of his precious son, Abdul Baha, the Exemplar, the Centre of the Covenant. Abdul Baha you have shown us how to walk on this spiritual path.

And Shoghi Effendi has given us detailed directions of how we can navigate this spiritual path. And through all this guidance, we have the instructions of how to create the oneness of humanity.

# What is hindering us from our purpose?

- We read our Sacred Writings and look around us, waiting for the oneness of humanity to manifest itself.
- Why do we look outwardly, when we should be looking inwardly to our own hearts?
- Abdul Baha has told us that each one of us has the capacity to become brothers and sisters.
- Let's make Abdul Baha proud of us by believing and doing what he has asked us to do and create the oneness of humanity.

# Lesson for today

1. Summary from last 3 weeks
2. New lesson – Deep Dive - Using the Inner Processes to understand Freedom from Racial Prejudice



# Summary from last 3 weeks

We started the Deep Dive Series of the presentations by examining the three spiritual prerequisites, focusing on the 3<sup>rd</sup> spiritual prerequisite.

Freedom from racial prejudice represents the creation of a new paradigm, whereby we learn a new language, the language of the heart.

- The actualization of the principle of the oneness of humankind, “**the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh revolve**” requires freedom from racial prejudice, from judgement, in our thoughts, our communication, our conduct and deeds.
- The journey requires sacrifice, suffering and discernment if we are going to build our capacity to persevere towards the goal, pivoting towards the oneness of humankind.

# Guidelines for our communication and interaction

**“...They must when coming together turn their faces to the Kingdom on High and ask aid from the Realm of Glory...” Abdul Baha**

What does turning our faces to the Kingdom and asking aid from the Realm of Glory look like?

- **“They must then proceed with the utmost devotion, courtesy, dignity, care and moderation to express their views. They must in every matter search out the truth and not insist upon their own opinion, for stubbornness and persistence in one’s views will lead ultimately to discord and wrangling and the truth will remain hidden.” Abdul Baha**
- First thing we note is that Abdu’l Baha commands us on how to consult together. He tells us we must express our views and we must search out the truth. He tells us that we must all be actively engaged in the consultation. We are NOT spectators but protagonists.
- In addition, we are given the guidelines for our speech: devotion, courtesy, dignity, care and moderation. If, in the gathering, I don’t uphold these guidelines, and insist on my own views, the truth will remain hidden. My insistence will veil the truth not just from me, but from this gathering.

# How do we use the Reflection Process to understand Freedom from Racial Prejudice?

We may become aware that a racial element exists through either reflection on our character and/or reflection on a spiritual opportunity :

- Character improvement: When we approach the Initial Self Assessment with the virtues of humility and honesty, our awareness and consciousness will start to develop. By using the spiritual standards, we become aware that there may be a racial element.
- Spiritual Opportunity: When we have moved from the Double Crusade fallout to a spiritual opportunity, we are now able to reflect on the spiritual opportunity .
  - What are the elements of a spiritual opportunity?
    - Faced with the emotional turmoil of a fallout, we must detach from being overwhelmed by the emotion. This is not avoiding, denying or compartmentalizing our emotional turmoil. It is understanding and being present and not being caught up in the turmoil. This will be a continuing conversation for us.
    - When we are no longer overwhelmed, we will be able to use our discernment, and conduct a sober assessment of the situation.
    - We can now identify and accept our personal responsibility for our share with humility, compassion and honesty, rather than judgement with ourselves, so that we can grow.

# What makes Freedom from Racial Prejudice so distinctive?

1. First is that the standards in Freedom from Racial Prejudice are compounded. For example, Moral Courage and Fortitude is treated as a single element composed of two separate spiritual standards.
2. Second is that if there is a racial element, we will use all 3 spiritual prerequisites in the self examination.
3. For example, let's examine Moral courage and Fortitude:
  - a. One approach to examining this spiritual standard of Moral Courage and Fortitude, is to examine moral courage and then fortitude separately.
  - b. Then we must explore how the 2 spiritual standards of moral courage and fortitude work together.
  - c. When we put these two spiritual standards together, how does the feeling of them existing together in one space change?
  - d. What does Moral courage and Fortitude look like as a single entity?

## Initial Reflection Process – what is latent within us

- How do we move forward through the 3 spiritual prerequisites? By focusing on freedom from racial prejudice with humility and honesty.
- What are the land mines of racial prejudice, hidden within ourselves? How do we bring them to the surface and deactivate them?
- For we CAN do this!
- We have been blessed by Shoghi Effendi giving us the instructions and tools for freeing ourselves from racial prejudice. As we work towards this freedom, we will develop our capacity to work on the betterment of the world towards the oneness of humanity.

# Let's start with the Assessment Practice

- We're going to start with the 3<sup>rd</sup> spiritual prerequisite, as it is the zenith point.
- The standards in freedom from racial prejudice are complex and must be looked at as individual and as compound standards.
- The first spiritual standard is "the sacrifice it must impose"
- Shoghi Effendi explains what sacrifice looks like for the Baha'is of North America.
- Now let us explore what this sacrifice means for us.

# What is sacrifice for us, the Baha'is of North America

**The community of the organized promoters of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the American continent—the spiritual descendants of the dawn-breakers of an heroic Age, who by their death proclaimed the birth of that Faith—must,**

**in turn, usher in, not by their death but through living sacrifice,**

**that promised World Order,**

**the shell ordained to enshrine that priceless jewel, the world civilization, of which the Faith itself is the sole begetter.**

**While its sister communities are bending beneath the tempestuous winds that beat upon them from every side,**

**this community, preserved by the immutable decrees of the omnipotent Ordainer and deriving continual sustenance from the mandate with which the Tablets of the Divine Plan have invested it, is now busily engaged in laying the foundations and in fostering the growth of those institutions which are to herald the approach of the Age destined to witness the birth and rise of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.**

**The Advent of Divine Justice, Shoghi Effendi**

# What is living sacrifice for us, the Baha'is of North America?

**How great, therefore, how staggering the responsibility that must weigh upon the present generation of the American believers,**

**at this early stage in their spiritual and administrative evolution,**

**to weed out, by every means in their power, those faults, habits, and tendencies which they have inherited from their own nation,**

**and to cultivate, patiently and prayerfully, those distinctive qualities and characteristics that are so indispensable to their effective participation in the great redemptive work of their Faith.**

**Incapable as yet, in view of the restricted size of their community and the limited influence it now wields, of producing any marked effect on the great mass of their countrymen,**

**let them focus their attention,**

**for the present,**

**on their own selves,**

**their own individual needs,**

**their own personal deficiencies and weaknesses,**

**ever mindful that every intensification of effort on their part will better equip them for the time when they will be called upon to eradicate in their turn such evil tendencies from the lives and the hearts of the entire body of their fellow-citizens.**

**The Advent of Divine Justice, Shoghi Effendi**



**Creating a new race of men**

**Nor must they overlook the fact that the World Order, whose basis they, as the advance-guard of the future Bahá'í generations of their countrymen, are now laboring to establish,**

**can never be reared**

**unless and until the generality of the people to which they belong has been already purged from the divers ills, whether social or political, that now so severely afflict it.**

**The Advent of Divine Justice, Shoghi Effendi**

# Aids to our personal assessment- What am I supposed to sacrifice?

- What are you asking me to give up?
- Why do I need to sacrifice more? Have I not sacrificed enough?
  - If I'm a minority, have my people not suffered and sacrificed enough?
  - If I am white, does sacrifice for me mean giving up all that I've worked for?

What emotions, thoughts are being stirred up within us when we read these questions?

The only way we can change is by seeing our own veils. The only way we can see our own veils is by being provoked. Abdul Baha has challenged and provoked us with his overwhelming love.

Shoghi Effendi has presented the unvarnished conditions of our reality. He has thus enabled us to become aware and conscious of our shortcomings. Now we can turn our personal fallout into a spiritual opportunity.

# Generic Example – Using the 3<sup>rd</sup> spiritual prerequisite in the Reflection Process

Selected - Sacrifices it must impose

- What standards and conditions in Prerequisite 1 and 2 do I need to help me move forward and improve how I use sacrifice?
- Identify the standards and conditions in Prerequisites 1 and 2 and then go back to Prerequisite 3.
- Confirm that the Prerequisite 1 and 2 standards and conditions will help with using the Sacrifice.
- At each step, you may have to play with the specific tools . I know I need a hammer but is it a 9 inch or 4 inch?

# Reflection Process - Identify relevant corresponding prayers

- Now that I have completed the exploration, I will identify the corresponding prayers that I need to help me in this work.
- Now we can move from our world to the spiritual world, the world of healing and communion with God, the world of prayer.

# Abdu'l Baha's Vision

Look ye not upon the present, fix your gaze upon the times to come. In the beginning, how small is the seed, yet in the end it is a mighty tree. Look ye not upon the seed, look ye upon the tree, and its blossoms, and its leaves and its fruits. Consider the days of Christ, when none but a small band followed Him; then observe what a mighty tree that seed became, behold ye its fruitage. And now shall come to pass even greater things than these, for this is the summons of the Lord of Hosts, this is the trumpet-call of the living Lord, this is the anthem of world peace, this is the standard of righteousness and trust and understanding raised up among all the variegated peoples of the globe; this is the splendour of the Sun of Truth, this is the holiness of the spirit of God Himself. This most powerful of dispensations will encompass all the earth, and beneath its banner will all peoples gather and be sheltered together. Know then the vital import of this tiny seed that the true Husbandman hath, with the hands of His mercy, sown in the ploughed fields of the Lord, and watered with the rain of bestowals and bounties and is now nurturing in the heat and light of the Day-Star of Truth.

Wherefore, O ye loved ones of God, offer up thanks unto Him, since He hath made you the object of such bounties, and the recipients of such gifts. Blessed are ye, glad tidings to you, for this abounding grace.