

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

25 November 2021

To the Friends Gathered in the Holy Land
to Mark the Centenary Commemoration
of the Ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Our hearts are filled with wonder as we contemplate the significance of this momentous occasion: the close of one hundred years since the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, one hundred years since the inception of the Formative Age of the Bahá’í Dispensation, and one hundred years since the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh was entrusted to His Administrative Order, whose institutions you here represent. How marvellous is His Covenant, through which “this unique, this wondrous System” has been established in your nations and its processes made to operate. We bow our heads in gratitude to Bahá’u’lláh that, despite the numerous and severe obstacles of a world in turmoil, He has opened the doors and facilitated the means for you—including, for the first time, representatives of Regional Bahá’í Councils—to be here during these soul-stirring days.

A period of special potency which began in 2016 with the centenary of the revelation of the Tablets of the Divine Plan and included the bicentennial anniversaries of the Birth of the Twin Manifestations of God is now, a hundred years after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s passing, drawing to a close. The advancements the Bahá’í community has made during this time have been nothing less than extraordinary. These have prepared the believers everywhere to meet the demands and fulfil the requirements of the next stage of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Divine Plan, which is to commence just months from now and will last nine years. The accelerating decline of the current social order, and the growing need for constructive processes that will lead to the emergence of a new world society, are daily more evident. A century after the Master bequeathed to the followers of the Greatest Name a document which contains priceless elements for building a divine civilization, we are reminded of the words of the beloved Guardian: “The champion builders of Bahá’u’lláh’s rising World Order must scale nobler heights of heroism as humanity plunges into greater depths of despair, degradation, dissension and distress.”

Beloved friends, on this Day of the Covenant we all look to its Centre and recall the life and Person of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, a Figure Whose very being was the embodiment of the Covenant, that pivotal centre of unity for all humankind, binding together the multitudinous peoples of the earth. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, that Mystery of God, “a sign of His greatness”, and “the most perfect bounty”, Who is treasured in the pure hearts of countless children, youth, and adults, is surely watching over and aiding His loved ones, ever casting His eye of protection over them. In these uncertain times, the friends turn with hope and longing to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, that “shelter for all mankind”, “a shield unto all who are in heaven and on earth”, beseeching His assistance from the realms above as they endeavour to follow His example in the path of service. During the coming days, when the thoughts of the believers all around the world are focused on “this sacred and glorious Being”, you have the blessing and privilege of paying homage to Him on behalf of your communities in those very spots where He laboured day and night for the promotion of the Cause of God and for the betterment of humankind.

Tomorrow night, on the eve of the centenary of His passing, we will hold His loved ones throughout the world in our hearts as we pray in the sacred room where the final moments of His earthly life were spent. We will ardently supplicate that the healing message for which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá lived and sacrificed His all may, before long, find a home in the hearts and souls of all humanity and that the efforts of the friends of God to this end may be acceptable in His sight.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]

