

# Capacity

Exported from Holy-Writings.com on 2026-07-05 — 1 clipping

## DEEPENING ON CAPACITY

We Must be Able to Swim

Compiled by Kate Lindsay

© 1999 Kate Lindsay

The Sun of Reality is shining upon you, the cloud of mercy is pouring down, and the breezes of providence are wafting through your souls.

Although the bestowal is great and the grace is glorious, yet capacity and readiness are requisite. Without capacity and readiness the divine bounty will not become manifest and evident.

No matter how much the cloud may rain, the sun may shine and the breezes blow, the soil that is sterile will give no growth. The ground that is pure and free from thorns and thistles receives and produces through the rain of the cloud of mercy.

No matter how much the sun shines, it will have no effect upon the black rock, but in a pure and polished mirror its lights become resplendent.

Therefore, we must develop capacity in order that the signs of the mercy of the Lord may be revealed in us.

We must endeavor to free the soil of the hearts from useless weeds and sanctify it from the thorns of worthless thoughts in order that the cloud of mercy of the Lord may be revealed in us.

The doors of God are open, but we must be ready and fitted to enter. The ocean of divine providence is surging, but we must be able to swim. The bestowals of the Almighty are descending from the heaven of grace, but capacity to receive them is essential. The foundation of divine generosity is gushing forth, but we must have thirst for the living waters.

Unless there be thirst, the salutary water will not assuage. Unless the soul hungers, the delicious foods of heavenly table will not give sustenance. Unless the eyes of perception be opened, the lights of the sun will not be witnessed. Until the nostrils are purified, the fragrance of the divine rose garden will not be inhaled. Unless the heart be filled with longing, the favors of the Lord will not be evident. Unless a perfect melody be sung, the ears of the hearers will not be attracted.

Therefore, we must endeavor night and day to purify the hearts from every dross, sanctify the souls from every restrictions and become free from the discords of the human world. The divine bestowals will become evident in their fullness and glory.

If we do not strive and sanctify ourselves from the defects and evil qualities of human nature, we will not partake of the bestowals of God....

Therefore, we must endeavor always, cry, supplicate and invoke the Kingdom of God to grant us full capacity in order that the bestowals of God may become revealed and manifest in us.

And as we attain to these heavenly bounties, we shall offer thanks unto the threshold of oneness. Then shall we rejoice in the Lord that in this wonderful century and glorious age, under the shelter of the Kingdom of God we have enjoyed these bestowals and will arise in praise and thanksgiving.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 195

## DEFINITION

ca.pac.i.ty (ke-pasli-te) noun; plural ca.pac.i.ties; Abbr. c., C., cap.\*

1. a. The ability to receive, hold, or absorb.  
b. A measure of this ability; volume.
2. The maximum amount that can be contained: a trunk filled to capacity.
3. a. Ability to perform or produce; capability.  
b. The maximum or optimum amount that can be produced: factories operating below capacity.
4. The power to learn or retain knowledge; mental ability.
5. Innate potential for growth, development, or accomplishment; faculty. See Synonyms at ABILITY.
6. The quality of being suitable for or receptive to specified treatment: the capacity of elastic to be stretched.
7. The position in which one functions; role: in your capacity as sales manager.
8. Legal qualification or authority: the capacity to make an arrest.
9. Electricity. Capacitance.

---

\*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition copyright 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from InfoSoft International, Inc. All rights reserved.

## DIFFERENCE IN CAPACITY

### 67. O SON OF BEAUTY!

By My spirit and by My favor! By My mercy and by My beauty! All that I have revealed unto thee with the tongue of power, and have written for thee with the pen of might, hath been in accordance with thy capacity and understanding, not with My state and the melody of My voice.

Baha'u'llah: The Hidden Words, Arabic

From the exalted source, and out of the essence of His favor and bounty He hath entrusted every created thing with a sign of His knowledge, so that none of His creatures may be deprived of its share in expressing, each according to its

capacity and rank, this knowledge. This sign is the mirror of His beauty in the world of creation. The greater the effort exerted for the refinement of this sublime and noble mirror, the more faithfully will it be made to reflect the glory of the names and attributes of God, and reveal the wonders of His signs and knowledge. Every created thing will be enabled, so great is this reflecting power, to reveal the potentialities of its pre-ordained station, will recognize its capacity and limitations, and will testify to the truth that "He, verily, is God; there is none other God besides Him."...

Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pages 261-262

All the wondrous achievements ye now witness are the direct consequences of the Revelation of this Name. In the days to come, ye will, verily, behold things of which ye have never heard before. Thus hath it been decreed in the Tablets of God, and none can comprehend it except them whose sight is sharp. In like manner, the moment the word expressing My attribute "the Omniscient" issueth forth from My mouth, every created thing will, according to its capacity and limitations, be invested with the power to unfold the knowledge of the most marvelous sciences, and will be empowered to manifest them in the course of time at the bidding of Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Knowing. Know thou of a certainty that the Revelation of every other Name is accompanied by a similar manifestation of Divine power. Every single letter proceeding out of the mouth of God is indeed a mother letter, and every word uttered by Him Who is the Well Spring of Divine Revelation is a mother word, and His Tablet a Mother Tablet. Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, page 142

The people of Baha, who are the inmates of the Ark of God, are, one and all, well aware of one another's state and condition, and are united in the bonds of intimacy and fellowship. Such a state, however, must depend upon their faith and their conduct. They that are of the same grade and station are fully aware of one another's capacity, character, accomplishments and merits. They that are of a lower grade, however, are incapable of comprehending adequately the station, or of estimating the merits, of those that rank above them. Each shall receive his share from thy Lord. Blessed is the man that hath turned his face towards God, and walked steadfastly in His love, until his soul hath winged its flight unto God, the Sovereign Lord of all, the Most Powerful, the Ever-Forgiving, the All-Merciful.

Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, page 170

XCIII. Know thou that every created thing is a sign of the revelation of God. Each, according to its capacity, is, and will ever remain, a token of the Almighty. Inasmuch as He, the sovereign Lord of all, hath willed to reveal His sovereignty in the kingdom of names and attributes, each and every created thing hath, through the act of the Divine Will, been made a sign of His glory. So pervasive and general is this revelation that nothing whatsoever in the whole universe can be discovered that doth not reflect His splendor. Under such conditions every consideration of proximity and remoteness is obliterated....

Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, page 184

It should be borne in mind, however, that when the light of My Name, the

All-Pervading, hath shed its radiance upon the universe, each and every created thing hath, according to a fixed decree, been endowed with the capacity to exercise a particular influence, and been made to possess a distinct virtue. Consider the effect of poison. Deadly though it is, it possesseth the power of exerting, under certain conditions, a beneficial influence. The potency infused into all created things is the direct consequence of the revelation of this most blessed Name. Glorified be He, Who is the Creator of all names and attributes! Cast into the fire the tree that hath rot and dried up, and abide under the shadow of the green and goodly Tree, and partake of the fruit thereof.

Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pages 188-189

We have variously and repeatedly set forth the meaning of every theme, that perchance every soul, whether high or low, may obtain, according to his measure and capacity, his share and portion thereof. Should he be unable to comprehend a certain argument, he may, thus, by referring unto another, attain his purpose. "That all sorts of men may know where to quench their thirst."

Baha'u'llah: Kitab-i-Iqan, pages 174-175

The essence of the matter is that divine justice will become manifest in human conditions and affairs, and all mankind will find comfort and enjoyment in life. It is not meant that all will be equal, for inequality in degree and capacity is a property of nature. Necessarily there will be rich people and also those who will be in want of their livelihood, but in the aggregate community there will be equalization and readjustment of values and interests. In the future there will be no very rich nor extremely poor. There will be an equilibrium of interests, and a condition will be established which will make both rich and poor comfortable and content.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 132

Difference of capacity in human individuals is fundamental. It is impossible for all to be alike, all to be equal, all to be wise. Baha'u'llah has revealed principles and laws which will accomplish the adjustment of varying human capacities. He has said that whatsoever is possible of accomplishment in human government will be effected through these principles. When the laws He has instituted are carried out, there will be no millionaires possible in the community and likewise no extremely poor. This will be effected and regulated by adjusting the different degrees of human capacity. The fundamental basis of the community is agriculture, tillage of the soil. All must be producers. Each person in the community whose need is equal to his individual producing capacity shall be exempt from taxation. But if his income is greater than his needs, he must pay a tax until an adjustment is effected. That is to say, a man's capacity for production and his needs will be equalized and reconciled through taxation. If his production exceeds, he will pay a tax; if his necessities exceed his production, he shall receive an amount sufficient to equalize or adjust. Therefore, taxation will be proportionate to capacity and production, and there will be no poor in the community.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 217

As difference in degree of capacity exists among human souls, as difference in capability is found, therefore, individualities will differ one from another. But in reality this is a reason for unity and not for discord and enmity. If the flowers of a garden were all of one color, the effect would be monotonous to the eye; but if the colors are variegated, it is most pleasing and wonderful. The difference in adornment of color and capacity of reflection among the flowers gives the garden its beauty and charm. Therefore, although we are of different individualities, different in ideas and of various fragrances, let us strive like flowers of the same divine garden to live together in harmony. Even though each soul has its own individual perfume and color, all are reflecting the same light, all contributing fragrance to the same breeze which blows through the garden, all continuing to grow in complete harmony and accord. Become as waves of one sea, trees of one forest, growing in the utmost love, agreement and unity.

If you attain to such a capacity of love and unity, the Blessed Perfection will shower infinite graces of the spiritual Kingdom upon you, guide, protect and preserve you under the shadow of His Word, increase your happiness in this world and uphold you through all difficulties. Therefore, it is my hope that day by day you will become more and more effulgent in the horizon of heaven, advance nearer and nearer toward the Kingdom of Abha, attain greater and greater bounties of the Blessed Perfection.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 24-25

In brief, the original purpose of temples and houses of worship is simply that of unity--places of meeting where various peoples, different races and souls of every capacity may come together in order that love and agreement should be manifest between them. That is why Baha'u'llah has commanded that a place of worship be built for all the religionists of the world; that all religions, races and sects may come together within its universal shelter; that the proclamation of the oneness of mankind shall go forth from its open courts of holiness--the announcement that humanity is the servant of God and that all are submerged in the ocean of His mercy.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 65

It is evident that although education improves the morals of mankind, confers the advantages of civilization and elevates man from lowest degrees to the station of sublimity, there is, nevertheless, a difference in the intrinsic or natal capacity of individuals. Ten children of the same age, with equal station of birth, taught in the same school, partaking of the same food, in all respects subject to the same environment, their interests equal and in common, will evidence separate and distinct degrees of capability and advancement; some will be exceedingly intelligent and progressive, some of mediocre ability, others limited and incapable. One may become a learned professor, while another under the same course of education proves dull and stupid. From all standpoints the opportunities have been equal, but the results and outcomes vary from the highest to lowest degree of advancement. It is evident, therefore, that mankind differs in natal capacity and intrinsic intellectual endowment. Nevertheless,

although capacities are not the same, every member of the human race is capable of education.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 85

Love the creatures for the sake of God and not for themselves. You will never become angry or impatient if you love them for the sake of God. Humanity is not perfect. There are imperfections in every human being, and you will always become unhappy if you look toward the people themselves. But if you look toward God, you will love them and be kind to them, for the world of God is the world of perfection and complete mercy. Therefore, do not look at the shortcomings of anybody; see with the sight of forgiveness. The imperfect eye beholds imperfections. The eye that covers faults looks toward the Creator of souls. He created them, trains and provides for them, endows them with capacity and life, sight and hearing; therefore, they are the signs of His grandeur. You must love and be kind to everybody, care for the poor, protect the weak, heal the sick, teach and educate the ignorant.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 93

The capacity of humankind will be tested, and a degree shall be attained where equality is a reality. All the peoples of the world will enjoy like interests, and the poor shall possess a portion of the comforts of life. Just as the rich are surrounded by their luxuries in palaces, the poor will have at least their comfortable and pleasant places of abode; and just as the wealthy enjoy a variety of food, the needy shall have their necessities and no longer live in poverty. In short, a readjustment of the economic order will come about, the divine Sonship will attract, the Sun of Reality will shine forth, and all phenomenal being will attain a portion.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 101-102

Instruments and means of human destruction have enormously multiplied in this era of material civilization. But if material civilization shall become organized in conjunction with divine civilization, if the man of moral integrity and intellectual acumen shall unite for human betterment and uplift with the man of spiritual capacity, the happiness and progress of the human race will be assured. ... Material civilization is likened to the body, whereas divine civilization is the spirit in that body. A body not manifesting the spirit is dead; a fruitless tree is worthless. Jesus declares that there is spiritual capacity in some people, for all are not submerged in the sea of materialism. They seek the Divine Spirit; they turn to God; they long for the Kingdom. It is my hope that these revered people present may attain both material and spiritual progress.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 104

In the world of existence man has traversed successive degrees until he has attained the human kingdom. In each degree of his progression he has developed capacity for advancement to the next station and condition. While in the kingdom of the mineral he was attaining the capacity for promotion into the degree of the vegetable. In the kingdom of the vegetable he underwent preparation for the world of the animal, and from thence he has come onward to

the human degree, or kingdom. Throughout this journey of progression he has ever and always been potentially man. In the beginning of his human life man was embryonic in the world of the matrix. There he received capacity and endowment for the reality of human existence. The forces and powers necessary for this world were bestowed upon him in that limited condition.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 225

Question.--How many kinds of character has man, and what is the cause of the differences and varieties in men?

Answer.--He has the innate character, the inherited character, and the acquired character which is gained by education.

With regard to the innate character, although the divine creation is purely good, yet the varieties of natural qualities in man come from the difference of degree; all are excellent, but they are more or less so, according to the degree. So all mankind possess intelligence and capacities, but the intelligence, the capacity and the worthiness of men differ. This is evident.

For example, take a number of children of one family, of one place, of one school, instructed by one teacher, reared on the same food, in the same climate, with the same clothing, and studying the same lessons--it is certain that among these children some will be clever in the sciences, some will be of average ability, and some dull. Hence it is clear that in the original nature there exists a difference of degree and varieties of worthiness and capacity. This difference does not imply good or evil but is simply a difference of degree. One has the highest degree, and another the lowest degree.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Some Answered Questions, pages 212-213

In the same manner the bestowals of God are moving and circulating throughout all created things. This illimitable divine bounty has no beginning and will have no ending. It is moving, circulating and becomes effective wherever capacity is developed to receive it. In every station there is a specialized capacity. Therefore, we must be hopeful that through the bounty and favor of God this spirit of life infusing all created beings shall quicken humanity, and from its bestowals the human world shall become a divine world, this earthly kingdom become the mirror of the realm of Divinity, the virtues and perfections of the world of humanity become unveiled and the image and likeness of God be reflected from this temple.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 160

Let us not regard our own respective capacities; nay, rather, let us regard forever the favors and bounties of God. The drop must not estimate its own limited capacity; it must realize the volume and sufficiency of the ocean, which ever glorifieth the drop. The tender and simple seed, solitary though it may be, must not look upon its own lack of power. Nay, rather, its attention must ever be directed to the sun, in the rays of which it finds life and quickening; and it must ever consider the downpour of the cloud of mercy. For the bounty of the cloud, the effulgence and heat of the sun and the breath of the vernal zephyrs can transform the tiny seed and develop it into a mighty

tree. And may you remember that a single infinitesimal atom in the ray of the sun through a shining beam of the solar energy becomes glorified and radiant.  
'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 420

#### DEVELOP CAPACITY

We ask of God that He will assist each and every one to obey this inescapable command that hath appeared and been caused to descend through the Pen of the Ancient of Days.

Baha'u'llah: From a tablet translated from the Persian, cited in Baha'i Education, quote #6, page 2

Strain every nerve to acquire both inner and outer perfections, for the fruit of the human tree hath ever been and will ever be perfections both within and without. It is not desirable that a man be left without knowledge or skills, for he is then but a barren tree. Then, so much as capacity and capability allow, ye needs must deck the tree of being with fruits such as knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception and eloquent speech.

Baha'u'llah: From a tablet translated from the Persian, cited in Baha'i Education, quote #9, page 3

Man is even as steel, the essence of which is hidden: through admonition and explanation, good counsel and education, that essence will be brought to light. If, however, he be allowed to remain in his original condition, the corrosion of lusts and appetites will effectively destroy him.

Baha'u'llah: From a tablet translated from the Persian, cited in Baha'i Education, quote #10, page 3

But this is not so, for capacity is of two kinds: natural capacity and acquired capacity. The first, which is the creation of God, is purely good--in the creation of God there is no evil; but the acquired capacity has become the cause of the appearance of evil. For example, God has created all men in such a manner and has given them such a constitution and such capacities that they are benefited by sugar and honey and harmed and destroyed by poison. This nature and constitution is innate, and God has given it equally to all mankind. But man begins little by little to accustom himself to poison by taking a small quantity each day, and gradually increasing it, until he reaches such a point that he cannot live without a gram of opium every day. The natural capacities are thus completely perverted. Observe how much the natural capacity and constitution can be changed, until by different habits and training they become entirely perverted. One does not criticize vicious people because of their innate capacities and nature, but rather for their acquired capacities and nature.

In creation there is no evil; all is good.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Some Answered Questions, pages 214-215

The greatest bestowal of God to man is the capacity to attain human virtues. Therefore, the teachings of religion must be reformed and renewed because past teachings are not suitable for the present time. For example, the sciences of

bygone centuries are not adequate for the present because sciences have undergone reform. The industrialism of the past will not ensure present efficiency because industrialism has advanced. The laws of the past are being superseded because they are not applicable to this time. All material conditions pertaining to the world of humanity have undergone reform, have achieved development, and the institutes of the past are not to be compared with those of this age.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 378

## WOMEN & CAPACITY

As regards the constitution of the House of Justice, Baha'u'llah addresses the men. He says: `O ye men of the House of Justice!' But when its members are to be elected, the right which belongs to women, so far as their voting and their voice is concerned, is indisputable. When the women attain to the ultimate degree of progress, then, according to the exigency of the time and place and their great capacity, they shall obtain extraordinary privileges. Be ye confident on these accounts. His Holiness Baha'u'llah has greatly strengthened the cause of women, and the rights and privileges of women is one of the greatest principles of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Rest ye assured! Ere long the days shall come when the men addressing the women, shall say: `Blessed are ye! Blessed are ye! Verily ye are worthy of every gift. Verily ye deserve to adorn your heads with the crown of everlasting glory, because in sciences and arts, in virtues and perfections ye shall become equal to man, and as regards tenderness of heart and the abundance of mercy and sympathy ye are superior.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Paris Talks, pages 183-184

Such differentiation is neither intelligent nor conscientious; therefore, the principle of religion has been revealed by Baha'u'llah that woman must be given the privilege of equal education with man and full right to his prerogatives. That is to say, there must be no difference in the education of male and female in order that womankind may develop equal capacity and importance with man in the social and economic equation.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 108-109

But while this principle of equality is true, it is likewise true that woman must prove her capacity and aptitude, must show forth the evidences of equality. She must become proficient in the arts and sciences and prove by her accomplishments that her abilities and powers have merely been latent. Demonstrations of force, such as are now taking place in England, are neither becoming nor effective in the cause of womanhood and equality. Woman must especially devote her energies and abilities toward the industrial and agricultural sciences, seeking to assist mankind in that which is most needful. By this means she will demonstrate capability and ensure recognition of equality in the social and economic equation. Undoubtedly God will confirm her in her efforts and endeavors, for in this century of radiance Baha'u'llah has proclaimed the reality of the oneness of the world of humanity and announced that all nations, peoples and races are one. He has shown that although individuals may differ in development and capacity, they are essentially and

intrinsically equal as human beings, just as the waves of the sea are innumerable and different, but the reality of the sea is one.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 283-284

One of the potentialities hidden in the realm of humanity was the capability or capacity of womanhood. Through the effulgent rays of divine illumination the capacity of woman has become so awakened and manifest in this age that equality of man and woman is an established fact....

There must be no difference in their education. Until the reality of equality between man and woman is fully established and attained, the highest social development of mankind is not possible. Even granted that woman is inferior to man in some degree of capacity or accomplishment, this or any other distinction would continue to be productive of discord and trouble. The only remedy is education, opportunity; for equality means equal qualification. In brief, the assumption of superiority by man will continue to be depressing to the ambition of woman, as if her attainment to equality was creationally impossible; woman's aspiration toward advancement will be checked by it, and she will gradually become hopeless. On the contrary, we must declare that her capacity is equal, even greater than man's. This will inspire her with hope and ambition, and her susceptibilities for advancement will continually increase. She must not be told and taught that she is weaker and inferior in capacity and qualification. If a pupil is told that his intelligence is less than his fellow pupils, it is a very great drawback and handicap to his progress. He must be encouraged to advance by the statement, "You are most capable, and if you endeavor, you will attain the highest degree."

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 74-77

#### SOURCE OF CAPACITY

Having created the world and all that liveth and moveth therein, He, through the direct operation of His unconstrained and sovereign Will, chose to confer upon man the unique distinction and capacity to know Him and to love Him a capacity that must needs be regarded as the generating impulse and the primary purpose underlying the whole of creation. Upon the inmost reality of each and every created thing He hath shed the light of one of His names, and made it a recipient of the glory of one of His attributes.

Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, page 65

What outpouring flood can compare with the stream of His all-embracing grace, and what blessing can excel the evidences of so great and pervasive a mercy? There can be no doubt whatever that if for one moment the tide of His mercy and grace were to be withheld from the world, it would completely perish. For this reason, from the beginning that hath no beginning the portals of Divine mercy have been flung open to the face of all created things, and the clouds of Truth will continue to the end that hath no end to rain on the soil of human capacity, reality and personality their favors and bounties. Such hath been God's method continued from everlasting to everlasting.

Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pages 68-69

XXXVI. Know thou that when the Son of Man yielded up His breath to God, the whole creation wept with a great weeping. By sacrificing Himself, however, a fresh capacity was infused into all created things. Its evidences, as witnessed in all the peoples of the earth, are now manifest before thee. The deepest wisdom which the sages have uttered, the profoundest learning which any mind hath unfolded, the arts which the ablest hands have produced, the influence exerted by the most potent of rulers, are but manifestations of the quickening power released by His transcendent, His all-pervasive, and resplendent Spirit.  
Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pages 85-86

Even as it hath been said: "Not everything that a man knoweth can be disclosed, nor can everything that he can disclose be regarded as timely, nor can every timely utterance be considered as suited to the capacity of those who hear it." Of these truths some can be disclosed only to the extent of the capacity of the repositories of the light of Our knowledge, and the recipients of Our hidden grace. We beseech God to strengthen thee with His power, and enable thee to recognize Him Who is the Source of all knowledge, that thou mayest detach thyself from all human learning, for, "what would it profit any man to strive after learning when he hath already found and recognized Him Who is the Object of all knowledge?"

Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pages 176-177

Hakim, to effect in the constituent elements of any of the minute and indivisible particles of matter so complete a transformation as to transmute it into purest gold? Perplexing and difficult as this may appear, the still greater task of converting satanic strength into heavenly power is one that We have been empowered to accomplish. The Force capable of such a transformation transcendeth the potency of the Elixir itself. The Word of God, alone, can claim the distinction of being endowed with the capacity required for so great and far-reaching a change.

Baha'u'llah: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, page 200

Among other teachings and principles Baha'u'llah counsels the education of all members of society. No individual should be denied or deprived of intellectual training, although each should receive according to capacity. None must be left in the grades of ignorance, for ignorance is a defect in the human world. All mankind must be given a knowledge of science and philosophy--that is, as much as may be deemed necessary. All cannot be scientists and philosophers, but each should be educated according to his needs and deserts.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 108-109

The body politic, or the social unity of the human world, may be likened to an ocean, and each member, each individual, a wave upon that same ocean.

The light of the sun becomes apparent in each object according to the capacity of that object. The difference is simply one of degree and receptivity. The stone would be a recipient only to a limited extent; another created thing might be as a mirror wherein the sun is fully reflected; but the same light shines upon both.

The most important thing is to polish the mirrors of hearts in order that they may become illumined and receptive of the divine light. One heart may possess the capacity of the polished mirror; another, be covered and obscured by the dust and dross of this world. Although the same Sun is shining upon both, in the mirror which is polished, pure and sanctified you may behold the Sun in all its fullness, glory and power, revealing its majesty and effulgence; but in the mirror which is rusted and obscured there is no capacity for reflection, although so far as the Sun itself is concerned it is shining thereon and is neither lessened nor deprived. Therefore, our duty lies in seeking to polish the mirrors of our hearts in order that we shall become reflectors of that light and recipients of the divine bounties which may be fully revealed through them.

This means the oneness of the world of humanity. That is to say, when this human body politic reaches a state of absolute unity, the effulgence of the eternal Sun will make its fullest light and heat manifest.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 14-15

## TEACHING

Were this "oppression" (which literally meaneth pressure) to be interpreted that the earth is to become contracted, or were men's idle fancy to conceive similar calamities to befall mankind, it is clear and manifest that no such happenings can ever come to pass. They will assuredly protest that this pre-requisite of divine revelation hath not been made manifest. Such hath been and still is their contention. Whereas, by "oppression" is meant the want of capacity to acquire spiritual knowledge and apprehend the Word of God. By it is meant that when the Day-star of Truth hath set, and the mirrors that reflect His light have departed, mankind will become afflicted with "oppression" and hardship, knowing not whither to turn for guidance.

Baha'u'llah: Kitab-i-Iqan, pages 32-33

And it came to pass that on a certain day a needy man came to visit this Soul, craving for the ocean of His knowledge. While conversing with him, mention was made concerning the signs of the Day of Judgment, Resurrection, Revival, and Reckoning. He urged Us to explain how, in this wondrous Dispensation, the peoples of the world were brought to a reckoning, when none were made aware of it. Thereupon, We imparted unto him, according to the measure of his capacity and understanding, certain truths of Science and ancient Wisdom. We then asked him saying: "Hast thou not read the Qur'an, and art thou not aware of this blessed verse: 'On that day shall neither man nor spirit be asked of his Sin?' Dost thou not realize that by 'asking' is not meant asking by tongue or speech, even as the verse itself doth indicate and prove? For afterward it is said: 'By their countenance shall the sinners be known, and they shall be seized by their forelocks and their feet.'

Baha'u'llah: Kitab-i-Iqan, pages 172-173

Were anyone to ponder in his heart that which hath, in this Revelation, streamed forth from the Pen of Glory, he would be assured that whatever this

Wronged One hath affirmed He hath had no intention of establishing any position or distinction for Himself. The purpose hath rather been to attract the souls, through the sublimity of His words, unto the summit of transcendent glory and to endow them with the capacity of perceiving that which will purge and purify the peoples of the world from the strife and dissension which religious differences provoke. Unto this bear witness My heart, My Pen, My inner and My outer Being. God grant that all men may turn unto the treasures latent within their own beings. O people of Baha! The source of crafts, sciences and arts is the power of reflection. Make ye every effort that out of this ideal mine there may gleam forth such pearls of wisdom and utterance as will promote the well-being and harmony of all the kindreds of the earth.

Baha'u'llah: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, page 72

This humble servant is filled with wonder, inasmuch as all men are endowed with the capacity to see and hear, yet we find them deprived of the privilege of using these faculties. This servant hath been prompted to pen these lines by virtue of the tender love he cherisheth for thee. The winds of despair are, alas, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divideth and afflicteth the human race is daily increasing. The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appeareth to be lamentably defective.

Baha'u'llah: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, pages 171-172

It behoveth the people of God to be forbearing. They should impart the Word of God according to the hearer's particular measure of understanding and capacity, that perchance the children of men may be roused from heedlessness and set their faces towards this Horizon which is immeasurably exalted above every horizon.

Baha'u'llah: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, pages 237-238

3. Moderation is indeed highly desirable. Every person who in some degree turneth towards the truth can himself later comprehend most of what he seeketh. However, if at the outset a word is uttered beyond his capacity, he will refuse to hear it and will arise in opposition.

Individual and Teaching, #1-#8

Nevertheless, it is certain that the radiance and favors of God are encompassing, minds have developed, perceptions have become acute, sciences and arts are widespread, and capacity exists for the proclamation and promulgation of the real and ultimate unity of mankind, which will bring forth marvelous results.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 191

Mere knowledge of principles is not sufficient. We all know and admit that justice is good, but there is need of volition and action to carry out and manifest it. For example, we might think it good to build a church, but simply thinking of it as a good thing will not help its erection. The ways and means must be provided; we must will to build it and then proceed with the construction. All of us know that international peace is good, that it is

conducive to human welfare and the glory of man, but volition and action are necessary before it can be established. Action is essential. Inasmuch as this century is a century of light, capacity for action is assured to mankind. Necessarily the divine principles will be spread among men until the time of action arrives. Surely this has been so, and truly the time and conditions are ripe for action now.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 121-122

Unless capacity is developed, the summons of the Kingdom cannot reach the ear, the light of the Sun of Truth will not be observed, and the fragrances of the rose garden of inner significance will be lost. Let us endeavor to attain capacity, susceptibility and worthiness that we may hear the call of the glad tidings of the Kingdom, become revived by the breaths of the Holy Spirit, hoist the standard of the oneness of humanity, establish human brotherhood, and under the protection of divine grace attain the everlasting and eternal life.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 149

### SPIRITUAL CAPACITY

Those souls who have the capacity and ability to receive the outpourings of the Kingdom and the confirmation of the Holy Spirit, they become attracted through one word. But people who have not the capacity, no matter how much one explain the divine behests and advices or breathe the breath of the Holy Spirit, it will not make an effect; nay, rather they add to their hardness and heedlessness. No sooner is the oil touched by fire than it is ignited, but the heat of the fire will not make any effect upon the black stone.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Baha'i World Faith, pages 364-365

Knowing God, therefore, means the comprehension and the knowledge of His attributes, and not of His Reality. This knowledge of the attributes is also proportioned to the capacity and power of man; it is not absolute. Philosophy consists in comprehending the reality of things as they exist, according to the capacity and the power of man. For the phenomenal reality can comprehend the Preexistent attributes only to the extent of the human capacity. The mystery of Divinity is sanctified and purified from the comprehension of the beings, for all that comes to the imagination is that which man understands, and the power of the understanding of man does not embrace the Reality of the Divine Essence. All that man is able to understand are the attributes of Divinity, the radiance of which appears and is visible in the world and within men's souls.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Some Answered Questions, page 221

Not until discipline, order and good government reach the degree where an individual, even if he should put forth his utmost efforts to do so, would still find himself unable to deviate by so much as a hair's breadth from righteousness, can the desired reforms be regarded as fully established. Furthermore, any agency whatever, though it be the instrument of mankind's greatest good, is capable of misuse. Its proper use or abuse depends on the varying degrees of enlightenment, capacity, faith, honesty, devotion and highmindedness of the leaders of public opinion.

'Abdu'l-Baha: Secret of Divine Civilization, pages 16-17

Every laborer in those fields, whether as traveling teacher or settler, should, I feel, make it his chief and constant concern to mix, in a friendly manner, with all sections of the population, irrespective of class, creed, nationality, or color, to familiarize himself with their ideas, tastes, and habits, to study the approach best suited to them, to concentrate, patiently and tactfully, on a few who have shown marked capacity and receptivity, and to endeavor, with extreme kindness, to implant such love, zeal, and devotion in their hearts as to enable them to become in turn self-sufficient and independent promoters of the Faith in their respective localities. "Consort with all men, O people of Baha," is Baha'u'llah's admonition, "in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship. If ye be aware of a certain truth, if ye possess a jewel, of which others are deprived, share it with them in a language of utmost kindness and goodwill. If it be accepted, if it fulfill its purpose, your object is attained. If anyone should refuse it, leave him unto himself, and beseech God to guide him.

Shoghi Effendi: The Advent of Divine Justice, page 65

God willing, through His aid and heavenly confirmation you may be enabled to exalt His Word and to render exemplary service to His Cause, that perchance the ears of all created things may be purged of the tales of bygone ages and become endowed with the capacity to hearken to the holy verses that the Lord of all men has proclaimed. Indeed, this is the underlying purpose of man's existence during the brief period of his earthly life. His fundamental purpose in enduring that continual toil and pain, and bearing those calamities, was to safeguard the divine and all-embracing Word, to shelter the tree of unity, to educate persons of capacity, to refine those who were pure in heart, and to transform the hearts of the receptive, to expound the mysteries of God and illumine the minds of the spiritual.

Shoghi Effendi: Bahiyyih Khanum, pages 177-178

That the members of this community, of either sex and of every age, of whatever race or background, however limited in experience, capacity and knowledge, may arise as one man, and seize with both hands the God-given opportunities now presented to them through the dispensations of an all-loving, ever-watchful, ever-sustaining Providence, and lend thereby a tremendous impetus to the propelling forces mysteriously guiding the operations of this newly launched, unspeakably potent, world-encompassing Crusade, is one of the dearest wishes which a loving and longing heart holds for them at this great turning point in the fortunes of the Faith of Baha'u'llah in the American continent. [July 28, 1954]

Shoghi Effendi: Citadel of Faith, pages 131-132

The purpose of the administration at this time is to blow on the fire newly kindled in the hearts of these people who have accepted the Faith, to create in them the desire and capacity to teach, to facilitate the pioneer and teaching work, and help deepen the knowledge and understanding of the friends. The beloved Guardian issues this word of warning, as long experience has shown that

it is a tendency on the part of all N.S.A.s to over-administer. In their enthusiasm they forget that they only have a handful of inexperienced souls to guide, and attempt to deal with their work as if they had a large population to regulate! This then stifles the spirit of the friends and the teaching work suffers.

Shoghi Effendi: *Japan Will Turn Ablaze*, pages 83-84

— Capacity