

*What could a future for  
the earth possibly  
look like?*



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*"If you want everything to keep going as is,  
you don't want everything to keep going."*

*(Written on a poster used by the peace movement in Germany)*

*This is really not just about us, but actually  
about the innumerable generations who will  
wish to live on this blue planet in relative  
prosperity and true freedom.*

### ***A daydream***

*Fast forward to the year 2333. Schools teach that the 20th century was the age of poverty and strife, of drugs and meat consumption, and of all kinds of pollution - from waste, noise and from exhaust fumes.*

*Humanity has almost completely freed itself of ego. Most people understand that what is really important is a good life for everyone and for the coming generations - not just for a few select individuals.*

*The importance of moderation has been comprehended, i.e. the fact that everything in life functions well when in balance - like guitar strings that only vibrate correctly and produce the right tone when they are not too slack yet not under too much tension.*

*It is also now apparent that freedom and liberty are relative, e.g. flying to another continent necessitates the observation of mechanical, electronic and aerodynamic laws as well as those of mathematics, upon which the construction of the aircraft is based, and which apply during flight. We trust that the crew will observe ethical laws to guarantee the responsible transportation of passengers.*

*To think that it might be possible to enjoy freedom without consequences is an illusion. Not the smallest particle can be moved without causing an effect.*

*People in the year 2000 had been in pursuit of fame, power and profit without taking into account what that meant for their fellow human beings or all of the coming generations. The spendthrift lifestyle of tens of millions of people diminished the chances and freedom of others and that of the generations which followed. This caused great harm to the environment and biodiversity and brought the whole planet to the brink of destruction.*

*Now we know that the true inventor of nature, of all physical laws and indeed of all life, is the astounding Life Source, the Great Spirit, the Protector – God. The only claim we humans can make is as discoverers of the fantastic, dazzling possibilities given to us. He is the origin and inventor of the complete universe, of all universes.*

*In the year 2000 everything really was topsy-turvy: Although the peoples of the world wanted to have nothing more to do with war, the world was teeming with weapons of destruction, and enormous sums were spent to develop new ones.*

*Many journalists preferred to report on horrifying events rather than those which were uplifting. People's attention was mostly directed to the weaknesses and failings of others instead of focusing on their strengths and good deeds.*

*The commandments and admonitions of the Manifestations (Prophets) were seen as prohibitions usurping freedom, though*

*in truth, their gentle guidance offered deliverance from error and an increase in freedom. Unmindful of the wealth of wonderful, religion-based insight in the world, it was even said that faith was for the ignorant.*

*A compulsive focus on finding pupils' and students' mistakes – not on honoring their achievements - was the objective at schools.*

*Many other things done in those days were very strange. Tins and caps for bottles were made of precious aluminum that was thrown away after the contents had been consumed.*

*Automobiles had as much power as lorries do today. Extremely poisonous metal was even used to fill cavities in teeth. Huge numbers of chickens were kept in the smallest of cages. This is completely unimaginable to farmers today.*

*In comparison, great strides have been made in many areas of human life:*

*Strikes that crippled the economy are no longer needed. Independent labor courts reconcile the views of employees and employers.*

*Genuinely independent bodies assess the effects of all manufacturing initiatives. No manufacturing is undertaken anywhere in the world without prior approval as to its suitability for future generations and the environment. Functionality, the fulfillment of global ethical standards, the use of production methods that are in harmony with nature as well as materials that can be repaired or completely recycled are prerequisites for obtaining production permits.*

*Years ago the attitude towards complete recycling of all component parts was: "It's not worth it; it's far too expensive." That calculation was totally wrong! Nowadays both current and future ramifications of production for the whole earth are part of cost calculations. A recycling quota of 99% is the goal that has been set for the planet – and this will be raised to 99.5 % in the year 2500. Devices, machines, robots and vehicles will now be constructed worldwide in such a way that they can easily be dismantled. The component parts will then be sent to materials recycling sites. Jobs working with recycling are in high regard. The purchase price includes the*

*cost of the recycling process. Product packaging is made exclusively of biodegradable or recyclable materials. Thinking in long-term cycles, not in linear progressions, has long since become the norm. Actions formerly motivated by an interest in environmental protection are now generated by love for nature.*

*Because shares in companies are actually meant to be investments, they cannot be sold until six months after their acquisition. Shareholders consider carefully whether the shares in question are truly sound and of real ethical value. The smallest coins and the largest banknotes are no longer in circulation but cash, as a convenient means of payment, is still in use. As far as compensation for work goes, humanity has gradually learned that unfair, excessively high salaries can only be financed at the expense of the labor of others. The number of daily working hours is now at a reasonable level of 4-6 hours per day. In the past, many workaholics were the reason that others were out of work.*

*Now, global standards for vocational and academic education have been established. This applies for career paths both practical, e.g. bakers, electronic technicians, and academic, e.g. lawyers, teachers, or economists. Thus apprentices/trainees and students acquire a broad spectrum of knowledge and have a truly thorough command of their subject matter. The youth are aware of the direction in which a materialistic orientation has led humanity in the course of history, and that is why they understand the importance of non-material values for the proper development of life, of nature and of the entire planet. Apprenticeships and academic courses leading to the various occupations and professions will go hand-in-hand with studies of such subjects as human rights, religions, ethics, important global laws, philosophy and the arts. Later, their knowledge will be brought up to date at regular intervals through advanced training. This is frequently offered as a combination of correspondence courses and part-time employment with full compensation.*

*A gigantic amount of energy is now saved by the simple fact that we have stopped creating temperatures in our homes in the winter, which are typical for summer months. Warm*

*clothing is not only worn outside but also indoors. Many modern houses are "dressed" appropriately for exterior temperatures, their foundations are insulated, i.e. they are thermally wrapped.*

*There is a diverse energy mix of various renewables depending on what is best suited for the locality, e.g. through the use of Ecat technologies, by thermic use of solar power, by solar cells in many forms, as well as using biogas from waste and tide turbines which are built with nets to protect fish from harm - and also from wind power and the utilization of geo-thermal energy. Many hydroelectric plants have been removed from rivers which have been returned to their natural states.*

*Air conditioning systems the world over usually function with solar thermal energy or solar cells.*

*Many fitness machines have been equipped to generate electricity.*

*Laundry is washed at low temperature whenever possible and rarely ironed. Generally, only large families and laundry services have tumble dryers.*

*The lighting of stores and businesses at night is also automatically reduced to a minimum because of light pollution.*

*The available natural light determines the intensity of illumination from LED lights. In areas set in natural surroundings, streetlights are equipped with adaptive lighting which moves, enhancing the brightness of the next streetlight being approached.*

*Falling asleep is easier as the lighting in homes is normally dimmed 1-2 hours before bedtime.*

*In every home, there will be a small net info box, usually located in the entryway, that is simply plugged into a socket, and which is provided by the network operator free of charge. It shows the momentary status of the grid in four LED colors (red for overload). The network operator controls the function by radio transmission, but the residents themselves ensure the stability of the network, for example, by timing the recharging their electric cars when the grid signal is green. Expensive overtaking of the system is largely unnecessary. Breakdowns of the network are prevented by switching on Ecat-generators.*

*Electric cars, trains, zero-emission buses, and ships together with airliners operated by Ecat technology are balanced to provide perfect traffic infrastructure. Filling stations which used to sell petrol and diesel fuel now provide carbon-neutral electricity. Service vehicles with charging technology are on call and get stranded cars back in running order for a fee. Although battery technology has made great strides, everyone has got used to all too short charging periods. Global law requires that batteries and accumulators all over the world be recycled.*

*The on-board computers in cars and trucks use GPS to adjust speeds to the limits applying at respective locations - excluding, of course, fire brigades, police, and ambulances.*

*Automatic braking is induced when red lights are approached too fast. All cars have collision protection at the front, which is a thick layer of soft, shock-absorbent material similar to that seen on bumper cars at fun fairs. Drivers are warned by pulsed laser warning systems where animals typically cross streets.*

*There is a network of magnetic levitation systems (maglevs) on every continent which does not cut off the natural routes that animals take nor interfere with the fauna. Streets and roads can cross below these maglevs. The panoramic views from them are beautiful, and electricity for them is generated ecologically. The high degree of mobility thus produced makes the investment well worthwhile.*

*Airship flights in helium airships are very popular for excursions on storm-free days. All aircraft and even the reliable multi-rotor helicopters have huge controllable parachutes made of ultra-light material on board, which allow them to glide safely to the ground in case of emergency.*

*To implement functioning infrastructures, the mega-cities of the past have been sub-divided into smaller metropolitan units. Those in coastal areas, threatened by rising sea levels, have been relocated in such a way that a number of new, less populous cities have been created.*

*Numerous roofs and facades have been greened, and care is taken to let the earth breathe by not sealing surfaces with*



concrete, for example. Small parks dot the landscape. Vegetarian or vegan diets have become the norm. We human beings have learned over time how to prepare these dishes in very tasty ways. Of course, there still are groups of people who mostly draw their food supply from hunting and fishing. Due to methods which avoid bycatch, there is a large reduction in the amount of marine fauna caught, and the marine stocks in rivers and oceans have recovered.

General limitations on the sale of alcoholic beverages and tobacco have been introduced. Because the premises on which alcoholic beverages are served and all of the shops selling wine, liquor and spirits are linked by Internet worldwide, it is only possible to obtain a limited amount of such substances on one's "limit-card", i.e. ration card. Thus, the number of those suffering from addictions has decreased dramatically. Leisure drugs are no longer produced, so drugs are only used for medicinal purposes as prescribed by certified physicians. Smoking is only permitted outdoors.

Doctors receive bonuses from health insurance associations when they have been successful in treating patients. Assembly-line style examinations went out of fashion long ago. Doctors are even allowed to prescribe health-food vouchers for poorer patients so that they can buy better-quality food. Higher health insurance contributions must be paid by those who do not demonstrate their willingness to participate in common-sense measure to prevent health problems. All of the health insurance companies in the world are solitarily working organizations and are open to everyone.

Schools now know that excessive, mindless memorizing of facts leads to quashing pupils' and students' ability to learn and leads to frustration. Character building has been the focal point of education for a long time now. Identifying and understanding inter-relationships on the one hand and practicing problem-solving on the other are seen as much more important than learning facts. There are also new subjects, for example, "basic life skills", "Internet and AI", "nutrition" and "child raising" with funny and instructive video clips and innovative role-play programs (like flight simulators).

*Students can create their own training situations or be shown exercise options and be assisted with solutions on a computer or by the teacher.*

*The fantastic technical possibilities involved in producing films are now put to use in a meaningful way. Profound messages are laced with infectious humor.*

*The freedom of choice has become a human right:  
It is now possible to settle anywhere on earth, to change jobs, to go to any particular school or university without difficulty. Marriage commitments all over the world are agreed to on the basis of free choice. Similarly, membership in any organization or group is on a voluntary basis.*

*There is now a federal system for the world with a world parliament, an international executive body, a supreme court as well as a universal language and a world currency and global bodies for the administration of the world's ecology and harmony.*

*Terrorism has completely disappeared as everyone has long since realized that killing never leads to beneficial results, and also because the colleagues from the harmony section of the government have been successful in defusing tension and eliminating crises the world over.*

*We dwellers of the earth see ourselves as essentially spiritual beings – not as physical ones - in spite of the numerous new material options made available to us.  
The sum total of the wonderful religious insights drawn from all religions has enchanted the world, and we experience the deep, liberating influence of religion. There is not only harmony between the followers of the various religions, but also between believers and those who see the world differently. We human beings are aware that spiritual happiness is the true foundation of human life (cf. Index 1).*

*In short: It is now a joy to live on earth.*

*Quotations from a variety of sources follow at this point. These are spiritual gems that can empower us to reflect, understand and, in consequence, to act.*

### ***Living wisely...***

*We take the world's current concern about what we have always warned against seriously. The destructive path that civilization's greed-driven processes are taking us down has been clear to us for a long time; we know that it is not a question of visions or prophetic warnings but one of facts which are now being confirmed. The world needs a new way of life.*

*Terena, Marcos 2*

*We need a change of heart, a reframing of all our conceptions and a new orientation of our activities. The inward life of man as well as his outward environment have to be reshaped if human salvation is to be secured.*

*Shoghi Effendi 3*

*Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.*

*Chief Seattle 4*

### ***The right measure...***

*Whatsoever passeth beyond the limits of moderation will cease to exert a beneficial influence.*

*Consider for instance such things as liberty, civilization and the like. However much men of understanding may favorably regard them, they will, if carried to excess, exercise a pernicious influence upon men...*

*Bahá'u'lláh 5*

*Certainly, some being enormously rich and others lamentably poor, an organization is necessary to control and improve this state of affairs. It is important to limit riches, as it is also of importance to limit poverty. Either extreme is not good.*

*To be seated in the mean is most desirable.*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá 6*

*[...] the human body is composed of numerous elements, but in the measure of an especial equilibrium. As long as this equilibrium is maintained, man is preserved from disease; but if this essential balance, which is the pivot of the constitution, is disturbed, the constitution is disordered, and disease will supervene...*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá 7*

*Allah indeed has appointed a measure for everything.*

*The Qur'an 8*

## **Truthfulness...**

*In this Day the secrets of the earth are laid bare before the eyes of men. The pages of swiftly-appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world. They reflect the deeds and the pursuits of divers peoples and kindreds. They both reflect them and make them known. They are a mirror endowed with hearing, sight and speech. This is an amazing and potent phenomenon. However, it behoveth the writers thereof to be purged from the promptings of evil passions and desires and to be attired with the raiment of justice and equity. They should enquire into situations as much as possible and ascertain the facts, then set them down in writing.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 9*

*Truthfulness is the foundation of all the virtues of the world of humanity.*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá 10*

## **Judge not...**

*Judge not, that ye be not judged.*

*The Bible 11*

*Who are we that we should judge? How shall we know who, in the sight of God, is the most upright man?*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá 12*

*...backbiting quencheth the light of the heart, and extinguisheth the life of the soul.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 13*

*Be mindful of your thoughts!  
They are the starting point of your actions.*

*Chinese proverb 14*

## ***Freedom and liberty...***

*Human beings never have complete freedom at their command but rather a limited form thereof. One may choose or decline, for example, to eat a particular thing – but refusing to eat entirely is not an option.*

*Antoine de Rivarol 15*

*Weapons cannot harm the soul, fire cannot burn the soul, water cannot wet and air cannot dry up the soul.*

*Bhagavad-Gita 16*

*When a friend said to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “We are glad you are free”, he answered with a wondrous smile: “Freedom is not a matter of place. It is a condition. I was thankful for the prison and the lack of liberty was very pleasing to me, for those days were passed in the path of service under the utmost difficulties and trials, bearing fruits and results.”*

*“Unless one accepts dire vicissitudes he will not attain. To me prison is freedom; troubles rest me; incarceration is an open court; death is life and to be despised is honor. Therefore, I was happy all that time in prison. When one is released from the prison of self, that is indeed freedom, for self is the greater prison...”*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá 17*

*A free constitution cannot survive without virtue and wisdom.*

*Johann Georg Forster 18*

*But when once the circle had been fairly run, I saw that the invaluable happiness of liberty consisted, not in doing what one pleases and what circumstances may invite to, but in being able, without hindrance or restraint, to do in the direct way what one regards as right and proper...*

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe 19*

*Independence and freedom for human beings are contingent not so much on any power the poor may have as on temperance of spirit. One who does not desire much is independent of most things.*

*Jean-Jaques Rousseau 20*

*On asked what freedom is, a wise man answered:*

*"A tranquil conscience."*

*Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel 21*

*What, now, is Right-Mindedness? It is thoughts free from lust; thoughts free from ill-will; thoughts free from cruelty.*

*This is called right-mindedness.*

*... Hence, there are three things, that accompany and follow upon right-mindedness, namely: right understanding, right effort, and right attentiveness.*

*Buddha 22*

*Any discussion of liberty and freedom must concern itself equally with issues of social justice and personal responsibility. Liberty implies a lack of restraint from an outside force whereas social justice requires that, at a minimum, an outside force restrain some from diminishing the liberty of others and, more proactively, provide the opportunity for all participants to acquire the necessary assets to take advantage of that liberty.*

*William G. Huitt, Ph. D 23*

*We have freedom of thought. Now all we need is the thoughts  
to go with it.*

*Karl Kraus 24*

*The spirit of man is itself informed and strengthened during  
meditation; through it affairs of which man knew nothing are  
unfolded before his view. Through it he receives Divine inspiration,  
through it he receives heavenly food.*

*Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that  
state man abstracts himself: in that state man withdraws himself  
from all outside objects; in that subjective mood he is immersed in the  
ocean of spiritual life and can unfold the secrets of things-in-  
themselves. To illustrate this, think of man as endowed  
with two kinds of sight;*

*when the power of insight is being used the outward power of vision  
does not see. This faculty of meditation frees man from the animal  
nature, discerns the reality of things, puts man in touch with God.*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá 25*

*For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is,  
there is freedom.*

*The Bible 26*

*But that self-controlled being who follows the Vedic injunctions while  
amidst objects of the senses, freed from attachment and aversion,  
with senses governed by the self; attains the precious mercy  
of the Ultimate Personality.*

*Bhagavad-Gita 27*

*Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from  
the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty,  
attain unto perfect liberty.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 28*



## **Peace...**

*All prejudices, whether of religion, race, politics or nation, must be renounced, for these prejudices have caused the world's sickness. It is a grave malady which, unless arrested, is capable of causing the destruction of the whole human race.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá 29*

*Peace never comes unexpectedly. It does not fall from heaven like rain. It comes to those who make ready for it.*

*Indian wisdom 30*

*...Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

*The Bible 31*

*The children of the world would certainly agree that a universal peace treaty is long overdue:*

*...The time must come when the imperative necessity for the holding of a vast, an all-embracing assemblage of men will be universally realized. The rulers and kings of the earth must needs attend it, and, participating in its deliberations, must consider such ways and means as will lay the foundations of the world's Great Peace amongst men.*

*Such a peace demandeth that the Great Powers should resolve, for the sake of the tranquility of the peoples of the earth, to be fully reconciled among themselves. Should any king take up arms against another, all should unitedly arise and prevent him. If this be done, the nations of the world will no longer require any armaments, except for the purpose of preserving the security of their realms and of maintaining internal order within their territories. This will ensure the peace and composure of every people, government and nation...*

*Bahá'u'lláh 32*

*Every aggressor deprives himself of God's grace.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá 33*

*"God grant that not only the love of liberty but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man may pervade all the nations of the earth ..."*

*Benjamin Franklin 34*

*A squirrel may be small – but it is not a slave to an elephant.*

*From Nigeria 35*

*Peace is not only the opposite of war nor is it only the period between two wars – peace is much more. Peace is the law of human life. There is peace when we act justly and when justice reigns between all individuals and all the peoples of the earth.*

*Sentence of the Mohawk 36*

*The Catholic Church intends to continue along the path of dialogue to foster understanding between the different cultures, traditions and religious learning.*

*I sincerely hope this spirit may spread especially where tensions are strongest, where freedom and respect for others are denied and men and women suffer the consequences of intolerance and misunderstanding.*

*Pope Benedikt XVI. 37*

*It is clear that the reality of mankind is diverse, that opinions are various and sentiments different; and this difference of opinions, of thoughts, of intelligence, of sentiments among the human species arises from essential necessity; for the differences in the degrees of existence of creatures is one of the necessities of existence, which unfolds itself in infinite forms. Therefore, we have need of a general*

*power which may dominate the sentiments, the opinions and the thoughts of all, thanks to which these divisions may no longer have effect, and all individuals may be brought under the influence of the unity of the world of humanity. It is clear and evident that this greatest power in the human world is the love of God. It brings the different peoples under the shadow of the tent of affection; it gives to the antagonistic and hostile nations and families the greatest love and union.*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá 38*

*“The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize at the center of the universe dwells the Great Spirit, and that its center is really everywhere, it is within each of us.”*

*Black Elk 39*

### ***People and nature...***

*We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one is reformed everything will be improved.*

*Man is organic and with the world. His inner life moulds the environment and is itself deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions.*

*Shoghi Effendi 40*

*Nature pays attention and keeps in touch consciously, use its strengths and allow that they fill you up.*

*Message of the Nangkaris 41*

*"Out of the Indian approach to life there came a great freedom - an intense and absorbing love for nature; a respect for life; enriching faith in a Supreme Power; and principles of truth, honesty, generosity, equity, and brotherhood as a guide to mundane relations."*

*Luther Standing Bear 42*

*What the consumption of animal meat and the abstinence of this does concern, ...*

*"...he (man) is not in need of meat, nor is he obliged to eat it. Even without eating meat he would live with the utmost vigor and energy.... Truly, the killing of animals and the eating of their meat is somewhat contrary to pity and compassion, and if one can content oneself with cereals, fruit, oil and nuts, such as pistachios, almonds and so on, it would undoubtedly be better and more pleasing."*

*'Abdu'l- Bahá 43*

*Nothing will benefit human health and increase chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet.*

*Albert Einstein 44*

### ***Knowledge and education...***

*The human spirit must be free to know. Apprehending who we are, for what purpose we exist, and how we should live our lives, is a basic impulse of human consciousness. This quest for self-understanding and meaning is the essence of life itself. The innate and fundamental aspiration to investigate reality is thus a right and an obligation of every human being.*

*Bahá'í International Community 45*

*...let each one who is able and hath a keen desire for it, enroll in higher institutions of learning and study advanced courses in the sciences and arts. Not all, however, will be able to engage in these advanced studies. Therefore, such children must be sent to industrial schools where they can also acquire technical skills, and once the child becomes proficient in such a skill, then let consideration be given to the child's own preference and inclinations. If a child hath a liking for commerce, then let him choose commerce; if industry, then industry; if for higher education, then the advancement of knowledge; if for some other of the responsibilities of humankind, then that. Let him be placed in the field for which he hath an inclination, a desire, and a talent. But the indispensable basis of all is that he should develop spiritual characteristics and the praiseworthy virtues of humankind. This is the primary consideration.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá 46*

*It is, in fact, nothing short of a miracle that the modern methods of instruction have not yet entirely strangled the holy curiosity of inquiry; for this delicate little plant, aside from stimulation, stands mainly in need of freedom. Without this, it goes to wrack and ruin without fail.*

*Albert Einstein 47*

*I believe it is possible to envision a new society: human beings will be more capable due to the fact that more trust will have been placed in them as children.*

*Maria Montessori 48*

*[...] choose one of the divers languages, and likewise one of the existing scripts, or else to create a new language and a new script to be taught children in schools throughout the world. They would, in this way, be acquiring only two languages, one their own native*

*tongue, the other the language in which all the peoples of the world would converse. Were men to take fast hold on that which hath been mentioned, the whole earth would come to be regarded as one country, and the people would be relieved and freed from the necessity of acquiring and teaching different languages.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 49*

### ***Science and religion...***

*Knowledge is as wings to man's life, and a ladder for his ascent. Its acquisition is incumbent upon everyone. The knowledge of such sciences, however, should be acquired as can profit the peoples of the earth, and not those which begin with words and end with words. Great indeed is the claim of scientists and craftsmen on the peoples of the world. [...] In truth, knowledge is a veritable treasure for man, and a source of glory, of bounty, of joy, of exaltation, of cheer and gladness unto him.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 50*

*We may think of science as one wing and religion as the other; a bird needs two wings for flight, one alone would be useless.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá 51*

*Should a man try to fly with the wing of religion alone he would quickly fall into the quagmire of superstition, whilst on the other hand, with the wing of science alone he would also make no progress, but fall into the despairing slough of materialism.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá 52*

*I used to think that top global environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse, and climate change. I thought that with 30 years of good science we could address these problems, but I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed, and apathy, and to deal with these we need a spiritual and cultural transformation. And we scientists don't know how to do that.*

*Gus Speth 53*

*With force and punishments, material civilization seeketh to restrain the people from mischief, from inflicting harm on society and committing crimes. But in a divine civilization, the individual is so conditioned that with no fear of punishment, he shunneth the perpetration of crimes, seeth the crime itself as the severest of torments, and with alacrity and joy, setteth himself to acquiring the virtues of humankind, to furthering human progress [...]*

*ʿAbdu'l-Bahá 54*

*Surely Allah does not do any injustice to men, but men are unjust to themselves.*

*Qur'an 55*

*In the treasures of the knowledge of God there lieth concealed a knowledge which, when applied, will largely, though not wholly, eliminate fear. This knowledge, however, should be taught from childhood, as it will greatly aid in its elimination.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 56*

*Man, possessed of an inner faculty which plants and animals do not have, a power which enables him to discover the secrets of nature and gain mastery over the environment, has a special responsibility to use his God-given powers for positive ends. The Universal House of Justice indicates that "the proper exercise of this responsibility is the key to whether his inventive genius produces beneficial results, or creates havoc in the material world".*

*Written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice 57*

### ***The economy...***

*It is time to realize that unregulated markets in and of themselves cannot function in everyone's best interests. Freedom needs limitations, but moreover the willingness of entrepreneurs, businesspeople and managers to assume personal responsibility. Their compensation must be keyed to sustained business development. This requires a mind shift and assertive action on the part of all the members of boards of directors and supervisory boards. Business must serve the best interests of the people.*

*Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany 58*

*If your enjoyment of life is gained at the expense of others,  
you will never be free.*

*Buddha 59*



*Fairtrade is an alternative approach to conventional trade and is based on a partnership between producers and consumers. Fairtrade offers producers a better deal and improved terms of trade. This allows them the opportunity to improve their lives and plan for their future. Fairtrade offers consumers a powerful way to reduce poverty through their everyday shopping.*

*Fairtrade 60*

*Every responsible and thoughtful individual involved in this line of business must now have realized that the international financial market has turned into a monster and must be checked by boundaries.*

*Horst Köhler 61*

*... it is twice to ten times more efficient to recycle metal than to extract it from the earth.*

*Achim Steiner 62*

### ***A model for the future:***

#### ***The administrative order of the Bahá'í Faith***

*Free from electioneering or such external pressures as those coming from economic power or manipulation of the press, the believers seek to elect for membership on their governing institutions those persons whom they regard as best qualified for such office. The elected members are then responsible to God and to their consciences, rather than to those who elect them.*

*The Universal House of Justice 63*

*In no other system do individuals exercise such a breath of freedom in  
the electoral process.*

*The Universal House of Justice 64*

*Take ye counsel together in all matters, inasmuch as consultation is  
the lamp of guidance which leadeth the way  
and is the bestower of understanding.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 65*

*...The members thereof must take counsel together in such wise that  
no occasion for ill-feeling or discord may arise. This can be attained  
when every member expresseth with absolute freedom his own  
opinion and setteth forth his argument. Should any one oppose, he  
must on no account feel hurt for not until matters are fully discussed  
can the right way be revealed. The shining spark of truth cometh  
forth only after the clash of differing opinions....*

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá 66*

*Human utterance is an essence which aspireth to exert its influence  
and needeth moderation.[...] As to its moderation this hath to be  
combined with tact and wisdom [...]*

*Bahá'u'lláh 67*

*Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and  
center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 68*

## ***The global unity of all people...***

*In unity -a unity that embraces and honors the full diversity of humankind- all problems can be solved. When applied on a universal basis, the teaching that we should treat others as we ourselves wish to be treated, an ethic variously repeated in all the great religions, will undoubtedly reveal the salutary power of unity. The building of a global society based on cooperation, reciprocity, and genuine concern for others is the ultimate expression of unified action. In short, the core spiritual values held in common by the world's religions contain within them the principal means for the reconciliation and advancement of the earth's peoples.*

*Bahá'í International Community 69*

*Why should not the followers of one religion praise the Founder or Teacher of another? ... You would lose nothing by such action and statement. On the contrary, you would contribute to the welfare of mankind. You would be instrumental in establishing the happiness of the world of humanity.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá 70*

*Let us never say, 'I am a believer but he is an infidel', 'I am near to God, whilst he is an outcast'. We can never know what will be the final judgment! Therefore let us help all who are in need of any kind of assistance.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá 71*

*It is not his to boast who loveth his country, but it is his  
who loveth the world.*

*Bahá'u'lláh 72*

*The diversity in the human family should be the cause of love and  
harmony, as it is in music where many different notes blend together  
in the making of a perfect chord. If you meet those of different race  
and colour from yourself, do not mistrust them and withdraw yourself  
into your shell of conventionality, but rather be glad and show them  
kindness. Think of them as different coloured roses growing in the  
beautiful garden of humanity, and rejoice to be among them.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá 73*

*Behave to the welfare of everyone and do not abandon it listen to the  
melody of the heart and the love and follow her.*

*Message of the Nangkaris 74*

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