

# Promise of Peace

## A dramatic reading for two voices

created by Anne Perry

*2015 December*

This script, incorporating various excerpts from Bahá'í Writings, is flexible and can be modified in any way. It was first shared at Thanksgiving Square in Dallas at an Interfaith Celebration, using live music.

**A:** In the spirit of hoping for PEACE ON EARTH we would like to share some thoughts from the writings of the Baha'i Faith.

*(Instrumental music begins)*

**B:** Baha'u'llah wrote: *“The winds of despair are, alas, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divides and afflicts the human race is daily increasing. The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appears to be lamentably defective.”*

**A:** Doubts, misconceptions, prejudices, suspicions and narrow self-interest beset nations and peoples.

**B:** We see the spectre of war,

**A:** the threatened collapse of the international economic order,

**B:** the spread of anarchy and terrorism,

**A:** intense suffering of various peoples.

**B:** Aggression and conflict. . . .

**A:** But are human beings incorrigibly selfish, or can we erect a social system based on co-operation and reciprocity?

**B:** The Bahá'í Faith sees the current world condition as a natural phase in an organic process leading to the unification of the human race. We have passed through stages analogous to infancy and childhood and are now in the period of a turbulent adolescence approaching a long-awaited coming of age.

**A:** The Great Peace towards which people of good will throughout the centuries have inclined their hearts, of which seers and poets have expressed their vision, and for which the sacred scriptures of [hu]mankind have held the promise, is now at long last within the reach of the nations.

**Together:** World peace is not only possible but inevitable.

**B:** Whether peace is to be reached only after unimaginable horrors or is to be embraced by an act of consultative will, is the choice before all who inhabit the earth.

**A:** However dark the present, the Bahá'í community believes that humanity can confront this supreme trial and reach our mature potential.

**B:** The primary question to be resolved is how the present world can change to a world in which harmony and co-operation will prevail.

**A:** Barriers to peace include Racism . . .

**B:** The inordinate disparity between rich and poor. . . .

**A:** Unbridled nationalism . . .

**B:** Religious strife. . . .

**A:** The lack of full gender equality . . .

**B:** “Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavour will the climate be created in which international peace can emerge.”

**A:** “Woman will be the greatest factor in establishing universal peace and international arbitration. Assuredly, woman will abolish warfare among mankind.” *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*

**B:** Every social problem can be solved by spiritual principles, such as universal education and the concept of world citizenship

**A:** an international auxiliary language. . . .

**B:** collective security. . . “*The well-being of mankind,*” Bahá'u'lláh wrote more than a century ago, “*its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.*”

**A:** And He promised: “*These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away,*

*BOTH: and the ‘Most Great Peace’ shall come.’*”

**B:** His son amplified these ideas when He said, “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.

**A:** If you meet those of different race . . . from yourself, do not mistrust them. . . , but rather . . . show them kindness. Think of them as different colored roses growing in the . . . garden of humanity, and rejoice to be among them.” (Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 53)

**B:** “Let us strive to blot out from our lives every last trace of prejudice--**A:** racial, **B:** religious, **A:** political, **B:** economic, **A:** national, **B:** tribal, **A:** class, **B:** cultural, and that which is based on differences of [gender], education or age. **A:** We shall be distinguished if our lives are adorned with this principle.” (The Universal House of Justice, July 13, 1972)

**B:** All the forces of history are moving humanity towards its long-awaited maturity.

**A:** all human beings have been created “to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization”;

**B:** the virtues that befit human dignity are trustworthiness,

**A:** forbearance, **B:** mercy, **A:** compassion **B:** and loving-kindness towards all peoples.

**A:** We summon the power of deeds of faith and sacrifice;

**B:** we convey the anxious plea of our co-religionists everywhere for peace and unity.

**A:** We join with all who are the victims of aggression,

**B:** all who yearn for an end to conflict and contention,

**A:** all whose devotion to principles of peace and world unity promotes the ennobling purposes for which humanity was called into being by an all-loving Creator.

**B:** And we ask for this spot, where we have gathered today in unity, to be blessed, and for gratitude and thanksgiving to characterize our lives and deeds as we go forth from here.

*Instrumental music turns into “Blessed Is the Spot”. . .*

