

## **Some Bahá'í quotations regarding Economic Justice**

- “The highest station, the supreme sphere, the noblest, most sublime position in creation, whether visible or invisible, whether alpha or omega, is that of the Prophets of God, notwithstanding the fact that for the most part they have to outward seeming been possessed of nothing but their own poverty”. – ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, [The Secret of Divine Civilization](#)
- “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. If it be right for a capitalist to possess a large fortune, it is equally just that his workman should have a sufficient means of existence.

A financier with colossal wealth should not exist whilst near him is a poor man in dire necessity. When we see poverty allowed to reach a condition of starvation it is a sure sign that somewhere we shall find tyranny. Men must bestir themselves in this matter, and no longer delay in altering conditions which bring the misery of grinding poverty to a very large number of the people.” – ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, [Paris Talks](#)

- “There is need of an equalization so that all may have an apportionment in the comforts of life. For example, the wealthy man, whose table is adorned with all kinds of delicacies, must allow the poor to have at least his necessities. It is not right that one should have all the delicacies and all foods on his table when another is in want of the necessities of life. The rich must be merciful to the poor and out of their own willing hearts should they uplift them, they should not be forced. There must be a readjustment and legislation which shall equalize conditions until humankind may have composure and rest with utmost ease.” – ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Star of the West*
- “The inordinate disparity between rich and poor, a source of acute suffering, keeps the world in a state of instability, virtually on the brink of war. Few societies have dealt effectively with this situation. The solution calls for the combined application of spiritual, moral and practical approaches. A fresh look at the problem is required, entailing consultation with experts from a wide spectrum of disciplines, devoid of economic and ideological polemics, and involving the people directly affected in the decisions that must urgently be made”. –The Universal House of Justice, [The Promise of World Peace](#)
- “O Ye Rich Ones on Earth! The poor in your midst are My trust; guard ye My trust, and be not intent only on your own ease”. – Bahá'u'lláh, [The Hidden Words](#)
- “The fundamentals of the whole economic condition are divine in nature and are associated with the world of the heart and spirit. This is fully explained in the Bahá'í teaching, and without knowledge of its principles no improvement in the economic state can be realized. The Bahá'ís will bring about this improvement and betterment but not through sedition and appeal to physical force – not through warfare, but welfare. Hearts must be so cemented together, love must become so dominant that the rich shall most willingly extend assistance to the poor and

take steps to establish these economic adjustments permanently. If it is accomplished in this way, it will be most praiseworthy because then it will be for the sake of God and in the pathway of His service". – 'Abdu'l-Bahá, [The Promulgation of Universal Peace](#)

- "We see amongst us men who are overburdened with riches on the one hand, and on the other those unfortunate ones who starve with nothing; those who possess several stately palaces, and those who have not where to lay their head. Some we find with numerous courses of costly and dainty food; whilst others can scarce find sufficient crusts to keep them alive. Whilst some are clothed in velvets, furs and fine linen, others have insufficient, poor and thin garments with which to protect them from the cold.

This condition of affairs is wrong, and must be remedied. Now the remedy must be carefully undertaken. It cannot be done by bringing to pass absolute equality between men ....

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There must be special laws made, dealing with these extremes of riches and of want. The members of the Government should consider the laws of God when they are framing plans for the ruling of the people. The general rights of mankind must be guarded and preserved". – [Paris Talks, p. 153.](#)

- "O MY SERVANT! The best of men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred for the love of God, the Lord of all worlds." - Bahá'u'lláh, [The Hidden Words](#)
- "Man reacheth perfection through good deeds, voluntarily performed, not through good deeds the doing of which was forced upon him. And sharing is a personally chosen righteous act: that is, the rich should extend assistance to the poor, they should expend their substance for the poor, but of their own free will, and not because the poor have gained this end by force. For the harvest of force is turmoil and the ruin of the social order. On the other hand voluntary sharing, the freely-chosen expending of one's substance, leadeth to society's comfort and peace. It lighteth up the world; it bestoweth honor upon humankind". – 'Abdu'l-Bahá, [Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 115.](#)
- "Wealth is praiseworthy in the highest degree, if it is acquired by an individual's own efforts and the grace of God, in commerce, agriculture, art and industry, and if it be expended for philanthropic purposes. Above all, if a judicious and resourceful individual should initiate measures which would universally enrich the masses of the people, there could be no undertaking greater than this, and it would rank in the sight of God as the supreme achievement, for such a benefactor would supply the needs and insure the comfort and well-being of a great multitude. Wealth is most commendable, provided the entire population is

wealthy. If, however, a few have inordinate riches while the rest are impoverished, and no fruit or benefit accrues from that wealth, then it is only a liability to its possessor. If, on the other hand, it is expended for the promotion of knowledge, the founding of elementary and other schools, the encouragement of art and industry, the training of orphans and the poor—in brief, if it is dedicated to the welfare of society— its possessor will stand out before God and man as the most excellent of all who live on earth and will be accounted as one of the people of paradise”. – ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 24.

- "In earthly riches, fear is hidden and peril is concealed". - Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 219
- No matter how far the material world advances, it cannot establish the happiness of mankind. Only when material and spiritual civilization are linked and coordinated will happiness be assured. Then material civilization will not contribute its energies to the forces of evil in destroying the oneness of humanity, for in material civilization good and evil advance together and maintain the same pace. For example, consider the material progress of man in the last decade. Schools and colleges, hospitals, philanthropic institutions, scientific academies and temples of philosophy have been founded, but hand in hand with these evidences of development, the invention and production of means and weapons for human destruction have correspondingly increased. In early days the weapon of war was the sword; now it is the magazine rifle. Among the ancients, men fought with javelins and daggers; now they employ shells and bombs. Dreadnoughts are built, torpedoes invented, and every few days new ammunition is forthcoming.

All this is the outcome of material civilization; therefore, although material advancement furthers good purposes in life, at the same time it serves evil ends. The divine civilization is good because it cultivates morals. Consider what the Prophets of God have contributed to human morality. Jesus Christ summoned all to the Most Great Peace through the acquisition of pure morals. If the moral precepts and foundations of divine civilization become united with the material advancement of man, there is no doubt that the happiness of the human world will be attained and that from every direction the glad tidings of peace upon earth will be announced. Then humankind will achieve extraordinary progress, the sphere of human intelligence will be immeasurably enlarged, wonderful inventions will appear, and the spirit of God will reveal itself; all men will consort in joy and fragrance, and eternal life will be conferred upon the children of the Kingdom. Then will the power of the divine make itself effective and the breath of the Holy Spirit penetrate the essence of all things. Therefore, the material and the divine, or merciful, civilizations must progress together until the highest aspirations and desires of humanity shall become realized.- ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*

- I beseech Thee, O my God, by all the transcendent glory of Thy Name, to clothe Thy loved ones in the robe of justice and to illumine their beings with the light of trustworthiness. Thou art the One that hath power to do as He pleaseth and Who holdeth within His grasp the reins of all things, visible and invisible.- Bahá'u'lláh