

# Stage of Maturity

Hamed Eshraghian

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In the Baha'i writings, the founders of the major world religions are viewed as divine Educators, who have been sent by a loving and purposeful Creator for the education and advancement of His creation, and whose successive appearances over the centuries have *"brought the earth's inhabitants to the threshold of their collective coming-of-age as a single people."*

*"The long ages of infancy and childhood, through which the human race had to pass, have receded into the background,"* these writings say. *"Humanity is now experiencing the commotions invariably associated with the most turbulent stage of its evolution, the stage of adolescence, when the impetuosity of youth and its vehemence reach their climax, and must gradually be superseded by the calmness, the wisdom, and the maturity that characterize the stage of adulthood."*

While the devastating commotions of the stage of adolescence encircle the globe, *"The divers social strata of the world are longing, in heart and mind, for equality, justice, and a society built on moral and worthy human qualities."*

And yet, despite today's great scientific and technological achievements, *"every political and economic school of thought is overwhelmed by and unequal to the scale, nature, complexity, and interconnectedness of the challenges."*

*"The world is thus facing a profound and far-reaching crisis that is destabilizing and disrupting its order. ... Conflict and contention among peoples and war and strife among nations are increasing day by day, and every pure heart and illumined conscience is oppressed and saddened thereby."*

But even though *"many souls are immersed in the sea of hopelessness and despair, there are also many people of goodwill who are earnestly and sincerely searching for a remedy and striving for a solution."*

The solution offered by the Baha'i writings calls for each person *"to learn, in collaboration with like-minded and sympathetic people, how to nurture communities that can manifest the fundamental principles of peace and the requirements of amity and oneness. Such communities ...*

- 1. keenly endeavor to give practical expression to the principle of the equality of women and men;*
- 2. are committed to the centrality of justice and fairness;*
- 3. strive to create harmony and unity, combined with diversity;*
- 4. make consultation the axis for individual and collective decision making, the remover of conflict, and the builder of agreement;*
- 5. promote economic solidarity and mutual support among people;*
- 6. teach children and junior youth freedom from both prejudice and rancor, and regard the youth as being at the vanguard of the advancement and transformation of society;*
- 7. view spiritual and moral principles as the foundation of the exaltation of humanity and of every kind of progress.*

*And in this way, they spread a culture of peace and reconciliation."*

As we strive toward the next stage of our evolution, *"the spiritual duty and moral responsibility of every conscientious soul is to serve the cause of the peace and unity of the world. ...In purifying the heart and cleansing its mirror from prejudice on the one hand, and in creating the social conditions for peace and unity on the other, every individual has agency and the capacity to play a part."*