

Order of Service

Opening Prayer

From the sweet-scented streams of Thine eternity give me to drink, O my God, and of the fruits of the tree of Thy being enable me to taste, O my Hope! From the crystal springs of Thy love suffer me to quaff, O my Glory, and beneath the shadow of Thine everlasting providence let me abide, O my Light! Within the meadows of Thy nearness, before Thy presence, make me able to roam, O my Beloved, and at the right hand of the throne of Thy mercy, seat me, O my Desire! From the fragrant breezes of Thy joy let a breath pass over me, O my Goal, and into the heights of the paradise of Thy reality let me gain admission, O my Adored One! To the melodies of the dove of Thy oneness suffer me to hearken, O Resplendent One, and through the spirit of Thy power and Thy might quicken me, O my Provider! In the spirit of Thy love keep me steadfast, O my Succorer, and in the path of Thy good-pleasure set firm my steps, O my Maker! Within the garden of Thine immortality, before Thy countenance, let me abide for ever, O Thou Who art merciful unto me, and upon the seat of Thy glory stablish me, O Thou Who art my Possessor! To the heaven of Thy loving-kindness lift me up, O my Quickener, and unto the Day-Star of Thy guidance lead me, O Thou my Attractor! Before the revelations of Thine invisible spirit summon me to be present, O Thou Who art my Origin and my Highest Wish, and unto the essence of the fragrance of Thy beauty, which Thou wilt manifest, cause me to return, O Thou Who art my God! Potent art Thou to do what pleasest Thee. Thou art, verily, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, the All-Highest.

Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh

First Reading

In this world we are influenced by two sentiments, Joy and Pain. Joy gives us wings! In times of joy our strength is more vital, our intellect keener, and our understanding less clouded. We seem better able to cope with the world and to find our sphere of usefulness. But when sadness visits us we become weak, our strength leaves us, our comprehension is dim and our intelligence veiled. The actualities of life seem to elude our grasp, the eyes of our spirits fail to discover the sacred mysteries, and we become even as dead beings. There is no human being untouched by these two influences; but all the sorrow and the grief that exist come from the world of matter - the spiritual world bestows only the joy! If we suffer it is the outcome of material things, and all the trials and troubles come from this world of illusion.

Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Music

Music

Second Reading

The sovereign soul of him who lives self-governed and at peace is centered, taking pleasure and pain alike; heat, cold; glory and shame. Glad with joy of light and truth; By this sign is he known. His mind upon The One, Let him accomplish Yoga, and achieve Purenness of soul, Tranquil in spirit, free of fear, intent upon his vow, devout, musing on Me, lost in the thought of Me. So devoted, he comes to the peace beyond, My peace, the peace of high Nirvana!

Hinduism, Bhagavad-Gita

Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail, and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will exult in the God of my salvation.

Judaism, Habakkuk 3.17-18

For instance, a merchant may lose his trade and depression ensues. A workman is dismissed and starvation stares him in the face. A farmer has a bad harvest, anxiety fills his mind... All these examples are ... trials which beset our every step, all our sorrow, pain, shame and grief, are born in the world of matter; whereas the spiritual Kingdom never causes sadness. A man living with his thoughts in this Kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ills all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene.

Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá

...As we have received mercy, we faint not....For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ ...We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed....

Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

Christianity, 2 Corinthians 4:1,6-9,16

Music

Music

Third Reading

We have not sent unto a city any prophet except we overtook the people thereof with trouble and distress, that haply they might humble themselves; and then did we give them, in exchange for evil, good, until they increased and said, 'Distress and joy both touched our fathers;' then we overtook them suddenly ere they could perceive.- Had the people of the town but believed and feared, we would have opened up for them blessings from the heavens and from the earth; but they said it was a lie, so we overtook them for that which they had earned.

Islam, Qur'an, Sura 7

If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

Christianity, John 15:10-11

Today, humanity is bowed down with trouble, sorrow and grief, no one escapes; the world is wet with tears; but, thank God, the remedy is at our doors. Let us turn our hearts away from the world of matter and live in the spiritual world! It alone can give us freedom! If we are hemmed in by difficulties we have only to call upon God, and by His great Mercy we shall be helped. If sorrow and adversity visit us, let us turn our faces to the Kingdom and heavenly consolation will be outpoured. If we are sick and in distress let us implore God's healing, and He will answer our prayer. When our thoughts are filled with the bitterness of this world, let us turn our eyes to the sweetness of God's compassion and He will send us heavenly calm! ... When our days are drawing to a close let us think of the eternal worlds, and we shall be full of joy! You see all round you proofs of the inadequacy of material things - how joy, comfort, peace and consolation are not to be found in the transitory things of the world.

Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Music

Open Prayers

Music

Music

Fourth Reading

Everything of importance in this world demands the close attention of its seeker. The one in pursuit of anything must undergo difficulties and hardships until the object in view is attained and the great success is obtained. This is the case of things pertaining to the world. How much higher is that which concerns the Supreme Concourse! That Cause involves every favor, glory and eternal bliss in the world of God. The seeker after the great guidance and eternal happiness necessarily will encounter difficulties. He must be patient under such circumstances.

But if the fragrance of love and unity among the believers is wafted ... every trial will become a mercy, every unhappiness a joy, every difficulty an expansion, every misery a treasure and every hardship a felicity.

Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Closing Prayer

O Thou Benevolent God, forgive my sins, grant Thy Bestowals, overlook my faults, provide for me a shelter, immerse me in the Fountain of Thy Patience and heal me of all sickness and disease. Purify and sanctify me. Give me a portion from the outpouring of holiness, so that sorrow and sadness may vanish, joy and happiness descend, despondency and hopelessness be changed into cheerfulness and trustfulness, and courage take the place of fear. Verily Thou art the Forgiver, the Compassionate, and Thou art the Generous, the Beloved.

Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá