

**THE**

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# CARAVAN

**ALLEGED  
WILL & TESTAMENT  
OF ABDU'L BAHA**

**INSIDE!**

**HANDWRITING  
ANALYSIS OF THE  
WILL OF ABDU'L BAHA  
BY DR. MITCHELL**

**INSIDE!**







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# PRAYER



HE IS GOD, EXALTED IS HE, THE LORD OF MIGHT AND  
GRANDEUR!

God, my God! I yield Thee thanks at all times and render Thee praise under all conditions.

In prosperity, all praise is Thine, O Lord of the Worlds, and in its absence, all gratitude is Thine, O Desire of them that have recognized Thee!

In adversity, all honour is Thine, O Adored One of all who are in heaven and on earth, and in affliction, all glory is Thine, O Enchanter of the hearts of those who yearn after Thee!

In hardship, all praise is Thine, O Thou the Goal of them that seek after Thee, and in comfort, all thanksgiving is Thine, O Thou whose remembrance is treasured in the hearts of those who are nigh unto Thee!

In wealth, all splendour is Thine, O Lord of them that are devoted to Thee, and in poverty, all command is Thine, O Thou the Hope of them that acknowledge Thy unity!

In joy, all glory is Thine, O Thou besides Whom there is none other God, and in sorrow, all beauty is Thine, O Thou besides Whom there is none other God!

In hunger, all justice is Thine, O Thou besides Whom there is none other God,  
and in satiety, all grace is Thine, O Thou besides Whom there is none other God!

In my homeland, all bounty is Thine, O Thou besides Whom there is none other  
God, and in exile, all decree is Thine, O Thou besides Whom there is none other  
God!

Under the sword, all munificence is Thine, O Thou besides Whom there is none  
other God, and in the safety of home, all perfection is Thine, O Thou besides  
Whom there is none other God!

In the lofty mansion, all generosity is Thine, O Thou besides Whom there is none  
other God, and upon the lowly dust, all favour is Thine, O Thou besides Whom  
there is none other God!

In prison, all fidelity is Thine, O Thou the Bestower of gifts, and in confinement,  
all eternity is Thine, O Thou Who art the ever-abiding King!

All bounty is Thine, O Thou Who art the Lord of bounty, and the Sovereign of  
bounty, and the King of bounty! I bear witness that Thou art to be praised in Thy  
doings, O Thou Source of bounty, and to be obeyed in Thy behests, O Thou  
Ocean of bounty, He from Whom all bounty doth proceed, He to Whom all  
bounty doth return!

**-Prayer of Baha'u'llah**



# THIS IS MY VICTORY SONG



God's love sets me free.  
This is my victory song.  
His grace is sufficient for me.  
It is what keeps me strong.

For I'm no perfect man,  
And on my own cannot prevail.  
Sometimes doing the best I can,  
Even will seem to no avail.

Had my share of heartaches,  
Sometimes wondering to what end.  
Made my share of mistakes.  
Over this, I can't pretend.

The struggles may increase,  
But it's no cause for alarm.  
God's thoughts to me are of peace,  
To nurture and not to harm.

I forge on quite resolved.  
God's at work in me for the best.  
I am flawed but fiercely loved,  
And He is not finished yet.

God's perfect plan for me,  
I may not fully understand.  
But trusting, obeying, I'm grateful to be,  
Handled in His loving hand.

- Abimbola T. Alabi

# FOREWORD

*“It is certain and indisputable that the creator of man is not like man because a powerless creature cannot create another being. The maker, the creator, has to possess all perfections in order that he may create...The contingent world is the source of imperfections: God is the origin of perfections. The imperfections of the contingent world are in themselves a proof of the perfections of God.” – Abdu'l Baha*

The holiday season was desperately required for everyone with even a passing interest in Baha'u'llah's teachings and working for the betterment of humanity—it was an opportunity for each of us to take stock, reflect, and perhaps sink a stiff drink after a stormy year. Both 2020 and 21 were years of uncertainty, and we've all gone from the realm of the inconceivable to the region of near reality. I feel that no one was unaffected by the loss of a loved one, whether it was one's own parents, siblings, or life partner; we lost someone who was close to our hearts but is now a part of the eternal world. I'd want to express my heartfelt sympathies to you. May Baha'u'llah provide us all the patience we need to get through this tough time. With that,

I wish all of our readers a prosperous 2022, and may Baha'u'llah's blessings and pleasure be upon you this year and in the years ahead.

Last year there was another great event commemorated by millions of Baha'is in communities all around the world, the hundredth anniversary of Abdu'l Baha's death. Abdu'l Baha died in the Holy Land on November 28, 1921. During this centennial year, his life and legacy are being celebrated all around the world. Abdu'l Baha died in Haifa at around 1:00 a.m. A Holy Day is observed on the anniversary of His death amongst the Baha'is. The significance of His death was reported in news outlets all over the world. Approximately ten thousand people attended his burial in Haifa, including Jews, Christians, Muslims, and a host of His American, European, and other friends. His coffin was taken to the mosque in Haifa, Israel where he used to frequent for prayers. He believed in unity with different sects and never discriminated between Muslims, Jews or Christians.

“The divine religions were founded for the



purpose of unifying humanity and establishing universal peace. Any movement which brings about peace and agreement in human society is truly a divine movement; any reform which causes people to come together under the shelter of the same tabernacle is surely animated by heavenly motives.” – Abdu'l Baha

Free Baha'is today, following his legacy is continuously working for the sake of humanity and for the welfare of the society as a whole. Since His death, Abdu'l Baha's works have continued to be a source of instruction for the Baha'i community. He addressed reams of writing to Baha'is all over the globe, explaining parts of the Baha'i teachings, supporting the spread of Baha'i principles, and leading early educational, social, and economic efforts.

I'd like to welcome you back to the next and last edition of The Caravan magazine in this series. First and foremost, thank you for your enthusiasm and for writing such lovely evaluations. We're delighted you're enjoying the magazine and recognising the work that's gone into it. I must add, it would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of all of our readers, since it is only with your help that we can continue to take tiny efforts toward spreading Baha'u'llah's word. In this magazine, we shall continue with our series of content like the laws from Kitab-i-Aqdas, Blast from the Past, Did you Know, Guest Articles, alongside other on-going series that you all have shown lot of interest in. In case our readers have any new suggestions to make in terms of adding a new content theme in the magazine, do share them with us and we will definitely make it part of the next magazine.

In case of any other suggestions, feedback or questions, kindly feel free to write to us and we will get in touch! Until then, keep healthy, stay happy!

**Stay blessed,**

The Free Baha'i Team

# DIVINE LAWS



In the name of Him who is the Ruler (al-hakim) over what was and what will be.

O Pen of the Most High, say: O multitudes of creation (al-insha'), we have ordained the Fast for you, certain limited days. After the completion of them we have made al-Nayruz (Nawruz) a feast for you. [Note 3] Thus has the Sun of Explanation shone from the horizon of the Book from before the presence of the Possessor of the Place of Beginning and Return. And place prior to the month of fasting the (intercalary) days which are in excess of the months. [Note 1] We have, indeed, made them manifestations of al-ha' [Note 2] among the nights and days. Therefore these five days are not included in the year and the months. It is fitting, then, that in them the People of Baha' (Splendour) feed themselves and their relatives, then the poor and poverty-stricken. They must exalt, magnify, praise, and glorify their Lord with joy and gladness. And whenever the days of giving [Note 3] are completed, before the refraining (from food) let them enter upon the fast. So has the Master of Mankind (mawla al-anam) commanded. This does not cause difficulty for the one who is on a journey, for the ill, for the pregnant woman, or the one who is nursing. God has exempted them as a Grace on His part. He is the Mighty One, the Free Giver.

(Source: Al-Kitab Al-Aqdas by Baha'u'llah,  
Translated from Arabic by Earl Elder &  
William Miller)

# AN ADDRESS TO THE UHJ BY AN HAIFAN EX-BAHA'I – GUEST ARTICLE

Many individuals abandon the Baha'i Faith because they are unhappy with the Baha'i administration, not because they are offended by Baha'u'llah's teachings. Isn't it natural for these individuals to reject "The Administration" before abandoning the Baha'i Faith as a whole? We can't believe no one thinks that the current version of UHJ is corrupt and anti-Baha'u'llah teachings, as a Free Baha'i. You'd have to be a complete moron not to realise how the UHJ is undermining the Baha'i Faith, especially after looking at their deeds and writings. Why aren't more people outraged about this? I'm starting to lose my sanity. I have the impression that Free Baha'is and a small group of other believers are the only normal individuals amid a sea of lunatics. You got the leadership you deserved since Baha'is are complete total imbeciles.

As Baha'is, we are called to act and serve mankind first and foremost, just as Jesus did for Christians. Instead, the UHJ insults much of mankind by calling Baha'is from other sect's names that contradict what the faith teaches. The UHJ and their adherents appear to have no understanding of the Baha'i faith. The

Baha'i religion is about more than simply one person's hopes and desires. The Baha'i religion is not about going to worship services once in a while and then forgetting about the faith's principles and ethics, as well as its rules, in one's daily life. The Baha'i Faith's main mission is eventually the redemption of society. While the UHJ is attempting to persuade Baha'is to focus on growing their numbers, this is primarily done on paper, and the actual situation is much different from what the UHJ communicates. Instead, Baha'is should concentrate on developing the talents of each and every Baha'i to strive for the development of mankind, using the resources provided by Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha and learning from their acts and experiences in order to disseminate the faith's message.

In the past, mass conversion failed to consolidate and activate new believers in several regions of the world. However, the UHJ solely concentrates on enrolments, which is problematic. You'll be asked to sign the cards first, then embrace the teachings and the faith's message. This causes many to abandon their religion once they realise UHJ's harmful intentions. You can see that the UHJ is





encouraging NSA and LSA to focus on local and neighbourhood services such as children's courses, junior youth classes, devotionals, and study groups. All of these classes, on the other hand, are solely focused on Ruhi texts, and neither the teacher nor the students are interested in learning. Instead, if they had focused on teaching from Baha'u'llah's original writings, the scenario would have been very different. We've seen incredible benefits in many places where this is being done. I've seen multiple instances where a single Baha'i family with children in one neighbourhood can benefit dozens of children, junior youth, youth and adults, and even hundreds, or where a few Baha'is visiting a neighbourhood or apartment complex can have a positive impact on the lives of dozens of families and create long-lasting bonds of affection, better morals, greater self-confidence, and educational improvements. Look at how brilliantly the Free Baha'is are propagating Baha'u'llah's teachings through working for the good of mankind, and I feel UHJ may learn something from them. After converting or signing cards, they do not run. If a Baha'i does not observe this and does not engage in it, they will most likely be unaware

of its favourable benefits.

The UHJ only understands how to seek down Baha'is and proclaim them covenant breaches for actions that they believe are detrimental to their own personal interests. Covenant violators, on the other hand, aren't genuine. It's merely a means to keep track of who's following you and what you're saying. The threat alone is enough to keep the "good" Baha'is in line. Are you following the clever strategy? They cleverly manage you, and you are unaware of the violence perpetrated in the name of faith. Who gave them the authority to label a Baha'i as a covenant-breeder? Now, don't show me Shoghi Effendi's acts and teachings to prove yourself here, since we only believe in Baha'u'llah's teachings because it is the benchmark for us, the Free Baha'is. Unlike UHJ, who follow Shoghi Effendi and succeeding his path, continue to go in contradiction of the teachings of Baha'u'llah. Let me bring up an incident here for the reference of my readers.

As narrated by Lady Ruth White in her book 'Abdu'l Baha's Questioned Will and Testament' on page 29. In spite of failing in his

college course at the age of twenty-four, Shoghi Effendi wanted to go to the Oxford University. And that too despite the objections made by the Master. Let us have a look at the narration below.

"I also wish to give a few highlights on Shoghi Effendi, the grandson of Abdul Baha, who is now his alleged successor. He had failed in his college course at the age of twenty-four, and he wished to go to Oxford University, in the autumn of 1919. Despite the objections of Abdu'l Baha he went. This act demonstrates that Shoghi Effendi had little consideration for the wishes of his grandfather, who was then seventy-four years of age. It also shows that he was lacking in the spiritual attributes which would have enabled him to know that it was of far more value to be with Abdul Baha, both spiritually and mentally, during the last two years of his life, than any amount of academic training could possibly be. For these last two years were filled with intense activities, and spiritual confirmations, as it was just after the first world war, and the war had made people hungry for spiritual enlightenment. As a result, there flocked to the home of Abdul Baha a steady stream of pilgrims from all over the earth – the poor, the wealthy, the distinguished, and frightened refugees. They came by camel, train, auto, boat, and on foot to imbibe the spiritual wisdom of Abdul Baha, and each day there dined at his table about forty pilgrims. This personal contact which we were privileged to have was of tremendous importance, not only because of what he said, but because of the emanation of his spirit, which transported those who were receptive into kingdoms of enlightenment and happiness. Yet Shoghi Effendi chose to be away during the last two years of Abdul Baha's life, and did not return for a full month after he had passed from this world.

Another significant fact to which I wish to call attention is this: If Abdul Baha had had any secret intention of appointing Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Bahai Cause, it does not seem plausible that he would have excluded

him from the entourage that accompanied him on his trip through Europe and America during 1912. Shoghi Effendi at that time was eighteen years of age and spoke and wrote English, Persian and Arabic; yet he was not included in this trip. Even after Abdul Baha returned to Palestine, instead of choosing Shoghi Effendi as his secretary, he chose Ahmad Sohrab, who had accompanied him to Europe and America, and who continued as his secretary for five succeeding years."

We might be hesitant to even name such a person a Baha'i, let alone the "Guardian of the Cause of God," after seeing what Shoghi did with the Cause. We must keep in mind that Abdu'l Baha has said, "If a person lives his life stepping on the principles of the Baha'i religion without publicly announcing himself as Baha'i, he has in reality lived as Baha'i," We realise how the current version of UHJ is not in accord with Baha'i principles and teachings when we read Baha'u'llah's and the Master's teachings, and hence we do not believe in it.





# CLERGY IN THE BAHA'I CAUSE

In answer to a question as to whether or not there would be any clergy in the Baha'i Cause?

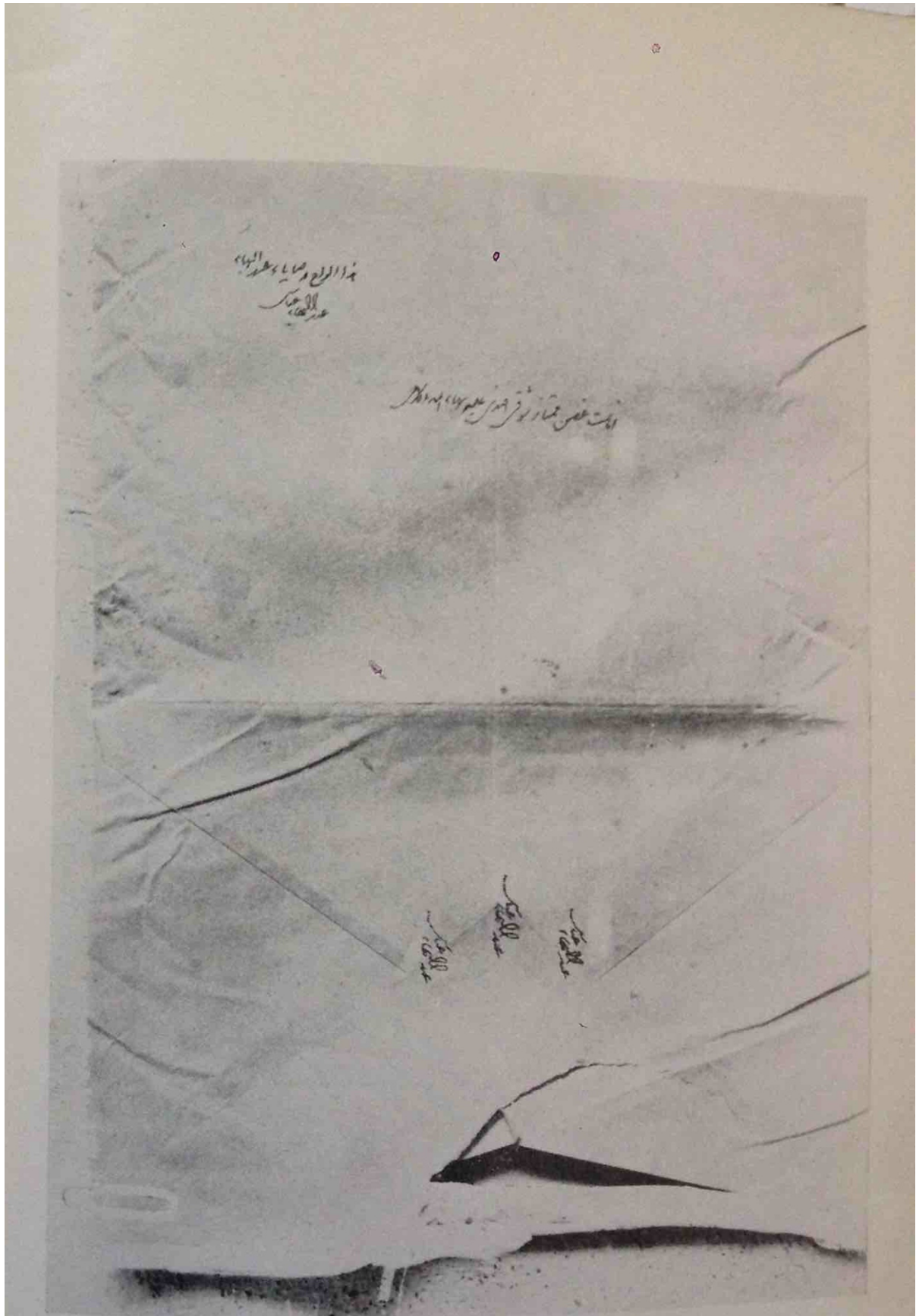
“No. In this movement there will never be any paid ministers, no appointed clergy, no bishops, no cardinals, no popes, no ceremonies. A clergyman, assuming that he is ordained to his ministry, may think that he knows more about God than anyone else, whereas the humble man in his congregation may know more about God than he does. The sacerdotal and theological position makes a clergyman proud and haughty. But there is one thing in this Cause; some people may become greater than the rest, not through appointment, but through the purity of their hearts, their unselfish deeds, their heroic sacrifices, and their knowledge of God. Such illumined souls, like kind fathers or teachers, will guide and teach those less fortunate. They are the elder brothers of the members of the community. They do not arrogate to themselves any title or position. You will know them by their humility, their sincerity, their deeds, their severance, their knowledge, their spirituality, and their attraction.”

- Abdu'l Baha

(Source: Diary of Ahmad Sohrab, March 21, 1913)



# ALLEGED WILL & TESTAMENT OF ABDU'L BAHA (PERSIAN)





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# HANDWRITING ANALYSIS OF THE WILL OF ABDU'L BAHA BY DR. MITCHELL



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THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection of the Library of Congress Manuscript Division contains an item from the papers of *Abdul Baha* entitled **REPORT ON THE WRITING SHOWN ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ALLEGED WILL OF ABDUL BAHA BY DR. C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL** and that the attached photocopies - the title page, the presentation page, 1 unnumbered page [page 1], and pages 2 through 4 - are a true representation from that work.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY FURTHER, that the work is marked with the handwritten notation "Presented to the Library of Congress by Ruth White, September 2, 1930."

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Virginia D. Sorkin".

By: Virginia D. Sorkin  
Acting Chief  
Library of Congress  
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Presented to the  
Library of Congress  
by  
Ruth White  
September 2, 1930

I have made a minute examination of the writing in the photograph and photographic enlargements of the alleged will of Abdul Baki. I have compared it with the authenticated writing of Abdul Baki in a series of photographs and photographic enlargements received from Mrs. H. Lawrence White.

In the above <sup>Gift</sup> Mrs. H. Lawrence White examines the original document and reaches the conclusion to be drawn from the examination of the photograph enlargements that necessarily is of a provisional character and upon the accuracy of the photographic records. However, some of the facts which are taken into consideration in the scientific examination of an original document cannot be perfectly studied in a photographic reproduction, such as, for example, the ink, paper, construction, and so on.

Assuming that the authenticated specimens of writing are of approximately the same period as that at which the alleged will is alleged to have been written and signed, the points which can be accurately compared in the photographic enlargements are the formation of the writing, the changes in pressure, the slant of the letters, and the relationship in the size of parts of the letters to the whole.



*Presented to the  
Library of Congress  
by  
Ruth White  
September 30*

REPORT  
ON THE WRITING SHOWN ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS  
OF THE ALLEGED WILL OF ABDUL BAHÁ

BY

DR C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL

EDITOR OF "THE ANALYST"

85, ECCLESTON SQUARE,

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ENGLAND

JUNE 3rd 1930

[AC3959]

C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL, D.Sc., F.I.C.

TEL: VICTORIA 8363.

85, ECCLESTON SQUARE,

LONDON, S.W. 1.

June 3rd 1930



# REPORT

## ON THE WRITING SHOWN ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ALLEGED WILL OF ABDUL BAHÁ.

I have made a minute examination of the writing in the photographs and photographic enlargements of the alleged will of Abdul Baha, and have compared it with the authenticated writing of Abdul Baha in a series of photographs and photographic enlargements received from Mrs. H. Lawrence White.

In the absence of an opportunity to examine the original document, any conclusions to be drawn from an examination of the photographic enlargements must necessarily be of a provisional character contingent upon the accuracy of the photographic records. Moreover, some of the facts which are taken into consideration in the scientific examination of an original document cannot be perfectly studied in a photographic reproduction, such as, for example, the ink, paper, penstrokes, and so on.

Assuming that the authenticated specimens of writing are of approximately the same period as that at which the disputed will is alleged to have been written and signed, the points which can be accurately compared in the photographic enlargements are the mode of formation of the writing, the changes in pressure, the form of individual letters, and the relationship in the size of parts of the letter to the whole.





A fact requiring explanation is the presence of apparent erasures on some of the pages of the will, namely in lines 12 and 13 of page 2, and line 13 of page 4. Without a microscopical examination of the original document it is not possible to state whether a chemical agent has been used, but assuming there have been erasures at these points I think it probable that they were done mechanically, not chemically. The apparent erasure on page 5, line 11, may possibly be the result of an imprint from other written matter while the ink was wet.

The photographic reproductions of authenticated specimens of the writing of Abdul Baha were the following:-

1. Writing from the Book of the Unitarian Church, Montclair, New Jersey.
2. Writing from the Guest Bible for 1912, City Temple, London.
3. Authenticated signatures on two letters to Mrs. Stannard on a photograph, and a possible authentic signature in the possession of Mrs. Devine.  
There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the signature from Mrs. Devine, since it agrees closely with the other signatures.

The Signatures on the Envelope:- A comparison of the four signatures on the envelope of the alleged will with the four authenticated signatures reveals many striking differences in the mode of formation of the characters, as for example:

In the authentic signatures the width of these characters, compared with their height, is much greater than in the signatures on the envelope. The strokes are also much firmer

ll

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85, ECCLESTON SQUARE,  
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in the envelope signatures than in the authenticated signatures.

*we* In the authenticated signature the entire character is roughly  $2\frac{1}{4}$  times the width of the open space between the uprights; in the disputed signatures the corresponding figure is twice as great. In the authentic signatures the cusp is rounded; in the disputed signatures it is pointed. In the authenticated signatures the relationship between the depth of the gap and its breadth is as 1 : 1.4 to 1.6, whereas in the disputed signatures it is as 1 : 2.3 to 2.6. Thus the ratio is totally different. In my opinion these differences are not consistent with the signatures upon the envelope being in the writing of the writer of the authenticated signature.

The Body of the Will:- A comparison of the formation of the writing on the envelope with that on pages 9 and 10 of the will shows so many points of resemblance that there is no reason to doubt that they were written by the same person.

I have also studied minutely the photographic enlargements of the writing on the other pages of the will, and have formed the following conclusions:-

Page 2, with the exception of the last two lines, agrees with Page 3.





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The last two lines of Page 2 agree with Page 4.

The other pages, namely 5, 6, 7 and 8, agree in the characteristics of writing with the writing on Page 4. That is to say, the writing does not agree with the hypothesis that it was all written by one person.

The writing of Abdul Baha has certain distinctive features, among which are a sudden change of pressure in some of the strokes, wavering formation of some of the curves, and the formation of sharp angles in some of the characters. These characteristics are sharply indicated in the enlarged photographs of the writing in the City Temple, London, and in the Montclair writing.

A minute comparison of the authenticated writing with the writing on every page of the alleged will, and in particular with the lines 10, 11 and 12 on page 5, has failed to detect in any part of the will the characteristics of the writing of Abdul Baha, as shown in the authenticated specimens.

In addition to these differences in writing habits, there are also differences in the shapes of many of the parallel characters in the body of the document compared with the authenticated writing, as in the case of the signatures mentioned above.

*C. Ainsworth Mitchell*



**1912** - Abdu'l Baha with the Persian Consul-General for New York and his household, Morristown, New Jersey





# THE BAHAI RELIGION AND ITS ENEMY, THE BAHA'I ORGANIZATION – PART 11

*(An extract from Lady Ruth White's book)*

**(...continued)**

## **CHAPTER VI.**

COMPLETE TEXT OF THE ENGLISH  
TRANSLATION OF THE ALLEGED WILL  
AND TESTAMENT OF ABDU'L BAHA.  
FAC-SIMILE REPRODUCTION OF THE  
ALLEGED WILLOF ABDU'L BAHA.

This chapter contains the translation of the alleged will and testament of Abdu'l Baha, exactly as it was translated by Shoghi Effendi, the alleged successor. Nothing has been omitted. On the cover page of the copies of the typewritten manuscript that were distributed only among a few Bahais in America, Shoghi Effendi wrote:

"I feel that the conditions are now favorable for the circulation of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha only in manuscript form and among recognized believers in America.

Every such Believer should be trusted with a single copy with the express understanding that no duplicate copies or extracts of it be made or published anywhere." – From letter written by Shoghi Effendi to the American National Spiritual Assembly on November 27, 1924.

Issued in accordance with the conditions laid down by Shoghi Effendi, National Spiritual Assembly. February, 1925.

The beloved of God and the handmaids of the Merciful throughout the

United States of America and Canada  
Received at 104 Wall St., New York, N. Y.

Saturday, February 25, 1922 – 11:20 A. M.

A copy was sent to me unsolicited, and as I made no promise that I would not publish it, I feel that in lieu of events that have since taken

place, it devolves upon me to publish this alleged will along with other suppressed information.

(PART ONE)

HEREIN FOLLOW THE TABLETS AND TESTAMENT OF ABDU'L BAHA:- All-praise to Him Who, by the Shield of His Covenant, hath guarded the Temple of His Cause from the darts of doubtfulness, Who by the Hosts of His Testament hath preserved the Sanctuary of His Most Beneficent Law and protected His Straight and Luminous Path, staying thereby the onslaught of the company of Coven. and-breakers, that have threatened to subvert His Divine Edifice; Who hath watched over His Mighty Stronghold and All-glorious Faith, through the aid of men whom the slander of the slanderer affect not, whom no earthly calling, glory and power can turn aside from the Covenant of God and His Testament, established firmly by His clear and manifest words, writ and revealed by His All-Glorious Pen and recorded in the Preserved Tablet.

Salutation and praise, blessing and glory rest upon that primal branch of the Divine and Sacred Lote-Tree, grown out, blest, tender, verdant and flourishing from the Twin Holy Trees; the most wondrous, unique and priceless pearl that doth gleam from out the Twin surging seas; upon the offshoots of the Tree of Holiness, the twigs of the Celestial Tree, they that in the Day of the Great Dividing have stood fast and firm in the Covenant; upon the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God that have diffused widely the Divine Fragrances, declared His Proofs, proclaimed His Faith, published abroad His Law, detached themselves from all things but Him, stood for righteousness in this world, and kindled the Fire of the Love God in the very hearts and souls of His servants; upon them that have believed, rested assured, stood steadfast in His Covenant and followed the Light that after my passing shineth from the Day spring of Divine Guidance—for behold!

he is the blest and sacred bough that hath branched out from the Twin Holy Trees. Well is it with him that seeketh the shelter of his shade that shadoweth all mankind.

O ye beloved of the Lord! The greatest of all things is the protection of the True Faith of God. the preservation of His Law, the safeguarding of His Cause and service unto His Word. Ten thousand souls have shed streams of their sacred blood in this path, their precious lives they offered in sacrifice unto Him. hastened wrapt in Holy ecstasy unto the glorious field of martyrdom, upraised the Standard of God's Faith and writ with their life-blood upon the Tablet of the world the verses of His Divine Unity. The sacred breast of His Holiness, the Exalted One, (May my life be a sacrifice unto Him) was made a target to many a dart of woe, and in Mazandaran, the Blessed feet of the Abha Beauty (may my life be offered up for His loved ones) were so grievously scourged as to bleed and be sore wounded. His neck also was put into captive chains and His feet made fast in the stocks. In every hour, for a period of fifty years, a new trial and calamity befell Him and fresh afflictions and cares beset Him. One of them, after having suffered intense vicissitudes, He was made homeless and a wanderer and fell a victim to still new vexations and troubles. In Iraq, the Day Star of the world was so exposed to the wiles of the people of malice as to be eclipsed in splendor. Later on He was sent an exile to the Great City (Constantinople) and thence to the Land of Mystery (Adrianople), whence, grievously wronged, He was eventually transferred to the Most Great Prison (Acre). He Whom the world hath wronged (may my life be offered up for His loved ones) was four times banished from city to city, till at last condemned to perpetual confinement, He was incarcerated in this Prison, the prison of highway robbers, of brigands and of man-slayers. All this is but one of the trials that have afflicted the Blessed Beauty, the rest being even as grievous as this.

And still another of His trials was the hostility,



the flagrant injustice, the iniquity and rebellion of Mirza Yahya. Although that Wronged One, that Prisoner, had through His loving-kindness nurtured him in His own bosom ever since his early years, had showered at every moment His tender care upon him, exalted his name, shielded him from every misfortune, endeared him to them of this world and the next, and despite the firm exhortations and counsels of His Holiness, the Exalted One (the Bab) and His clear and conclusive warning: "Beware, beware lest the Nineteen Letters of the Living and that which hath been revealed in the Bayan veil thee!" yet notwithstanding this, Mirza Yahya denied Him, dealt falsely with Him, believed Him not., sowed the seeds of doubt, closed his eyes to His manifest verses and turned aside therefrom. Would that he had been content therewith! Nay, he even attempted to shed the sacred blood (of Baha'u'llah) and then raised a great clamour and tumult around him, attributing into Baha'u'llah malevolence and cruelty towards himself. What sedition he stirred up and what a storm of mischief he raised whilst in the Land of Mystery (Adrianople)! At last he wrought that which caused the Day-Star of the world to be sent an exile to this, the Most Great Prison, and sorely wronged and in the West of this Great Prison He did set.

O ye that stand fast and firm in the Covenant! The Center of Sedition, the Prime Mover of mischief, Mirza Muhammad Ali, hath passed out from under the shadow of the Cause, hath broken the Covenant, hath falsified the Holy Text, hath inflicted a grievous loss upon the true Faith of God, hath scattered His people, hath with bitter rancour endeavored to hurt Abdu'l-Baha and hath assailed with the utmost enmity this servant of the Sacred Threshold. Every dart he seized and hurled to pierce the breast of this wronged servant, no wound did he neglect to grievously inflict upon me, no venom did he spare but he poisoned therewith the life of this hapless one. I swear by the most holy Abha Beauty and by the Light shining from His Holiness, the

Exalted One, (may my soul be a sacrifice for their lowly servants) that because of this iniquity the dwellers in the Pavilion of the Abha Kingdom have bewailed, the Celestial Concourse is lamenting, the Immortal Maids of Heaven in the All-Highest Paradise have raised their plaintive cries and the angelic company sighed and uttered their moanings. So grievous the deeds of this iniquitous person became that he struck with his axe at the root of the Blessed Tree, dealt a heavy blow at the Temple of the Cause of God, deluged with tears of blood the eyes of the loved ones of the Blessed Beauty, cheered and encouraged the enemies of the One True God, by his repudiation of the Covenant turned many a seeker after Truth aside from the Cause of God, revived the blighted hopes of Yahya's following, made himself detested, caused the enemies of the Greatest Name to become audacious and arrogant, put aside the firm and conclusive verses and sowed the seeds of doubt. Had not the promised aid of the Ancient Beauty been graciously vouchsafed at every moment to this one, unworthy though he be, he surely would have destroyed, nay exterminate the Cause of God and utterly subverted the Divine Edifice. But, praise be the Lord, the triumphant assistance of the Abha Kingdom was received, the hosts of the Realm above hastened to bestow victory. The Cause of God was promoted far and wide, the call of the True One was noised abroad, ears in all regions were inclined to the Word of God. His standard was unfurled, the ensigns of Holiness gloriously waved aloft and the verses celebrating His Divine Unity were chanted. Now, that the true Faith of God may be shielded and protected, His Law guarded and preserved and its Cause remain safe and secure, it is incumbent upon everyone to hold fast unto the Text of the clear and firmly established blessed verse, revealed about him. None other transgression greater than this can ever be imagined. He (Baha'u'llah) saveth, glorious and holy is His Word:- "My foolish loved ones have regarded him even as my partner, have kindled sedition

in the land and they verily are of the mischief-makers." Consider, how foolish are the people! They that have been in His (Baha'u'llah's) Presence and beheld His Countenance, have nevertheless noised abroad such idle talk, until, exalted be His explicit words. He said: "Should he for a moment pass out from under the shadow of the Cause, he surely shall be brought to naught." Reflect! What stress He layeth upon one moment's deviation: that is, were he to incline a hair's breadth to the right or to the left, his deviation would be clearly established and his utter nothingness made manifest. And now ye are witnessing how the wrath of God hath from all sides afflicted him and how day by day he is speeding towards destruction. Ere long will ye behold him and his associates outwardly and inwardly, condemned to utter ruin.

What deviation can be greater than breaking the Covenant of God! What deviation can be greater than interpolating and falsifying the words and verses of the Sacred Text, even as testified and declared by Mirza Badi'u'llah! What deviation can be greater than calumniating the Center of the Covenant himself! What deviation can be more glaring than spreading broadcast false and foolish reports touching the Temple of God's Testament! What deviation can be more grievous than decreeing the death of the Center of the Covenant, supported by the holy verse: "He that layeth a claim ere the passing of a thousand years..." whilst he (Muhammad Ali) without shame in the days of the Blessed Beauty had advanced such a claim as this and been confuted by Him in the afore-mentioned manner, the text of his claim being still extant in his own handwriting and bearing his own seal. What deviation can be more complete than falsely accusing the loved ones of God! What deviation can be more evil than causing their imprisonment and incarceration! What deviation can be more severe than delivering into the hands of the government the Holy Writings and Epistles, that haply they (the government) might arise

intent upon the death of this wronged one! What deviation can be more violent than threatening the ruin of the Cause of God, forging and slanderously falsifying letters and documents so that this might perturb and alarm the government and lead to the shedding of the blood of this wronged one, — such letters and documents being now in the possession of the government! What deviation can be more odious than his iniquity and rebellion! What deviation can be more shameful than dispersing the gathering of the people of salvation! What deviation can be more infamous than the vain and feeble interpretations of the people of doubt! What deviation can be more wicked than joining hands with strangers and with the enemies of God!

Few months ago, in concert with others, he that hath broken the Covenant, hath prepared a document teeming with calumny and slander wherein, the Lord forbid, among many similar slanderous charges, Abdu'l Baha is deemed a deadly enemy, the ill-wisher of the Crown. They so perturbed the minds of the members of the Imperial Government that at last a Committee of Investigation was sent from the seat of His Majesty's Government which, violating every rule of justice and equity that befit His Imperial Majesty, nay, with the most glaring injustice, proceeded with its investigations. The ill-wishers of the One True God surrounded them on every side and explained and excessively enlarged upon the text of the document whilst they (the members of the Committee) in their turn blindly acquiesced. One of their many calumnies was that this servant had raised aloft a banner in this city, had summoned the people together under it, had established a new sovereignty for himself, had erected upon Mount Carmel a mighty stronghold, had rallied around him all the peoples of the land and made them obedient to him, had caused disruption in the Faith of Islam, had covenanted with the following of Christ and, God forbid, had purposed to cause the gravest



breach in the mighty power of the Crown. May the Lord protect us from such atrocious falsehoods!

According to the direct and sacred command of God we are forbidden to utter slander, are commanded to show forth peace and amity, are exhorted to rectitude of conduct, straightforwardness and harmony with all the kindreds and peoples of the world. We must obey and be the well-wishers of the governments of the land, regard disloyalty unto a just king as disloyalty to God Himself and wishing evil to the government a transgression of the Cause of God. With these final and decisive words, how can it be that these imprisoned ones should indulge in such vain fancies; incarcerated, how could they show forth such disloyalty? But alas! The Committee of Investigation hath approved and confirmed these calumnies of my brother and ill-wishers and submitted them to the presence of His Majesty the Sovereign. Now at this moment a fierce storm is raging around this prisoner who awaiteth, be it favorable or unfavorable, the gracious will of His Majesty, may the Lord aid him by His Grace to be just. In whatsoever condition he may be, with absolute calm and quietness, Abdu'l-Baha is ready for self sacrifice and is wholly resigned and submitted to His Will. What transgression can be more abominable, more odious, more wicked than this?

In like manner, the focal Center of hate, hath purposed to put Abdu'l-Baha to death and this is supported by the testimony written by Mirza Shua'u'llah himself and is here enclosed. It is evident and indisputable that they are privily and with the utmost subtlety engaged in conspiring against me. The following are his very words written by him in this letter: "I curse at every moment him that hath kindled this discord, imprecate in these words 'Lord! have no mercy upon him' and I hope ere long God will make manifest the one that shall have no pity on him, who now weareth another garb and about whom I cannot any more explain." Reference he doth

make by these words to the sacred verse that beginneth as follows: "He that layeth a claim ere the passing of a thousand years ..... Reflect How intent they are upon the death of Abdu'l Baha! Ponder in your hearts upon the phrase "I cannot anymore explain" and realize what schemes they are devising for this purpose. They fear lest too fully explained the letter might fall into alien hands and their schemes be foiled and frustrated. The phrase is only foretelling good tidings to come, namely that regarding this all requisite arrangements have been made.

O God, my God! Thou seest this wronged servant of Thine, held fast in the talons of ferocious lions, of ravening wolves, of blood thirsty beasts. Graciously assist me, through my love for Thee, that I may drink deep of the chalice that brimmeth over with faithfulness to Thee and is filled with Thy bountiful Grace; so that, fallen upon the dust, I may sink prostrate and senseless whilst my venture is dyed crimson with my blood. This is my wish, my heart's desire, my hope, my pride, my glory. Grant, O Lord my God, and my Refuge, that in my last hour, my end, may even as musk shed its fragrance of glory! Is there a bounty greater than this? Nay, by Thy Glory! I call Thee to witness that no day passeth but that I quaff my fill from this cup, so grievous are the misdeeds wrought by them that have broken the Covenant, kindled discord, showed their malice, stirred sedition in the land and dishonored Thee amidst Thy servants. Lord! Shield Thou from these Covenant-breakers the mighty Stronghold of Thy Faith and protect Thy secret Sanctuary from the onslaught of the ungodly. Thou are in truth the Mighty, the Powerful, the Gracious, the Strong.

In short, O ye beloved of the Lord! The Center of Sedition, Mirza Muhammad Ali, in accordance with the decisive words of God and by reason of his boundless transgression, hath grievously fallen and been cut off from the Holy Tree. "Verily, we wronged them not, but they have wronged themselves!"

O God, my God! Shield Thy trusted servants from the evils of self and passion, protect them with the watchful Eye of Thy loving kindness from all rancour, hate and envy, shelter them in the impregnable stronghold of Thy cause and, safe from the darts of doubtfulness, make them the manifestations of Thy glorious Signs, illumine their fares with the effulgent, rays shed from the Dayspring of Thy Divine Unity, gladden their hearts with the verses revealed from Thy Holy Kingdom, strengthen their loins by Thy all-swaying power that cometh from Thy Realm of Glory. Thou are the All. Bountiful, the Protector, the All-Mighty, the Gracious!

O ye that stand fast in the Covenant! When the hour cometh that this wronged and broken winged bird will have taken its flight unto the Celestial concourse, when it will have hastened to the Realm of the Unseen and its mortal frame will have been either lost or hidden neath the dust, it is incumbent upon the Afnan, that are steadfast in the Covenant of God, and have branched from the Tree of Holiness; the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God, (the glory of the Lord rest upon them), and all the friends and loved ones, one and all to bestir themselves and arise with heart and soul and in one accord, to diffuse the sweet savours of God, to teach His Cause and to promote His Faith. It behooveth them not to rest for a moment, neither to seek repose. They must disperse themselves in every land, pass by every clime and travel throughout all regions. Bestirred, without rest, and steadfast to the end they must raise in every land the triumphal cry...O Thou the Glory of Glorious!.. (Ya Baha'u'llah). must achieve renown in the world wherever they go. must burn brightly even as a candle in every meeting and must kindle the flame of Divine love in every assembly, that the light of truth may rise resplendent in the midmost heart of the world, that throughout the East and throughout the West a vast concourse may gather under the shadow of the Word of God. that the sweet savours of holiness may be diffused, that faces may shine radiantly,

hearts be filled with the Divine spirit and souls be made heavenly.

In these days, the most important of all things is the guidance of the nations and peoples of the world. Teaching the Cause is of utmost importance for it is the head cornerstone of the foundation itself. This wronged servant has spent his days and nights in promoting the Cause and urging the peoples to service. He rested not a moment, till the fame of the Cause of God was noised abroad in the world and the Celestial strains from the Abha Kingdom roused the East and the West. The beloved of God must also follow the same example. This is the secret of faithfulness, this is the requirement of servitude to the Threshold of Baha!

The disciples of Christ forgot themselves and all earthly things, forsook all their cares and belongings, purged themselves of self and passion and with absolute detachment scattered far and wide and engaged in calling the peoples of the world to the Divine Guidance. till at last they made the world another world, illumined the surface of the earth and even to their last hour proved self-sacrificing in the pathway of that Beloved One of God. Finally, in various lands they suffered glorious martyrdom. Let them that are men of action, follow in their footsteps!

O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsan (Branches), the Afnan (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abha Beauty to turn unto-Shoghi Effendi—the youthful branch branched from the Two hallowed and sacred Lote-Trees and the fruit grown from the Union of the Two offshoots of the Tree of Holiness, — as he is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsan, the Afnan, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the expounder of the words of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendants.



The sacred and youthful branch, the guardian of the Cause of God as well as the Universal House of Justice, to be universally elected and established, are both under the care and protection of the Abha Beauty, under the shelter and unerring guidance of His Holiness, the Exalted One (may my life be offered up for them both). Whatsoever they decide is of God. Who so obeyeth him not, neither obeyeth them, hath not obeyed God; whoso rebelleth against him and against them hath rebelled against God; whoso opposeth him hath opposed God; whoso contendeth with them hath contended with God; whoso disputeth with him hath disputed with God; whoso denieth him hath denied God; whoso disbelieveth in him hath disbelieved in God; whoso deviateth, separate himself and turneth aside from him hath in truth deviated, separated himself and turned aside from God. May the wrath, the fierce indignation, the vengeance of God rest upon him! The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, upon all the Aghsan, the Afnan, the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One, will make a breach in the Cause of God, will subvert His word and will become a manifestation of the Center of Sedition. Beware, beware, lest the days after the ascension (of Baha'o'llah) be repeated, when the Center of Sedition waxed haughty and rebellious and with Divine Unity for his excuse deprived himself and perturbed and poisoned others. No doubt every vain-glorious one that purposeth dissension and discord will not openly declare his evil purposes, nay rather! even as impure gold would he cease (seize?) upon divers measures and various pretexts that he may separate the gathering of the people of Baha. My object is to show that the Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find

anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the guardian of the Cause of God cast him out from the congregation of the people of Baha and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men.

O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon the guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor, that differences may not arise after his passing. He that is appointed must manifest in himself detachment from all worldly things, must be the essence of purity, must show in himself the fear of God, knowledge, wisdom and learning. Thus, should the first-born of the guardian of the Cause of God not manifest in himself the truth of the words: "The child is the secret essence of its sire," that is, should he not inherit of the spiritual within him (the guardian of the Cause of God) and his glorious lineage not be matched with a goodly character, then must he, (the guardian of the Cause of God) choose another branch to succeed him.

The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God and these whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor. This assent must be given in such wise as the assenting and dissenting voices may not be distinguished, (secret ballot). O friends! The Hands of the Cause of God must be nominated and appointed by the guardian of the Cause of God. All must be under his shadow and obey his command. Should any, within or without the company of the Hands of the Cause of God disobey and seek division, the wrath of God and His vengeance will be upon him, for he will have caused a breach in

the true Faith of God.

The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words.

This body of the Hands of the Cause of God is under the direction of the guardian of the Cause of God. He must continually urge them to strive and endeavour to the utmost of their ability to diffuse the Sweet savours of God, and to guide all the peoples of the world for it is the light of Divine Guidance that causeth all the universe to be illumined. To disregard, though be it for a moment, this absolute command which is binding upon everyone, is in no wise permitted, that the existent world may become even as the Abha Paradise, that the surface of the earth may become heavenly, that contention and conflict amidst peoples, kindreds, nations and governments may disappear, that all the dwellers on earth may become one people and one race, that the world may become even as one home. Should differences arise they shall be amicably and conclusively settled by the Supreme Tribunal, that shall include members from all the governments and peoples of the world.

O ye beloved of the Lord! In this sacred Dispensation, conflict and contention are in no wise permitted. Every aggressor deprives himself of God's grace. It is incumbent upon everyone to show the utmost love, rectitude of conduct, straight forwardness and sincere kindness unto all the peoples and kindreds of the world, be they friends or strangers. So intense must be the spirit of love and loving kindness that the stranger may find himself a friend, the enemy a true brother, no difference whatsoever existing between them. For universality is of God and all limitations earthly. Thus, man must strive that his reality may manifest virtues and perfections, the

light whereof may shine upon everyone the light of the sun shineth upon all the world and the merciful showers of Divine Providence fall upon all peoples. The vivifying breeze reviveth every living creature and all beings endowed with life obtain their share and portion at His heavenly board. In like manner, the affections and loving kindness of the servants of the One True God must be bountifully and universally extended to all mankind. Regarding this, restrictions and limitations are in no wise permitted.

Wherefore, O my loving friends! Consort with all the peoples, kindreds and religions of the world with the utmost truthfulness, uprightness, faithfulness, kindness, goodwill and friendliness, that all the world of being may be filled with the holy ecstasy of the grace of Baha, that ignorance, enmity, hate and rancour may vanish from the world and the darkness of estrangement amidst the peoples and kindreds of the world may give way to the Light of Unity. Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you show your fidelity unto them, should they be unjust toward you show justice toward them, should they keep aloof from you attract them to yourself, should they show their enmity be friendly towards them, should they poison your lives, sweeten their souls, should they inflict a wound upon you, be a salve to their sores. Such are the attributes of the sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful.

And now, concerning the House of Justice which God had ordained as the source of all good and freed from all error, it must be elected by universal suffrage, that is, by the believers. Its members must be manifestations of the fear of God and daysprings of knowledge and understanding, must be steadfast in God's faith and the well-wishers of all mankind. By this House is meant the Universal House of Justice, that is, in all countries, a secondary House of Justice must be instituted, and these secondary Houses of Justice must elect the members of the Universal one. Unto this body all things must



be referred. It enacteth all ordinances and regulations that are not to be found in the explicit Holy Text. By this body all the difficult problems are to be resolved and the guardian of the Cause of God is its sacred head and the distinguished member for life of that body. Should he not attend in person its deliberations, he must appoint one to represent him. Should any of the members commit a sin, injurious to the common weal, the guardian of the Cause of God hath at his own discretion the right to expel him, whereupon the people must elect another one in his stead. This House of Justice enacteth the laws and the government enforceth them. The legislative body must reinforce the executive, the executive must aid and assist the legislative body so that through the close union and harmony of these two forces, the foundation of fairness and justice may become firm and strong, that all the regions of the world may become even as Paradise itself.

O Lord, my God! Assist Thy loved ones to be firm in Thy Faith, to walk in Thy Ways, to be steadfast in Thy Cause. Give them Thy grace to withstand the onslaught of self and passion, to follow the light of Divine Guidance. Thou art the Powerful, the Gracious, the Self-Subsisting; the Bestower, the Compassionate, the All-Mighty, the All-Bountiful.

O friends of Abdul-Baha! The Lord, as a sign of His infinite bounties, hath graciously favored His servants by providing for a fixed money offering (Huquq), to be dutifully presented unto Him, though He, the True One and His servants have been at all times independent of all created things, and God verily is the All Possessing, Exalted above the need of any gift from his Creatures. This fixed money offering, however, causeth the people to become firm and steadfast and draweth Divine increase upon them. It is to be offered through the guardian of the Cause of God, that it may be expended for the diffusion of the Fragrances of God and the exaltation of His word for benevolent pursuits and for the common weal. O ye beloved of the Lord! It is

incumbent upon you to be submissive to all Monarchs that are just and show your fidelity to every righteous King. Serve ye the Sovereigns of the world with utmost truthfulness and loyalty. Show obedience unto them and be their well-wishers. Without their leave and permission do not meddle with political affairs, for disloyalty to the just Sovereign is disloyalty to God himself.

This is my counsel and the commandment of God unto you. Well is it with them that act accordingly.

Note: (This written paper hath for a long time been preserved underground, damp having affected it. When brought forth to the light it was observed that certain parts of it were injured by the damp, and the Holy Land being solely agitated, it was left untouched.)

**To be continued...**



# INSPIRING QUOTES



“Thou primest thyself in the things thou dost possess, yet no believer in God and in His signs, nor any righteous man would ever deign to regard them. This mortal life is like unto the carcass of a dog, around which none would gather, nor would any partake thereof, except those who gainsay the life hereafter. Verily it is incumbent upon thee to become a true believer in God, the All-Possessing, the Almighty, and to turn away from the one who guideth thee into the torment of hellfire.”

— The Bab

“Only when the lamp of search, of earnest striving, of longing desire, of passionate devotion, of fervid love, of rapture, and ecstasy, is kindled within the seeker's heart, and the breeze of His loving-kindness is wafted upon his soul, will the darkness of error be dispelled, the mists of doubts and misgivings be dissipated, and the lights of knowledge and certitude envelop his being.”

— Baha'u'llah

" Sincerity is the foundation-stone of faith. That is, a religious individual must disregard his personal desires and seek in whatever way he can wholeheartedly to serve the public interest; and it is impossible for a human being to turn aside from his own selfish advantages and sacrifice his own good for the good of the community except through true religious faith.”

— Abdu'l Baha



# FREE BAHAI ACTIVITIES

Dear friends,

Allah'u'abha

The 28th of November marked the ascension of Abdul Baha. This year also marks the 100th anniversary of the ascension of Abdul Baha. To commemorate this solemn occasion we had friends from various nations conduct virtual seminars showcasing the life, sacrifices and teachings of Abdul Baha. These online sessions gave friends of the faith valuable insight into the life of Abdul Baha and the many fundamental values of the Baha'i Faith.

As the world has begun to witness another strong wave of Covid infections, it was a very pragmatic call to avoid physical gatherings. Also very valuable were the feedbacks we have received from our friends who are doctors, most of them in Asia. They also took the opportunity to use these online programs to educate the community about the preventive measures one should take to remain safe and the steps one should take,

should they by chance, contract the virus.

Apart from these Covid advisories, we tend to discourage any form of physical gatherings, in order to protect identities, as the shameless dictatorial administration lunges behind friends who, with great courage, break free from their shackles and adopt the correct Baha'i teachings i.e - The Free Baha'i teachings.

Notwithstanding, some courageous friends have shared news of small family and neighbourhood gatherings wherever feasible, to discuss and further propagate various aspects of the life of Abdul Baha. The wholesome personality of Abdul Baha is such a potent topic, that one could learn many practical lessons of love and peace, the twin deficiencies in today's society. His love and concern for the poor and destitute, gives us all food for thought and pushes us to strive our best in furthering the cause of eradicating poverty, helping the needy and bringing

people together.

Based on these very teachings we have seen the great extents to which friends were motivated to assist those affected by this Covid pandemic, making a significant difference in the communities they reside in. Such timely action in times of need gave the Free Baha'i Faith much needed public recognition as the true followers of Abdul Baha, while the Administration shackled Baha'is launched another of their typical "fill my pocket" fund to collect more money in the name of suffering.

Finally for a great news that we are ecstatic to share is that friends from Germany have, after great efforts, created a blog for Free Baha'is of Germany. They have shared few articles in the German language in order to reach a wider audience on their blog. We wish them great success and hope they continue this fabulous work of promoting the message of unity of mankind to people in the language best known to them. Some friends have also shared their experience of reading the book "Some Answered Questions". The book mainly deals with questions that were asked to Abdul Baha and the answers given by him on those subject matter. To all those who have

not read the book yet are advised to kindly do so at the earliest.

We continue to pray for the safety and health of the entire mankind. While we conclude, we urge our readers to continue learning more and more about the faith so that it helps them strengthen their roots and make them firm in their independent investigation of truth. Stay blessed!





# BLAST FROM THE PAST



## I HEARD HIM SAY

FROM THE UNPUBLISHED DIARY OF MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB  
KEPT WHILE HE WAS IN THE SERVICE OF ABDUL BAHÁ

### On Leaving College With No Religion At All

The doors of Colleges and Universities must be kept wide open to the youth of all nationalities and the adherents of all religions, so that men and women, from widely scattered countries, meeting therein and becoming acquainted with one another's customs and thoughts, may discard their baseless prejudices. In this manner these young people will acquire the ideal of WORLD PATRIOTISM. In the East there are a number of missionary colleges where dogmatic sectarianism is practised—the student being constantly taught, side by side with the grandeur of the Christian faith, the falsity of his own. The net result has been woeful failure, for these young people are apt to leave College with no religion at all. Thus it has been shown that when a missionary tries to undermine, either by direct attack or by indirect reference, the religion in which the student has been brought up, he is at the same time undermining his own Christianity.

Now, in this radiant century, the Sun of Reality has dawned, scattering its bright rays upon all humanity. We are beginning to realize that this globe is one home; that all men are members of one family, trees of one garden, and lamps of one meeting.

Creationally, there are no bad people. All are good. It is only when we subvert the original plan concerning our progress that the result is distorted and abnormal. The tree of humanity is a single tree—planted by God. The origin is one and the end also is one.

### On Buildings

I have come to your country to see men rather than to see piles of brick and clay. Buildings are many; *men* are few. I have come to see men.

Palaces built by ancient kings retain not even a stone to tell the story of their decay, and so will the great piles, rearing their heads in these cities, go through the same process. But the divine palace shall never be destroyed—the indestructible palace, which is the reality of man. Every heart is a site for the erection of such a palace, of which action is the cement, and noble deeds the bricks. I am searching, throughout the world, for the men and women who are engaged in building these mansions of God.

The mansions of God are high, and in them one can only love, and love more. When the aerial mariner steers his ship skyward, little by little, inharmonies and incongruities are left behind. Vast, wonderful, serene, the panorama of nature spreads itself below—the Creator's work, flawless, from that height. Even so does the path of reality lead to the summit of Love, from which ugliness is not discernible, nor any misfit whatsoever—where man contemplates the world of humanity with the vision of the seer and the prophet.

(Reference: New History Magazine, July 1934)



# SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

## Email 1:

How do Free Baha'is consider themselves correct and other Baha'is as wrong? Im not a Baha'i myself, but was reading about the Baha'is and came across different cults within the Baha'is so would like to understand your view point. Kindly respond asap.

### Answer:

Firstly, we as Free Baha'is believe and follow only the true teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha, which is the source of all light. We don't consider other Baha'is as wrong. Each one has their own religion, and we can't label anyone as wrongly guided. We are just against the Administration and organising the faith, that too because the teachings of Baha'u'llah and the Master tell us that. Since they were against organising the religion, we as their followers agree to take their advice only. Our Master said, "I do not and have not appointed any one to perform any special services, but I encourage everyone to engage

in the service of the Kingdom." (Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

Here the Master has asked each and every Baha'i to engage in the service. We as Free Baha'is share equal responsibility towards Baha'u'llah and thus, we all should equally work in spreading His teachings. We are closely associated with a lot of Baha'is around the world who belong to different groups, however, as Free Baha'is, we don't have any grudges against any of them. The problem is with the UHJ who has mislead the innocent Baha'is in the name of religion and are ruling over them by twisting the teachings of Baha'u'llah and the Master.

Do let us know if you have any other queries/feedback/suggestions. We will be happy to help you!

Regards,

Team Free Baha'is



## Email 2:

Good morning from Portugal!

I would like to study Ruhi Book 12 (Family) online.

Is there any Group starting?

thank you, kristine

### Answer:

Hi Kristine,

Trust you and your family are doing well and staying safe in this pandemic! May Baha'u'llah keep all of us protected!

Glad to see you're interested in learning the faith, however, we as Free Baha'is are completely against learning the teachings of Baha'u'llah through the derived source. Instead, one should strive to learn the faith from the sourcebooks and stick to the original teachings of Baha'u'llah and the Master. If you're truly interested to make the most out of the teachings of Baha'u'llah, you should prefer reading books like Kitab-i-Aqdas, Kitab-i-Iqan, Some Answered Questions, alongside other sourcebooks. Also, we believe Ruhi books is another weapon created by the Administration to keep the Baha'is away from the teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. When people read original books, the undiluted version of the teachings, they tend to question the authority of the Administration, which the UHJ doesn't want. So, how to keep them away from these books. The best solution that they found was introducing the Ruhi books.

Almost all Baha'is have, at one point in time, been trapped in the Ruhi curriculum, but I have never met a single Baha'i who has ever completed a single Ruhi course. They are taught random books in the series and the vigour in which it gets started doesn't maintain and people drop out losing interest and then you are left in the middle of

nowhere.

Whereas, when you conduct reading sessions where people are introduced to the sourcebooks, due to the pure intentions of teaching and learning the message of Baha'u'llah, it has its affluence. Would suggest you read the sourcebooks and experience it for yourself. We wish you success and godspeed.

Do write back in case of any further queries.

Thanks, and regards,

**Team Free Baha'is**



### Email 3:

What does Baha'u'llah has to say about smoking cigarettes? Also about drugs. People nowadays have this habit of smoking up. Do we have any command from the teachings of Baha'u'llah about it? Since my roommate is into this habit, I sometimes feel like joining him and his other friends. So just wanted to check if once in a while is it ok to do it. Kindly advice.

### Answer:

Allah'u'Abha!

Glad to see youths are concerned about the teachings of the faith and are not going with the flow of the society. It takes courage for someone to admit they may have a problem with drugs or alcohol. Recognising you might have an issue and asking for help is an important first step to making a change. If you are not yet into the act, better to stay out of it. If changing your friends doesn't seem possible, better to look out for another apartment and shift from that place.

Baha'is are forbidden to drink alcohol or to take drugs because God has given human beings reason which is taken away by intoxicants that lead the mind astray. The non-medicinal use of opium and other mind-altering drugs is particularly condemned in the teachings of Baha'u'llah. Let's look at the below extract taken from Kitab-i-Aqdas.

"The smoking of opium has been prohibited to you. We have strictly forbidden this to you in the Book. Whoever smokes (it) is not one of us. Fear God, O people of intelligence. By My Most Great, Most Holy, High, and Most Splendid Name!"

May Baha'u'llah keep you protected.

If you have any other question, feel free to write back to us.

Thanks, and regards,

**Team Free Baha'is**







# INVESTIGATION OF REALITY

“God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigation of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain... Therefore, depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation; otherwise, you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God.”

– Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Volume 2, p. 287

*“Where there is love, nothing is too much trouble and there is always time.” – Abdu'l Baha*



With this, I pray to God to help us follow in the footsteps of the Master and take care of the poor and the needy, always. More power to you!

Want to be a contributor for 'The Caravan'?

Interested in contributing to the Caravan Magazine by writing a guest article? Kindly send us your article at ['thecaravan@freeBahais.org'](mailto:thecaravan@freeBahais.org) and if we find your article unique, knowledgeable and interesting enough for our readers, we will surely publish it in our upcoming issue. If you have any other queries, you can write to us at ['info@freeBahais.org'](mailto:info@freeBahais.org)

Thank you!



# DID YOU KNOW ?

Baha'is around the world celebrated the 100th anniversary of Abdu'l Baha's passing on 27-28 November 2021. The world's thoughts and emotions concentrated on Abdu'l Baha as centennial commemorations around the globe. People in nation after country were linked in their love and awe for one Whom they look up to as the perfect example of love for humanity and unselfish devotion to society, as though by a continuous thread. Many centennial celebrations honouring Abdu'l Baha were organised across the world.

Abdu'l Baha's visits around the world, particularly to the West were crucial in disseminating Baha'u'llah's teachings and solidifying Baha'i communities in Europe and North America. On both continents, He was greeted with enthusiasm by prominent audiences worried about the state of modern civilization. He fostered an environment that prioritised issues like peace, women's rights, racial equality, social change, and moral growth. Abdu'l Baha's message throughout His travels was a proclamation that the long-awaited age-old promise of world oneness had arrived. He repeatedly emphasised the need of establishing the socioeconomic circumstances and international political tools required for peace to be established. His predictions of a world-encompassing battle came true just two years later.

Abdu'l Baha remained extremely active in his elderly age. Not only to the Baha'i community in Haifa, but to the entire international movement, he was a loving parent. His letters aided Baha'is all over the world in their attempts to create an organisational foundation for the society. Another means through which He continued to educate and encourage Christians from all over the world was His engagement with a steady stream of visitors to the Holy Land.

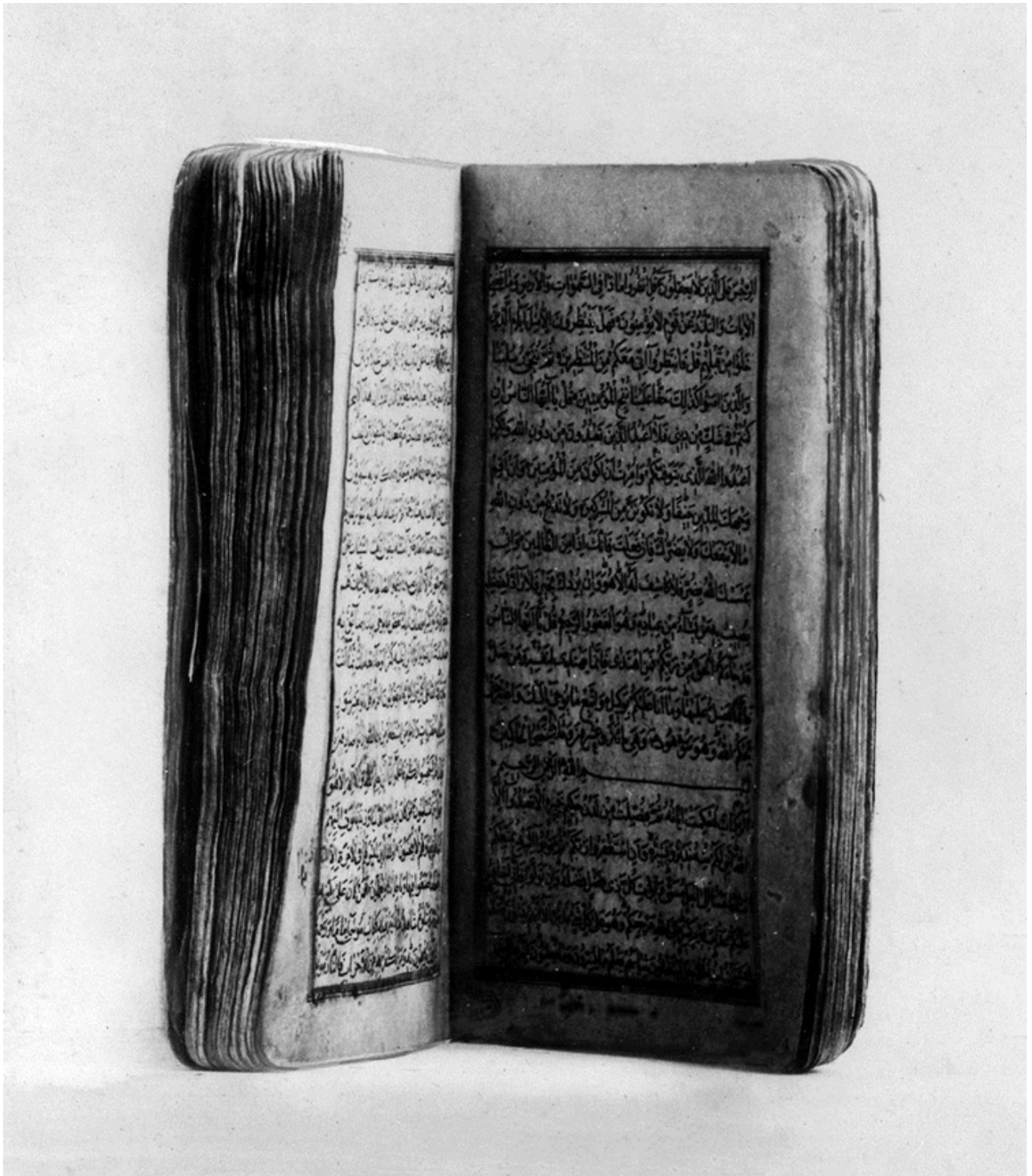
Abdu'l Baha passed away in his home on November 28, 1921, in Haifa, Israel, at the age of 77. Bahiyyih Khanum, Abdu'l Baha's sister, handled all of the burial arrangements. On November 29, 1921, a funeral procession with 10,000 mourners from various religious backgrounds took place. Abdu'l Baha remained extremely active in his elderly age. He was not only a loving father to the Baha'is, but to all humanity. Mohammed Ali Faizi writes on page 341 of his book *The Life of Abdu'l Baha* that the Master used to attend Friday congregation prayers at a Mosque in Israel and would offer donations to beggars thereafter.

Abdu'l Baha was eulogised as One who guided mankind to the "Way of Truth," as a "pillar of peace," and as the epitome of "glory and magnificence" in spontaneous tributes to a respected figure. His letters aided worldwide attempts to develop a community-wide organisational framework. His interactions with a steady stream of pilgrims visiting the Holy Land gave another tool for training and encouraging Christians all around the world.

Abdu'l Baha's mortal remains were interred in one of the rooms of Mount Carmel's Shrine of the Bab.



# KNOW YOUR HERITAGE



The Quran belonging to the Bab

# DECLARATIONS

We the Free Baha'is do not believe in declarations. We believe in spreading the true teachings of Baha'u'llah and don't work for numbers. A Free Baha'i should purify himself from greed of attaining positions, and start working out of love for humanity and world peace.

Our Master has clearly stated,

"There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not appointed any one to perform any special services, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is purely a democracy, and not a theocracy."

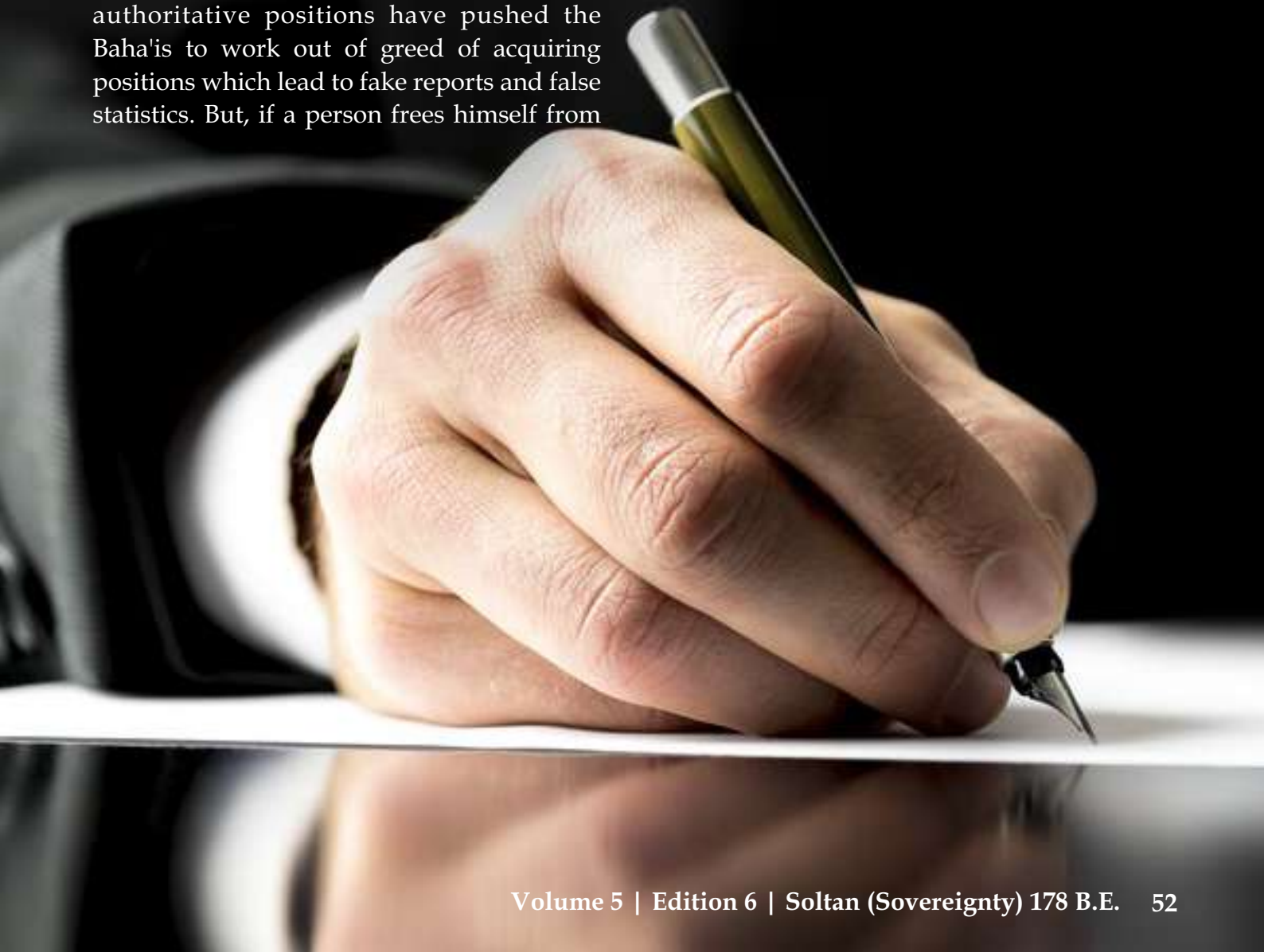
(Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

These man-made assemblies and authoritative positions have pushed the Baha'is to work out of greed of acquiring positions which lead to fake reports and false statistics. But, if a person frees himself from

administration, he will fulfil his duties towards Baha'u'llah and not for NSA or UHJ. Thus, he will be rewarded by Baha'u'llah for his efforts. For this reason, Free Baha'is do not believe in Officers or Office Bearers and one must be the Guardian of his own faith and action.

So, anyone who would wish to work for the faith should follow the teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha, serve the faith and promote world peace and harmony.

Why do you think the Baha'i Faith got split into various groups after the passing away of the Master? Don't you think the rule of the so-called guardian Shoghi Effendi and his Administration has played a very crucial role in the division and disunity of the Baha'is?





# THROWBACK



**1904** - Ali-Kuli Khan married Boston socialite Florence Breed, consummating the first marriage between an Iranian and a Western Baha'i

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