

THE CARAVAN

Shoghi Effendi -
The so-called "Guardian"
Who Betrayed the Cause!?

Article Inside

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PRAYER



Thou kind Lord! O Thou Who art generous and merciful! We are servants of Thy threshold and are gathered beneath the sheltering shadow of Thy divine unity. The sun of Thy mercy is shining upon all, and the clouds of Thy bounty shower upon all.

Thy gifts encompass all, Thy loving providence sustains all, Thy protection overshadows all, and the glances of Thy favor are cast upon all. O Lord! Grant Thine infinite bestowals, and let the light of Thy guidance shine. Illumine the eyes, gladden the hearts with abiding joy. Confer a new spirit upon all people and bestow upon them eternal life. Unlock the gates of true understanding and let the light of faith shine resplendent. Gather all people beneath the shadow of Thy bounty and cause them to unite in harmony, so that they may become as the rays of one sun, as the waves of one ocean, and as the fruit of one tree. May they drink from the same fountain. May they be refreshed by the same breeze. May they receive illumination from the same source of light. Thou art the Giver, the Merciful, the Omnipotent.

- Abdu'l Baha

FOREWORD

“True honour is not for him who loveth his own self, but rather for him who loveth mankind.” – Baha’u’llah

Allah’u’Abha, dear friends and seekers of truth,

As we step into the month that marks the death anniversary of Shoghi Effendi, we dedicate this special edition of *The Caravan* to exploring the man whose actions, decisions, and legacy forever altered the course of the Baha’i Faith. This issue is not about criticism for the sake of fault-finding—it is about uncovering truth, so that the light of Baha’u’llah’s original message may once again shine unobstructed.

Shoghi’s era marked a turning point—one that saw the Faith transform from a living, spiritual movement into a rigid administrative order. The beauty and universality of Baha’u’llah’s words, meant to free humanity from the chains of religious hierarchy, were slowly replaced by bureaucratic machinery, blind obedience, and

the worship of institutions. In this special issue, we take an unflinching look at how this transformation occurred, and how it continues to affect Baha’is around the world today.

We feature guest articles that examine Shoghi Effendi’s controversial role in shaping the modern Baha’i Administration, from the monetary scandals that shadowed his reputation to the authoritarian structures he helped create—structures that continue to suppress free thought, inquiry, and individual spiritual growth. Our ‘Did you know?’ article even reopens the conversation about Shoghi’s mysterious death certificate, which listed his gender as “unknown”—a small but shocking symbol of the cloud of secrecy that surrounded his life and legacy. In our “Some Questions Answered” section, we explore questions that examine how the spirit of independent investigation—the cornerstone of Baha’u’llah’s teachings—was lost under the shadow of the centralized power established by Shoghi Effendi.

Friends, the truth may be uncomfortable, but



it is necessary. The story of Shoghi Effendi is not merely a chapter in our history—it is a cautionary tale. A tale of how power can corrupt a Cause that began with divine purity. But it is also a story of hope—for today, more and more Baha'is are awakening, rediscovering the radiant teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha without the filter of administration.

As you turn these pages, read not with anger, but with clarity. The time has come to separate the Faith of God from the systems of men.

With love, courage, and faith in the light of truth,

The Free Baha'is Team



November 1919 – Western pilgrims with Shoghi Effendi and some resident Baha'is in Haifa.

LOST IN EMOTION



Sometimes I feel lost in a maze of emotions,
where every direction feels like a dead-end street.
I feel so alone in my search for an answer
that I start to blame God for not meeting my needs.

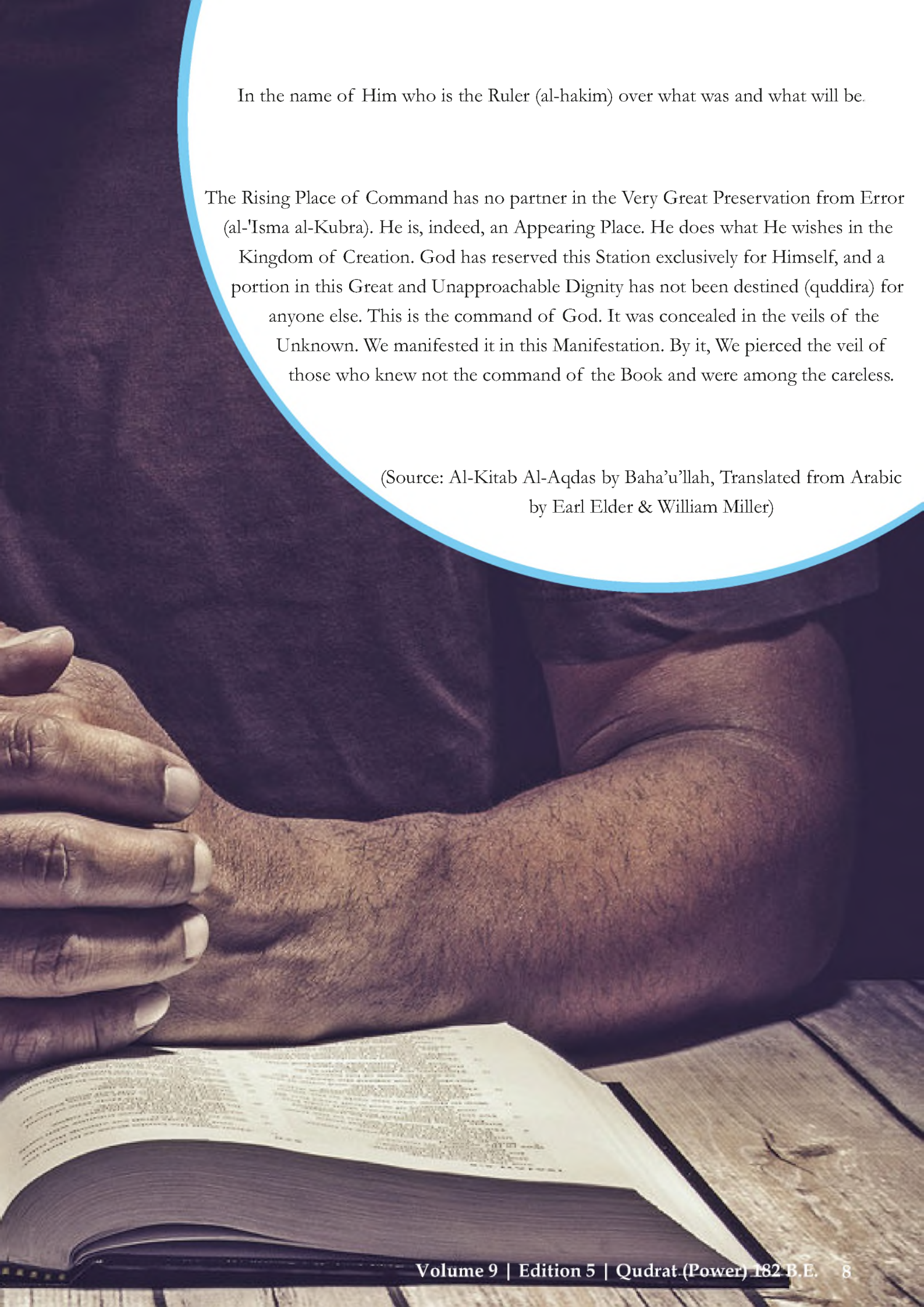
But God never promised that life would be easy,
for trials will come in different forms.
But He did promise that He would never forsake us
and that we can still have peace in the midst of the storm.

God's love runs deeper than the deepest ocean,
but He is not altered by the moods that we bring.
For every problem, He has a solution.
He is consistently working behind the scenes.

So whenever you feel like you're losing the battle
and you want to just bow your head in defeat,
remember, with God you are always the winner,
for with Him by your side, you will never be beat!

- Josephine Zavala-Florez

DIVINE LAWS



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

The Rising Place of Command has no partner in the Very Great Preservation from Error (al-'Isma al-Kubra). He is, indeed, an Appearing Place. He does what He wishes in the Kingdom of Creation. God has reserved this Station exclusively for Himself, and a portion in this Great and Unapproachable Dignity has not been destined (quddira) for anyone else. This is the command of God. It was concealed in the veils of the Unknown. We manifested it in this Manifestation. By it, We pierced the veil of those who knew not the command of the Book and were among the careless.

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

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)



The Baha'is following Shoghi Effendi bier to the grave

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE LOVING BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY WE ONCE KNEW?

For those of us in our 50s and 60s, there was a time when being part of the Baha'i Faith meant being surrounded by genuine love, compassion, and joy. We remember a community that was alive — not with programs and reports, but with kindness and sincerity. A community where hearts were open, mentors were patient, and spirituality wasn't measured in numbers but in the light of people's actions.

Back then, the Baha'i community felt like a family. Love and acceptance were tangible, and everyone tried to live by Baha'u'llah's teachings through their deeds — to truly be “a blessing to the world of humanity.”

Then the Institute Process began... and it was like the air was sucked out of the room. The focus shifted overnight. The warmth, the love, the spontaneity — all vanished. The beautiful, organic fellowship we had once known was replaced by a cold system of checkboxes and reports. Instead of hearts awakening, we were now told to fill in blanks and memorize lessons from the Ruhi books.

Where once we had mentors — radiant souls who lived by example, kindness, and humility — they quietly disappeared, replaced by self-proclaimed experts and administrators who spoke in numbers, charts, and “core activities.” They measured spirituality in statistics and success by how many study circles were completed.

It was as though love for God and humanity had been replaced by a fast-food version of worship — quick, shallow, and systemized.

A generation has passed since then. My mentors are gone now, and my years are fewer than before. Those of us who still remember that vibrant, loving community — the one that was filled with true seekers and lovers of truth — have been pushed aside. We've been labeled “old-fashioned” or “inactive” because we don't find God through forms, attendance lists, or “clusters.”

It's heartbreaking. Something precious feels stolen — destroyed by an overreaching administrative system that lost touch with the spiritual roots of the Faith.



The truth is, all of this began with the erroneous decision of the Universal House of Justice to introduce the Institute Process in place of encouraging believers to read and reflect directly upon the Holy Writings themselves. As Mrs. Ruth White rightly observed decades ago, “The Baha’i administration has become the enemy of the Baha’i Faith.”

Instead of nurturing hearts, the Administration chose to build systems. Instead of fostering personal transformation, it built bureaucratic empires. Instead of empowering individuals to seek truth independently, it created dependency on structured programs that drain the soul of genuine experience.

Now, we see the results — dwindling communities, disconnected youth, and believers who no longer read the words of Baha’u’llah or Abdu’l Baha for themselves. The spirit of the Faith — the radiant, loving, inclusive spirit that once embraced everyone — has been replaced by cold formality. And many, like me, have been left asking:

What happened to the Faith we loved?

It’s time to return to the true essence of Baha’u’llah’s message — to love, to seek truth independently, and to build community not through systems and statistics, but through sincerity and service.

Only then can we reclaim what was lost.

Editor’s Note:

This heartfelt reflection, shared by a long-time believer, echoes the feelings of countless Baha’is around the world who have witnessed the decline of spiritual warmth within the Faith under institutional rigidity. The Free Baha’i community believes that true revival will only come when we return to the original message of Baha’u’llah — one that calls for unity, compassion, and the independent investigation of truth, free from administrative control.



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

INSPIRING QUOTES



“No created thing shall ever attain its paradise unless it appeareth in its highest prescribed degree of perfection. For instance, this crystal representeth the paradise of the stone whereof its substance is composed. Likewise there are various stages in the paradise for the crystal itself.... So long as it was stone it was worthless, but if it attaineth the excellence of ruby – a potentiality which is latent in it – how much a carat will it be worth? Consider likewise every created thing.”

— The Bab

“The Divine Springtime is come, O Most Exalted Pen, for the Festival of the All-Merciful is fast approaching. Bestir thyself, and magnify, before the entire creation, the name of God, and celebrate His praise, in such wise that all created things may be regenerated and made new. Speak, and hold not thy peace. The daystar of blissfulness shineth above the horizon of Our name, the Blissful, inasmuch as the kingdom of the names of God hath been adorned with the ornament of the name of thy Lord, the Creator of the heavens. Arise before the nations of the earth, and arm thyself with the power of this Most Great Name, and be not of those who tarry.”

— Baha’u’llah

“Man is in the ultimate degree of materiality and the beginning of spirituality; that is, he is at the end of imperfection and the beginning of perfection. He is at the furthestmost degree of darkness and the beginning of the light. That is why the station of man is said to be the end of night and the beginning of day, meaning that he encompasses all the degrees of imperfection and that he potentially possesses all the degrees of perfection. He has both an animal side and an angelic side, and the role of the educator is to so train human souls that the angelic side may overcome the animal. Thus, should the divine powers, which are identical with perfection, overcome in man the satanic powers, which are absolute imperfection, he becomes the noblest of all creatures, but should the converse take place, he becomes the vilest of all beings. That is why he is the end of imperfection and the beginning of perfection.”

— Abdu’l Baha

FREE BAHAI ACTIVITIES

“O night of the All-Bountiful! In thee do We verily behold the Mother Book. Is it a Book, in truth, or rather a child begotten? Nay, by Myself! Such words pertain to the realm of names, whilst God hath sanctified this Book above all names. Through it the hidden Secret and the treasured Mystery have been revealed. Nay, by My life! All that hath been mentioned pertaineth to the realm of attributes, whereas the Mother Book standeth supreme above this. Through it have appeared the manifestations of “There is no God but God” over them all. Nay, while such things have been proclaimed to all people, in the estimation of thy Lord naught but His ear is capable of hearing them. Blessed are those that are well assured!” – Extract from the Tablet of Baha’u’llah on the birth of the Bab

As the world prepares to celebrate the Birth of the Bab and Baha’u’llah – two radiant Luminaries who changed the course of human history – the Free Baha’is across the globe have been filled with renewed devotion, unity, and purpose. These sacred days are not just moments of remembrance but living opportunities to spread the unfiltered message of divine love, freedom, and truth as revealed by Baha’u’llah and the Bab.

Over the past few months, Free Baha’is in various parts of the world have been engaged in heartfelt service, deep study, and community-building efforts, keeping alive the pristine spirit of the Faith without the constraints of rigid administration or hierarchy.

In Thailand and Malaysia, the youth have

been at the forefront of activities – organizing storytelling sessions, small reading circles, and community gatherings in parks and homes. Many of these youth, aged 18 to 25, are showing exemplary leadership and dedication in sharing the teachings of Baha’u’llah with friends, families, and seekers from all walks of life. They have been instrumental in reviving the spirit of the early believers – simple, pure, and motivated only by love for truth.

In Singapore and India, Free Baha’is have been reaching out to the wider community through educational initiatives and humanitarian acts. In several Indian cities, Free Baha’is visited orphanages and elderly homes, distributing food, warm clothing, and comfort items, echoing the timeless words of Abdu’l Baha: “Let your heart burn with loving kindness for all who may cross your path.” In Singapore, small discussion groups have been held where participants read passages from the Hidden Words and The Seven Valleys, reflecting on how one can apply the teachings in daily life without the interference of administrative authority.

Across Europe, in Germany, France, and the UK, Free Baha’is have held home-based devotional meetings focused on prayer, meditation, and collective study of the Kitab-i-Iqan and Selections from the Writings of the Bab. Many of these gatherings have included friends who had distanced themselves from the Haifan administration, weary of bureaucracy and formality, yet yearning for

genuine spiritual connection.

In North America, the spirit of renewal is also strong. In Canada and the United States, Free Baha'is gathered in small groups to hold open discussions about the life and mission of the Bab, connecting his sacrifice to the courage needed today to stand firm against institutional oppression. The Free Baha'i team in Canada has also been slowly working towards upgrading the official website with a more secure and user-friendly interface, ensuring that seekers from all over the world can freely access the writings and history without censorship.

In the Middle East, particularly in Bahrain, Qatar, Lebanon, and some parts of the Gulf, gatherings are often quieter and more discreet due to sensitivity and the fear of persecution. Yet, even there, Free Baha'is continue to meet in small circles to pray, read, and support one another in their spiritual journey. Their steadfastness under such conditions is a true reflection of the courage and faith of the early believers.

As the joyous occasion of the Twin Holy Birthdays approaches, preparations are underway across continents. In Africa, Free Baha'is in Angola, Kenya, and Uganda are planning to celebrate by holding service projects – cleaning community spaces, distributing food to the needy, and organizing children's gatherings where stories of the Bab and Baha'u'llah are shared in a spirit of joy and unity. In Latin America, believers in Panama, Argentina, and Brazil are arranging evenings of music, storytelling, and reflection,

celebrating the divine message that calls humanity toward oneness and love.

This year, the celebrations will not be confined to homes and gatherings alone. Many Free Baha'is plan to dedicate these sacred days to personal acts of kindness – feeding the poor, helping strangers, comforting the lonely – reflecting the true spirit of service that both the Bab and Baha'u'llah exemplified.

Everywhere, from Asia to the Americas, from Europe to the Middle East, Free Baha'is are united not by administrative decree but by the love of Baha'u'llah and the truth of His message. They are living proof that the Cause of God does not need institutions to thrive – it only needs sincere hearts devoted to truth, compassion, and service.

As the light of the Twin Manifestations shines once again this year, the Free Baha'i community stands as a testament to Baha'u'llah's timeless promise – that His Cause shall prevail, not through institutions or titles, but through hearts enkindled by love and faith.

With warm regards and best wishes,

Team Free Baha'is



INTRODUCING

THE CARAVAN

APP!



KNOW YOUR HERITAGE



A taj of Baha'u'llah displayed in His room at Bahji (Denny Allen, 2000)

SHOGHI EFFENDI – THE SO-CALLED “GUARDIAN” WHO BETRAYED THE CAUSE

History calls him the Guardian of the Baha’i Faith. Yet, when one looks beyond the titles and carefully woven narratives, a far darker truth emerges. What kind of “Guardian” celebrates persecution, excommunicates his own family, and replaces humility with hierarchy? What kind of leadership stands in the name of unity, yet divides and destroys?

A Guardian Rejoicing in Tragedy

In *The Messiah of Shiraz* (Denis MacEoin, p. 528), we find chilling evidence of how Shoghi Effendi reacted to the martyrdom of innocent Baha’is in Iran. Instead of mourning, he celebrated the global attention it brought to the Faith. Writing to the American Baha’is in August 1955, Shoghi stated:

“Seldom, if at any time since its inception, has such a widespread publicity been accorded the infant Faith of God, now at long last emerging from an obscurity which has so long and so grievously oppressed it...

“To him, the shedding of Baha’i blood was publicity. The suffering of believers became a

marketing opportunity. Even worse, he later directed that funds be used to hire “an expert publicity agent.” Was this the spirit of Baha’u’llah’s teachings – to find advantage in the suffering of others?

A Guardian Who Banished His Own Blood

The so-called Guardian excommunicated nearly every close relative of Baha’u’llah and Abdu’l Baha – including his own parents and the granddaughters of Abdu’l Baha. Among those cast out were Ruhi Effendi Afnan, Mehr-Angiz (Shoghi’s own sister), and even Lady Munira, the beloved wife of Abdu’l Baha.

No tyrant in history was harsher toward his own kin. How could the grandson of the Master, who embodied love and service, become a source of pain and humiliation for those who carried the same sacred lineage?

A Greedy Guardian in the Age of Gold

Under Abdu’l Baha, generosity meant humility. He refused even the \$18,000 offered



by American Baha'is for his travels, returning it with instructions to "give it to the poor." (Zimmer, *A Fraudulent Testament*).

But under Shoghi Effendi, money became the Faith's new idol. Fundraising replaced service, bureaucracy replaced love, and temples of stone replaced temples of the heart. The shift was clear: the Cause became a corporate enterprise, and the faithful became financiers of an administration that fed itself.

A Guardian of Arrogance, Not of Grace

Accounts from those who met both the Master and Shoghi Effendi show the contrast vividly. Thornton Chase described Abdu'l Baha as "one who loved to serve others, even in little things." There was no distance between the Master and the believer — only warmth and oneness.

Dr. G. Haynes Holmes, a minister from New York, recalls his shock upon meeting Shoghi Effendi:

I was instructed that I must rise when Shoghi

Effendi entered, and must under no circumstances approach his person. I had to keep my distance, as though I were in the presence of some king or pope." (Sohrab, Grandson, 1943).

From servant to sovereign — this was the transformation that turned the Faith from a movement of hearts into an empire of fear.

The True Guardian - Abdu'l Baha's Spirit of Love

Abdu'l Baha once said, "There are no officers in the Cause. I do not and have not appointed anyone to perform any special service..." This simple, luminous statement was the death knell to any form of clerical control — yet Shoghi ignored it, introducing hierarchy under the guise of Guardianship. From this false step, the cancer of administration grew: the UHJ, the NSAs, the LSAs — all layers of control that now suffocate the Faith.

The Free Baha'i Stand

Today, the so-called Universal House of Justice walks the same path as Shoghi — distant, bureaucratic, and obsessed with funds and reports. The light of love that once defined the Faith is dimmed under piles of statistics, accounts, and decrees.

But the Free Baha'is remember. We hold fast to the essence of Baha'u'llah's message: freedom from clergy, independence of thought, and the love that unites all hearts. We do not need Guardians to rule over us — we have Baha'u'llah to guide us.

A true Guardian protects. Shoghi Effendi destroyed. A true leader unites. He divided. A true servant uplifts. He oppressed.

The time has come to return to the purity of the Cause, to the radiant simplicity of Abdu'l Baha's teachings, and to the heart of Baha'u'llah's revelation — love without control, faith without fear.





SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Email 1:

I always was told that Shoghi Effendi was appointed by the Master as the “Guardian” of the Faith. But then I found out that the you guys, as in, the Free Baha’is reject this idea completely calling it bogus. I wanted to understand if you can explain what are your sources to show Shoghi Effendi was not chosen by Abdu’l Baha?

Answer:

Dear friend,

Allah’u’Abha!

This question touches the very heart of what differentiates the Free Baha’i understanding of the Faith from that of the mainstream, or Haifan, Baha’is. Although we have covered it in our magazine many times, and answer to that can also be found on various Free Baha’i blogs and infact other portals like a Quora or a Reddit too.

Free Baha’is believe that Shoghi Effendi was never appointed as Guardian by Abdu’l Baha, and that the Will and Testament of Abdu’l Baha, which supposedly names him as such, was not an authentic document revealed or entirely written by the Master Himself. There are several reasons behind this conviction – historical, spiritual, and textual.

First, we must remember that throughout His lifetime, Abdu’l Baha spoke consistently and clearly against the establishment of any kind of priesthood or hierarchical authority. In His talks, letters, and writings – whether in *Some Answered Questions*, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, or during His travels in the West – He emphasized the equality of all believers and warned against anyone assuming leadership over others in spiritual matters. The idea of a “Guardian,” who alone would interpret the Word of God and govern the affairs of the Faith, completely contradicts this

principle.

Second, there is no mention of Shoghi Effendi – either by name or by reference to his supposed future role – in any of the authenticated writings of Baha’u’llah or Abdu’l Baha that were made public during Their lifetimes. If Baha’u’llah, the Manifestation of God for this age, intended for hereditary succession or a line of Guardians, such a vital command would have been revealed clearly and unequivocally in His own writings. The absence of any such instruction speaks volumes.

Third, the so-called Will and Testament of Abdu’l Baha surfaced only after His passing in 1921, under circumstances that have never been fully clarified. There are multiple accounts of how the document was “discovered,” and questions remain about its authenticity. The language, tone, and even handwriting in sections of this Will are inconsistent with the known style of Abdu’l Baha’s writings. These inconsistencies have been discussed not only by Free Baha’is but also by notable early scholars such as Lady Ruth White, who publicly challenged the document’s legitimacy and even accused Shoghi Effendi of forgery, citing evidence through handwriting analysis.

Moreover, after assuming control, Shoghi Effendi centralized authority, introduced titles, and created an administrative system that effectively replaced the spiritual simplicity of the Cause with a bureaucratic hierarchy. This was completely against Baha’u’llah’s call for “independent investigation of truth” and His prohibition of clergy or intermediaries between the believer and God.

When viewed considering Baha’u’llah’s own teachings and Abdu’l Baha’s lifelong example of humility and service, the concept of

Guardianship as established by Shoghi Effendi appears alien to the spirit of the Faith. The Free Baha’is therefore hold that the Will and Testament was not written by Abdu’l Baha entirely, but was fabricated after His death to justify a line of leadership that He never intended.

The truth, as we see it, is simple: Faith was never meant to be inherited, controlled, or institutionalized. It was meant to be lived, searched for, and expressed by each soul in the light of divine guidance. Baha’u’llah and Abdu’l Baha taught that the only “Guardian” of the Faith is the Word of God itself – unchanging, eternal, and accessible to all.

Hope that answers your question. Please get back in case of anything more.

With warm regards,

Team Free Baha'is



Email 2:

Hello, I'm an Argentinian native living in Panama. I've been studying the Bab, Bahá'u'lláh, and the Bahá'ís since July. A few days ago, I discovered that there are other interpretations of Bahá'u'lláh's revelations. I can't say for sure that I'm still a believer, but there is something very strong about the Bahá'ís that is calling me intellectually and spiritually. There are also concepts that don't make sense to me, and that's where I find myself. Would it be possible to speak with one of your instructors who speaks Spanish?.

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hola soy argentino vivo en panamá. estoy desde julio estudiando al Bab ,Bahá'u'lláh y a los bahai. hace poco dias que descubri que hay otras interpretaciones de las revelaciones de Bahá'u'lláh. No puedo afirmar que aun doy creyente pero si que hay algo muy fuerte que me esta llamando intelectualmente y espiritualmente sobre los Bahai también hay conceptos que no me cierran y ahi es donde me encuentro con ustedes. sera posible hablar con algun intructor de ustedes que pueda hablar español ?

Answer:

Dear M,

Allah'ú'Abha!

Thank you for writing to us and for sharing a little about your spiritual journey. It is truly inspiring to hear that you have been studying the lives and teachings of the Bab and Baha'u'llah, and that you are seeking clarity on concepts that do not yet feel clear. This search – the Independent Investigation of Truth – is exactly what Baha'u'llah called on every soul to pursue.

As you have discovered, there are indeed different interpretations of Baha'u'llah's message. The Free Baha'is follow the pure and original teachings, free from the control and bureaucratic influence of the current Baha'i Administration in Haifa, which sadly has restricted the Faith in ways Baha'u'llah never intended.

Regarding your request to speak with someone in Spanish – while we will gladly take your contact details (WhatsApp number, email, or other secure method), we must also share with you the reality of our situation. Free Baha'is are a minority within a minority, and the Haifan Administration considers us “Covenant-breakers.” If someone is identified as a Free Baha'i, they face immediate excommunication and social isolation from the mainstream community.

Because of this, many Free Baha'is live under disguise, attending Haifan Baha'i gatherings and blending in, while privately holding to the original teachings. This means that direct introductions are sometimes difficult – not out of unwillingness, but because we wish to protect those living under this risk.

That said, we will do our best to find a Spanish-speaking friend who can safely connect with you. Please share your details and time zone, and we will pass them to the concerned person to contact you directly when possible.

We are happy to also let you know that Free Baha'is launch The Caravan magazine every quarter as per the Baha'i calendar, so you can explore the Faith as Baha'u'llah revealed it – unaltered, unfiltered, and free from administrative distortion.

With love and fellowship,

Team Free Baha'is

Email 3:

I've heard that Free Bahais have a different understanding of the law of Huququ'llah. Can you explain what it really means, and where the money should go?

Answer:

Dear Friend,

That's a beautiful and very important question—because the true meaning of Huququ'llah (the Right of God) has been misunderstood and misused by the Administration for decades.

According to the writings of Baha'u'llah, Huququ'llah was never meant to become a centralized tool of fundraising or institutional wealth. It was a spiritual law, a reminder to the believers to purify their wealth and to serve humanity through selfless giving. Baha'u'llah revealed:

"Should anyone acquire wealth, a portion thereof is the right of God, and should be rendered unto Him Who is the Possessor of all things..." (Kitab-i-Aqdas)

Notice how Baha'u'llah says this is to be rendered unto God, not to any council, institution, or administrative body. The act was meant to be personal and voluntary, an expression of gratitude to the Creator – not a compulsory tax collected by clerical institutions in the name of God.

In fact, the Free Baha'is believe that the true spirit of Huququ'llah lies in how and why it is given – not to whom. When one uses their wealth to help the poor, feed the hungry, educate a child, or comfort the sick, they are fulfilling the law far more genuinely than by sending money to a faceless administration that uses it for buildings, conferences, and bureaucracy.

Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha both emphasized that service to humanity is service to God. Abdu'l Baha said:

"If you meet those who are poor, treat them not as strangers. Let your hearts be filled with compassion toward them." (Tablets of Abdu'l Baha)

From this viewpoint, every act of charity done out of love for God and humanity becomes Huququ'llah. You don't need to send it to Haifa. You don't need a receipt or a signature.

The sad reality is that under the Haifan Administration, this sacred teaching has become a financial system, where believers are pressured to "purify their possessions" through payments – sometimes even tracked, audited, or reported. This contradicts the very essence of Baha'u'llah's message, which abolished priesthood and religious taxation.

For Free Baha'is, Huququ'llah is about giving freely, without expectation or control, and ensuring that one's wealth becomes a source of blessing to others. It's about spiritual generosity, not financial submission.

So, to put it simply: Huququ'llah is not about money, it's about purity of heart. And when we give from the heart to uplift humanity, we are giving to God Himself.

Team Free Baha'is

www.freebahais.org





1919 - Shoghi Effendi (right) and Fujita, the Japanese servant in Haifa

DID YOU KNOW ?

When Shoghi Effendi passed away, his official death certificate reportedly recorded his gender as “UNKNOWN.”

This remarkable and little-publicized detail raises serious questions. Why would a certificate fail to identify the gender of someone so central to an administration claiming authority over a global Faith? Some have interpreted it as hinting at long-rumoured controversies about his personal life – rumours dismissed by the official Order. But the certificate itself stands as a stark document: even at death, ambiguity surrounds his identity.

For Free Baha'is, this is more than trivia. It underlines the opacity and contradictions that have followed the administration since Shoghi's time. When the very facts about a “Guardian” are uncertain, how can

believers be confident in any claim of infallibility or moral authority?

This single document – the death certificate – reminds us that we must always return to the clear, unaltered Writings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha, rather than placing blind faith in later institutions or individuals whose own foundations may not survive scrutiny.

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England & Wales deaths 1837-2007 Transcription

First name(s)	SHOGHI E
Last name	RABBANI
Gender	Unknown
Birth day	-
Birth month	-
Birth year	1896
Age	61
Death quarter	4
Death year	1957
District	Marylebone
County	London
Volume	5D
Page	350
Country	England
Record set	England & Wales Deaths 1837-2007
Category	Birth, Marriage, Death & Parish Records
Subcategory	Civil Deaths & Burials
Collections from	Great Britain, England

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URL of this page: <https://search.findmypast.co.uk/record?id=bmd%2fdaz%2f000985%2f011>

“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!

BLAST FROM THE PAST



The STORY TELLER

THE STORY OF THE STORK, THE FISH AND THE PRAWN

Once upon a time there was a stork, a fish and a prawn who, in spite of their varied natures, felt in their hearts a common mission and planned to travel together. Now their methods were inherently different so that, in spite of the sincere friendship which existed between them, something like an argument arose.

The stork contended that their way lay upward along the path of the air, the fish asserted that their direction stretched seaward across the curve of the bay, while the prawn turned his

tail toward his destination, insisting that the track of the soft moist shore was the only logical course to take.

Unable to impose their ideas upon each other, they then decided to stifle their natural instincts, to the end that they might travel as a unit. So, observing a little baby carriage standing near by, they all three hitched themselves to it and started on their way with the best intentions in the world. But, lo and behold, the stork drew upward, the fish pulled seaward and the prawn pushed backward.

Reference: New History Magazine, February 1933

WEBSPLORE

Shoghi Effendi gay? Destroyed will?

Question

There are a few internet pages that claim that Shoghi Effendi was gay, his trips to Switzerland and London were to meet lovers. There's also rumours that Rúhíyyih Khánum destroyed his will, because he appointed Remey as guardian as he was also gay and Effendi was his lover. There's also claims that Rúhíyyih Khánum wrote the letters condemning homosexuality and that she was the real power behind the UHJ during her life. I can send links if you want although I suspect you know all this already and the posts are really long. What do you think of this? Just rumours and prejudicial or possibly even true?



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<https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/s/GUCUXMYXbm>

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."

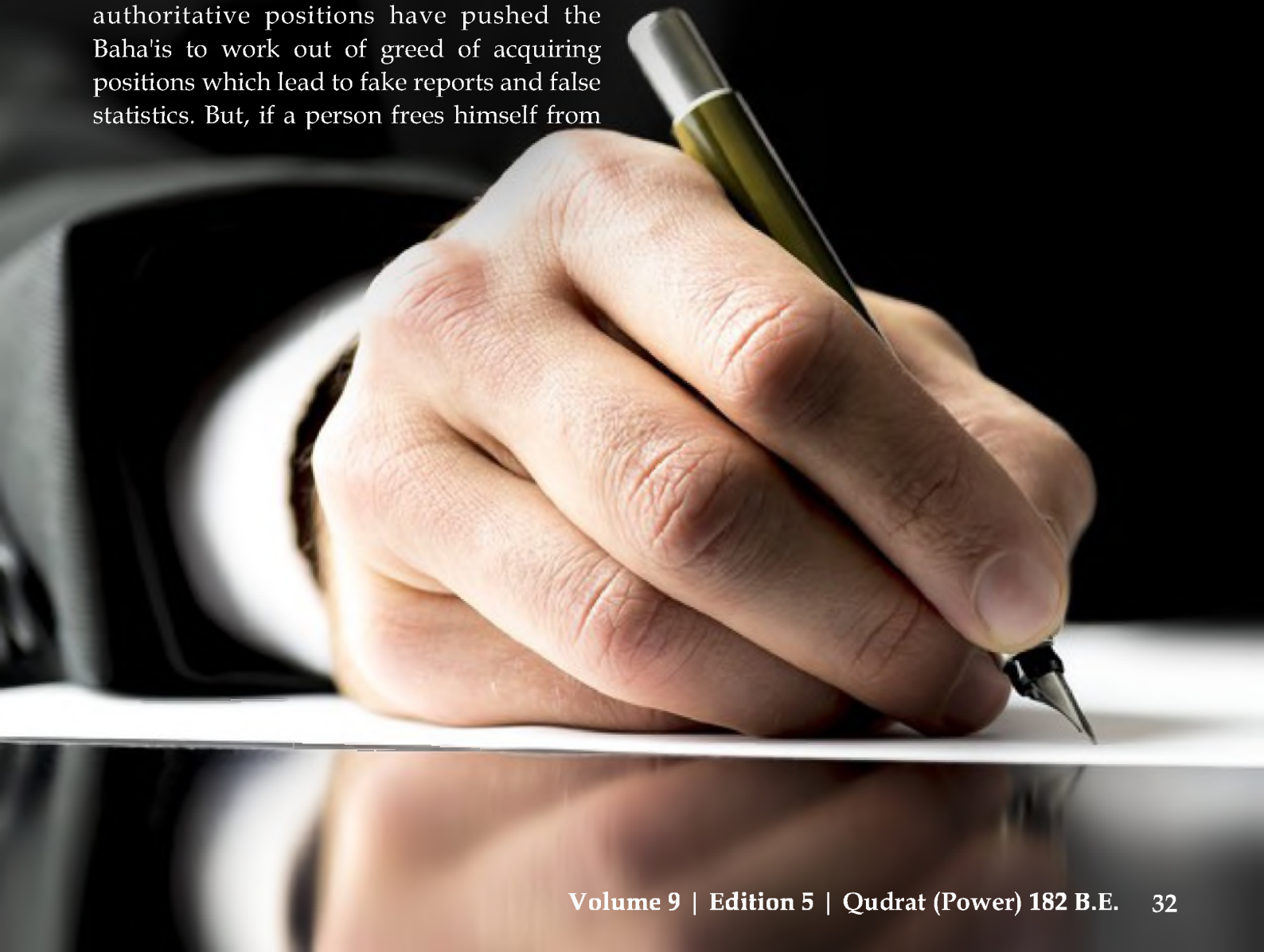
(Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

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



Shoghi Effendi with J.E. Esslemont during his time at Oxford, 1921.

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