

THE **CARAVAN**



Admin rep declares:
House of Justice irrelevant;
spirituality is dead.

Article Inside

MARCH 2024
VOLUME 8, EDITION 1,
BAHA (SPLENDOR) 181 B.E.





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PRAYER



Praised be Thou, O my God, that Thou hast ordained Naw-Rúz as a festival unto those who have observed the Fast for love of Thee and abstained from all that is abhorrent unto thee. Grant, O my Lord, that the fire of Thy love and the heat produced by the Fast enjoined by Thee may inflame them in Thy Cause, and make them to be occupied with Thy praise and with remembrance of Thee.

Since thou hast adorned them, O my Lord, with the ornament of the Fast prescribed by Thee, do Thou adorn them also with the ornament of Thine acceptance, through Thy grace and bountiful favor. For the doings of men are all dependent upon Thy good-pleasure, and are conditioned by Thy behest. Shouldst Thou regard him who hath broken the Fast as one who hath observed it, such a man would be reckoned among them who from eternity had been keeping the Fast. And shouldst Thou decree that he who hath observed the Fast hath broken it, that person would be numbered with such as have caused the Robe of Thy Revelation to be stained with dust, and been far removed from the crystal waters of this living Fountain.

Thou art He through Whom the ensign “Praiseworthy art Thou in Thy works” hath been lifted up, and the standard “Obeyed art Thou in Thy behest” hath been unfurled. Make known this Thy station, O my God, unto Thy servants, that they may be made aware that the excellence of all things is dependent upon Thy bidding and Thy word, and the virtue of every act is conditioned by Thy leave and the good pleasure of Thy will, and may recognize that the reins of men's

doings are within the grasp of Thine acceptance and Thy commandment. Make this known unto them, that nothing whatsoever may shut them out from Thy Beauty, in these days whereon the Christ exclaimeth: “All dominion is Thine, O Thou the Begetter of the Spirit (Jesus)”; and Thy Friend (Muhammad) crieth out: “Glory be to Thee, O Thou the Best-Beloved, for that Thou hast uncovered Thy Beauty, and written down for Thy chosen ones what will cause them to attain unto the seat of the revelation of Thy Most Great Name, through which all the peoples have lamented except such as have detached themselves from all else except Thee, and set themselves towards Him Who is the Revealer of Thyself and the Manifestation of Thine attributes.”

He Who is Thy Branch and all Thy company, O my Lord, have broken this day their fast, after having observed it within the precincts of Thy court, and in their eagerness to please Thee. Do Thou ordain for Him, and for them, and for all such as have entered Thy presence in those days all the good Thou didst destine in Thy Book. Supply them, then, with that which will profit them, in both this life and in the life beyond.

Thou, in truth, art the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

- Baha'u'llah

FOREWORD

“I beseech Thee, O my Lord, by Him Who is Thy Name, Who, through the power of Thy sovereignty and might, hath risen above the horizon of His prison, to ordain for everyone what becometh Thee and beseemeth Thine exaltation. Thy might, in truth, is equal to all things.” – Baha’u’llah

Dear readers, friends, and fellow travelers on the path of truth,

As we embrace the arrival of Baha, the month that aligns with the joyous occasion of Naw-Rúz, we extend heartfelt wishes to Baha'is worldwide. Naw-Rúz not only marks the beginning of a new year but symbolizes the dawn of hope, heralding fresh opportunities and a vibrant reawakening of the spirit.


In the gentle glow of this new beginning, let us take a moment to reflect on the profound teachings of Baha'u'llah, whose message continues to illuminate our lives. His vision transcends borders, touching hearts far and wide, uniting us in the common purpose of building a world rooted in justice, unity, and compassion.

In this edition, we delve into the Guest Article

section, where we confront the growing disillusionment with the Universal House of Justice (UHJ). The weariness of unwanted and seemingly inconsequential messages has left many seeking a return to the pure teachings of Baha'u'llah. As we navigate these waters, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to the essence of Baha'i teachings.

Amidst these winds of change, we celebrate the emergence of new voices and unconventional approaches. An inspiring example graces us from Mexico, where a compassionate soul has chosen to direct her Huqu'qullah contributions towards the welfare of animals. In doing so, she has chosen a path less traveled, deviating from the traditional channels of the Administration. This courageous act echoes the essence of Baha'u'llah's teachings, reminding us that benevolence knows no boundaries.

As we witness the rise of such stories, let us remember that generosity extends beyond conventional norms. Baha'u'llah's teachings empower us to seek justice and alleviate suffering in diverse and innovative ways. It is



heartening to see individuals embracing this spirit, contributing to the betterment of society and, by extension, fulfilling the vision set forth by Baha'u'llah.

May this Naw-Rúz usher in a season of renewed faith, profound insights, and a deepened commitment to the teachings of Baha'u'llah. Let our collective efforts illuminate the world with the brilliance of unity, justice, and love.

In the spirit of Naw-Rúz, we wish you all a joyous celebration and a year filled with abundant blessings.

With profound love and unwavering unity,

Team Free Baha'is

SINNER



Humanity I swear I hate,
When my empathy doesn't change the fate,
And my will destroys reality,
I only wish for sorrow's end.

And I know I do no harm,
to the human, so unkind.
But behind backs I talk,
When I say what's on my mind.

I sin father, I sin.
To keep my insanity unseen,
To the eye, I am candy,
But my thoughts only envy.

Those who poor they aren't,
Those who wish and act upon.
I am only lost in traffic,
Of the soul's whom lost their homes.

And I am not yet there father,
I still have priorities,
But my life has gone off sider,
And my wishes are all gone.

So why do I still begin to try
What am I hoping for?
When I don't feel human anymore,
What am I waiting on?

- Deityrium

DIVINE LAWS

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

Whoever claims Command (amr) before the completion of a thousand years is a false liar. We ask God to help him to return. If he repents, He is the Relenting One. If he persists in what he has said, one who will have no mercy on him will be sent against him. He is the Strong in punishment. Whoever explains this verse or interprets it in any other way than that plainly sent down, he will be deprived of the Spirit and Mercy of God, which preceded the worlds. Fear God and follow not your illusions. Follow what your Lord, the Mighty and Wise One, commands. The sound of bleating [note 3] shall arise from most of the lands. O people, avoid every vile sinner and do not follow him. This is what we informed you when we were in Iraq, in the land of the Secret (fi ard al-sirr), and in this illuminating Spectacle (al-manzar al-munir).

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

ADMIN REP DECLARES: HOUSE OF JUSTICE IRRELEVANT; SPIRITUALITY IS DEAD.

– GUEST ARTICLE

"The words of the House of Justice are boring and no one should care for it"

"Spirituality and dedication to the faith has no bearing on one's faith and loyalty to the covenant"

Those were the paraphrased words of the administration representative who "graced" our local feast this month. As it happened, this event also served as the venue for electing national delegates. As expected from the local assembly, it featured a red-carpet reception with the typical flattery one anticipates when an administration representative visits.

However, this administration representative revealed the core of their stance when she proudly declared that the faithful no longer care about what the UHJ has to say. Mimicking boredom and acknowledging the dull response to the UHJ's words, she confidently stated that the faithful no longer care for messages from the House and avoid discussing them because they find them boring. How nice!

The members of the administration are now openly acknowledging what the faithful have known for a long time. The words of the UHJ are plain and simply irrelevant, constituting a collection of high-sounding yet meaningless words.

Next came the bigger revelation. She declared, referring to the March 2007 message of the UHJ, that those who vote are considered faithful and loyal Baha'is. Think about it for a moment. Prayers? No. Fasting? No. Reading and deepening? No. Teaching? No. But what makes you a loyal and faithful Baha'i? Voting!

This was a blow to the generational Baha'is who have dedicated their lives and resources to the faith. Some of us devoted our entire lives to the cause, and others contributed their resources. But no! According to the administration, you are considered faithful if you participate in their electoral charade. Additionally, this administration representative urged all Baha'is to reconsider their choices if they have already voted for someone loyal to the administration.



At this point, I as a Free Baha'i would add my thought – Abdu'l Baha, a central figure in the faith, never participated in voting. Should we then question his loyalty and faithfulness?

Finally, it wouldn't surprise me if the die-hard Haifan Baha'is, those who've been fervently supporting the Administration, start questioning the Master or twist his words to match the stance of the UHJ or the Administration. It appears their aim is to sidestep independent truth-seeking, a fundamental aspect of Baha'i teachings. They rally behind the Administration, branding anyone who questions them as anti-faith or even a covenant breaker.



Thankfully, our allegiance remains unwaveringly aligned with the teachings of Baha'u'llah, and we won't back down no matter what. May Baha'u'llah bless us with the strength and courage to stay true to the path he has illuminated.

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)



1912: Abdu'l-Bahá addresses the gathering on the temple land in Wilmette, IL



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



“Rid thou thyself of all attachments to aught except God, enrich thyself in God by dispensing with all else besides Him, and recite this prayer:
Say: God sufficeth all things above all things, and nothing in the heavens or in the earth or in whatever lieth between them but God, thy Lord, sufficeth. Verily, He is in Himself the Knower, the Sustainer, the Omnipotent.”

— The Bab

“Happy the one who entereth upon the first day of the month of Bahá, the day which God hath consecrated to this Great Name. And blessed be he who evidenceth on this day the bounties that God hath bestowed upon him; he, verily, is of those who show forth thanks to God through actions betokening the Lord's munificence which hath encompassed all the worlds. Say: This day, verily, is the crown of all the months and the source thereof, the day on which the breath of life is wafted over all created things. Great is the blessedness of him who greeteth it with radiance and joy. We testify that he is, in truth, among those who are blissful.”

— Baha'ú'llah

“...just as the solar cycle has its four seasons, the cycle of the Sun of Reality has its distinct and successive periods. Each brings its vernal season or springtime. When the Sun of Reality returns to quicken the world of mankind a divine bounty descends from the heaven of generosity. The realm of thoughts and ideals is set in motion and blessed with new life. Minds are developed, hopes brighten, aspirations become spiritual, the virtues of the human world appear with freshened power of growth and the image and likeness of God become visible in man. It is the springtime of the inner world...
In it the former springtime has returned, the world is resuscitated, illumined and attains spirituality; religion is renewed and reorganized, hearts are turned to God, the summons of God is heard and life is again bestowed upon man.”

— Abdu'l Baha

FREE BAHAI ACTIVITIES

"At the time of the vernal equinox in the material world a wonderful vibrant energy and new life-quickening is observed everywhere in the vegetable kingdom; the animal and human kingdoms are resuscitated and move forward with a new impulse. The whole world is born anew, resurrected. Gentle zephyrs are set in motion, wafting and fragrant; flowers bloom; the trees are in blossom, the air temperate and delightful; how pleasant and beautiful become the mountains, fields and meadows.

Likewise, the spiritual bounty and springtime of God quicken the world of humanity with a new animus and vivification. All the virtues which have been deposited and potential in human hearts are being revealed from that Reality as flowers and blossoms from divine gardens. It is a day of joy, a time of happiness, a period of spiritual growth. I beg of God that this divine spiritual civilization may have the fullest impression and effect upon you. May you become as growing plants. May the trees of your hearts bring forth new leaves and variegated blossoms. May ideal fruits appear from them in order that the world of humanity, which has grown and developed in material civilization, may be quickened in the bringing forth of spiritual ideals." – Abdu'l Baha

Dear readers,

As we step into the vibrant month of Baha, we are excited to share the heartwarming activities that have unfolded within the Free Baha'i community, enriching our connection with the teachings of Baha'u'llah.

At the close of the previous year, Free Baha'is worldwide commemorated the sacred Day of Covenant & Ascension of Abdu'l Baha by drawing closer to the profound teachings of the Master. In Canada, this celebration took a special turn with the successful launch of the much-anticipated book, "Beyond the Narrative." This comprehensive work delves into a profound analysis of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha, shedding light on its true essence.

Looking forward, the Free Baha'i community in Thailand is gearing up for a joyous Naw-Rúz celebration. They have extended heartfelt invitations to their families, extended families, friends, and friends of friends, creating an atmosphere of unity and festivity. We wish them success in this endeavor, trusting that it will bring happiness to the

heart of Baha'u'llah.

In the United States, the Free Baha'i team has been diligently immersed in the original writings and teachings of Baha'u'llah. This focused study aims to deepen their understanding and strengthen their spiritual connection. Additionally, the team is actively working on spreading awareness about Huqu'qullah, emphasizing the importance of redirecting these funds towards humanitarian causes rather than Administration expenses.

Baha'is from various corners of the world, including Angola, Azerbaijan, Australia, India and beyond, are engaging in dynamic activities to raise awareness about the teachings of Baha'u'llah. A dedicated individual from Thailand has taken a bold step by printing and distributing the book "Beyond the Narrative" among key Baha'is in the country. This initiative seeks to illuminate the distortions in the Will of Abdu'l Baha, particularly regarding the appointment of

Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Cause. As we continue our journey, let us unite in the spirit of these activities, drawing inspiration from the teachings of Baha'u'llah and fostering a sense of community, understanding, and purpose.

Warm regards,

The Caravan Magazine Editorial Team

Warmest Baha'i regards,

Free Baha'i Team



INTRODUCING

THE CARAVAN

APP!





SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Email 1:

We are all aware of the law regarding backbiting:

"Ye have been forbidden to commit murder or adultery, or to engage in backbiting or calumny; shun ye, then, what hath been prohibited in the holy Books and Tablets.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas)

www.bahai.org/r/815589753 "

My question for discussion is: Does this ban extend to dwelling on and thinking about faults and shortcomings of people, perceived or otherwise?

In other words, when we are alone and think about somebody's faults, be it true or untrue, does that constitute backbiting or slander?

Also, I would like to know what are your thoughts on the effects of backbiting, calumny, and slander on our souls and

spiritual growth.

Answer:

Hi Fariborz,

Allah'ú' Abha!

Firstly, appreciate your question and we're glad there are people like you who adhere to such ethics. More power to you!

Let's look at your question. In delving into the profound teachings of Baha'u'llah, we encounter the unequivocal injunction against backbiting: "Ye have been forbidden to commit murder or adultery, or to engage in backbiting or calumny." (The Kitáb-i-Aqdas) It's a directive aimed not just at external actions but, significantly, at the internal realm of our thoughts.

Contemplating someone's faults, whether

true or untrue, when alone, does raise pertinent questions. From a Free Baha'i perspective, it's essential to understand the spirit behind this prohibition. While the explicit wording addresses spoken or written backbiting, the essence goes deeper. Engaging in negative thoughts about others, even in solitude, can be seen as a breach of the broader principle of unity and love.

In the solitude of our thoughts, we shape our innermost reality. Dwelling on the faults of others, whether they exist or are imagined, fosters a divisive and judgmental mindset. It contradicts the fundamental teachings of unity, compassion, and the acknowledgment of the inherent nobility in every soul.

Moreover, the effects of backbiting, calumny, and slander on our souls and spiritual growth are profound. Baha'u'llah encourages us to "see with the eye of oneness." When we engage in backbiting, we tarnish our own spiritual mirror, clouding our perception of the inherent goodness in others. It hampers the development of virtues like forgiveness, understanding, and unconditional love.

The interconnectedness of our souls within the tapestry of humanity is a central theme in Baha'i teachings. Backbiting disrupts this harmony, creating discord not only in our individual spirits but also in the collective consciousness. It weakens the bonds of unity and impedes the progress of the community towards its noble goals.

In essence, abstaining from backbiting in thought, word, and deed is not merely a rule but a pathway to spiritual growth. By consciously redirecting our thoughts towards understanding, compassion, and appreciation for the diverse journeys of our fellow beings, we contribute to the creation of a more unified and spiritually vibrant community.

Let us, therefore, strive to purify our thoughts, uplift our souls, and foster an environment where the light of truth and love can shine unobstructed.

Regards,

Team Free Baha'is



Email 2:

There are people who are non meat eaters. They should please stop pushing their beliefs as a Bahai thing. There is no room for anyone other than, the universal house of justice, to interpret the writings.

Answer:

Hi Manizheh,

Allah'u'Abha!

In response to your inquiry, as Free Baha'is, we wish to express our stance unequivocally. We adhere to the teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha as our primary sources of authority within the Baha'i Faith. Our belief system doesn't align with the current form of the Universal House of Justice (UHJ).

In terms of dietary choices, we recognize and respect the diverse practices within our community. The act of consuming meat, in accordance with the tradition of numerous major religions, holds a place of acceptance within the Baha'i context. We advocate for a spirit of mutual support and understanding, where both meat-eaters and non-meat eaters coexist with respect for each other's choices.

The Baha'i community, much like the world it aspires to unite, comprises individuals with varying beliefs and practices. Our Faith promotes open-mindedness, encouraging dialogue and the exploration of different viewpoints, that has been the essence of the teaching of Baha'u'llah.

Rather than viewing this diversity as a challenge, we see it as an opportunity for collective learning. Unity, in the Baha'i context, isn't synonymous with uniformity but rather a harmonious coexistence of different perspectives contributing to a more profound understanding of the Faith.

Inclusivity, respect, and understanding form the bedrock of Baha'i principles. Embracing the richness that diversity brings to our community conversations aligns with Baha'u'llah's vision of a united and tolerant world. Our shared love for Baha'u'llah and commitment to the betterment of humanity unite us despite the varying interpretations of our community members.

Warm Regards,

Team Free Baha'is



Email 3:

Here are my questions:

1- Is there just one true religion? if no, what is the purpose of being many? (in my point of view I do think that all religions have to some degree from God's essence but with time and corruption of its followers they diverge from the truth to some extent depends on time and place)

3- Do you think that Kitab Al Aqdas (literally in Arabic the holiest book) is the only uncorrupted? or all the other holy books are uncorrupted? (which will make every book contradict each other except in some basic morals and ethics)

4- What do you think will happen to anybody after death? (Please explain in details)

5- I suppose that the main conflict between you and the more dominant Bahai group is the universal house of justice so please tell me more about this big difference?

6- What is your principles in fasting?

Other than these questions I personally prefers Bahai Faith and feel spiritual calmness while reading Bahai Scripture or I think so.

Thanks again for your patience

Answer:

Hi Omar,

Thank you for your thoughtful questions and appreciate your patience. Here are perspectives from a Free Baha'i viewpoint:

1. The Free Baha'i community acknowledges the divine origin of various religions throughout history. Each religion, in its purest form, is considered a path leading to God. However, human interpretations and distortions over time can lead to deviations.

The diversity of religions may serve to address the varied needs and capacities of humanity.

3. The Free Baha'i community sees the Kitab Al Aqdas as a central and uncorrupted text, emphasizing the fundamental spiritual and ethical principles. However, it doesn't necessarily assert exclusivity or claim that other holy books are entirely corrupted. Rather, it recognizes the potential for human interpretation and alteration over time.

4. Free Baha'is generally align with the Baha'i principle that the soul continues to progress in the spiritual realms after death. The details of the afterlife, while not explicitly outlined, are believed to involve the soul's continued journey towards God, guided by the deeds and choices made during earthly life.

5. One significant difference between Free Baha'is and the mainstream Baha'i community lies in the interpretation of the role of the Universal House of Justice. Free Baha'is often emphasize a more decentralized approach, asserting the importance of individual conscience and local autonomy, rather than a centralized authority.

6. Fasting, as prescribed by Baha'u'llah, is seen as a spiritual practice promoting detachment and self-discipline. While there might be variations in its observance among Free Baha'is, the emphasis is on the inner spiritual transformation rather than rigid adherence to specific rules.

Those responses reflect the diversity within the Free Baha'i community, as individual perspectives may vary. We appreciate your openness to dialogue and hope these insights contribute positively to your understanding.

Warm regards,

Team Free Baha'is

KNOW YOUR HERITAGE

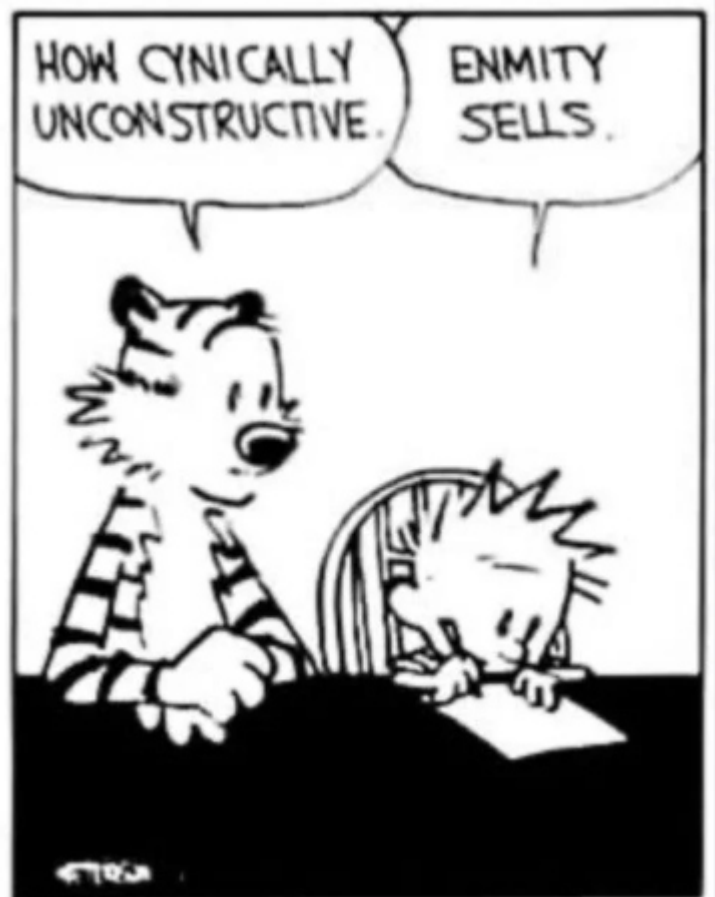
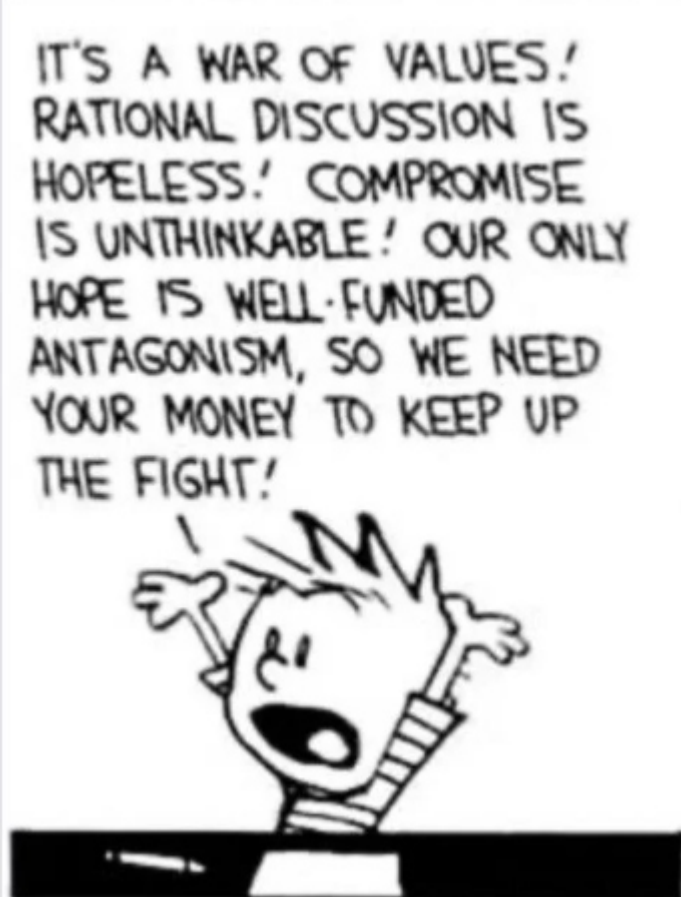
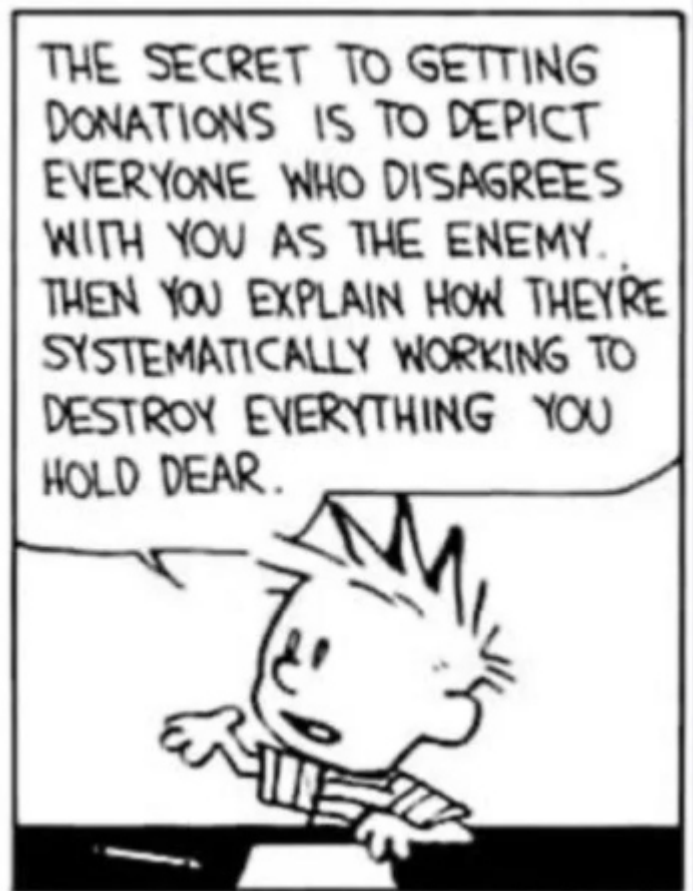
اس میں کیا
اسلام میں نا، بیک
عہدہ امام احمد

The maidervant of God, 'Twas Anna Reinke, unto her
be Bahullah-El Abdu',
Austin, Texas, U.S.A.

[illegible]

Letter from Abdu'l Baha to Anna Reinke in Farsi

WEBSPLORE



“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 ?

According to ancient custom, every nation has general holidays when all the people rejoice and are glad. That is, they choose the day of the year whereon a great or glorious event had occurred. On that day they manifest great joy and happiness. They visit one another; if they have any feelings of bitterness towards one another, they become reconciled on that day; hard feelings pass away and they unite in love for each other. As great events occurred on the day of Naw-Ruz for the Persians, that nation therefore made it a national feast and considered it a national holiday.

This is, indeed, a blessed day because it is the beginning of the temperate season and the commencement of springtime in the northern hemisphere. All earthly things, whether trees, animals or humans, become refreshed; they receive power from the life-giving breeze and obtain new life; a resurrection takes place and, because it is the season of springtime, there is a general marvelous activity in all contingent beings.

There was a time when the Persian dynasty died out and no trace remained thereof. On such a day [Naw-Ruz] a new one was founded. Jamshid ascended the throne. Persia became happy and at peace. Its power, which had been dissipated, once more returned. Hearts and souls became possessed of wonderful susceptibilities, to such a degree that Persia became more advanced than it

had been in former days under the sovereignty of Kayumars and Hushang. The glory and greatness of the government and the nation of Persia rose higher. Likewise, a great many events occurred upon the day of Naw-Ruz that brought honour and glory to Persia and to the Persians. Therefore, the Persian nation, for the last five or six thousand years, has always considered the Feast of Naw-Ruz as a day of national happiness, and until now it is sanctified and recognized as a blessed day.

In brief, every nation has a day to mark as a holiday which they celebrate with joy. In the sacred laws of God in every cycle and dispensation, there are blessed feasts, holidays and workless days. On such days no kind of occupation, commerce, industry, agriculture, or the like, is allowed. All work is unlawful. All must enjoy themselves, gather together, hold general meetings, become as one assembly, so that the oneness, unity and harmony of the people may be demonstrated in the eyes of all. As it is a blessed day it should not be neglected or left without results by making it a day limited to the fruits of mere pleasure. During such blessed days institutions should be founded that may be of permanent benefit and value to the people so that in their conversations and in history it may become widely known that such a good work was inaugurated on such a feast day. Therefore, the intelligent must look searchingly into conditions to find out what important affair, what philanthropic institutions are most needed, and what foundations should be laid for the community on that particular day, so that they may be established. For example, if they find that the community needs morality, then they may lay down the foundation of good morals on that day. If the community be in need of spreading sciences and widening the circle of knowledge, on that day they should proceed in that direction, that is to say, direct the thoughts of all the people to that philanthropic cause. If, however, the community is in need of widening the circle of commerce or industry or agriculture, they should inaugurate the means of attaining the desired aim. If the community needs protection, proper support and care of orphans, they should act upon the welfare of the orphans, and so forth. Such undertakings as are beneficial to the poor, the weak and the helpless should be pursued in order that, on that day, through the unity of all and through great meetings, results may be obtained, the glory and blessings of that day may be declared and manifest.

Likewise in this wonderful Dispensation this day [Naw-Ruz] is a blessed day. The friends of God should be confirmed in service and servitude. With one another they must be in the utmost harmony, love and oneness, clasping hands, engaged in the commemoration of the Blessed Beauty and thinking of the great results that may be obtained on such a blessed day.

Today, there is no result or fruit greater than guiding the people, because these helpless creatures, especially the Persians, have remained without a share in the bestowals of God. Undoubtedly, the friends of God, upon such a day, must leave tangible, philanthropic or ideal traces that should reach all mankind and not only pertain to the Baha'is.

In all the prophetic Dispensations, philanthropic affairs were confined to their respective peoples only – with the exception of small matters, such as charity, which it was permissible to extend to others. But in this wonderful Dispensation, philanthropic undertakings are for all humanity, without any exception, because this is the manifestation of the mercifulness of God. Therefore, every universal matter – that is, one that belongs to all the world of humanity – is divine; and every matter that is sectarian and private is not universal in character – that is, it is limited. Therefore, my hope is that the friends of God, every one of them, may become as the mercy of God to all mankind.

-A talk Abdu'l Baha gave in the Victoria Hotel in Alexandria (Egypt).

BLAST FROM THE PAST

MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR

By ROMAIN ROLLAND

War, approaches. It approaches from all sides. It menaces all peoples. Tomorrow it might break out. If it blazes forth in any corner of the earth, it can never more be isolated. In a period of weeks, of days, it will consume us all. And it will be a nameless horror, the death of civilization. All our civilization, our whole world is in danger.

We sound the alarm! Arise! We appeal to *all* peoples, *all* parties, *all* men and women of good will. It is not now the interest of a single people, class, or party that is at stake. They are all threatened. Salvation cannot be attained without the help of all. Let them all act. A truce to the discussions now rending us! Unite against the common enemy! Down with war! Stop war!

We summon you to a great Congress which shall be a powerful manifestation of all the elements against war. We summon all parties from whatever point of the social compass they come, socialists, communists, syndicalists, anarchists, republicans of all shades free-thinkers and Christians, non-partisans, all the associations of pacifists and war resisters, conscientious objectors, independent individuals,

everybody in France and in all the other countries who is firmly resolved to use every means to put a stop to war. We beg them to appoint delegates at once to an Organizing Committee for the World Congress to decide in the very shortest time on the place, the date, and the rules for the Congress. There is not a day to lose.

We need not draw up a plan of action in advance. That would hamper the freedom of those whom we convoke. It is for them during the Congress to set forth freely their different schemes, and then to seek among themselves for harmony of action. What we want is to raise an immense wave of public opinion against war, whatever war it is, whatever its source, whomsoever it may threaten. We want to make the will of the people resound, the will of all that is healthy in humanity. Let us force the feeble, unworthy, quibbling governments to strangle the monstrous instigators of war,—profiteers of massacre,—munition industries, cannonsellers, their controlled agents provocateurs and vile press,—all the herd that plots to fish in bloody waters.

Gag and Smother War!

—Extract of letter from Romain Rolland made public by Alfred Lief.

Reference: The New Historian, August 1932, Volume 1

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."

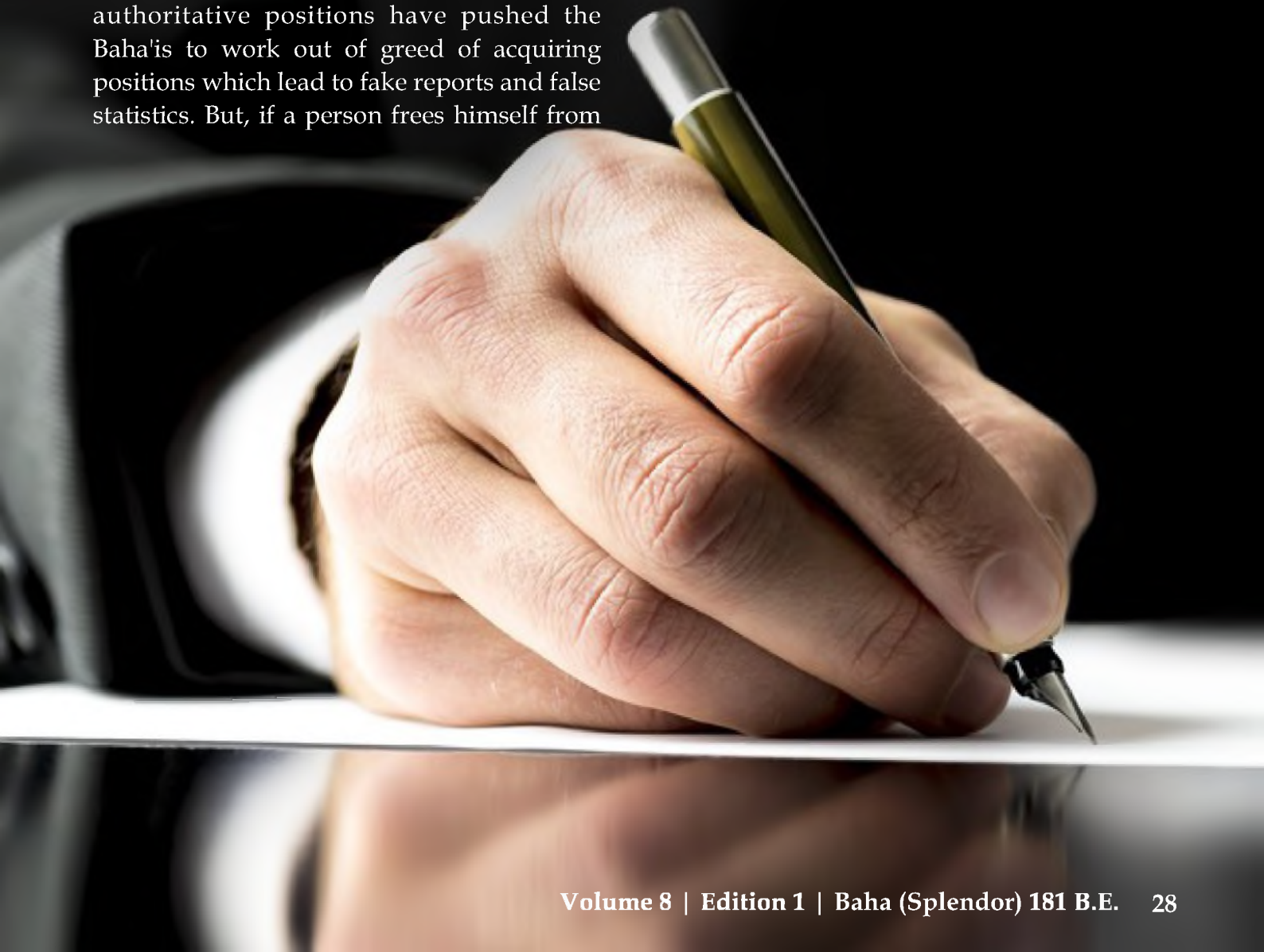
(Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

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



A painting of Abdu'l Baha on one of his walks through the streets of Haifa, Israel.

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**PUBLISHED BY THE FREE BAHAI FAITH
IN
SINGAPORE | THAILAND | USA**

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**THE CARAVAN || REVIVED EDITION
VOLUME 8 - EDITION 1**



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