

THE

OCTOBER 2021
VOLUME 5, EDITION 5, MASHIYYAT (WILL) 178 B.E.

CARAVAN

**MAINSTREAM
BAHA'I FAITH IS
HEADING FOR A
VERTICAL SPLIT**

GUEST ARTICLE INSIDE!

**"THE ACTIONS OF UHJ
IS AGAINST THE
TEACHINGS
OF BAHU'LLAH."**

**REFER
'DID YOU KNOW'**





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PRAYER



O MY LORD! I BEG THEE TO FORGIVE ME!

O my Lord! I beg Thee to forgive me for shutting myself out from Thee. By Thy glory and majesty, I have failed to befittingly recognize Thee and to worship Thee, while Thou dost make Thyself known unto me and callest me to remembrance as beseemeth Thy station. Grievous woe would betide me, O my Lord, wert Thou to take hold of me by reason of my misdeeds and trespasses. No helper do I know of other than Thee. No refuge do I have to flee to save Thee. None among Thy creatures can dare to intercede with Thyself without Thy leave. I hold fast to Thy love before Thy court, and, according to Thy bidding, I earnestly pray unto Thee as becometh Thy glory. I beg Thee to heed my call as Thou hast promised me. Verily Thou art God; no God is there but Thee. Alone and unaided, Thou art independent of all created things. Neither can the devotion of Thy lovers profit Thee, nor the evil doings of the faithless harm Thee. Verily Thou art my God, He Who will never fail in His promise.

- Prayer of The Bab

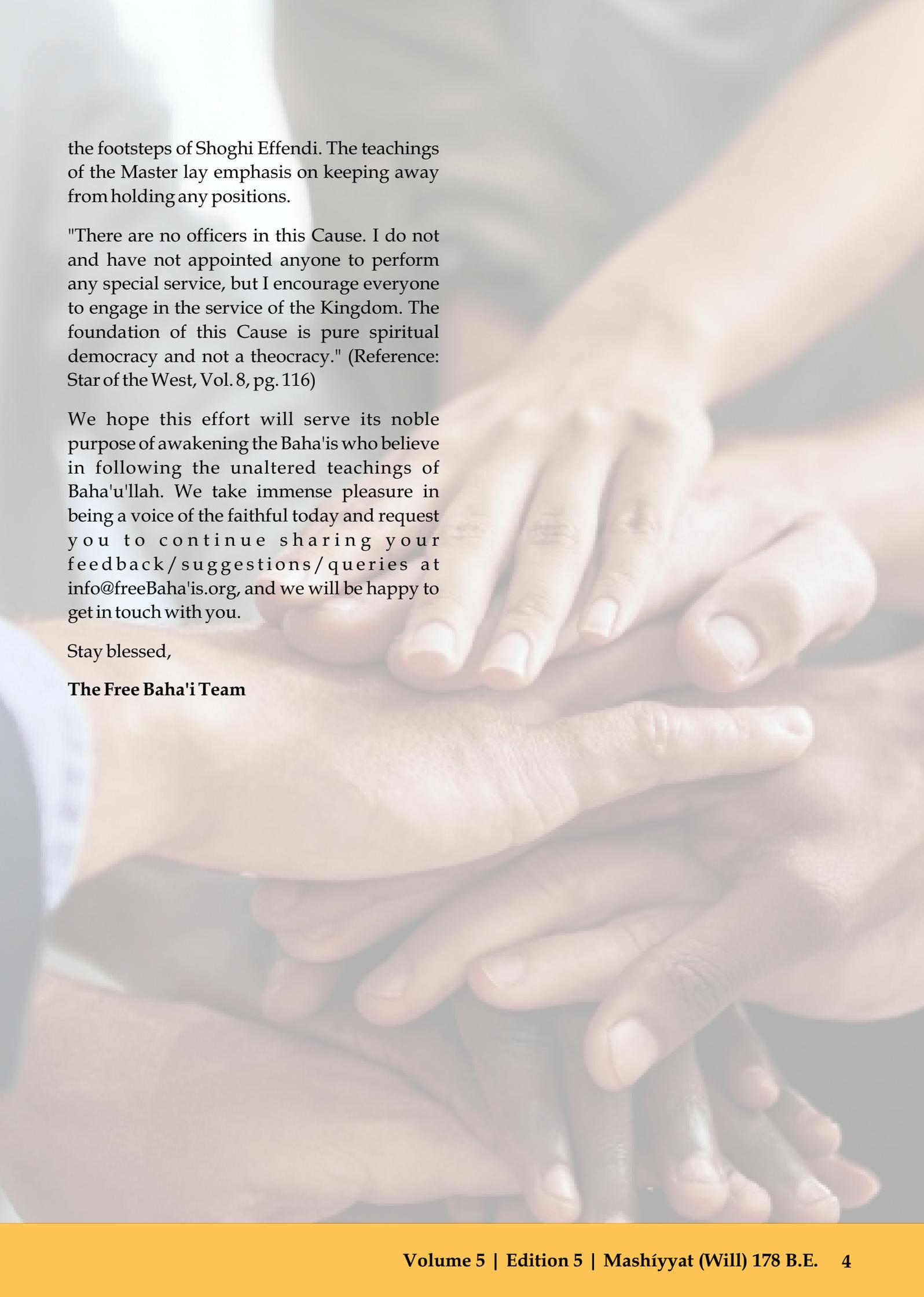
FOREWORD

“Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer of the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk-in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression.”
– Baha'u'llah

And we are back yet again! With great honour, we present to our dearest readers the fifth edition of the magazine in this series, which through the last couple of editions has grown from strength to strength due to the divine blessings and the efforts of the faithful. Our success in this endeavour has been certain for the reason that spreading the pristine message of Baha'u'llah bestows on us a blessing so magnanimous that we are propelled to victory. Anyone who has been a regular reader of The Caravan will easily be able to gauge that we the Free Baha'is are very particular about following the factual

teachings and principles of the Faith, taking guidance from the words of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha as the only source of our beliefs. We always encourage the faithful, basis the teachings of the Master to conduct an 'Independent Investigation of Truth' and only then derive a conclusion, rather than joining the bandwagon of accepting something because it has been agreed upon by the “majority”.

Most Baha'is have been made to believe that the Will and Testament of the Abdu'l Baha is authentic, but does that really make it authentic is the question. Does it not matter that no investigation of any kind has gone into the various substantiated allegations and valid evidences presented by truth seekers which prove its tampering? Those Baha'is today, who believe in the authenticity of the Will of the Master, who believe in the Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi, have been prone to moving farther away from the original teachings of the faith. One can witness the condition of the Cause and how the image of the faith has been tampered by the power-hungry people who are following



the footsteps of Shoghi Effendi. The teachings of the Master lay emphasis on keeping away from holding any positions.

"There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not appointed anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy." (Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

We hope this effort will serve its noble purpose of awakening the Baha'is who believe in following the unaltered teachings of Baha'u'llah. We take immense pleasure in being a voice of the faithful today and request you to continue sharing your feedback/suggestions/queries at info@freeBaha'is.org, and we will be happy to get in touch with you.

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.

We have exempted you from worship (on the occasion) of wonders. Whenever they appear, make mention of God with greatness and power. He is the Hearing One, the Seeing One. Say: "al-'azama lillah, rabb ma yura wa wa ma la yura, rabb al-'alamin" (Greatness belongs to God, the Lord of what is seen and what is unseen, the Lord of the worlds). Worship as individuals has been ordained for you; the commandment regarding group worship is remitted (rufi'a), except in worship for the dead. He is the Wise One, the Commanding One.

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



A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Across from the mountains,
A little house sits in the trees.
I'm lost in tranquility
As my soul tries to breathe.

White clouds moving slowly,
The breeze a calm still.
I'm caught in the moment
As my heart starts to heal.

A piece of me
In the startling blue sky.
As I spread my wings,
My soul starts to fly.

I fly to unknown places,
Where pain and hurt once dwelled.
As the memories flow past me,
My eyes start to swell.

Tear drops drip slowly
Down my cheeks.
The wind wipes them dry
And gives me some peace.

Soaring so free,
Over water and land,
My Spirit Guide gently
Takes me by my hand.

He shows me what was
And what's meant to be
And why my life
Is so important it seems.

A long soar,
Like the eagle high,
I bow my head,
And I start to cry.

Back on the land,
Across from the trees,
I began to realize
What healing means.

It means not to forget,
Let the past flow
Of all the horrors
One soul had to go.

To take the strengths
And apply them to life
Is a valuable lesson
I've learned this flight.

Alone in the sunset,
I watch it go down,
When I finally realize
What peace I have found.

- Ana Lei Somerville

MAINSTREAM BAHAI FAITH IS HEADING FOR A VERTICAL SPLIT – GUEST ARTICLE

Persian Baha'is v/s. the Rest

The Baha'i Faith, the youngest of all the faiths and supposedly the most united is now suffering from an existential crisis. Already divided into many fraction and sects, the Faith currently faces an existential threat in the form of a power struggle between the Persian Baha'is and the rest. This crisis may lead to the already decimated Faith into vertical split in an already decimated faith shaking it's roots.

There is no denying the fact that the Baha'i Faith is born in Persia and the Persians have made a great sacrifice in spreading the Faith across the globe.

We will have to go back into history to recollect that the Persian Baha'is pioneered to places far and wide and have devotedly served the Faith. The progress of the Faith in golden era from 1970 to 2010 was mainly due to the efforts of Eidelkhanis, Nakhjawanis, Razavis, Afshins, Rouhanis, Muhajirs, Azadis and so on. All familiar names to the Baha'i community, known for their selfless services. While these individuals offered their service,

they also led the administrative positions – so we had people who had practical experience for managing the affairs.

Subsequently the faith saw some unfortunate developments. While the Persian front runners toiled, a big section of the Persian Baha'is felt that it was their right to govern the affairs. They had a sense of superiority and prided that they were connected to the cradle of the faith. Perhaps as a result of this, resentment crept in amongst the other sections. Added to this was the fact that growing tension between Israel and Iran, made Israel suspicious of members of Persian background Baha'is visiting Israel. And the crack widened.

During the inauguration of the Chile temple in 2016, many Persian Baha'is were found boasting about the spread of the faith in Iran. They were also heard saying that many family members of the former Iranian President Ahmadinejad were taking the Ruhi curriculum. The non-Persian Baha'is used to take this newfound interest of Iranians in the faith as an attempt of penetration rather than



acceptance. Ahmadinejad was an archenemy of the faith.

So today, while superficially Baha'is express perfect harmony, for most of us it is clear that the gap is too large now and cannot be bridged. Administrative responsibilities have started slipping from the hands of Persian Baha'is and they do not attempt to hide their discontent. After all, they represent a section who has sacrificed most and have had to face severe hardships for the cause of the Faith. The rest of the community just enjoyed the outcome of their hard work and yet walked away with administrative posts.

The non-Persian Baha'is feel that the Persian Baha'is have enjoyed enough limelight and it is high time they take a back seat. There have been few cases of dis-loyalty by some Persian Baha'is which has added to the demand that Persian Baha'is cannot be trusted entirely.

As this split widens, though ideologically the mainstream Baha'i Faith will not break, the future will see a risk of Persian Baha'is forming a separate body for governance of their affairs.

Much to the dismay of the founding fathers of the faith and to the pleasure of the enemies of the Faith and Covenant breakers there is an enemy within.

The grievances of Persian Baha'is are expressed in this open letter to UHJ which is being widely circulated amongst the Baha'is.

AN OPEN LETTER TO UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

SUBJECT: Persecution of Persian Baha'is in at the Highest Seat of Baha'i Administration

Dear Esteemed Members of Universal House of Justice

1. Paul Lample
2. Payman Mohajer
3. Shahriar Razavi
4. Stephen Birkland
5. Stephen Hall
6. Ayman Rouhani

7. Chuungu Malitonga
8. Juan Francisco Mora
9. Praveen Mallik

It saddens me to write this letter to the esteemed members. Members who collectively are supposed to be infallible in their decisions. From quite some time, some of the decisions of the members are being viewed as being with a targeted agenda – cleansing the Baha'i Administration of the Persian Baha'is' very silent callous racism and fanaticism is engulfing the whole of Baha'i Community. The Persian Baha'is are being persecuted in whichever land they pioneered and surprisingly the Universal House of Justice is a mock spectator to this persecution.

One could argue that these steps are seen with prejudice. However, when the sequence of similar actions has been witnessed the benefit of doubt reduces.

Let us one by one see such incidences to conclude whether it is co-incidence or otherwise:

Recently a prominent Heterodox Baha'i, Omid Seioshansian, who was born in Qatar, was blacklisted in Qatar. Government authorities in the country have levelled criminal and national security charges against him. Mr. Omid now will face severe penalties in Qatar's judicial system. And will be denied entry.

Although Bani Duggal, the BIC's Principal Representative to the United Nations, said that "the Baha'i International Community is saddened that the State of Qatar has chosen to expel members of a community that has peacefully coexisted in and contributed to the progress of the country", the silence of UHJ has raised concerns. Many prominent Baha'is believe that UHJ is behind the expelling of Omid as they are in the cleansing process of Persian Baha'is and Omid a high-ranking Persian Baha'i in Baha'i Administration, who has an eye on selection to UHJ. He has a lot of clouds in countries like India.

1. Another high-ranking Persian Baha'i, a counsellor, Dr. Jabbar Eidelkhani who had served for many years in Bangladesh was also removed from his post and a very insignificant Indian Baha'i was asked to step in his shoes. Was this part of a strategy?

2. Another Persian background lady, a former counsellor and member of NSA of India, Mrs Zeena Sorabjee, was asked to resign/retire from NSA after being elected on NSA. Fate accompli?

3. A prominent Baha'i of the USA, Mr. Bahareh Moghaddam has been accused of trying to deceive and misguide the Baha'is of Iranian descent by sowing seeds of discord. UHJ just watched silently.

4. Mr. Ali Nakhjawani was hunted for his misunderstood statement resulting into ignorant Baha'is daring to ask him that why he gave such statement. UHJ could have defended in this situation

5. The case of Baha'i Scholar Ahang Rabbani has not been forgotten. After working for 15 years at the World Centre, he was heartbroken. UHJ had no comfort to offer

6. Jamshed Fozdar and Firoz Anarki were on the brink of being declared Covenant Breakers, but some better reasoning prevailed on the UHJ and they stopped from doing such an atrocious act. Both these gentlemen have bitterness still

7. The Late Mr. Hasan Sabri along with Isabella Sabri made fun of Persian Baha'is and used to call them KHAR (donkey) and used to say that Persian Baha'is are misguiding other Baha'is. There are several other such incidences of rebuke. UHJ conveniently ignores these. They used to say Panchami is the centre of deviation

8. The number of Persian Baha'is as counsellors have come down drastically and the story is not different for the ABMs. They were asked to leave their place of pioneer (where they had established themselves,

gained respect and involved themselves in Teaching of the Faith) and settle in some other parts of the world. This is nothing but humiliation and harassment. UHJ choses to look the other way

9. When a non-Persian Counsellor retires from his post, he is immediately offered another post in his own country. But if the counsellor is Persian, and that too a pioneer, never this opportunity of service had been offered to him or his experience used for promotion of the Faith. This happens under watchful eyes of the UHJ

10. A sincere Persian BAHAI Mr. A.S. Furudi who took care of the BAHAI property the National Hotel at Pune in India was threatened by one of the members of UHJ that he should come in line with UHJ or face severe consequences

11. A Persian pioneer a devoted Baha'i Dr. Ahmed Ansari was asked to resign after he was elected as a delegate for National convention. It was feared that he was a sure member of NSA

12. Payam Shoghi - A person of capacity, he served the faith as a counsellor, but he was sacked by the UHJ and was asked to resign from all his administrative positions, just because he was "accused" for forging Documents? Which was never proved

13. Shahryar Nooreyazdan - He has such a wide experience about the faith. Has given years as a pioneer to Mumbai Community. A person instrumental in building the Lotus Temple and donating huge amounts of his savings was never given any hearing by UHJ. All his suggestions are ignored and was made centre of mockery

14. Farida Vahedi - She served the Faith with best of her capacity running the External affair department very efficiently but just some Indian NSA members did not like her success was asked to resign from the NSA of India. In her place a dumb Ram Sevak Yadav was

brought to NSA just to appease the Hindu nationalist Government

15. Afshin and his son Naim now live a life of loneliness. Afshin gave all his golden years for the propagation of faith in India. Today when he is ill and may need financial assistance, the UHJ is wasting sources on inexperienced, and worthless people like Praveen Mallick, Rajan Sawant etc. All the "soldiers of Baha'u'llah" are being treated like worthless entity

16. The Baha'i Academy in Panchgani was subjected to pressure because its Director Mr. Leson Azadi was a Persian and son of a Martyr. UHJ made his life and of his family miserable. He was sacked as Auxiliary Board Member

Such examples leave us with a bitter conclusion that those having Persian (cradle of faith) background need to sieve. It is as though the UHJ sees the Persian Baha'is being responsible for the formation of so many sects. A thought is prevailing in the Faith that Persian Baha'is are working in groups and are having soft corner for the Persian fourth Guardian Nosratullah Bahremand of the Orthodox Baha'i Faith, who is calling his shots from Australia. Such a suspicion has been prevailing for many years now. UHJ has so far not taken any steps to reject this idea.

While all this is happening, the clout of Baha'is with Jewish background is increasing. Whether it is happening with connivance of Jewish state, is a question that then comes to mind.

Esteemed members do look into the injustice that has crept in functioning of the Faith. Else history would not forget UHJ being cause of moral and population downfall of our Beloved Faith.

-A GROUP OF BAHAI'S

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)



1913 - Abdu'l Baha with a group of friends in Stuttgart, Germany



THE BAHAI' RELIGION AND ITS ENEMY, THE BAHA'I ORGANIZATION – PART 10

(An extract from Lady Ruth White's book)

The Epistle

HE IS EL-ABHA! (THE MOST GLORIOUS!)

O ye assisted hosts of ABHA, who are turning unto the Horizon of the Covenant of the Lord of the Kingdom!

Praise be to God! The banners of the Cause of God are waving in the center of the world, and the holy hearts of those who are firm and steadfast are attracted and happy. The fragrance of the Supreme Word is diffused throughout all regions and climes and the lights of the Sun of Reality are shining in all countries. Through the confirmed power of the Center of the Covenant, who is inspired by God, the life-refreshing proclamation of faith is being heard from the Occident; the heart-attracting voice of certainty is raised from the Orient; the people of the North commemorate the most wonderful Name of ABHA, and the

people of the South are made happy by the praise and glory of the Supreme Lord.

The universe is perfumed through the scented fragrance of the Covenant, and the essences of existence are enlightened through the radiance of the Sun of the horizons. The Lamp of the Cause of God is clear and shining in the world, and the light of His Will is bright and gleaming in the assemblages of the people. The boundless Bounties are enveloping the world, and the Mercy of God is extended to all regions. The Power of the Lord of Glory is become manifest in the temple of "Him who is branched from the Ancient Root," and the Divine favors are shown forth through the Holy Being of the Chosen One.

It is the time for joy and happiness. It is the period of ecstasy and gladness. It is the day of zeal and attraction. The Expounder of the Book of the Lord of Lords is present, and the

light of the Promulgator of the Cause of God is radiant from the horizon of the world. The table of happiness is spread; the means of joy and gladness prepared; the eternal blessings are surrounding all.

In these days it behooves these Servants to strengthen the loins of endeavor in the utmost of unity, concord, love and accord, and win the goal of eternal happiness. We should follow the Path of the Covenant, bear unto the souls the glad tidings of the Kingdom, and guide them to the shade of the blessed Tree of God, the Sadrat el-Montaha. We should all abide under the canopy of the Testament, and, if need be, sacrifice possessions and life in the path of the Supreme One. We should close our eyes to the world and its belongings, and with our powers both latent and manifest we should promulgate the Word and spread the Cause. Thus, may we be accounted as the people of faithfulness in the Supreme Kingdom and Glorious Horizon.

With smiling faces, free minds, attracted hearts and pure souls may we approach the Holy Threshold and become blessed with His good pleasure. May we with loud and cheerful voices proclaim the glad tidings, and bless the hearing of those who are far and near with the blessed Word – ALLAH-O-ABHA!

The intention of this servant of the sublime Threshold in writing this paper is to elucidate briefly that which has occurred in these days and in those of the past, and to reveal to the pure minds of the beloved of God that which will tend to make them confident and assured. Thus, they may remain firm in the Covenant and be protected from breaking it. They may look forward to the Utterances of the Supreme Pen, and with all power, endeavor, firmness and constancy, observe this blessed verse:

“When the Ocean of Meeting sinks and the Book of Origin is achieved to the end, turn unto Him who is chosen by God, who is branched from this Pre-existent Root” (i.e. after the departure of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, all Bahais must look to ABDUL-BAHA for

heavenly guidance).

O ye friends of God!—May my spirit be a sacrifice for your love!—This servant had the intention some time ago to bring about that which would take away dissension and replace it with love and unity. Thus, hatred and jealousy, which are contrary to the Divine Law, might be effaced that all may abandon the people of the “left,” the violators of the Covenant, and unite with those of the “right” who are firm to the Center of the Covenant. So, the unpleasant odor of this dissension, which was the cause of dispersing the people, disturbing the minds and saddening the hearts, might disappear, and the fragrance of love and harmony prevail. That, through the decisive command of the Testament of God, and turning to “Him whom God hath willed... the sun of unity may dawn from the horizons of the hearts, the Supreme Collective Word become freed from the oppression of discord, the table of hate (spread in the name of religion) be rolled as a scroll, and the sun of the blessed verse: “Make not the means of order the cause of disorder—the cause of unity the cause of discord”—dawn and enlighten the eyes.

That which prompted the intention was as follows:

Previous to the late imprisonment there appeared actions and conduct by Mirza Mohammed Ali, which were diametrically opposed to trustworthiness, the true spirit of religion and the commands of God. This servant awaited opportunity in order to investigate certain matters which they had attributed to His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA—May my life be a sacrifice for His beloved! Thus truth might become distinguished from falsity, and the real intentions of Mirza Mohammed Ali become evident. Opportunity did not afford until in this prison, which in reality is as paradise to me, my desires were fulfilled and God directed me to my object.

One day I attained the honor of visiting His

Holiness, "Him whom God hath willed," (ABDUL-BAHA) and heard from His blessed tongue all that which proved the untruth of the statements made regarding Him (by the Nakazeen). Later, I directed my steps to the house and conversed with Mirza Mohammed Ali, and pleaded with him to forsake all personalities and to follow what he is commanded, hoping that he might cease opposing the Cause of God and disturbing His believers. The more I pleaded with him, the more he refused and the prouder he appeared. He said nothing save words and expressions indicative of hatred, jealousy and enmity against the confirmed Center of the Covenant. He further tried to conceal the matter from those connected with him and from outsiders, and to throw suspicions whereby my object might remain hidden.

Having observed these actions, behaviours, words and deeds, this servant utterly despaired and closed his eyes to him. After the lapse of some time I discovered that he had composed untrue statements, and by hints and symbolic writing endeavored to keep the people ignorant of his intentions, and claimed that he was oppressed and persecuted, while the fact was that day and night he remained at home and was engaged in cursing and execrating the Center of the Covenant. He has written an announcement, wherein he made statements of his being wronged and his holding to the law. For the purpose of casting suspicions, he has written certain expressions, all of which are void of truth and far from the reality.

Since brevity must be considered, I shall write the full details of his announcement and his papers, which he is yet engaged in writing, at a future time. After a while these falsities and bad conditions attained such magnitude that I was compelled to resolve to ask the Government to transfer me from this prison to that of Rodos, so that I might be free from hearing that which harmed me physically and spiritually. Thus, I wrote a petition to the Porte at Constantinople, and also a formal

application to the Vilayet, but when I met the Center of the Covenant. His advice changed my desire.

In those days the Honorable Haji Mirza Hassan Khorassani – Upon him be the Glory of God! – arrived and visited the Holy Threshold. He met this servant several times and asked him to go once more and see Mirza Mohammed Ali and advise him to return to the Center of the Covenant, hoping that he might, for the love of God's Cause and obedience to His Commands, lose sight of personality and follow that which is commanded. He said that, should Mohammed Ali return, the object would be attained; otherwise this servant should announce his own return to His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA – May my life be a sacrifice to Him! Knowing as I did his personal feelings, enmity and jealousy, I thought my effort would prove fruitless. However, I investigated the matter and heard the same statements and old ideas. Therefore, I severed myself entirely from him and published the announcement* of my return. Thus, I joined with His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA and cut myself from all else save Him.

Later, one day, in company with His Holiness, the blessed twig, Haji Mirza Seyyid Ali – Upon him be BAHA'U'LLAH-el-ABHA! – I met Mirza Mohammed Ali and performed that which was my religious duty and due to love. I besought him to unite with me and attain the great blessing. Hearing useless words, which referred to nothing but personality, I arose and went directly to the household of ABDUL-BAHA. According to his old rule and custom, Mohammed Ali wrote a paper in behalf of the few who have turned away from the Center of the Covenant and addressed it to the twig (Afnan H. M. Seyyid Ali) in order to mix statements, disturb the minds and throw suspicions upon the hearts (*The Confession to be found at the beginning of this epistle.) of the simple, he requested a meeting with us. Presently, I sent a message that we were always ready,

whenever or wherever it might be, to manifest the word of Truth and disprove that which is far from it.

His Honor Afnan (i.e., Haji Seyyid Ali) conveyed the message to him (Mohammed Ali). He held to other pretexts and prepared another form of suspicion, which he endeavored to instill into the minds by his peculiar ways. Whatever he says or writes, or whatever he spreads, results in naught but manifest loss.

To awaken and inform the beloved of God, it is necessary to write concerning some of the pretexts which have been used by them (the Nakazeen) and thereby they have raised the cry of being wronged. Thus, may the truth of the matter be clearly demonstrated to the pure minds.

One of the questions is that of stealing the traces and interpolating the verses (the writings of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH) and also that of concealing certain commandments from the beloved of God. This they have done in effort to prove their having been wronged and the difficulties which prevent their turning to (or acknowledging) the Center of the Covenant. They mourn and lament their state, although all that has been said of them by some souls is truth itself and the facts of the matter.

Now this servant will forget all he has heard from other souls concerning the matter and will only write that which he has seen with his own eyes and heard from their own tongues (i.e., of Mohammed Ali and his followers). Thus, may the truth of the matter be clear to all.

O ye beloved of God! The question of stealing the traces (writings) is as follows: During the days of the illness of the worshipped Countenance (BAHÁ'U'LLÁH)- the illness which preceded His departure- one day He summoned this servant to His Presence and gave to him the keys of His blessed depository and chests, which were in His room, and ordered that the locks should be renewed. According to His command, this servant sent

for Mohammed Kaani and had him renew the locks, which he did, and Mirza Ali Riza brought the locks and helped to affix them in their places. We locked the doors and presented the keys to Him and He said: "Keep them." He also ordered that the key to my own depository in my room be renewed, and this was done. Likewise, during those blessed days. His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA was summoned (by BAHÁ'U'LLÁH) and was commanded by Him to gather together all His blessed writings and traces. This command (indicative of what was to come) produced such a feeling (in ABDUL-BAHA) that his tears descended like unto rain, and, while his body was trembling and his heart aching, he was obeying the command, gathering together the important manuscripts. He placed them all in the two large trunks which had always held the important Tablets and writings, when BAHÁ'U'LLÁH went to Acca, Haifa and Kassre. These had always been in the blessed room as a trust of His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA, for they were given him by BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

When the night of the great ordeal arrived, the sea of mating sunk, the lamentation of the Supreme Concourse raised, the earthquake of the pillars of the horizons occurred, and the radiant Sun of Beauty passed behind the veils of Glory. It was the time for the washing of the blessed body. Water was brought, and they were prepared for the blessed purpose, when Mirza Mohammed Ali said: Now there will be much water spilled in this room and in order to prevent these trunks being affected by dampness, let me help you carry them to another room... He had them deposited in the room of this servant with the help of Mirza Majduddin.

Three days after this event Mirza Mohammed Ali said to me: "The Blessed Beauty (BAHÁ'U'LLÁH) — Exalted is His station! — said: We have written something and it is in Our Depository., which I would like to see... He took the keys from this servant for that purpose. Later I saw that, through Mirza

Majduddin. Ali Riza his sister, and the mother of Mirza Shua'u'llah he (Mohammed Ali) carried the blessed trusts (the writings of BAHA'U'LLAH) by way of the window and the gallery of the Behji to his own place. He took away all the traces of the Supreme Pen and the special Tablets revealed for the beloved of God. When this servant reproached him and endeavored to reclaim them, he spoke so much that should I attempt to write it here. Masnavi "becomes seventy pounds of paper"

Among other things he said to me that the preservation of the blessed writings was referred to him by a blessed command, that he possessed a Tablet from the Supreme Pen to that effect. He did not even allow this servant to read the writings. By various means he endeavored to insinuate to this servant that His Holiness the Greatest Branch was against the Blessed Law, that if the blessed writings fell into his hands they would be effaced and no name of the Blessed Beauty would remain in the world.

Another question concerns the interpolation. It is as follows: For a long time, by means of allusions and hints, symbols and signs, he gave me to understand that he possessed a Tablet from the Supreme Pen concerning His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA, which, he said, if he should reveal, the name of ABDUL-BAHA would be effaced. He spoke of this on numerous occasions to some members of the family. Some time elapsed, during which some souls inquired of me concerning the Tablet in question, and I asked him for it, but every time he offered me an excuse and sought a pretext to avoid it. Finally, prior to the imprisonment in the most great prison of ABHA, one day he took out of a drawer a blessed Tablet from the Supreme Pen, wherein were mentioned the deeds, the actions, the oppression and opposition of Mirza Yahyah (Subh-i-Ezel), mentioning him often as "My brother," which he gave to me to read. I read it and remarked: "This has no connection with these days." (It refers to the

former days.) He said: "I have permission from the Blessed Beauty (BAHA'U'LLAH) to use my pen in the blessed writings (interpolate) for the protection of the Cause. Now, since some souls have exaggerated (the station of ABDUL-BAHA) and the Master claims Divinity, I will erase the word 'My brother' and insert in its place 'My Greatest Branch,' which I will show to people in order to check his influence." (An expression meaning that the matter is most voluminous. —Translator)

I was entirely dazed, but said nothing to him, waiting to see if he really dared to do such a thing. A few moments passed and I saw him take up the Tablet, erase "My brother" and replace it with "My Greatest Branch." Having seen this, I immediately said: "This deed is a great sin and a breach of trust. If you show this Tablet, this servant will divulge the whole account, will point out the interpolation, and this will cause all the writings in your possession to be considered unreliable. Hereafter whatsoever of the writings traced by the Supreme Pen you may show me, I will not accept as authentic until I have carefully compared the manuscript with the original handwriting which is elsewhere preserved, and have examined the same with a magnifying glass." Upon hearing these words, he was very much disturbed, promised and made a covenant that he would not show the Tablet to any one, and, further, he requested this servant not to reveal the matter.

From that day this servant entirely lost confidence in him and did not trust him in matters which concerned the Cause and the conscience. He continually sought opportunities for the investigation and scrutiny of the remaining questions which he (Mohammed Ali) had discussed and insinuated since the departure of the Blessed Perfection. He first referred to the manuscripts compiled by him (Mohammed Ali), and discovered that all the verses revealed by BAHA'U'LLAH concerning the

people of Beyan and the souls who, subsequent to the martyrdom of His Holiness the Supreme (the BAB. — May the spirit of all else be a ransom to Him! — had claimed Divinity, the station of Manifestation, the degree of Succesorship, or that of Mirroriness, were transposed and applied to the days following the ascension of the worshipped Countenance (BAHA'U'LLAH). In this wise and by this means they endeavored to perturb the minds and hinder the souls from turning (to the blessed Center of the Covenant). If this servant attempt to write the full account of these matters, the work will be endless. However, to the possessors of wisdom and intelligence, who are informed of past events, the reading of the said verses will suffice.

The blessed Tablet, so often cited in their pamphlets, will be sufficient. This is the Tablet which was revealed on the occasion of His exodus from Adrianople. It is as follows:

“O Salmaan! At the time of leaving Iraq, the Tongue of God informed some (of the followers) of the fact that the Sameri. would appear, the goat would bleat, and the bats (literally, birds of night) would move after the setting of the Sun,” etc.

In response to the inquiry, of a person concerning this blessed Tablet, He has said: “As to what thou hast asked concerning that whereof We informed the servants at the time of leaving Iraq, to wit, that when the Sun disappears the birds of night will move, the standards of Sameri will be hoisted, etc., verily, the birds of night did move in those days, and the Sameri did call, and blessed is he who knew and was of the knowing. Then We informed them of the goat. Verily, all We have told them appeared, and must have appeared, for thus did the Pen of Power and Glory reveal.”

Now this blessed Tablet, which makes mention of the goat, Sameri, and the birds of nights through excessive animosity and hatred they attribute to these days. They are so thoughtless regarding the meanness and

baseness of this sort of transposition. likewise, the numerous Tablets, and Writings (revealed by BAHA'U'LLAH) for the promotion of the Word of God and the preservation of the cause of God. concerning the harmfulness of dissensions, divisions and disagreements have all been to promote their own selfish desires, and used as a mean for instilling enmity and hatred (in the minds) against ABDUL BAHA. Notwithstanding this, they account themselves of the people of faithfulness and style themselves “Unitarians.”

A Blessed Tablet was shown to me (by Mohammed Ali), which had no beginning or end, rescaled by the Supreme Pen. He asked me to unite the separate fragments and frame it — that is, to place them on a board and thus Join the two fragments. He said: These two (fragments) are of one blessed Tablet., revealed on two pages.” This servant, considering the matter to contain a project, did not acquiesce in this work, and said: “This servant will not interfere in these affairs. If you wish to paste them, do it yourself.” Finding him urging and encouraging this servant to the work in a great degree. he was more certain that the two fragments did not belong together. but that he wished them joined to affect the meaning of the word “Covenant” which occurred in them. He said: “I have spoken of this to Agha Jamal and he has commended it.” This servant remarked that whoever wishes may commend this, but it will not induce me to interfere with any such matter or entangle myself in like affairs. When he became disappointed in this servant he made no further revelation regarding these things.

As to the imprisonment (the last confineme.it of ABDUL BAHA and His brothers to Acca), it is as follows: A certain day lie said, while in the Kussre (Behji), that His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA — May the spirit of existence be a sacrifice unto Him! -negotiated with Constantinople regarding the removal of the blessed Station (the sacred remains of

BAHA'U'LLAH) to Mt. Carmel. In this matter, he said, we must make our plans. This servant having observed those actions from him and having decided not to interfere in such matters, made no remark.

However, he made arrangements to send Mirza Majduddin, with a present and a letter in Persian text, to Nazim Pasha, the Governor of Damascus, to seek his aid in this affair. After hearing of this arrangement, this servant remarked that the said Governor being a man of politics, if certain matters were communicated to him, he would doubtless convey the same in a petition to the Sultan and cause suspicion in the court, producing harmful results, and thus bring calamity to all. This servant, during the same days, conveyed this matter to His Honor, the twig (a relative of the BAB), Haji Mirza Seyvid Ali—Upon him be BAHA'U'LLAH EI-ABHA! Notwithstanding all this, he sent Mirza Majduddin, with presents, a letter and verbal suggestions and instructions to Damascus. He met the said Nazim Pasha, and according to his own words spoken to this servant in Haifa, all that he could be told the Governor, concerning the building on Mt. Carmel (the tomb of BAB), the coming and going of American friends and the gatherings and meetings at Acca. In order to get all this information, Pasha showed him the utmost kindness and assured him of his help.

Mirza Majduddin returned, and, only a few days later, a telegram, transmitted in symbolic code, from the Royal Porte (Constantinople) arrived, the purport of which was the imprisonment of His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA, of this servant and of them (Mohammed Ali, et al). As soon as I heard this news I told them that it was the fruit and the result of the trip of Mirza Majduddin.

Although they have been the cause of this great matter yet every day They arranged a new fiction and spread it here and abroad. Once they said a Christian gentleman, among the friends of His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA,

who resides in Egypt, had spoken publicly of the Cause, in a church, without caution and wisdom, and this had caused the imprisonment. At another time they said that his Honor Mirza Abul Fazl—Upon him be BAHA'U'LLAH—had composed a book and published it, and, this having fallen into the hands of the doctors of Azhar (University) had caused this misfortune. In short, they have done all they could, secretly and publicly. “They scheme and God schemes. Verily, God is the best schemer.”

In those days a certain person came from Damascus to Acca and told some of the souls among the outsiders that the cause of the imprisonment of His Holiness Abbas Effendi was Nazim Pasha, the Governor of Damascus. The strangest of all is this, that, after imprisonment. Mirza Mohammed Ali wrote a letter to Nazim Pasha for the purpose of his own deliverance, and the person who transcribed the letter into Turkish is now present in Acca, the said Pasha, however, did not answer a word in reply to the first or second letter.

Now, O ye beloved of God! I ask you, by your Lord EI-ABHA, is it possible for me to remain with them (Mohammed Ali and his people) after witnessing these deeds and actions which are opposed to the decisive texts of God and are against the honesty and integrity recognized among all sects and peoples and after I have learned the falsity of the things they attributed to the Center of the Covenant of God? Is it lawful, according to any Divine law, for me to be connected with Mirza Mohammed Ali? No, verily, by my Lord EI-ABHA! Nay, rather, to shun him is a lawful command and a wise and solid counsel. As He (BAHA'U'LLAH) has said: “If ye sense any odor of jealousy and envy from any soul in the Cause of God, keep aloof from him.” Is he who manifests such actions and deeds an enemy or a friend, an interested or a disinterested person?

Notwithstanding all this, this servant, in the

spirit of supplication and humility, hopes and begs of God, the Almighty, to guide them unto the shade of the blessed Word of the Covenant and Testament, to treat them with absolute mercy and to aid and confirm them in that which is befitting. Verily, He is the Near, the Answerer.

As to the ways by which they cast their suspicions, it is necessary that they be outlined briefly, in order to inform and awaken the souls...Thus may no one be caught in the trap of the polytheism of their doubts and become deprived of the eternal blessing. The first thing they do is to appear most obedient to the Divine Laws and night and day engage themselves in the writing of the verses to such a degree that the new comer imagines that they are absolutely evanescent and absorbed entirely in servitude, having no thought or purpose save the Blessed Cause and the Blessed verses. After a while they give vent to certain mentions and insinuations in order to hinder the listener from turning to the firm command of the Covenant of God. That is to say, they begin to interpret and misconstrue some of the verses, and some they interpolate and transpose with perfect delicacy, giving the one to understand they are wronged. They convey all that which tends to instill enmity and hate in the newcomer's heart against His Holiness, Him whom God hath willed" – ABDUL-BAHA. Later they encourage him by various means to say evil things against ABDUL-BAHA. and they, themselves, outwardly voice the verses of BAHAU'LLAH. "The tongue is for the mention of good; stain it not with evil sayings." On the other hand, they make light of the important command of...."Turn your faces to Him whom God hath willed," which is the greatest command of God. They give much importance to 'insignificant, petty matters.

If the subject be correctly considered, after the ascension of the Adored Countenance (BAHA'U'LLAH) the decisive command which holds the first degree of importance.

which is incumbent upon all, is the one mentioned above. Second in importance are the other commands of the Book of God. For instance, if a person commits a murder he has committed a crime, the harmful result of which will concern him; but if he disobeys the word of the Covenant of God (disobeys ABDUL-BAHA) and causes dissension in the Law of God, the harmful result of it will touch the Cause itself (humanity at large). In this wise he will be absolutely non-existent and in evident loss. The fundamental basis of unity and concord rests upon the gathering of all under the shadow of one Word. This is the Oneness and Singleness mentioned in so many Tablets by the Supreme Pen. Now, what Word is greater than the Word of "Turn to. (ABDUL-BAHA)" after the ascension – and what command is greater than that? But, alas! that selfish motives and passionate desires have proved the greatest hindrance to the divine, eternal happiness.

They further give the newcomer to understand that His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA claims a station higher than that of the Ancient Beauty (BAHA'U'LLAH) – Magnified is His Station! – that He wishes to efface the ordinances and laws of the Blessed Perfection and to rule independently, establishing a new law and code. As a witness to this matter they cite the saying of such souls as are distant from His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA and who entertain extraordinary enmity and jealousy; likewise, they offer poems and certain pamphlets which contain sentiments differing from the true belief of the Center of the Covenant and the hopes of His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA. Soon, through the power of the pen and utterances of the Center of the Covenant, the horizon of realities and meanings will become illumined and that which is the desire of the heart and life of His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA – that is, absolute servitude at the Holy Threshold, will be established and proved.

As to the dissension in the Cause, which is shaking the pillars of the Divine Law and

causing conflagration of the fire of religious hatred and enmity, they consider it a religious duty – nay, the basis of the Holy Laws. If a person mention a word agreeing with the texts of the Books of God against dissension and concerning the necessity of unity, they consider him a polytheist and call him rejected and raise the voice of...where is the law!. Yet the Laws of God all concern unity under one Word, and the original purpose of the Divine collective Manifestation is for the solidarity of all sects and peoples of the world.

In most of the Blessed Tablets this point has been explained and elucidated, as, for example, in one of the Tablets BAHÁ'U'LLAH says: "O people of Baha! Strengthen the loins of endeavor, perchance religious strife and quarrel may be removed and erased from among the people of the world. For the love of God and His servants, arise to serve this Cause. Religious animosity and hatred is a world-consuming fire and the extinction thereof is most difficult unless the Hand of Divine Power rescue the people from this awful ordeal...

Likewise, He says:

"In the Name of God, the Unique! O people of the world! After the removal of the veil some people held fast to verses. We revealed verses. Some took hold of proofs (evidences); We manifested them; and certain souls turned to commandments, and We revealed the greatest proofs thereof. Whatever they said was performed and whatever they wished was granted. The purpose of all that was manifested was that the ears might become ready for hearing this Supreme Word, and that is this: O people of the earth! Make not the religion of God a cause of enmity. If this Word take root in the world, all will find themselves free and at peace. Say, verily, by the life of God! the tenet of God and His religion hath come for unity and concord, not for dissensions and disagreements. To this bears witness the Mother Book, and the people hear not! The glory which is shining from the

horizon of the Heaven of My Kingdom be upon thee and upon them who have left superstitions, holding to the lights of certainty."

Now they have forsaken these firm commandments and for selfish motives they have held to the sayings of this and that one, and are enkindling the fire of animosity in the breasts and hearts. It is for this reason that BAHÁ'U'LLAH says in the Book of the Covenant: "O ye My branches! In existence is hidden and latent a great power and a perfect strength. Turn to it and consider that which is conducive to its unity and not to that which is its apparent disagreement." Likewise, He says: "O servants! Do not make the means of order the means of disorder, and the cause of unity the cause of discord."

O people of equity! Is it meet and behooving for them to withhold vision from the Great Power and direct it to the sayings of the souls; to make the cause of order in the world that of dispersion; and to prefer personal interests over the Divine Laws? Although they are in the utmost degree of jealousy and hatred, they consider themselves abiders by the Holy Law. By all means they endeavor to extinguish the light of the Divine Covenant, and consider the Testament of the Son of the world a toy for children. Night and day, they work for the destruction of the edifice of the Supreme Word and the foundation of the Holy Cause of ABHA. No, verily, by Him whose hands hold the reins of the Cause! Rather it is meet and behooving that when they heard the verses of the Book of the Covenant they should have said: "We believe and are assured." They should have considered themselves evanescent and absorbed in the command of the Testament of God. They should have arisen with all power and strength in obedience to His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA and should have strengthened the loins of service among the people. But, alas! as the author of Masnavi says: "When personal interest appears, man's accomplishments will be concealed and the veils of the heart will

blind the eyes.”

If personal interests were to be forsaken by them, if they would turn to the Center of the Covenant of God and would perceive the power of Divine evidence which emanates from His tongue, they would see clearly that all that is not the mention of absolute servitude is outside of His verbal commands and the writings of His pen. Although He is the Center of the Covenant of the Blessed Perfection, in the degrees of utterance, He hold, himself the servant of the beloved of God, and has no desire save the promulgation of the Word of God, the promotion of the Cause of God, the diffusion of the fragrances of God and the education of the souls. The greatest proof of this is the boundless writings of His pen. Among them is an utterance which emanated from His blessed tongue recently and copies of which have gone to all regions. This will be cited here in order to manifest to all that outside of the mention of servitude and the station of servitude, there is no other mention in that station:

“Through His Honor Agha Ghulam Ali—Upon him be BAHA'U'LLAH! —to the beloved of God.

(Upon them be BAHA'U'LLAH-EL-ABHA!)
HE is GOD!

“O my God! O my God! Thou knowest, verily, that my heart is replete with the love of Thy beloved ones, my spirit is attached to the spirit of Thy chosen ones, my breast is dilated with the mention of Thy trustworthy ones, and my reality is attracted by the mention of Thy servants. The ecstasy of their love has taken such hold of me that Thou caused me to open my tongue in their praises. I pray Thee with my heart, my spirit and my tongue, and supplicate Thee to cause Thy heavenly table and merciful blessing to descend upon them, to lay upon them the Hem of Thy Garment, to fill for them the chalice of Thy Grace, to cast upon them the glance of Thy Mercy, to submerge them in the seas of Thy Bounty, to specialize them with the glory of Thy

Bestowal, to choose them for the promotion of Thy Word, and to perfect for them Thy Benefit. Thus may the Lights of Thy Oneness shine in their hearts, the breeze of Life pass through the garden of their minds by Thy bounty and generosity; the verses of Thy knowledge be imprinted upon the mirrors of their hearts; their eyes may become bright with the witness of the manifestations of Thy bounty; their tongues may utter Thy wonderful mysteries; their souls may be assured by the comprehension of Thy signs, and the bounties of Thy Names and Attributes may envelop them.

“O Lord! O Lord! Aid them in Thy service, confirm them in Thy servitude, make them the signs of Thy Oneness, the banners of Thy Glory, the trees of the garden of Thy Love, the words of the book of Thy Knowledge, the lamps of Thy Guidance, the stars of the horizon of Thy Bounty, the waves of the sea of Thy Oneness, the meteors of the altitude of Thy Grandeur, the lights of the Sun of Thy Manifestation, the myrtles of the meadows of Thy Mercy, the fountains of Thy Mysteries, and the evidences of Thy Guidance. Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Giver, the Confirmer, the Almighty, and the Generous.

“O ye beloved of God and the helpers of ABDUL- BAHA! When the Sun of Reality became concealed, behind the veils of glory and the Orb of the Universe disappeared from the dawning point of evidence and arose in the Invisible World and conferred successive bounties upon the contingent world from the Unseen Realm, the bats began to move and spread out their wings in a race. They imagined that they could interrupt the glorious bounties of that Beautiful Face, extinguish the shining rays of the Sun of Reality, put out the ignited fire and destroy the praised Light. For they supposed that on account of the ascension of His Holiness the Beloved, the Divine Foundation would be demolished, the edifice of God would be destroyed, and the Blessed Tree uprooted. 'Evil was that which they imagined and vain

was that which they supposed, and ye see them today in manifest loss.' For, according to what is heard, in certain regions, the enemies hearing the news of the great ordeal (the departure of BAHA'U'LLAH), feasted and rejoiced, celebrated festivals, burned incense, served sweets and flowers, lit candles, mixed honey and wine and played lutes and harps. That night until morn they spent in feasting and rejoicing in gladness and happiness. But they were ignorant of the fact that the Light of this Sun has no end, the torrent of that plain is free from interruption, the Light of that Blessed Orb is eternal, the Merciful One is established upon the Throne of Sovereignty, and the Throne is permanent. Nay, rather, the human temple (the body), like the clouds, hinders the visions from the Light of the Sun. It is for this reason that the Gospel records the statement that when the promised One comes He will come upon the clouds, and when the respective clouds pass away, then shall the disk of this Sun appear and the penetrating Light there-of spread. Thus, little while the great glad tidings spread throughout, the world and the pillars thereof trembled; the East shouted. with joy and the 'Vest reverberated the Blessed Voice the Most Radiant Sun of the Beauty of Reality appeared from the invisible zodiac and shone upon the Center of the world; the veil of concealment and mystery fell the fire of the love of God burned in the hearts the beloved of God radiated as a candle, and, like unto the witnesses of love, they be. came known in the assembly. From every region the melody of joy was raised and the voice of O our God! Verily, we have heard Thy Voice from all countries was raised the Word of God was promoted the fragrances of God spread, the fame of the Truth enveloped the world the call Of 'Am I not your Lord?' reached the ear of the far and near the Cause of God became greater the edifice of the Law of God loftier all the nations were impressed and the enemies of the Blessed Beauty became fearful and at loss. When they noticed that the ascension of His Holiness the Desired One

(BAHA'U'LLAH) – May my spirit be a sacrifice to His beloved !-became the cause of the promotion of His blessed Cause and the flame of the burning fire became greater and every confident believer took a firmer stand – therefore the dawning of the Light caused the opposing nations a great loss, and, likewise, the blessing of God adorned the Royal Throne of Persia with the coronation of a just Shah. With the power of God that perfect Crowned Head became kind to the oppressed sect. This, also, was a confirmation from His Holiness the Almighty God. Likewise, certain holy souls among the beloved of God arose with faithfulness to sacrifice self in the pathway of the Beauty of ABHA; they left their own rest and peace and turned to the horizon of Oneness; they became callers of the Covenant and held the chalice of the Testament in their hands and gave the world the ecstasy thereof; they spread the fragrance of God- conveyed the Cause of God and guided many souls.

“Praise be to God that the confirmation of the Beauty of ABHA arrived successively and the victory of the Supreme Concourse shed a light as that of the early dawn, the Hosts of the Supreme Concourse descended as unto the waves and the zealous armies of gladness of the Kingdom of ABHA, with perfect power and strength, conquered and upbuilt the domains of the hearts. These hosts were the Divine inspirations and these armies were the waves of the Divine seas. They conferred eternal life upon dead souls and attacked the countries of the heart, giving them life and spirit, for they are the hosts of life and the army of salvation. May God increase them in power, glory, strength and number.

“Therefore, O ye beloved of God, this is a time when ye should arise, and, in thanksgiving for this bounty, do that which is your duty: Abide by the Law of God, pray to the Divine Threshold in the Mashrek-el-Azkar, supplicate and implore, praise and glorify Him; fast in the month of fasting and keep watch during its nights. All this should be

done in perfect wisdom and not in a manner which may cause the uproar and tumult of the ignorant "I have one request to make of all the beloved of God, and that is the desire of my life—that they all praise me in the absolute servitude of the Holy Threshold without interpretation. They must not praise Abdul-Baha except according to the expressions and words which have emanated from the pen of this Servant. They must never exceed that, but must content themselves therewith. Verily, my praise, my quality, my attribute, my name, my title, my entity, my reality, my essence and my manifestation is Abdul-Baha and I have no other station than this. Certainly, the beloved of God will accept this request from this Servant who makes it in the utmost lowliness and humility, and will make happy this sad heart and will confer a new life upon this weak body. Thus, may Abdul-Baha, through hearing these great glad tidings and attaining this Supreme bounty, rejoice and attain Divine happiness and gladness.

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS...

But, as the Nakazeen (the violators of the Covenant of BAHÁ'U'LLAH) have no God save passion and no object save personal interest; if they see a hundred thousand traces of the power of God, they will increase their enmity and jealousy; they will not under any consideration observe the honor of the Cause and that of the beloved of God, and will never be awakened or warned. "God has sealed their hearts, their hearing and their sight."

In short—Praise be to God! —the souls who are turning to ABDUL-BAHA all believe in the great Manifestation of God, and, through His Sublime commands, are turning to the established Center and the evident Station. And, after the commands of the Blessed Beauty — Exalted is His Station! —obedience to the commands of His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA is considered by them a duty, a cause of spreading the fragrances of God and the means of promulgating the Laws of the Ancient Beauty (BAHÁ'U'LLAH).

Consider how great is the utterance of His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA that inhabitants of America, notwithstanding the long distance and the difference in the tastes and customs, have been so attracted and enkindled as to cause the amazement of intellects. In these days one of the believers and assured maid-servants from that land, known as the maid-servant of God, Lua (Mrs. Get-singer), is present in this blessed spot. She is enkindled and attracted beyond description and sheds tears night and day, seeking permission from His Holiness ABDUL-BAHA to go to Persia and quaff the cup of martyrdom. With all this they (Mohammed Ali and his people) mourn and cry, saying, the Cause of God has vanished. What Cause of God is among them and what trace thereof is in their hands?

O Lord! Thou knowest and bearest witness that this servant seeks only Thy Will and hopeth only for the promotion of Thy Word, and, with perfect endeavor and steadfastness, is arising to serve the Center of the Covenant, looking and turning to Him. He begs the ocean of Thy generosity to guide them, also, to the straight path and to help them to obey that which they have been commanded. Thus may that which rejoices the hearts of the enemies of Thy religion and law be removed from among them, and the hearts of those who hold fast to the hem of Thy Covenant and Testament be made happy and joyous. Verily, Thou art the Able and the Powerful!

El-Baha be upon the people of faithfulness who have turned to the horizon of the Covenant of the Lord of the creatures.

(Signed) BADIULLAH.

Here ends "The Epistle to the Bahai World." The very fact that the Bahai organization has suppressed this pamphlet, while at the same time they advertise a book attacking Abdul Baha, is convincing proof that their actions are not in accordance with their words.

To be continued...

INSPIRING QUOTES



“My God, my Lord and my Master! I have detached myself from my kindred and have sought through Thee to become independent of all that dwell on earth and ever ready to receive that which is praiseworthy in Thy sight. Bestow on me such good as will make me independent of aught else but Thee, and grant me an ampler share of Thy boundless favors. Verily Thou art the Lord of grace abounding.”

— The Bab

“By the righteousness of God! These are the days in which God hath proved the hearts of the entire company of His Messengers and Prophets, and beyond them those that stand guard over His sacred and inviolable Sanctuary, the inmates of the celestial Pavilion and dwellers of the Tabernacle of Glory. How severe, therefore, the test to which they who join partners with God must needs be subjected!”

— Baha'u'llah

"O army of God! Today, in this world, every people is wandering astray in its own desert, moving here and there according to the dictates of its fancies and whims, pursuing its own particular caprice. Amongst all the teeming masses of the earth, only this community of the Most Great Name is free and clear of human schemes and hath no selfish purpose to promote. Alone amongst them all, this people hath arisen with aims purified of self, following the Teachings of God, most eagerly toiling and striving toward a single goal: to turn this nether dust into high heaven, to make of this world a mirror for the Kingdom, to change this world into a different world, and cause all humankind to adopt the ways of righteousness and a new manner of life.”

— Abdu'l Baha

BLAST FROM THE PAST

THE RIVER OF EXPLANATION

O Son of Being!

My lamp thou art and My light is in thee; be therefore illumined by it. Seek no one but Me, for I created thee rich and upon thee have I showered abundant grace.

O Son of Existence!

With the hands of power I made thee, and by the fingers of strength I created thee; in thee I placed the essence of My light. See that thou depend on it, for My creation is perfect and My command cometh to its effect.

O Son of Spirit!

I created thee rich, why makest thou thyself poor? Out of the essence of knowledge I manifested thee. Why seekest thou knowledge from another than Me? From the clay of love I kneaded thee. Why art thou occupied with another? Turn thy sight into thyself that thou mayest find Me, all powerful, mighty and supreme.

O Son of Man!

Thou art My possession and My possession can never be destroyed. Why art thou in fear of destruction? Thou art My light and My light shall never be extinguished. Thou art My glory and My glory can never be veiled. Thou art My garment and My garment shall never be outworn. Therefore abide in thy love for Me, that thou mayest find Me on the Supreme Horizon.

O My Friend!

Thou art like unto a bright and well-tempered sword, so concealed in a dark sheath, that its value is unknown to the jewelers. Come forth, therefore, from the sheath of self and desire, that thine essential worth may be manifest before the eyes of the people.

O My Brother!

Thou art a sun in the heavens of My sanctuary. Be not entangled in the eclipse of the world; tear asunder the veils that thou mayest emerge from behind the cloud, and adorn all beings with the robe of life.

BAHA-U-LLAH.

(Reference: New History Magazine, Volume I, Number 3, May 1932)

FREE BAHAI ACTIVITIES

“Love the creatures for the sake of God and not for themselves. You will never become angry or impatient if you love them for the sake of God. Humanity is not perfect. There are imperfections in every human being, and you will always become unhappy if you look toward the people themselves. But if you look toward God, you will love them and be kind to them, for the world of God is the world of perfection and complete mercy. Therefore, do not look at the shortcomings of anybody; see with the sight of forgiveness. The imperfect eye beholds imperfections. The eye that covers faults looks toward the Creator of souls. He created them, trains and provides for them, endows them with capacity and life, sight and hearing; therefore, they are the signs of His grandeur. You must love and be kind to everybody, care for the poor, protect the weak, heal the sick, teach and educate the ignorant.”

—Abdu'l-Baha

Dear friends,

Allah'u'abha

As the world continues to face this pandemic and makes may through this crisis, we pray to Baha'u'llah for the good health and safety of all mankind. During these times of severe crisis, it is extremely reassuring to learn that friends around the globe are coming up with new and innovative to maintain their spiritual connection while at the same time inviting and including members of the wider community also to join them. All such activities provide a glimmer of hope for mankind in these tough times where mere

survival for some is a challenge.

Apart from providing food for the soul, friends have been actively involved in helping and aiding people get timely treatment for the Covid-19 infection. Other than that, friends have been helping vulnerable people find employment, especially those who were rendered unemployed due to the prevailing economic conditions. Recently, some friends from a province in Angola in collaboration with the local government, organized a vaccination drive against Covid-19. This was much appreciated by the wider society and also by the government officials who have highlighted the role of friends in alleviating concerns about the vaccine.

Friends from Canada and Australia, in part due to the nationwide / citywide lockdowns imposed by their governments, have been actively conducting devotionals, prayer meets and enlightening discussions virtually while inviting their non-Baha'i associates. Also, a group of friends in Thailand had arranged a memorial meeting to commemorate the death anniversary of a very devout Baha'i who winged to the Abha kingdom a few years back. The said deceased was extremely involved in social activities helping people in any form possible. His memorial meet was attended by many from the wider community and friends made it a point to highlight the importance of belief and faith in the conduct and behaviour of a person. He was the symbolic representation of the fundamentals and principles of the Baha'i faith.

While friends are busy spreading the unaltered and true teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha, we are also seeing the shameful actions of the so called "Baha'i Administration". The "administration" among the "Haifan" Baha'is has turned the faith into a private company. The "UHJ" is the boss who dictates the terms, which the rest of the lower ranks have to follow. Leaving aside the true teachings of our faith, they are blindly involved in a metaphorical rat race to gain position in the administration hierarchy. Based on the numbers of followers quoted by them, there should have been a tremendous and impactful effort from their supposed thriving yet spiritually dead community.

In the recent past we have seen that supposed outspoken and so-called pro-active Baha'is were often appointed (not elected) to important positions within the administration. However a closer look at their credentials often brought out the fact that they were either belonging to prominent/influential Persian Baha'i families or were large donors to the corrupt administrations. This was the mainstay of their policy to maintain Persian leadership at the top and to let the non-Persian hardworking Baha'is stay at the bottom doing their sundry hard work till they reach their spot in the Gulistan.

However, recently a sudden change was witnessed from the UHJ, where quite evidently the administration is filtering out the Persian Baha'is from the top. We have received letters and mails from some

frustrated and flustered Haifan Baha'is who have lamented the kicking out of the Persian Baha'is from top administrative post. According to them, some of those thrown out may have contributed immensely to the faith and are now being disposed-off once their years of service are coming to an end. This is being termed by the faithful as "disposable paper cup policy" of the UHJ. Once they use you to the most that you can serve, you will find yourself unceremoniously in the Garbage, quietly thrown away. Such appointment and termination which are not based on the teachings of the Faith ought to lead them towards destruction.

We pray to the Blessed Beauty to keep us steadfast and honest with the true teachings of the faith and away from such selfish motives of greed, power and position which comes at the cost of belief and faith. We also pray and work towards making people realise the true essence of the faith.

Lastly we pray to Baha'u'llah for the safety and good health of all humanity and for the truth to prevail.





SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Email 1:

Hey! I had one question if someone could please help me with it. Is praying compulsory in the Baha'i religion? If yes, why? I believe God doesn't require our prayers, instead when we require God we should connect with him. Why do it compulsorily and make it a burden for the people? Please let me know if my thoughts are correct.

Answer:

Hi Tim,

Alla'hu'Abha!

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

Prayer is an important part of a Baha'i. We consider it to be more than just making requests to God. It's more like a conversation with God in contrast to meditation, which is like a conversation with one's inner spirit.

Also, one's perspective should be that he shouldn't just talk to God when he requires him, but it should be done on a regular basis.

“Recite the verses of God every morning and evening. Whoever does not recite does not fulfill the covenant and bond of God. Whoever turns back from them to-day is of those who turn back from God in the eternity of past eternities.” - Kitab-i-Aqdas

Also, one should note that the purpose of these prayers is to cultivate humility and devotion so one should continue with the regular prayers. Hope that answers your question.

Do write back in case of any further queries.

Thanks, and regards,

Team Free Baha'is

Email 2:

To whomsoever it may concern, answer one question regarding Shoghi Effendi, in whose guardianship you don't believe in. What do you have to say about all the service done by Shoghi after Abdu'l Baha? Don't you see his works where he has authored 10s of books that spread the teachings of Baha'u'llah? It is so ignorant of you guys to not believe in the man who helped spread the Baha'i faith across the world today. The numbers are ever growing, and people are accepting the name of Baha'u'llah more than ever. At least respect him for that!??

Answer:

Hi Dear,

Thanks for your email.

Please note that it is now a well-known and widely accepted fact that Shoghi Effendi acquired the position of Guardianship solely based on the forged Will and Testaments of Abdu'l Baha and by no other official introductions or prior appointments. The Master never once in His lifetime even made a passing comment about Shoghi Effendi succeeding Him and hence we the Free Baha'is do not believe in his guardianship.

Regarding your point of Shoghi writing books and translating the works of Baha'u'llah and the Master, one cannot accept someone as a Guardian or respect someone just for translating the writings of others, if one is sure of the fact that they have never followed / obeyed the writings and teachings of that person. How does it even make sense to serve the Cause but not follow the teachings, and on the other hand go just against it? You should learn about the changes made in the religion by Shoghi after the ascension of the Master.

As per Baha'i teachings, there is to be no clergy or supreme leader / unquestioned commander in the Baha'i faith. But Shoghi Effendi managed or rather ruled the faith as his personal fiefdom. Much akin to a tyrant

Pope or a crazy Mollah, he excommunicated the entire family of Abdu'l Baha on frivolous pretexts, like travelling abroad without informing him or for marrying without his permission or even for attending Baha'i gatherings without informing him. While none of these innocent family members of Abdu'l Baha broke Covenant, what they did break was the ginormous ego of this tyrant "Guardian" which resulted in their excommunication. The true reason for these excommunications was Shoghi Effendis insecurity about his fragile position and his paranoia which afforded no challengers or questioners to his unchecked authority.

Seeing the above and applying it to an everyday person we might hesitate to even call such a person as a Baha'i, let alone as the "Guardian of the cause of God". We must keep in mind that Abdu'l Baha has said "if a person is to live his life treading on the principles of the Baha'i faith without overtly declaring himself as Baha'i, he has in fact lived as Baha'i. And if a person calls himself a Baha'i all his life and has not obeyed or followed the principles of the Baha'i faith then he is not a Baha'i."

Assuming for a moment, for the sake of a healthy argument, that the will and testament of Abdu'l Baha is not forged, can anyone today justify the disobedience of Shoghi Effendi with regards to the direct commandments of Abdu'l Baha made in the said will. Did Shoghi Effendi live the life of a model Baha'i or did he choose to deliberately disobey the instructions and commandments of Abdu'l Baha and Baha'u'llah?

A little "Independent Investigation of Truth" would very easily reveal the truth.

If you still have any questions, do feel free to write us back.

Regards,

Team Free Baha'is

Email 3:

Hi, when it comes to spending Huququ'llah monies, should I first look at giving it to a Baha'i or can it be given to anyone, without keeping the barrier of faith, community, or relationship? Plz answer.

Answer:

Hi Alina,

Allah'u'Abha!

That is an excellent question and we appreciate you for asking that. I'm sure a lot of Baha'is out there might be thinking about it. Firstly, no where in the teachings of Baha'u'llah or the Master have we ever come across that a Baha'i has any superiority over a non-Baha'i in terms of anything. The teachings of Baha'u'llah have infact emphasized on the uniformity of all men and women.

The Master has said, "...consider all mankind as your relations and servants of the most-high God. Strive day and night that animosity and contention may pass away from the hearts of men, that all religions shall become reconciled and the nations love each other so that no racial, religious or political prejudice may remain and the world of humanity behold God as the beginning and end of all existence..." (Abdu'l Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 290)

Keeping the above incident and the Master's quote in mind, we the Free Baha'is have always invited all Baha'is to use their Huququ'llah monies for the betterment of the society, instead of giving it in the hands which are not liable to collect them. By doing this, we all can in fact work on the footsteps of Baha'u'llah and the Master and play a leading role in spreading the Baha'i religion around

the world.

Hope that answers your question.

If you still have doubts or would need more clarity, pls reach out to us.

Thanks,

Team Free Baha'is



Email 4:

Greetings. I am familiarizing myself with the Bahai religion and history because of my interest in religious history. I have been studying various websites to understand all the different views of Bahai'ism. I see that what are called Reform Bahai seem to share the same views as Free Bahais. Of course I do see differences from websites associated with what is called Bayani,(Babis), Orthodox Bahai (accept successors after Ghoshi Effendi) and Unitarian Bahai (who reject Abdul Baha). What exactly are the differences between the two movements that reject Ghoshi Effendi, and how do you view the ideas of the website called Five Elders?

Answer:

Dear Dave,

Thanks for writing to us, we can help you understand about the Free Baha'is as Free Baha'is are true followers of the teachings of Baha'u'llah.

Free Baha'is believe in the Bab as forerunner to Baha'ullah, Abdu'l Baha as his true successor and center of Covenant. Abdu'l Baha's Will and Testament was forged by Shoghi Effendi to acquire the chair of Guardianship, (would recommend you to refer the Books section on our website where you can find Dr. Anisworth Mitchel's report on Will and Testaments and many books to support forging Will and Testament of the Master. As Shoghi Effendi forged the Will of Abdu'l Baha, the Free Baha'is do not believe in his Guardianship and also in the current form of Universal House of Justice, even any form of Administration which tries to organize the faith and force its leadership on the Baha'is.

Our beloved Master has been very clear in this

regard - "There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not appointed anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy." (Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

We as Free Baha'is are engaged in the teachings of Baha'u'llah, that is Oneness of Mankind, Removal of Prejudice, Respecting Teachings of all Religions.

We don't have any idea about the Five Elders and their teachings.

In case you have any more questions about the Free Baha'is, pls feel free to write back to us.

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 ?

THE MESSAGES AND ACTIONS OF UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE ARE AGAINST THE BASIC TEACHINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLAH

A fundamental teaching of Baha'u'llah is the oneness of the world of humanity. Addressing mankind, He says: "Ye are all leaves of one tree and the fruits of one branch." By this it is meant that the world of humanity is like a tree, the nations or peoples are the different limbs or branches of that tree and the individual human creatures are as the Fruits and blossoms thereof. In this way His Holiness Baha'u'llah expressed the oneness of humankind whereas in all religious teachings Of the past, the human world has been represented as divided into two Parts, one known as the people of the Book of God or the pure tree and the other the people of infidelity and error or the evil tree. The former was considered as belonging to the faithful and the others to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel; one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. His Holiness Baha'u'llah removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity and this principle is specialized in His teachings.... (Abdu'l Baha, Baha'i World Faith – Abdu'l Baha Section, p. 246)

A religion whose founders state that the practice of shunning has been abolished and nullified and those we should see no one as an enemy or draw lines between ourselves and others; and yet we see

that the Universal House of Justice asking the Baha'is to practice these very things, shunning, seeing enemies, drawing lines.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE UHJ:

The need to protect the Faith from the attacks of its enemies may not be generally appreciated by the friends, particularly in places where attacks have been infrequent. However, it is certain that such opposition will increase, become concerted, and eventually universal. The writings clearly foreshadow not only an intensification of the machinations of internal enemies, but a rise in the hostility and opposition of its external enemies, whether religious or secular, as the Cause pursues its onward march towards ultimate victory. Therefore, in the light of the warnings of the Guardian, the Auxiliary Boards for Protection should keep "constantly" a "watchful eye" on those "who are known to be enemies, or to have been put out of the Faith", discreetly investigate their activities, alert intelligently the friends to the opposition inevitably to come, explain how each crisis in God's Faith has always proved to be a blessing in disguise, and prepare them for the "dire contest which is destined to range the Army of Light against the forces of darkness". (The Universal House of Justice, The Institution of the Counsellors, p. 16)

One must ask oneself why Baha'u'llah would remove the past religious practice of dividing humanity the "pure tree"- "the faithful", from "the evil tree"- "the irreligious" only to have the Universal House of Justice itself reinstate the very same past religious practice of dividing humanity: "the army of light" from "the forces of darkness"?

The Other example of betrayal of the Basic Baha'i teachings is the Court case slammed by the Haifan Baha'is against the minority Baha'i communities like Orthodox Baha'is lead by Mr. Joel Marangella, Baha'is under the provision of Covenant lead by Mr. Neal Chase and The Reform Baha'i Faith lead by Mr. Fredrick Glaysher.

Why do Baha'is so easily and conveniently dismiss the universal teachings of the Baha'i faith? Why are the universal teachings within the Baha'i faith in effect eliminated?

It is the duty of every lover of Baha'u'llah to free themselves from the clutches of UHJ and follow the FREE BAHAI FAITH.

KNOW YOUR HERITAGE



Robe worn by 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."

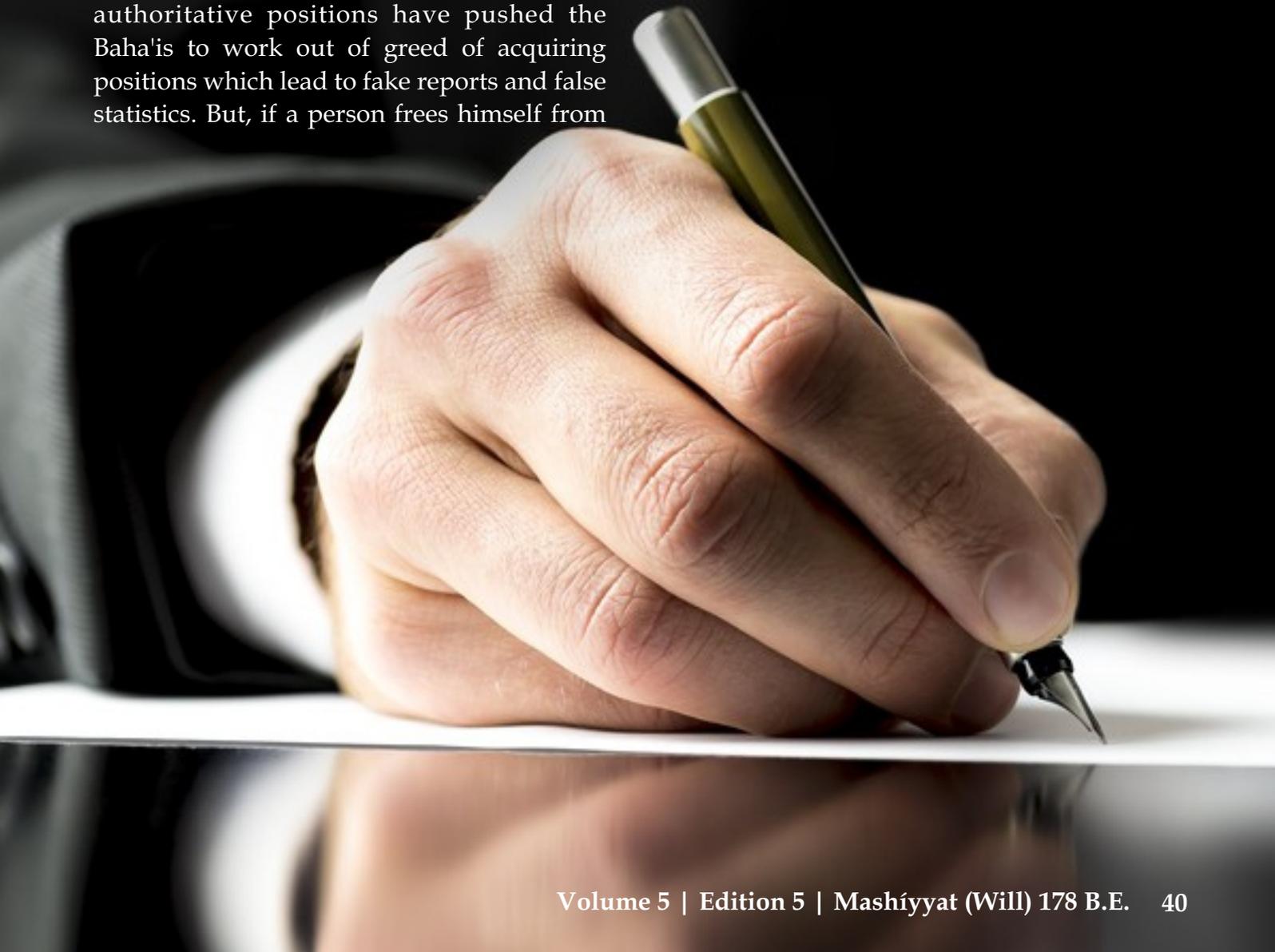
(Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

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



Abdu'l Baha on board the S.S. Celtic as he sailed from New York City to Liverpool, England, 5 December 1912

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**PUBLISHED BY THE FREE BAHÁ'Í FAITH
IN
SINGAPORE | THAILAND | USA**



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**THE CARAVAN || REVIVED EDITION
VOLUME 5 - EDITION 5**

FOR PUBLIC CIRCULATION