



**HOW DO WE INSTRUCT
OUR CHILDREN USING
THE KITAB I AQDAS ?**

ANSWER INSIDE

**NINE OR NINETEEN MEMBERS
IN THE UHJ? – A DEBATE
IN THE BAHAI FAITH**

ARTICLE INSIDE!

**THE
C**

A

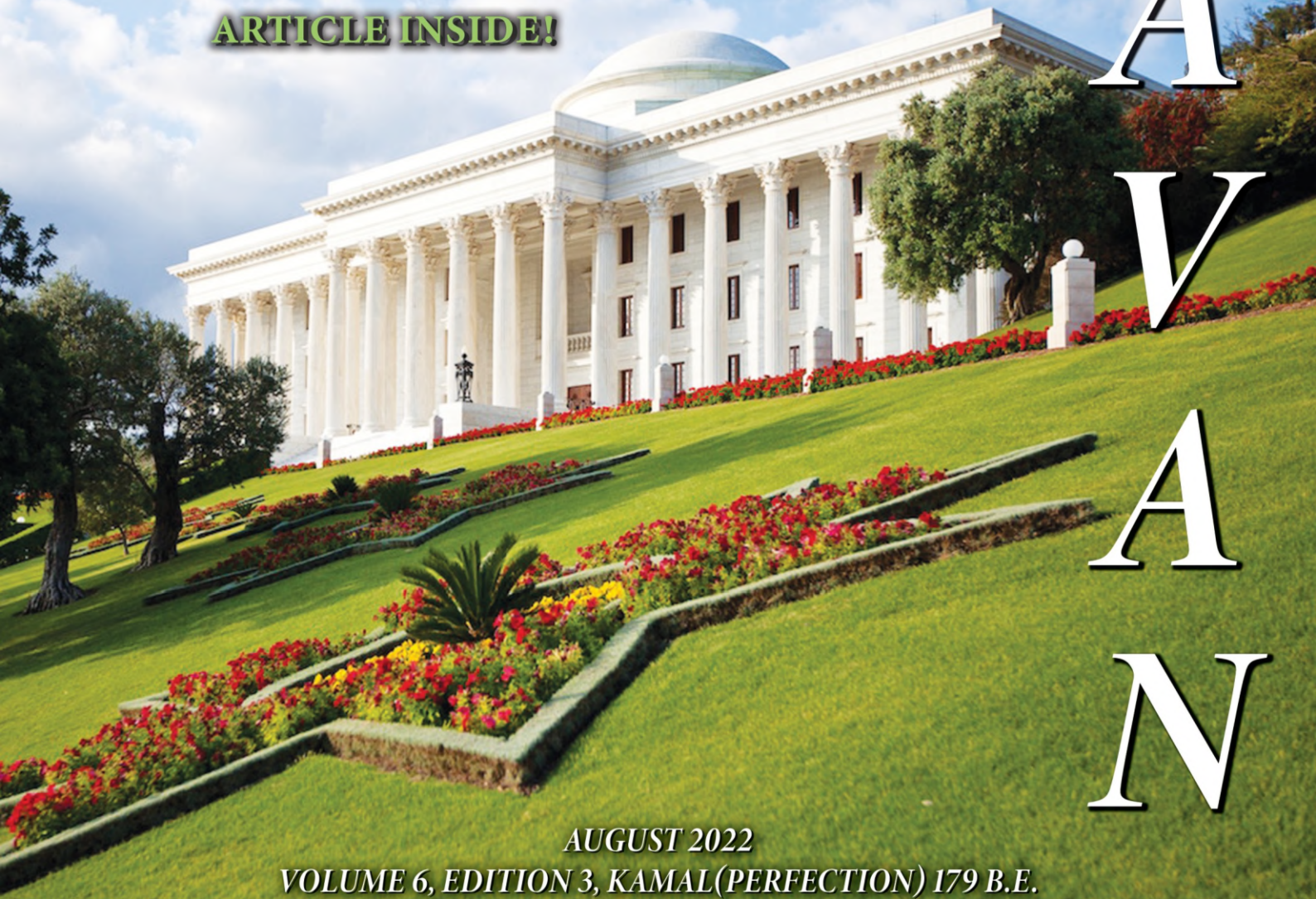
R

A

V

A

N



**AUGUST 2022
VOLUME 6, EDITION 3, KAMAL(PERFECTION) 179 B.E.**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Prayer of the Bab
2. Foreword
3. Divine Laws of Baha'u'llah
4. Clergy in the Baha'i Cause
5. Poem – Black Hole!
6. Nine or Nineteen Members in the Universal House of Justice? - A Debate in the Baha'i Faith – Guest Article
7. The Baha'i Religion and its enemy the Baha'i Organization - Part 14
8. Picture: A file photo of the Mansion of Bahji where Baha'u'llah spent the final years of His holy life
9. Inspiring Quotes
10. Unholy House of Justice issues an irresponsible statement
11. Free Baha'i Activities
12. Blast from the Past
13. Some Questions Answered
14. Know your Heritage
15. Investigation of Reality
16. Did you know?
17. Introducing The Caravan App!
18. Websplore
19. Declarations
20. Throwback

PRAYER



O Lord! Enable all the peoples...

O Lord! Enable all the peoples of the earth to gain admittance into the Paradise of Thy Faith, so that no created being may remain beyond the bounds of Thy good-pleasure.

From time immemorial Thou hast been potent to do what pleaseth thee and transcendent above whatsoever thou desirest.

-Prayer of the Bab


FOREWORD

Friends of the Baha'i Faith remember the martyrdom of the Bab, who preceded Baha'u'llah, the religion's founder. Among all of the important days in the Baha'i calendar, it is one of the most significant. The history of the Bab began not more than 200 years ago. In 1844, The Bab, whose name in Arabic means "Gate," founded his new Faith. His rousing message, that his teachings portended the coming of a great, universal revelation, quickly swept Persian culture. Despite the widespread genocide committed against its adherents, the number of Babis grew. The government chose to put The Bab to death in 1850 out of fear of the Babi movement's expanding influence and a desperate attempt to put an end to it. "If His Holiness, The Bab had not manifested love for mankind, surely he would not have offered his breast for a thousand bullets." – Abdu'l Baha

We consider it an honour that The Caravan Magazine has contributed to the Baha'i community's increased awareness of Baha'u'llah's authentic teachings. We are absolutely thrilled that this publication has served as a source of motivation for our

friends who remain steadfast in their faith in the face of an enemy who has chosen to denigrate the words of God and turn the teachings of God meaningless for their own monetary benefit. "Baha'u'llah continually urges man to free himself from the superstitions and traditions of the past and become an investigator of reality, for it will then be seen that God has revealed his light many times to illumine mankind in the path of evolution, in various countries and through many different prophets, masters and sages." – Abdu'l Baha (Divine Philosophy, p. 8)

Moving on, we now provide an intriguing guest post from a friend titled Nine or Nineteen Members on the Universal House of Justice? A Debate in the Baha'i Faith - should be a fascinating read for our readers. This issue of the magazine is devoted to the revered figure of the Bab and discusses his struggles in bringing the gospel of God to people all over the world. With great joy, we will continue our series of essays, starting with an excerpt from the book "The Baha'i Religion and Its Enemy, The Baha'i Organization" and then the Laws from Kitab-



i-Aqdas. “The principles of the Teachings of Baha'u'llah should be carefully studied, one by one, until they are realized and understood by mind and heart — so will you become strong followers of the light, truly spiritual, heavenly soldiers of God, acquiring and spreading the true civilization....” – Abdu'l Baha (Paris Talks, p. 22)

We are really glad to serve as the voice of the faithful today, and we ask that you keep sending us your comments, questions, and recommendations at info@freeBahais.org. 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.

Murder and adultery are unlawful for you, also back-biting (al-ghayba) and calumny (al-iftira). Avoid what you have been forbidden in the Books and the Tablets.

Inheritances We have divided according to the number al-za' (seven). Of them we have apportioned to your seed from the book al-ta' (nine), according to the number al-maqt (540); to husbands or wives from the book al-ha' (eight), according to the number of al-ta' and al-fa' (480); to fathers from the book al-za' (seven), according to the number of al-ta' and al-kaf (420); and to mothers from the book al-waw (Six), according to the number of al-rafi' (360); and to brothers from the book al-ha' (five), the number of al-shin (300); and to sisters from the book (9) al-dal (four), the number of al-ra' and al-mim (240); and to teachers from the book al-jim (three), the number of al-qaf and al-fa' (180). Thus commanded He who gave Good News of Me and who made mention of Me at nights and at daybreaks (al-ashar). Indeed when We heard the clamour of the offspring in the loins (al-aslab), We doubled their wealth and took away from others. He is the Powerful One over what He wills and He acts with His authority as He desires.

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

CLERGY IN THE BAHA'I CAUSE

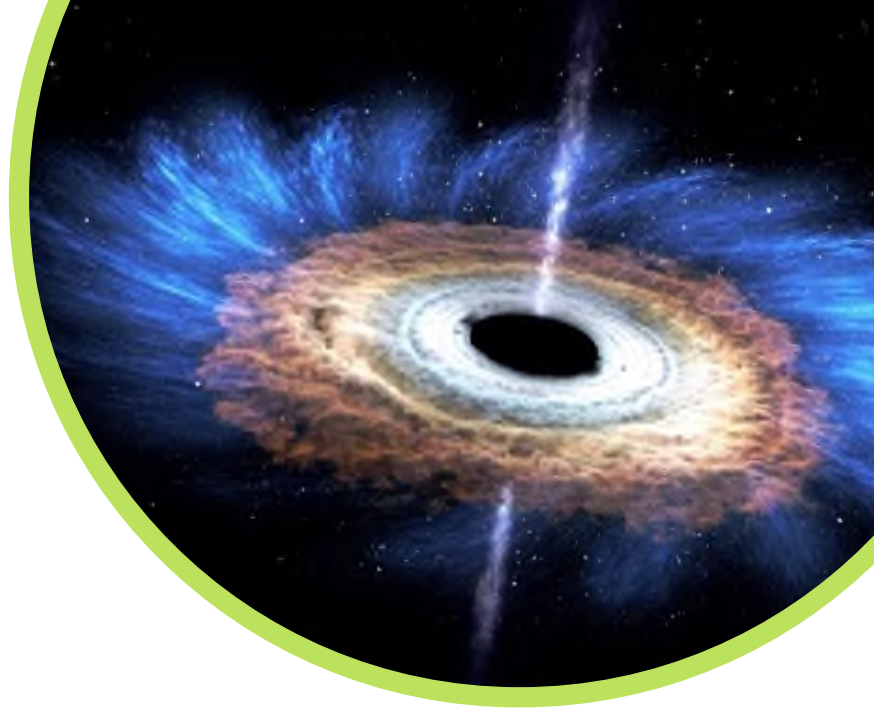
In answer to a question as to whether or not there would be any clergy in the Baha'i Cause?

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

- Abdu'l Baha

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

BLACK HOLE !



There's a black hole
In my consciousness
I feel less whole
Diminishing
As it swallows up the light
Diminished by my lack of Faith,
Dark, dark, dark, I become
As the sun consumed by night.

In a distant park
A lone dog is heard to bark,
Lost, bereft of its master.
I too am lost
Cry out for guidance, Faith
As the gathering night encloses.
People with Faith, hold out your torch,
And bring me back to light.
You will not scorch me with your truths.

– Tom Billsborough

NINE OR NINETEEN MEMBERS IN THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE? – A DEBATE IN THE BAHAI FAITH – GUEST ARTICLE

When someone joins a religion, it will always be riddled with uncertainty for him or her rather than filled with faith. Even if one was born into the faith or grew up among the most devoted of friends and relatives, this is true. A religion journey is usually distinguished by great joy, astonishment, and exquisite camaraderie, as well as a great deal of doubt, difficulty, and grief.

Okay, so it's acknowledged that doubts are a natural component of religious beliefs, and when people have concerns, they strive to work through them, investigate them, and emerge stronger and more confident in their views. Perhaps there are good answers to your doubts, and as a result, your faith will be stronger and more solid. On the other hand, if you don't get any positive replies, you'll be forced to choose between sticking with a religion you know isn't logical and abandoning it in favour of ideas that are.

Now, imagine there are contradictions and incompatibilities in what one perceives to be true, only to discover later that it was all untrue and based on selfish gain? There is a laundry list of such items forced down Bahais' throats that are not supported by the Bahai Scriptures and are not founded on Bahaullah and Abdu'l Baha's teachings. Today, I'd want to look at one of the items on that list and compare it to the teachings of the Bahai faith's

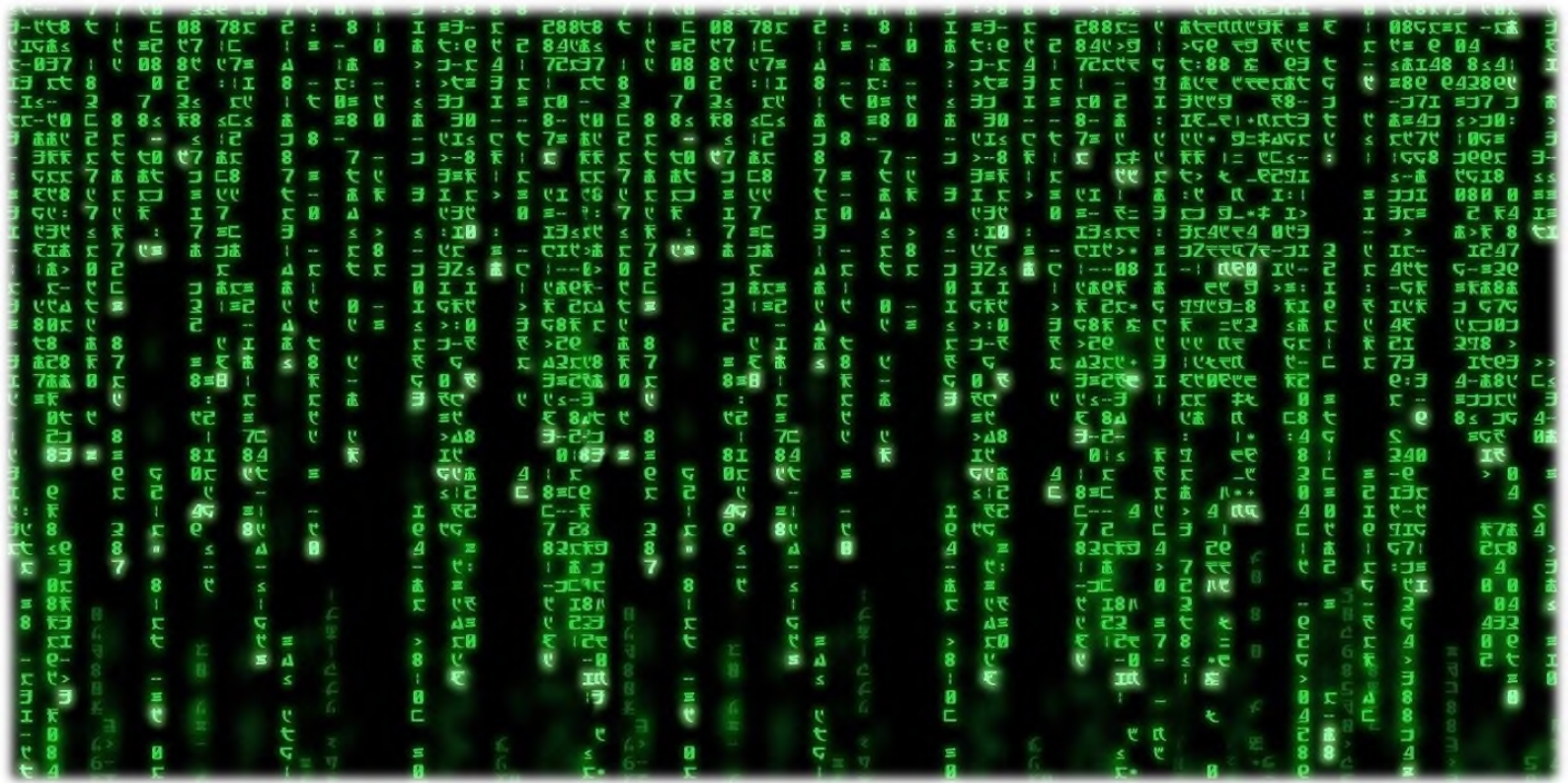
founders.

Among the many incompatibilities and inconsistencies in the Bahai Faith's beliefs, practices, and governance, such as the continuation of Guardianship, the authenticity of Abdu'l Baha's Will and Testament, the validity of the current Universal House of Justice, and the non-election of women to the UHJ, to which the current Administration has provided no satisfactory answer, a new controversy is arising that will strike the foundations of the UHJ, and it is the number of members. For these integers that are diagonally opposite each other, we discover various references. Some sources claim 19, while others say between 9 and 19, and some state things that aren't specifically referenced in the Holy Scriptures.

The Bahai faith is unable to make decisions on a number of contentious problems, one of which being where nine should be used and where nineteen should be applied. There is a clear reference from Abdu'l Baha stating that the UHJ will have 19 members.

1- We can see that Abdu'l Baha clearly said that the UHJ will have 19 members.

The King and Rulers of the world will find their true authority under the ruling of House of Justice. The Laws of God will be vested in



nineteen men who will compose the House of Justice and render decisions.... The House of Justice will decide between kings and kings. All judgment will be from the standpoint of God's law

(Ten days in the light of Acca by Julite M. Grundy, Printed in Chicago December 1907. Published by Bahai Publishing Society Chicago, ILLIONIS, U.S.A. WORDS OF Abdu'l Baha)

2-The Present universal House of justice is advocating for membership between 9 and 19.

The number of members of the Universal House of Justice is not explicitly fixed at nine,[a] and in a Tablet 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated that the Universal House of Justice may function with up to nineteen members at its discretion.(b)

According to Ali Nakhjavani, Abdu'l Baha claimed that the number "might be 19," and that he justifies this by stating, "We had a meeting of UHJ with members of ITC, and the members were 18 and manageable."

A member of the Universal House of Justice

incorrectly attributes this to Abdu'l Baha. 'Nineteen' is plainly referenced in the previous passage.

(a) 1998 letter by / on behalf of Universal House of Justice

(b) 'Ali Nakhjavani, Shoghi Effendi: The Range and Power of his Pen, Casa Editrice Baha'i, 2006, p 251

3- The number of members is not specifically specified in Holy Text, according to Shoghi Effendi's secretary. This is also incorrect.

"The membership of the Universal House of Justice is confined to men. Fixing the number of the members, the procedures for election and the term of membership will be known later, as these are not explicitly revealed in the Holy Text." (27 May 1940)

(Women on the Universal House of Justice: by / on behalf of Universal House of Justice, 1988-05-31, date of original: 1998)

4- Another study argues that the UHJ should be made up of 19 people. The Local Spiritual Assembly was most likely formerly known

as the Local House of Justice, and the House of Justice had 19 members in 1905.

“There are three meetings held in Bombay, on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings at six o'clock. The Tuesday meeting is reserved for house of justice composed on 19 members”

(A year with the Bahais of India and Burma by Sydney Sprague second edition pa 15 The Priory Press High Street, Hampstead, London, N.W.)

Whatever the cause, the change from nineteen to nine was not a divine decree; rather, it was the kind of deception for which the Bahai faith is notorious. The Bahai Administration is now attempting to justify its nine members. This, along with several other flaws in the Bahai Faith, will cause Bahais to doubt the faith's authenticity. Without a doubt, the Bahai Faith is a man-made religion that evolves through time. Downsizing became necessary because the Bahai Administration believed that supervising and controlling 9 members would be simpler.

What is the importance of the UHJ in the Baha'i faith?

As per the teachings Bahauallah and Abdu'l Baha, the UHJ plays a very important role especially **because it enacts laws “that are not expressly recorded in the Book,”** according to the Baha'i writings, legislating on issues not covered in the original writings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha:

Those matters of major importance which constitute the foundation of the Law of God are explicitly recorded in the Text, but subsidiary laws are left to the House of Justice. The wisdom of this is that the times never remain the same, for change is a necessary quality and an essential attribute of this world, and of time and place. – Abdu'l Baha, cited in Wellsprings of Guidance, pp. 84-86.

Abdu'l Baha also promised that the Universal

House of Justice is **“the source of all good and freed from all error.”** Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha, p. 19.

To summarize, the UHJ is a group of people who are responsible for looking after the whole Bahai community and for putting the teachings into practice as well as developing laws from Bahauallah's teachings. They are, in a sense, acting as a Guardian who has assumed control of the faith today. Imagine a team that has a big role to play in the Bahai world, but its basis is built on lies?! Also, if a 19-member team can become infallible when they work together, can we be confident that reducing the number to 9 will have the same outcome? Is it really possible to consider them infallible? Is it possible to trust their acts and statements at face value? Perhaps this is why, from the inception of this complete system of existing form of UHJ, the team has strayed so far from the faith. All of their choices have been discovered to have faults and weaknesses.

The big question!

Now comes the big question that every Bahai should consider: Do we still believe in a system despite its numerous flaws? If one is unable to discover solutions to his or her problems and questions, it may be time to change one's path. It doesn't have to be atheism or a different theological perspective; it only has to be one that is based on truth and is rational and clear. You should not be ashamed of seeking to discover your own path in a way that makes sense to you; you are not required to follow the same faith as your family just because you have done so previously.

-Dr. Mark



THE BAHAI RELIGION AND ITS ENEMY, THE BAHAI ORGANIZATION – PART 14

(An extract from Lady Ruth White's book)

(...continued)

CHAPTER VII

A CHECK AND TWO MANUSCRIPTS INTERCEPTED – EVERY INCIDENT SHOWS THAT SHOGHI EFFENDI, MOHAMMED AU AND THE BAHAI ORGANIZATION ARE THE ARCH ENEMIES OF THE BAHAI RELIGION.

Abdu'l Baha exhorts us to judge people by what they do and not by what they say, or profess. Therefore, let us apply this gauge to the foregoing, as well as to the following facts, and measure them by this standard.

In the autumn of 1919 I sent to Abdu'l Baha the manuscript of a book that I had written on the Bahai Cause. It was the same in substance as that which I have since published under the

title of "Abdu'l Baha and the Promised Age". I packed it with the greatest care and sent it by the registered mail. At the same time, I also sent an American Express Company Check for \$500.00 to Abdu'l Baha and asked him to apply it to some of the many charities he was dispensing. * As my husband and I intended to go to Palestine in few months we couldn't bear the thought that we, in that land which had been so impoverished by the war, would add to the burden unless we contributed something, either directly, or indirectly.

*The quality of giving was one of the strongest characteristics of Abdu'l Baha. He deprived himself very often of the necessities of life, that he might give to others. His cloak, and even his bed he has often given away. When he spoke at the Bowery Mission in the New York and pressed a shining quarter into each palm, as he

bade the unfortunates there farewell, it was only one among hundred occurrences.

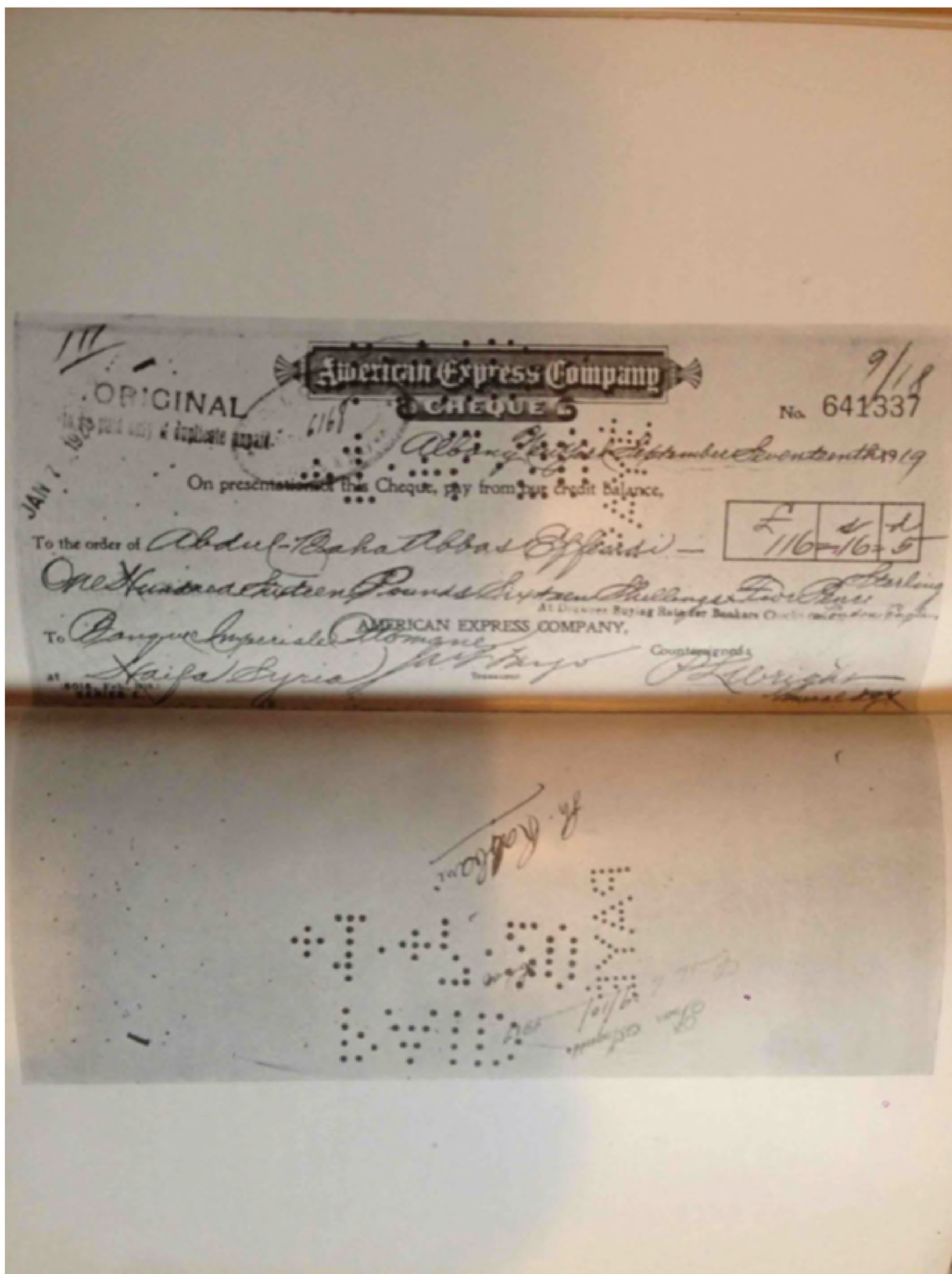
About four months after the manuscript and the check had been sent we arrived in Haifa as the guests of Abdu'l Baha, where we remained for twenty-nine days. During this time no mention was made, either of the manuscript or the check. On the day before our departure, although I disliked mentioning the subject, I asked Abdu'l Baha if he had received the manuscript or the check. Without a moment's hesitancy and very emphatically he said that he had not received either one. He repeated this a number of times, and seemed indignant that they had not been turned over to him. I discussed this with various members of the family of Abdu'l Baha, and one of the brothers-in-law said he would go to town and enquire about the matter. He returned later and said there was no record of either the check or the manuscript. I was greatly disappointed of course, but more on account of my lost manuscript than the money, for my object in sending the manuscript ahead of my visit was that Abdu'l Baha would have time to read it and pass on it while I was there. Fortunately, I had another copy with me, but as a number of pages needed re-typing I therefore asked Abdu'l Baha if after I had finished it he would permit me to send it to him before I left the Holy Land. To this he graciously assented, and he gave me directions just how to send it. He said that after our visit to Jerusalem, and upon our arrival at Port Said I must give the manuscript to Mirza Yazdi, his trusted son-in-law, who was a merchant there.

When we arrived at Port Said, eleven days later, we immediately met two pilgrims who were going to Haifa the next day. It occurred to me at once that if I sent my manuscript back by these pilgrims it would arrive several days, and perhaps a week sooner, than if I gave it to Mirza Yazdi. Without remembering that there was a great wisdom in everything that Abdu'l Baha said, I therefore gave it to them, with

careful instructions to see that it was delivered into the hands of Abdu'l Baha. Little did I dream at that time that some of Abdu'l Baha's own household were on the lookout for every pilgrim in order to intercept things that they did not wish Abdu'l Baha to have. Also their policy was to be with the pilgrims as much as possible, as it was through the returning pilgrims that the propaganda for organization was carried to every country. As my manuscript dealt with the universal aspect of the Bahai Religion, that, these lovers of organization have tried so hard to repress, therefore it was again intercepted.

When I returned to America I asked the American Express Company to look up the receipt of the check that I had sent, through their office, and on the back was the signature of the person who had received the cash. This person was Sh. Rabbani. As I did not know who Sh. Rabbani was I enquired of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, and he said that Sh. Rabbani was Shoghi Effendi. I asked the American Express Company to Photostat this check for me, which they did. Herewith is a reproduction of the check, with the signature Sh. Rabbani on the back. Here then is proof positive that Shoghi Effendi cashed the check and also proof that the son-in-law who purported to enquire for the lost check did not do so at all. Otherwise, he could have ascertained in a few minutes, from the office of the American Express Company at Haifa that the check had been cashed by Shoghi Rabbani, as I had given the son-in-law the whole information, the date of sending, the amount, the name of sender, etc. All of which shows that there was collusion between the son-in-law and Shoghi Effendi.

Circumstantial evidence also points to the fact that Shoghi Effendi used the money to go to Oxford University. For immediately after cashing the check he departed for Orford, this despite the fact that Abdu'l Baha did not wish him to go. I also wrote to Abdu'l Baha from



America that I had traced the check and found that Shoghi Rabbani had cashed it, and I sent this letter through the office of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, to be entrusted to some pilgrims who were embarking the next day. This letter was also intercepted.

Some may naturally ask: How could Shoghi Rabbani have cashed the check unless he had had authority from Abdu'l Baha to do so. This he may have had. Yet the fact remains that the proceeds were never turned over to Abdu'l Baha, nor were the two manuscripts that I sent about this same time. If everything had been all right, then surely Shoghi Effendi, or one of the brother-in-laws, would have been glad to have written me an explanation. This they never did. My readers may, therefore, draw their own conclusions.

I would never have made these facts known so long as they remained merely a personal injury and loss. But Shoghi Effendi has since become the alleged successor of Abdu'l Baha, and as this is another link in the chain showing how he and his abettors acted before the death of Abdu'l Baha, I felt it should be made public as a protection of the Baha Religion.

After the death of Abdu'l Baha, I knew that, as Shoghi Effendi and his abettors had appropriated and suppressed my manuscript before his death, they would see to it that the book was suppressed in case I presented it to the Bahai Publishing committee, as all activities were under his dictatorship. Therefore, after adding to and rewriting my manuscript in part, I published it myself, in November, 1927, under the title of "Abdu'l Baha and The Promised Age."

Further proof that Shoghi Effendi, and his abettors are the enemies of the Bahai Religion is the fact that they have suppressed two valuable diaries that deal with the later years of the life of Abdu'l Baha. These two diaries were written by the two secretaries of Abdu'l Baha. One was written by Mirza Ahmad

Sohrab, who was Abdu'l Baha's secretary from 1911 until 1919, and recounts some of the, most important history of Abdu'l Baha's life. The other diary was written by Mirza Mahmood, who was also Abdu'l Baha's secretary for many years. Before Shoghi Effendi had the power, through the alleged will, to suppress books, he intercepted and kept them. These books, as well as my book, deal with the universal aspect of the Bahai Religion, these secretaries were chosen and trusted by Abdu'l Baha and accompanied him on his sojourn throughout Europe and America in preference to Shoghi Effendi and other members of Abdu'l Baha's family. If Abdu'l Baha were training Shoghi Effendi to be his successor, then he certainly did not show this in deeds nor in words. For Shoghi Effendi was not with Abdu'l Baha during his maturity, except for a few months occasionally. Even after Abdu'l Baha returned to the Holy Land from his two-year trip, Mirza Sohrab and Mirza Mahmood continued to be the secretaries of Abdu'l Baha. And now the records of these secretaries whom Abdu'l Baha trusted, are repressed by Shoghi Effendi, the very man whom Abdu'l Baha showed not only by inference but by deeds that he did not trust. Even, incident that has happened in connection with this affair convinced me that the real enemy of the Bahai Religion is the Bahai organization. It was not mere chance that the Bahai organization was founded by I. G. Kheiralla and Mirza Assad'ullah., the two arch enemies of Abdu'l Baha, and it has continued ever since as the enemy of the Bahai Religion. Not of course as the open or avowed enemy, because such an enemy is never effective; but the enemy, nevertheless, which, while purporting to represent Baha'o'llah and Abdu'l Baha in words, is their bitterest enemy in policies.

I do not mean to imply that the leaders of the Bahai organization are conscious enemies of the Bahai Religion, except in a few instances, any more than the bigots of the dark ages were the conscious enemies of Christianity. For like

those same bigots, these modern-day bigots shout the loudest that they are the only true representatives of the religion which they, in reality are making a parody of. It was the policies of the bigots of the dark ages that were the enemies of Christianity, exactly as the policies of the Bahai organization are the enemies of the Bahai Religion today. In both instances the underlying idea of their respective organizations was the same—that the individual conscience must be subordinated to the leaders of their organization, and in both cases they gave to the world the inverted idea of the religion they claimed to represent. Only the Bahais have carried the inversions of the Bahai Religion much further than the bigots of the dark ages carried their inversions.

To show an instance of this unconscious allegiance to the policies of Mohammed Ali, I will have to be personal. Mrs. May Maxwell, who has been a Bahai for over thirty years, said to Abdu'l Baha: "Why is it that when I first accepted the Bahai Cause, I was so radiantly happy and now I am neither happy nor well?" To this Abdu'l Baha replied: "Because the Nakazeens have entered your life." This astonished Mrs. Maxwell very much, because she had had no contact with what she considered the Nakazeens, i.e. (the followers of Mohammed Ali). She thereupon began to look everywhere for this Nakazeen - everywhere except in the right place, which was within her own heart. For Abdu'l Baha meant the Nakazeen of love of leadership, and love of organization and the narrow sectarian policies of Mohammed Ali and his abettors which had come into her life. What is true of her is, more or less, true of all the other leaders who have been active workers for the Bahai organization. In other words, their political ambition has been the vulnerable spot through which Mohammed Ali's scheme to control the Bahai organization could function. During Abdu'l Baha's lifetime Mohammed Ali worked secretly and laid the foundation for

his policies through propaganda for a Bahai organization. Today these same policies have come into the open, under the administration of Shoghi Effendi, back of whom is Mohammed Ali, still secretly working. This is the only real enemy the Bahai Religion has ever had.

It pains me to be thus personal, for Mrs. Maxwell has given her time and money for the promulgation of the Bahai organization, which she sincerely believes is the Bahai Religion. And there are also a few others like her. But where such tremendous issues are at stake as the establishment of a great universal religion, I must be frank.

Whether the will is valid or invalid does not alter the fact that the Bahai organization is the worst enemy of the Bahai Religion and its only real one. For the Bahai organization was born of the Nakazeen element and has never been anything but Nakazeen. When I say it is Nakazeen I do not mean in the obvious sense that the word is used by the Bahai to denote a follower of Mohammed Ali. I mean that the leaders of the Bahai organization have been the followers of the policies of Mohammed Ali, and therefore whether they reject the personality of Shoghi Effendi as they have that of Mohammed Ali, will not in the least, matter, as they have always followed the policies of Mohammed Ali, and are still doing through the personality of Shoghi Effendi. Now, as these policies are the very thing that attracted them first to what they interpret as the Bahai Religion, and as they have no capacity for any other conception of the Bahai Religion except as a narrow sectarian organization, they will continue to function in this same way until the public becomes sufficiently informed of what the Bahai organization really represents, and in time it will die of sheer inanition. This is what Abdu'l Baha meant when he said that in the next century there would be no more Nakazeens. He meant that the Bahai Religion would be freed from the policies and political

ambitions of the leaders of the Bahai organization. These types of leaders always, in whatever age religion is revealed, are the Nakazeens, who try to drag it down to meet their own limitations. Abdu'l Baha did not mean the open enemies, for he says that these are without effect, and we know that as long as religion exists there will always be enemies and opposers to it. But the enemies of limitations and political ambitions are the only real enemies.

To be continued...





A file photo of the Mansion of Bahji where Baha'u'llah spent the final years of His holy life

INSPIRING QUOTES



“Is there any Remover of difficulties save God? Say: Praised be God! He is God! All are His servants and all abide by His bidding!”

— The Bab

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

— Baha'u'llah

" The most vital duty, in this day, is to purify your characters, to correct your manners, and improve your conduct. The beloved of the Merciful must show forth such character and conduct among His creatures, that the fragrance of their holiness may be shed upon the whole world, and may quicken the dead, inasmuch as the purpose of the Manifestation of God and the dawning of the limitless lights of the Invisible is to educate the souls of men, and refine the character of every living man — so that blessed individuals, who have freed themselves from the murk of the animal world, shall rise up with those qualities which are the adornings of the reality of man."

— Abdu'l Baha

UNHOLY HOUSE OF JUSTICE ISSUES AN IRRESPONSIBLE STATEMENT

We have repeatedly seen the selfishness and carelessness with which the administration reacts when it comes to pushing their mean propaganda. Be it distancing from devoted friends and shunning them for revolting against the oppression of the UHJ or going to the extent of excommunicating assembly members for exposing the hypocrisy of the UHJ. The recent incident involving the fire at the construction site of the shrine of Abdu'l Baha has left us all stunned. The sheer lack of care and due attention has turned the almost built pilgrim site to ashes. We are unable to remove the harrowing images of the flames and smoke from our minds. The flame of anger and sorrow caused by this fire burns feverishly in our hearts. The Administration ergo the UHJ (unholy House of Justice) as always - shamelessly tried to cover-up the incident and push it under the rug by simply sharing the “progress” with their assemblies. Reproduced below is the statement given by UHJ sent to the NSAs after almost 3-4 months of incident:

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

4 July 2022

Transmitted by email

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Universal House of Justice wishes to inform you of the progress that has been made in recent weeks with regard to the construction of the Shrine of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Following the fire in early April, the construction site for the Shrine was closed. This was to allow for a thorough investigation of the cause of the fire and its immediate impact, which has now concluded and confirmed that the fire was the result of an accident. Accordingly, the insurance claim for all losses incurred is proceeding well.

While construction work on the areas unaffected by the fire has continued, the site has only recently been reopened for the cleaning of the affected areas. Although the structures are fundamentally sound, to ensure that the project meets the highest standard of excellence and the design intent is fully realized, extensive testing has commenced to ascertain which parts either require repair or need to be replaced. Determination of the nature of this remedial work for some parts of the floor, walls, and columns involves close consultation with the project's structural engineers and review by external experts.

While no exact date for the conclusion of the project had been set, it is recognized that the accident will result in a substantial delay in the completion of the final resting place of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. However, it will not require a higher level of contributions than had already been announced.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

This document has been downloaded from the [Bahá'í Reference Library](http://Bahá'íReferenceLibrary). You are free to use its content subject to the terms of use found at www.bahai.org/legal

It is appalling to see the desperation with which this administration is attempting to do damage control. This statement is nothing but a PR rehabilitation stunt meant to reassure the feeble believers that their lives savings invested into the Shrine is safe. This is the true face and the sad truth of the administrative Baha'is that they least care about spirituality and pretend to be unanswerable to anyone for their actions. What good can be expected from a self-sanctified organization that has been formed on the basis of a forgery? I urge the truthful Baha'is to be take note of such antics by the administrative Baha'is and raise their protest against it.

FREE BAHAI ACTIVITIES

Dear friends,
Allah' u' abha!

Friends from all over the world have been busy commemorating the Bab's martyrdom by holding seminars and meetings to examine the Bab's life history. Friends also shared their opinions on how one can be involved in influencing the lives of individuals in the larger community, while taking inspiration from the Bab's life and the difficulties he encountered in preaching the message of God. This gives us the strength to withstand the agony and challenges that we face while disseminating the truth. The flames of the fire at the building site of Abdu'l Baha's shrine rages on in our hearts. The grief of this occurrence, as well as the fury directed at the Administration's irresponsible attitude, grows by the day. How badly is the Administration attempting to defend this instance of blatant dereliction of duty? This is the true face and truth of the administrative Baha'is that they are unconcerned with spirituality and claim to be unaccountable to anybody for their conduct. While the administrative Baha'is are busy seeking attention, our friends from Canada, Thailand, and Singapore have shared inspiring stories

of how they are proclaiming the message of God and supporting people in need using ways most innovative. They have come up with innovative methods to engage their friends and co-workers in discussions centred on spirituality and religion.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our friends from Singapore for bringing back to life the reading sessions of the Tablets of Abdu'l Baha after the COVID-19 era, with four new friends who have lately accepted the message of Baha'u'llah. We encourage new friends who are interested in the Baha'i religion to study the life of our Master, who served as a role model for Baha'i service. According to the Master, service to mankind is of the utmost significance, and He spent the majority of His life teaching and traveling to promote and transmit the word of Baha'u'llah.

Another piece of encouraging news is that a few friends from Germany, fed up with the comical antics of the administration in Germany, have expressed a strong interest in the Free Baha'i teachings. They have renounced their relationship with the Administration and have accepted the empowering ideas of the Free Baha'i faith after

resolving a few of their uncertainties.

Another interesting news from our friends in Canada is that they are preparing to hold another webinar where the faithful may interact with other Free Baha'is (from different parts of Canada) and also discuss the words of Baha'u'llah. Their previous seminar was a resounding success, so we wish them the best of luck with this one too. These friends are also working on finishing a book, which is dedicated to the Lady Ruth White and is based on the study of the forged Will of the Master. This book will be preliminarily released this year and would be officially available online in due time for everyone on the Free Baha'is' official website.



Finally, we pray for the protection of all humanity, and that the loyal ones, by the grace of the Blessed Beauty, prosper in their goal of spreading the unadulterated version of the Master's teachings.

Warm greetings,

Team Free Baha'i



BLAST FROM THE PAST

Paris, France: Mlle. Romande, who has been in Alsace these past months, has arrived in Paris. It is with her that I am arranging the matter of the Junior Caravan and its announcement in "L'Enfant", monthly review. You did not know that I was already cooperating with this Magazine and knew its founder, Maître Henri Rollet, a great soul, who, for fifty years, devoted his life for the cause of the so-called "criminal childhood". It is in one of his institutions that I have gone for nearly two years, every Sunday, to play with those from 13 to 21 who were sentenced to various periods or taken away from irresponsible or difficult parents. At present, "L'Enfant" is just adding a section to its pages. This new section will be especially for children, while the rest of the journal will be for educators, teachers, parents and social welfare institutions interested in the care of childhood. The announcement of the Junior Caravan will be made in the January issue and we are expecting a permit from the Ministère de l'Education Nationale to introduce the magazine in the public schools of France. Such permit would be a great help to us and for the Junior Caravan. We intend to set aside a page every month for the publication of a letter to or from America written by a child or a class.

(Reference: Out of the Mail Box, The Children's Caravan Magazine,
January 1935)



SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Email 1:

What is your opinion towards Baha'is spending so much money on adorning their places of worship? The intention should have been to build a modest worship space and donate the vast majority of this money to charity. Don't assume that Baha'is are even considering this.

Answer:

Hi Rey,

Hope you're doing well.

Please do let us know if you're a Baha'i yourself.

To begin, we can see where you're coming from. The current situation involving the Holy Shrine of Abdu'l Baha has caused many Baha'is (and even non-Baha'is) to question

whether spending such large sums of money on building or Houses of Worship (Mashariq al-Adhkar) is appropriate. Our response would be both yes and no! Let me explain with an extract from the Kitab-i-Aqdas.

“O multitude of Creation, furnish houses (of worship) in the most complete way possible in the name of the Possessor of Religions in the lands. Decorate them with what is fitting, not with pictures and statues. Then make mention in them of your Lord, the Merciful, with joy and sweetness (bi l-rawh wa l-rayhan). Is it not by mentioning him that breasts are enlightened and eyes are consoled?”

Why is that? Because, as stated in the preceding excerpt, "furnish dwellings in the most comprehensive manner conceivable." Decorate them with appropriate items, not with photos and sculptures." As a result, your houses of worship should be complete in

every way. But when we say no, we do so for the same reason. There is no requirement to make the residences seem extravagant, costly, or appealing. It has been completed in the sense that spending time in these residences provides a sense of tranquilly. The dwellings in which Baha'u'llah or the Master resided, the clothes they wore, and the food they ate were all plain and unappealing. They never had a rich life, but their lives were complete in every way. They were so satisfied with what they had that they were always seen performing charity despite having less and smiling despite all the agony. Was this because they intended to live a low life, or was it to show their followers how to live life with the minimal necessities and instead focus on assisting the poor and needy?

Hope that answers your question. Do write back in case of any further queries.

Thanks and regards,

Team Free Baha'is



Email 2:

How do we use Kitab-i-Aqdas or other Holy Books to instruct our children? Especially when the terms used are complex and require clarification. When even I am unable to grasp the significance, how do we communicate it to our children? Please respond as soon as possible; it will be greatly appreciated.

Answer:

Hi Sarah,

Allah'u'Abha! Hope you're doing well and staying safe.

Let us look at what Kitab-i-Aqdas says about teaching your children from the Holy Scriptures.

“Teach your offspring that which was sent down from the heaven of greatness and power so that they read the Tablets of the Merciful with the beat tones in the rooms constructed (for that purpose) in the Mashariq (plu.) al-Adhkar. Indeed, the one on whom the attraction of the love of My Name, the Merciful, takes hold reads the verses of God in such a way that the hearts of those who sleep are attracted. Good health to him who drinks the strong Wine of Life (rahiq alhayawan) from the Explanation (Bayan) of his Lord, the Merciful, in this Name by which every lofty elevated mountain is pulled down!”

It is thus preferable to educate children the words of the Holy Books before they become drawn to less essential teachings and depart from the fundamental teachings of Baha'u'llah and the Master. If the difficulty is that you are unable to absorb those lessons, what better way to begin than to get profound knowledge yourself and then endeavour to make it easier for your kids and other Baha'is children? This

will undoubtedly help you gain enormous respect in the eyes of Baha'u'llah.

That should address your question. Please respond if you have any more questions.

Thanks and regards,

Team Free Baha'is



Email 3:

Our local LSA and NSA are continually pressing us to donate to the Abdu'l Baha Shrine. What should our stance be in this situation? People are still giving, but I feel this is a waste of our hard-earned money, and it is all due to the UHJ's indifference to our cause.

Answer:

Hi Ruby,

Allah'u'Abha!

Your worry is very genuine, and we appreciate the fact that individuals are thinking in the correct way. It is incredibly difficult for us as Free Baha'is to do anything while seeing injustice at the hands of the Administration. We were never of the view that the hard-earned money of our Baha'i friends should ever be utilised by the UHJ, as they had no right to collect it, let alone spend it on anything. Every individual should have the right to take a position and fight against the UHJ's disregard towards the Master's Shrine. Their ignorance has been catastrophic for other Baha'is, and if all Baha'is do not band together now, I don't know what will.

An urgent step that all Baha'is may take is to request that the Administration give a report on their collection, expenditures for the construction of the Shrine, and losses incurred as a result of the incident. This will not only put them in the spotlight, but will also hold them accountable for any accidents or errors, lowering the likelihood of blunders. Each Baha'i has the ability to request a report because this Shrine is not someone's personal property and is being created with donations from Baha'is all over the world. If we don't take a position now, I'm confident we'll be

held accountable in front of Baha'u'llah for the Administration's ineptitude.

According to Baha'i teachings, the cause for tyranny and injustice flourishing is, and we cite Abdu'l Baha, - "...where no fear of spiritual retribution exists, the execution of the laws is tyrannical and unjust. There is no greater prevention of oppression than these two sentiments, hope and fear. They have both political and spiritual consequences. ..." (Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 157)

Please let us know if you have any more questions, criticism, or recommendations. We will gladly assist you!

Regards,

Team Free Baha'is



KNOW YOUR HERITAGE



Cut-reed pen and ink spoon used by Baha'u'llah

Although Baha'u'llah often recited His letters to an amanuensis, He also wrote many of them in His own hand. For the first time in religious history the original writings of a Messenger of God have been preserved.



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

DID YOU KNOW ?

Before departing for the Holy Land from Persia, Munirih Khanum encountered Khadijih-Bagum, who would eventually marry Abdu'l Baha. She was called to Akka by Baha'u'llah while she was residing in Isfahan, a town roughly 200 miles north of Shiraz. She requested that the Bab's wife share with me some memories of her interactions with the Bab, of entering His presence, and of her marriage to Him. I don't remember every detail, but I'll tell you what I can, the woman added.

There were three of us. One of the three sisters, who married Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali, the Bab's uncle who perished at Tihran, was a half-sister. One night I had a dream that Fatimih, the most revered woman in Islam and the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad, had come to our home as a suitor to make a marriage proposal. [Back then, it was customary for mothers, sisters, or other close female relatives of a guy who wanted to get married to make the marriage proposal to the girl's parents. The girl would be told once a decision had been made, and they would then get married.] My sisters and I went to her in a state of utter excitement and happiness. She approached me and kissed my forehead after that. In the dream, I realised she had picked me. I felt incredibly joyful and joyous when I woke up in the morning, but I was too embarrassed to tell anyone about my dream. The mother of the Bab

visited our home that day in the afternoon. I went to her with my sister. She approached, kissed my forehead, and hugged me just as I had imagined. Then she went. The mother of the Bab came to beg for your hand in marriage [with her son], my elder sister informed me. This is a wonderful felicity for me, I said. I described my dream and shared how happy I felt as a result of its meaning.

After a few days, they sent gifts as a sign of their engagement, and the Bab travelled to Bushihr with His uncle on business. It was a family affair to get engaged. It was unseemly for a man who was dating a lady to hang out with her before being hitched. In any case, until after marriage, he was not even allowed to view his fiancée's face. Of course a pair of close relatives would have previously crossed paths.] Despite the fact that I was the cousin of the Bab's mother, I always treated her with the utmost respect and courtesy because of my dream.

I don't remember how far the Bab travelled. One night I had a dream that I was sitting in the Bab's presence when He was at Bushihr. It seemed to be the night before our wedding. The Qur'anic phrases were embroidered along the edges of the green cloak that the Bab was wearing, and light was emanating from Him. I was so happy and gladdened to see Him in this way that I actually woke up. After having this dream, I had no doubts in my heart that the Bab was a notable figure. I had a deep-seated love for Him, but I kept it a secret from others. He eventually made it back from Bushihr, and His uncle set up the nuptials.

He would ask for His business documents and account books in the evenings, as was typical among businessmen. But I observed these weren't business documents. I used to question Him about the documents every now and then. 'It is the Book of the Accounts of All the Peoples of the World,' he once stated. If a guest came unexpectedly, he would spread a handkerchief over the papers. His close relatives, such as His uncles and aunts, were well aware of His eminent personality. They worshipped and respected Him until the terrible night of the 5th of Jamadi'ul-Avval 1260 A.H. (22 May 1844) came. It was on this night that Jinab-i-Babu'l-Babu, Mulla Husayn-i-Bushru'i [the first believer of the Babi Dispensation] gained the Bab's presence and recognised the reality of His Cause. That was a very wonderful evening. The Bab hinted that we were expecting a special guest. He looked like he was on fire and ecstatic. I was excited to hear His good words, but He told me to go to bed. Despite the fact that I had been awake the entire night, I remained in bed because I did not want to defy Him. I could hear His voice until the next morning when He spoke with Jinab-i-Babu'l-Bab. He was quoting God's scriptures and providing evidence. Later, I saw that every day, a different visitor would arrive, and the Bab would engage in identical conversations.

If I try to convey the hardships and persecutions of those days, I won't be able to talk about them, and you won't be able to listen to them...

One night around midnight, I awoke to find that the... Chief Constable Abdu'l Hamid had entered the home from the top with his men and taken the Bab with him without explanation. I never returned to His presence.

(Adapted from 'The Revelation of Baha'u'llah, by Adib Taherzadeh, vol. 2)

INTRODUCING

THE CARAVAN

APP!



“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!

WEBSPLORE

↑ [-] **trident765** 1 point 31 minutes ago*

I'm torn on this. On one hand I feel bad for all the grandmothers that donated to this only to see their contributions burned away like this. On the other, it's good that it teaches the dangers of investing too much into a single Grand Plan. Next time the higher levels of the Baha'i administration pressure the lower ones to sell their local property so that they can pool money to build the next Grand Temple, I hope they will refuse, citing the disaster of the Shrine of Abdul Baha as the reason.

Also, it demonstrates that the Baha'i administration is not as competent or infallible as they are often purported to be. If this construction project resulted in a disaster, then maybe the Institute Process will also result in disaster.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [report](#) [reply](#)

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."

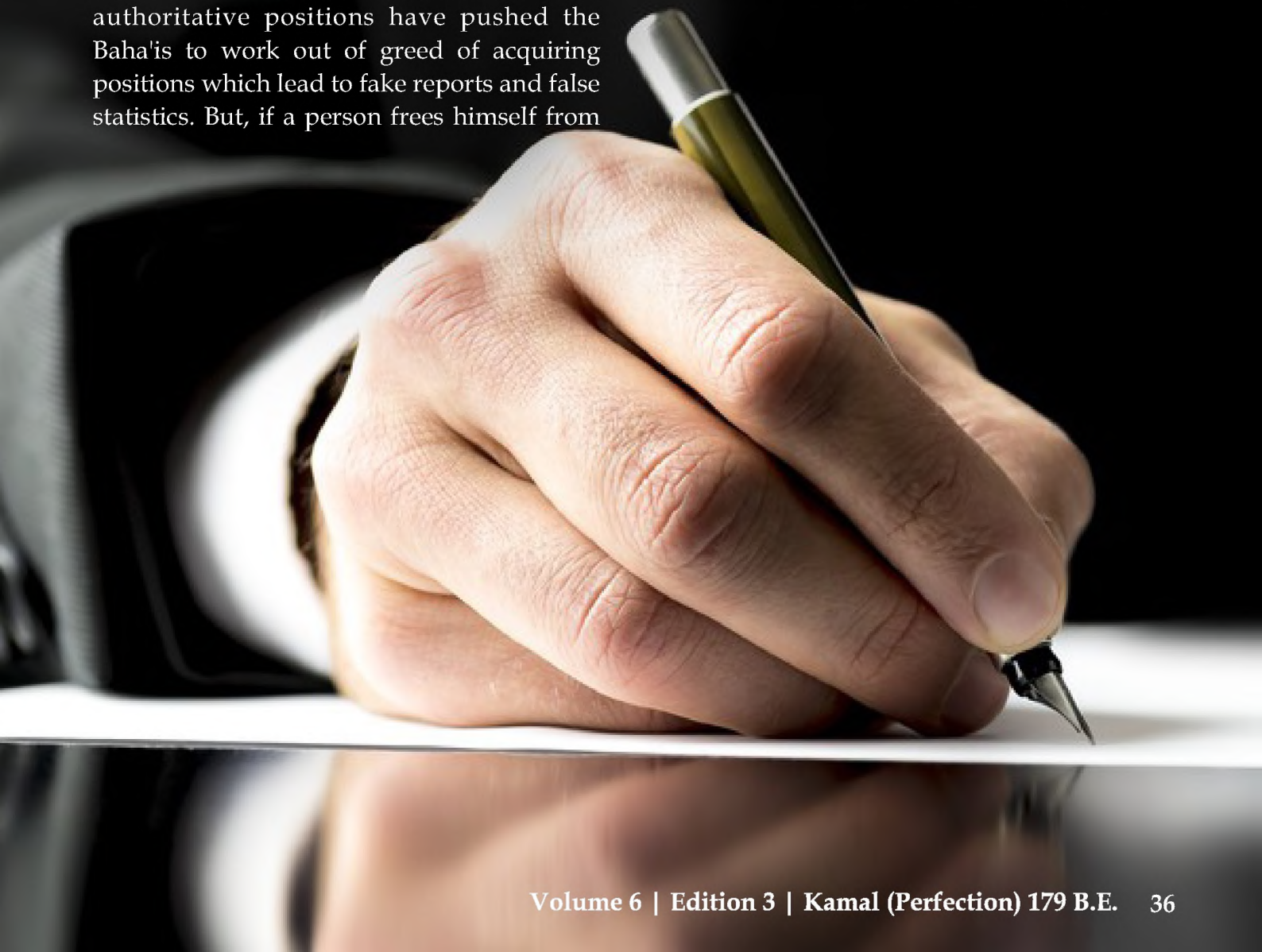
(Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

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 (centre), surrounded by Indian and local Baha'is on the steps of his home in Bahji, near Haifa, Israel

DISCLAIMER

All content in this Magazine is for information purposes only. "Free Baha'i Faith" assumes no liability or responsibility for any inaccurate, delayed or incomplete information, nor for any actions taken in reliance thereon. The information contained about each individual, event or organization has been provided by such individual, event organizers or organization without verification by us.

The opinion expressed in each article is the opinion of its author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of "Free Baha'is". Therefore, "Free Baha'i Faith" carries no responsibility for the opinion expressed thereon.

All trademarks, product names, and company names or logos cited herein are the property of their respective owners and do not infringe any patent, trademark, copyright, license or any other proprietary right of any third party.

We do not represent Haifa / Wilmette based mainstream Baha'i religion / organization in any way.

**PUBLISHED BY THE FREE BAHA'I FAITH
IN
SINGAPORE | THAILAND | USA**



www.freebahais.org | info@freebahais.org

**THE CARAVAN || REVIVED EDITION
VOLUME 6 - EDITION 3**

FOR PUBLIC CIRCULATION