

Bahá'u'lláh and His Most Holy Shrine

O ye dwellers in the highest paradise!

Proclaim unto the children of assurance that within the realms of holiness, nigh unto the celestial paradise, a new garden hath appeared, round which circle the denizens of the realm on high and the immortal dwellers of the exalted paradise. Strive, then, that ye may attain that station, that ye may unravel the mysteries of love from its wind-flowers and learn the secret of divine and consummate wisdom from its eternal fruits. Solaced are the eyes of them that enter and abide therein.¹

* * *

But for Him* (Bahá'u'lláh) no Divine Messenger would have been invested with the robe of prophethood, nor would any of the sacred scriptures have been revealed. To this bear witness all created things.³

*By the Hand of the Cause of God
Dhikru'lláh Khádem*

The Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'lláh Khádem has written a trilogy of illuminating articles for Bahá'í News in two years. In each, he has related aspects of Bahá'í history to the contemporary problems and experience of newer generations. The first article, which appeared in September 1974, was a speculative piece which explored the significance of the Bahá'í conference at St. Louis, the largest in history, through a comparison with the first Bahá'í conference in history, that of Badashit where the independent character of the new Revelation was boldly asserted. In a second article, published in August 1975, Mr. Khádem recalled the process of the development of the Faith at the World Center and told of the circumstances attending the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of Carmel and of its portent. This latest article, an analysis of the religious literature which anticipated the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, is coupled with an explanation of how the Master and the Guardian expressed their love for the Manifestation in their worship at the Holy Shrines and in their life at the World Center. His moving descriptions will surely provide valuable insight for those who grasp for a deeper application of Bahá'u'lláh's mission.

"When the friends speak of the Blessed Beauty," said the beloved of all hearts, Shoghi Effendi, to the pilgrims, "it is not enough for them to merely say that Bahá'u'lláh is the Great Educator of mankind; let them rather say that He is 'the Most Great Revelation,' the Promised One of all Holy Books and Scriptures, the Dawning-place of Revelation, and the Source of Inspiration. There is a difference between revelation and inspiration. He is also the 'Heavenly Father'."⁴

Ever since that moment I heard the beloved Guardian emphasize this, when I approach a seeker I quote the following from Isaiah, the greatest prophet of Israel:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.⁵

In the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Bahá'u'lláh proclaims His Station and the great Significance of His Day, to the kings:

O kings of the earth! He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is come. The Kingdom is God's, the omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting. . . .

This is the Day in which He Who held converse with God (Moses) hath attained the light of the Ancient of Days, and quaffed the pure waters of reunion from this Cup that hath caused the seas to swell. Say: By the one true God! Sinai is circling round the Day Spring of Revelation, while from the heights of the Kingdom the Voice of the Spirit of God (Jesus

* In all the Bahá'í Writings it is emphasized: "Let no one meditating . . . on the nature of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, mistake its character or misconstrue the intent of its Author. The divinity attributed to so great a Being and the complete incarnation of the names and attributes of God in so exalted a Person should, under no circumstances, be misconceived or misinterpreted. The human temple that has been made the vehicle of so overpowering a Revelation must, if we be faithful to the tenets of the Faith, ever remain entirely distinguished from that 'innermost Spirit of Spirits' and 'eternal Essence of Essences'—that invisible yet rational God . . ."²

*‘ . . . The Most Great
Revelation, the Promised
One of all Holy Books, the
Dawning-place of
Revelation, and the Source
of Inspiration.’*

Christ) is heard proclaiming: “Bestir yourselves, ye proud ones of the earth, and hasten ye unto Him.” Carmel hath, in this Day, hastened in longing adoration to attain His court, whilst from the heart of Zion there cometh the cry: “The promise is fulfilled. That which had been announced in the holy Writ of God, the most Exalted, the Almighty, the Best-Beloved, is made manifest.”⁶

Bahá'u'lláh proclaims: “All the Divine Books and Scriptures have predicted and announced unto men the advent of the Most Great Revelation.”⁷

The Divine Messengers of the past had a mission to prepare the people for this Day and give them glad tidings of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.

Of old did we send Moses with our signs: and said to him, “Bring forth thy people from the darkness into the light, and remind them of the days of God.”⁸

Then gave We the Book to Moses—complete for Him who

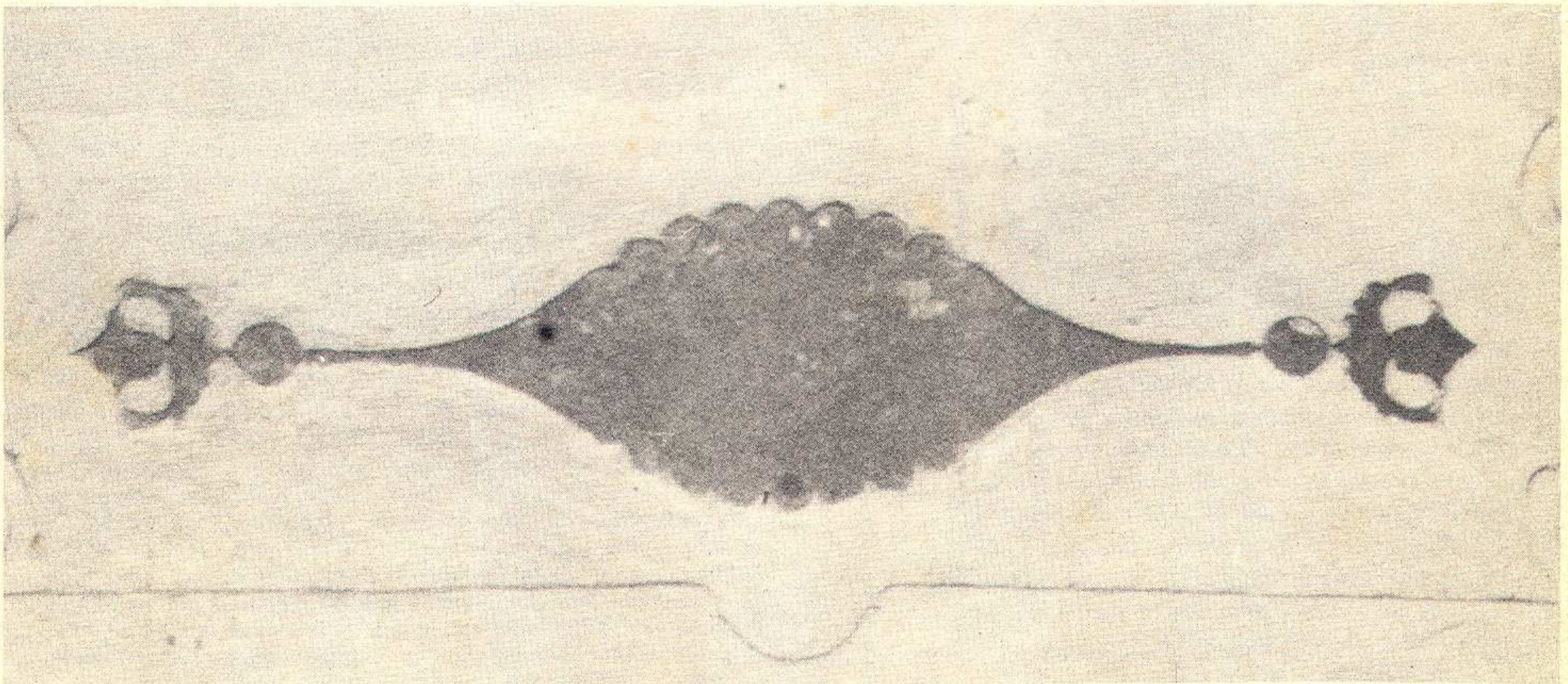
should do right, and a decision for all matters, and a guidance, and a mercy, that they might believe in the Presence of their Lord.⁹

All the Prophets from the seed of Abraham received their mantles in the Holy Land and its vicinity, the Court and Sanctuary of Bahá'u'lláh. Zoroaster also visited the Holy Land and “held converse with some of the Prophets of Israel.”¹⁰

The Greatest Name of Bahá'u'lláh

The Holy Books start with *B* (the first letter of the name of Bahá'u'lláh), as with the first letter of the first word of Genesis, “Brishit” (Hebrew: beginning or in the beginning), which starts with the letter *B*.¹¹

This large wooden plaque inscribed by Bahá'u'lláh's beloved father hangs over the mansion he built in Tákur. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said the poem on the plaque is proof that Bahá'u'lláh's father recognized the Station of His Son as the Manifestation of God.



Hundreds of verses and traditions had been revealed by the Prophets in praise of the name of Bahá'u'lláh.

The same is true of the beginning of the Glorious Qur'án and of each of the 114 Súrihs (chapters) which all begin with *B*: *BiSMI'LLÁH*. * The ninth Súrih also begins with a *B*, but with a different word, *Bára't*.

The Muslims repeat the first chapter beginning with *BiSMI'LLÁH*, five times a day in their obligatory prayers. They are also urged to repeat the word, *BiSMI'LLÁH*, as many times as they can in their daily lives as a blessing, evidently a reminder of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, in His commentary¹³ of *BiSMI'LLÁH*, quotes from Imám Ja'far-i-Şádiq (the sixth Imám) that "El-Bá Bahá'u'lláh" (*B* means Bahá'u'lláh). Siyyid Kázim-i-Rashtí, in one of his works (*Sharḥ-i-Qasídh*), quotes from the same Imám on several occasions, "El-Bá, Bahá'u'lláh, val-Sín, Saná'u'lláh" (*B* means Bahá'u'lláh and *S* Saná'u'lláh). In Arabic, the *i* between *B* and *S* is not written, thus *B* is the first letter and *S* the second letter and Saná'u'lláh again means Bahá'u'lláh. The inscription, "El-Bá, Bahá'u'lláh" (the beginning of this analysis in Arabic),

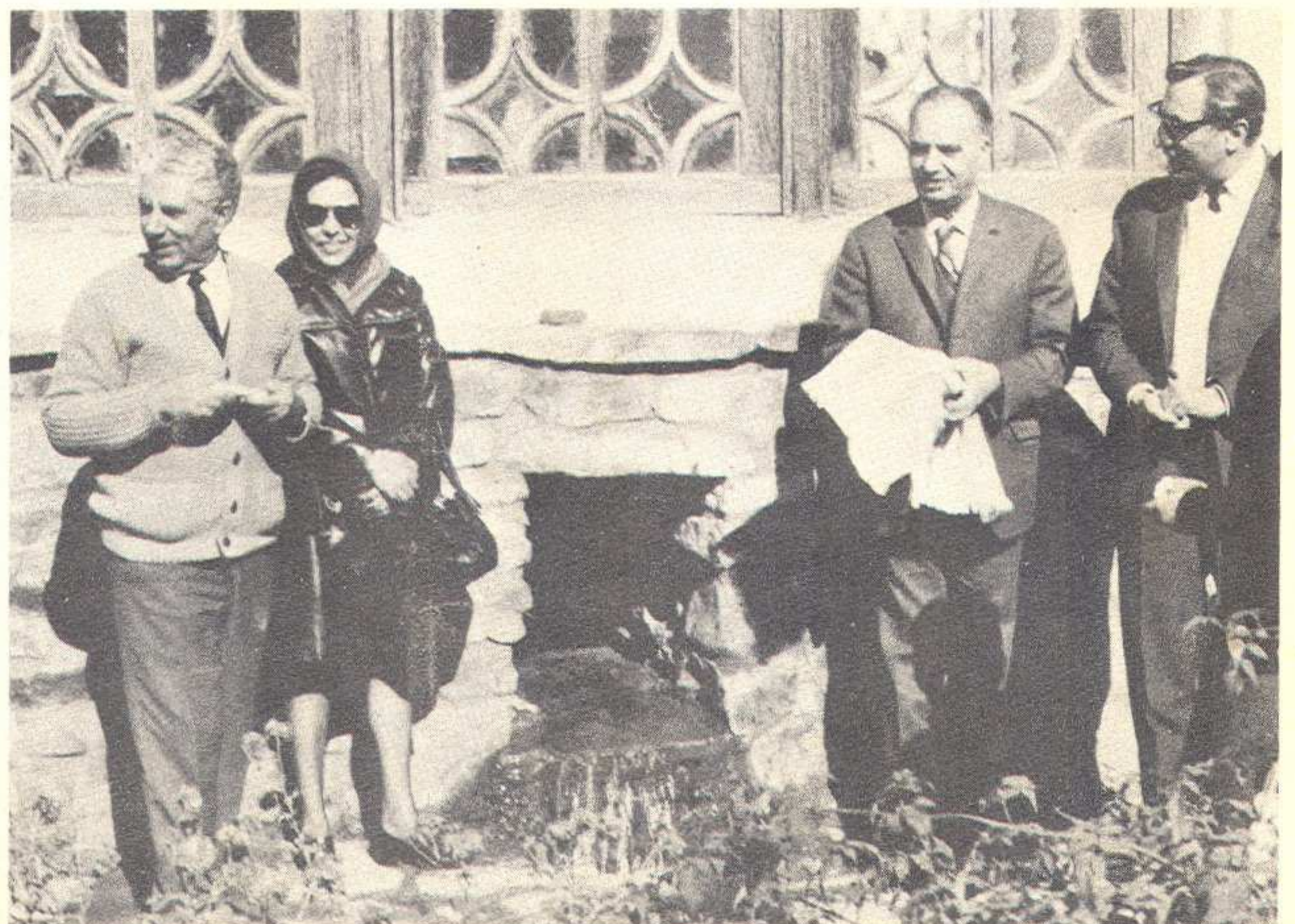
adorns the margins of some of the Latin editions of the Qur'án published in Turkey.

The Imám 'Alí explains that the Qur'án is the essence of all Holy Books and the essence of the Qur'án is contained in its first chapter. Further, the essence of the first chapter is in the first verse and the essence of the first verse is in the first letter, *B*, to which is added in the commentary of the *Khuṭbiy-i-Ṭutunjíyyih*, "El-Bá, Bahá'u'lláh val-Sín, Saná'u'lláh. . . ."¹⁴

Hundreds of verses and traditions had been revealed by the Prophets in praise of the name of Bahá'u'lláh. Some of them, together with some of His titles, appear in the majestic work of the beloved Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, Chapter XI, and others.

Ezekiel said, "the glory of the God of Israel (Bahá'u'lláh) came from the way of the East."¹⁵

**BISMI'LLÁH* is the first word of the first verse of every Surih of the Qur'án except the ninth. The verse is composed of 19 letters, in honor of each letter six chapters were revealed, totaling 114 chapters.¹² The translation of the first verse is: "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful."



A group of pilgrims stands beneath the windows of the hall of the Mansion of Tákur, a home built by the father of Bahá'u'lláh. The water is from a natural spring which flows from beneath the hall into a pool in the gardens.

Isaiah said: 'Arise, shine; for the light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.'

Isaiah said, "Arise, shine; for the light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."¹⁶ Not only does "the glory of the Lord" refer to the name of Bahá'u'lláh, but since Bahá also means shining,* "Arise, shine" may be considered an exhortation to be a Bahá'í!¹⁸

The followers of Krishna also have many references to the name of Bahá'u'lláh. In the prayer, "the Mother of the Vedas," the Hindus stand with great reverence and beseech guidance from the "GLORY OF GOD" (Bahá'u'lláh). Also in Gita, XI:30, it is said, "Thine Blazing BHAH, O Vishnu (the Omnipotent God), doth glow intensely."¹⁹

AMITABHA (Infinite Glory), the name of the promised Buddha, is inscribed in the 42-foot statue sitting in eternal meditation at Kamakura, Japan, accompanied by the words, "Long ear lobes denote aristocratic birth. Mark on forehead is symbol of

spiritual insight."

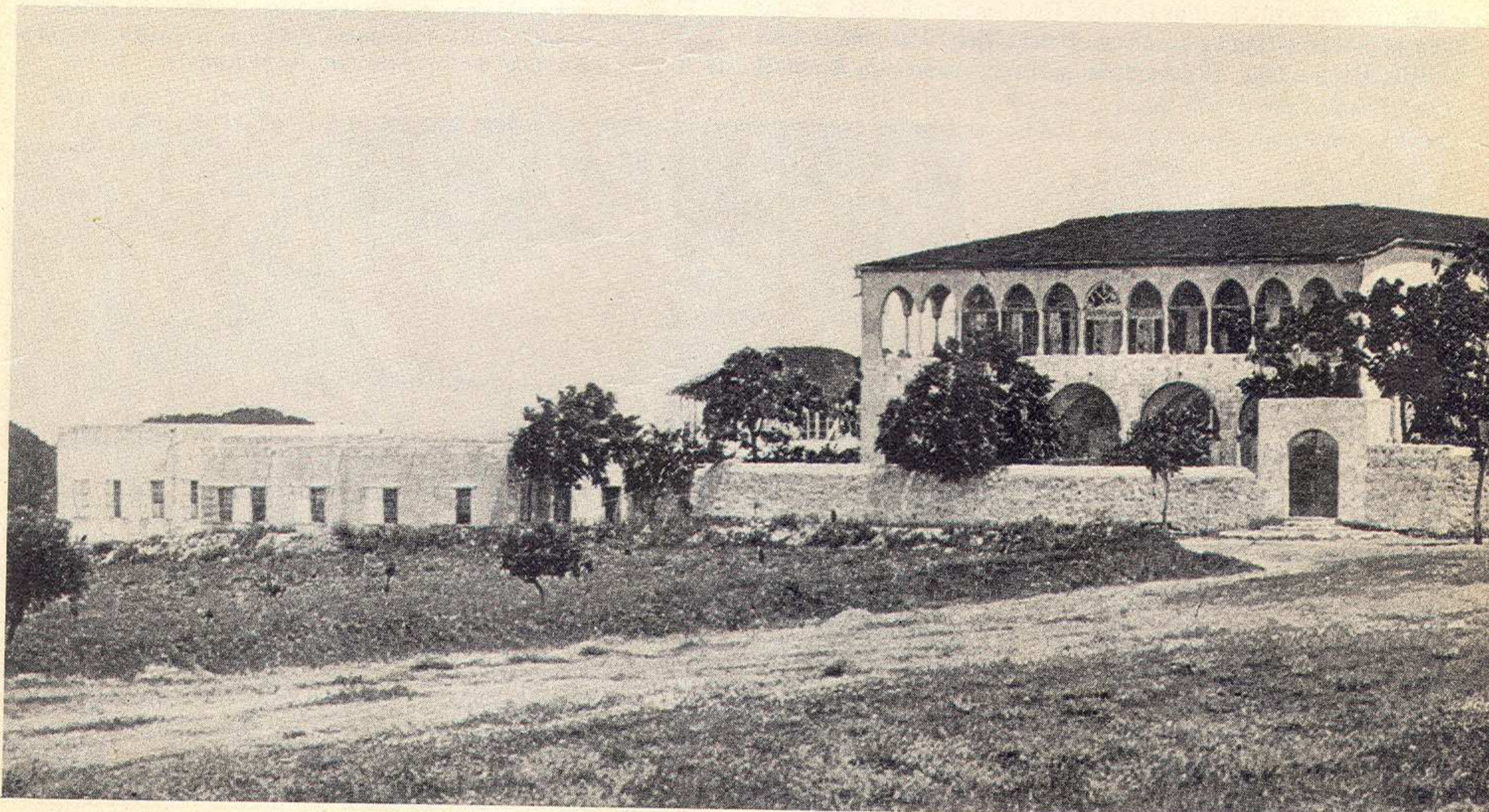
One of the most explicit references appears in the 11th chapter of *Shams'ul-Ma'ání* written by *Shaykh-i-Búní**: "Ere long God will shine from the face of Bahíyu'l-Abhá (the Glory, the Most Glorious) with the name of Bahá on the Day of Absolute (the Promised Day), in the plain of 'Akká."²⁰

The well-known scholar, the illustrious and learned man, *Shaykh Muḥammad 'Ámilí*, was the first in the Muslim Faith to

* "Bahá'u'lláh, . . . signifying at once the glory, the light and the splendor of God."¹⁷

** He passed on in the year 622 A.H. (774 years ago).

The Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí as it appeared during the time of the first pilgrimages of the Western believers in the early 1900s.



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Shaykh 'Ámilí assumed the
title 'Bahá'í' over three
centuries ago.*

discover the name of Bahá'u'lláh. He was inspired by the guidance of the fifth and sixth Imáms* who swore that the Greatest Name of God could be found in either of two specific prayers.** In one of these,*** recited at dawn during the month of Fasting, the name, 'BAHÁ' is repeated four times in the first verse, a verse that Bahá'u'lláh commanded the "Son of the Wolf" recite with absolute sincerity while facing the Kaaba of God: "O my God! I beseech Thee by Thy *most glorious light*, and all Thy *lights* are verily *glorious*."²¹

How significant that during the 30 days of Ramadán this prayer echoes melodiously from the minarets at dawn, awakening the populace with the name of Bahá'u'lláh.

In order to attest to his faith in Bahá'u'lláh, he (Shaykh Ámilí) assumed the title "Bahá'í" over three centuries ago,**** and is now known as Shaykh-i-Bahá'í. He composed a most moving and

eloquent poem in praise of his Beloved, some verses of which are as follows:

How long will this torrent of tears flood from each lash
in my longing to meet Thee,
O, the Unique One, my Beloved?
Will the night of Thy separation ever end
O, Thou, Whose agony and tribulations have, as an
arrow, pierced the hearts of Thy lovers?
Multitudes are occupied in Thy praise whilst Thou art
hidden from them.
To the abode of the pious and the religious I went;
Before Thy Countenance, I found all bowing and prostrating. . . .
Of a time I was a hermit of the hermitage,
Another, a refugee in the monastery
And again, a resident in the mosque.
Verily, O Beloved, house to house 'tis Thee I have
sought.

Upon whichever door I knock, I find the Master of the
house is Thee, Thee alone.
In Pagan temple, in monastery, Thou art the Beloved,
Thee, Thee alone.
My goal in the Kaaba and the temple is Thee, Thee
alone.
Thou art my purpose; Kaaba and temple are but excuses. . . .

Helpless Bahá'í, whose heart is rent by Thy sorrows,
However sinful he may be, is one among the multitudes
of Thy servants,

* Imám Muḥammad-i-Báqir and Imám Ja'far-i-Sádiq.

** Du'áy-i-Saḥar and Du'áy-i-Umm-i-Davúd (See commentary of *Ash'ár-i-Na'im* by Ishráq-Khávarí pp. 469-70.

*** Du'áy-i-Saḥar. The first verse, transliterated, reads: "Alláhumma inní as 'aluka min Bahá' ika bi Abháh va kullu Bahá' ika Bahí." The illustrious Bahá'í poet, Na'im has pointed out that the Dawn-prayer begins with the name of Bahá (Splendor) and ends with the name of 'Alá (Loftiness), the latter the exalted name of the Báb, the two names of the 1st and 19th month of the Badí' Calendar.

**** He passed on in the year 1030 A.H., which corresponds to the early part of the 16th Century A.D. He was 78. He is buried in Mashhad.



*The Exalted Báb praises
Bahá'u'lláh and mentions
His name with great
exaltation.*

His hope is Thy perpetual compassion,
His sins anticipate Thy mercifulness.
Surely, no better excuse has one for sins.²²

In the Qur'án, Moses was addressed by "the Speaker on Sinai" (one of the titles of Bahá'u'lláh) in the following words:

O Moses! Verily, I am thy Lord: therefore pull off thy shoes: for thou art in the holy valley of Towa. . . .

Verily I am God: there is no God but Me: therefore worship me, and observe prayer for a remembrance of me. Verily the hour is coming:—I all but manifest it—That every soul may be recompensed for its labors."²³

And when Moses came at our set time and his Lord spake with him, he said, "O Lord, shew thyself to me, that I may look upon thee." He said, "Thou shalt not see Me; but look towards the mount, and if it abide firm in its place, then shalt thou see Me." And when God manifested Himself to the mountain he turned it to dust! and Moses fell in a swoon.

And when he came to himself, he said, "Glory be to thee! To thee do I turn in penitence, and I am the first of them that believe."²⁴

Bahá'u'lláh confirms in His *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* that He is "the Speaker on Sinai" anticipated by Imám 'Alí:

The Commander of the Faithful (Imám 'Alí)—peace be upon him—moreover saith in the *Khutbiy-i-Ṭutunjíyyih*: "Anticipate ye the Revelation of Him Who conversed with Moses from the Burning Bush on Sinai."²⁵

One of the most moving recognitions of the station of Bahá'u'lláh appears in a beautiful poem inscribed by His beloved father in exquisite handwriting on a large wooden plaque. This plaque was given a place of honor over the kingly mansion he built in Tákur, where Bahá'u'lláh spent most of His summers. This gesture, according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is proof that he recognized the Station of his Son as the Manifestation of God. This plaque is still in existence in Tákur. It reads:

When thou attaineth the threshold of thy Beloved

Say yea, for this is not the place to exchange Salám (peace) and Alayk (upon thee be peace).

This is the valley of love, mind thy step.

This is the Holy Land, pull off thy shoes.²⁶

Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, received His revelation almost 1,400 years ago, in His one-night journey (according to the Muslims, "a journey equal to seventy thousand years") to Jerusalem and was shown there, in 'the circuit of' Jerusalem ('Akká and Haifa) some of the signs of God:

Praise be unto him who transported his servant (Muḥammad) by night from the sacred temple of Mecca to the farther temple of Jerusalem, the circuit of which we have blessed, that we might show him some of our signs.²⁷

The Koran is no other than a revelation revealed to him (Muḥammad):

Endued with wisdom. With even balance stood he. . . .

Then came he nearer and approached. . . .

And he (God) revealed to his servant what he revealed. . . .

He (Muḥammad) had seen him also another time,*

Near the Sidrah-tree, which marks the boundary.²⁸

In the Conference of Badašht, Bahá'u'lláh, the Hidden Treasure, Who 'loved to be known,' revealed His "Hidden Name" and appeared with His Most Great Name: *BAHA*; He Who "But for Him no Divine Messenger would have been invested with the robe of prophethood, nor would any of the sacred scriptures have been revealed."²⁹

The Exalted Báb, Who declared "that He had 'sacrificed' Himself 'wholly' for Him (Bahá'u'lláh), that He had 'consented to be cursed' for His sake, and to have 'yearned for naught but martyrdom in the path of His love,'"³⁰ in all His Writings and in between the lines, praises Bahá'u'lláh and mentions His name with great exaltation. In His formulation of the Badí' Calendar, He adorned the first day and first month of the year with the name "Bahá." He "alluded to Him (Bahá'u'lláh) as the 'Abhá Horizon' wherein He Himself lived and dwelt,"³¹ called the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the Qayyúm-i-Asmá, "companions of the Crimson Ark—the Ark which God hath prepared for the people of

* This refers to the twin Revelations of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

The golden star of Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá adorns the top of the entrance of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh as well as the top of the entrance of the Holy of Holies.

Bahá'".³² He heralded the order of Bahá'u'lláh in these words: "Well is it with him who fixeth his gaze upon the Order of Bahá'u'lláh."³³ Prior to His departure from Chihri'q, He had penned on a scroll "no less than three hundred and sixty derivations of the word Bahá'" and instructed that the scroll together with His documents, "His pen-case, His seals, and agate rings" be delivered to His Beloved, Bahá'u'lláh.³⁴ In the ninth Váhid of the Arabic Bayán, the Báb also sends His greetings to Bahá'u'lláh, in the most touching, and delicate way, unprecedented in the annals of all religions, wishing the remembrance and praise of all creation rest upon Him at all times. He addresses Him in that passage:

O Bahá'u'lláh!



O Bahá'u'lláh!

What hast Thou done? O Bahá'u'lláh! May my life be sacrificed for Thee! O Bahá'u'lláh! May my soul be offered up for Thy sake! How full were Thy days with trials and tribulations! How severe the ordeals Thou didst endure! How solid the foundation Thou hast finally laid, and how glorious the banner Thou didst hoist!³⁵

"He ('Abdu'l-Bahá) . . . was heard to exclaim" the above passages "one evening as He was being swiftly driven to fulfill His third engagement of the day in Washington."

One day, as He ('Abdu'l-Bahá) was strolling, the beloved Guardian further recounts: "He called to remembrance the days of the Blessed Beauty, referring with sadness to His sojourn in Sulaymáníyyih, to His loneliness and to the wrongs inflicted upon Him. Though He had often recounted that episode, that day He was so overcome with emotion that He sobbed aloud in His grief. . . . All His attendants wept with Him, and were plunged into sorrow as they heard the tale of the woeful trials endured by the Ancient Beauty, and witnessed the tenderness of heart manifested by His Son."³⁶

The Sufferings of Bahá'u'lláh

I am moved to share with you my dear readers, further heart-breaking passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh; and, from the writings of the beloved Guardian, a moving story related by 'Abdu'l-Bahá; and, finally, touching accounts of the Síyáh-Chál by Dr. Yúnis Khán, one of the amanuenses of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

they, . . . from Níyávarán, which was then the residence of His Majesty, conducted Us, on foot and in chains, with bared head and bare feet, to the dungeon of Tíhrán. A brutal man, accompanying Us on horseback, snatched off Our hat, whilst We were being hurried along by a troop of executioners and officials. We were consigned for four months to a place foul beyond comparison. As to the dungeon in which this Wronged One and others similarly wronged were confined, a dark and narrow pit were preferable. Upon Our arrival We were first conducted along a pitch-black corridor, from whence We descended three steep flights of stairs to the place of confinement assigned to Us. The dungeon was wrapped in thick darkness, and Our fellow-prisoners numbered nearly a hundred and fifty souls: thieves, assassins and highwaymen. Though crowded, it had no other outlet than the passage by which We entered . . . Most of these men had neither clothes nor bedding to lie on. God alone knoweth what befell Us in that most foul-smelling and gloomy place!³⁷

Shouldst thou at sometime happen to visit the dungeon of His Majesty the Sháh, ask the director and chief jailer to show thee those two chains, one of which is known as Qará-Guhar, and the other as Salásil. I swear by the Day-Star of Justice that for four months this Wronged One was tormented and chained by one or the other of them. "My grief exceedeth all the woes to which Jacob gave vent, and all the afflictions of Job are but a part of My sorrows!"³⁸

"'Abdu'l-Bahá tells how one day He was allowed to enter the prison yard to see His beloved Father when He came out for His daily exercise. Bahá'u'lláh was terribly altered, so ill He could hardly walk, His hair and beard unkempt, His neck galled and swollen from the pressure of a heavy steel collar, His body bent by the weight of His chains, and the sight made a never-to-be-forgotten impression on the mind of the sensitive boy."³⁹

Bahá'u'lláh praises God, "Who has adorned the Strong Prison with the presence of his holiness 'Ali-Kabli-Akbar and his holiness Ameen . . . The Glory of God and the glory of all in heaven and earth be upon both of them!

"Light and glory, greetings and praise, be upon the hands of His Cause. . . ."

(from the Tablet of the World, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 172, in honor of Jinábi Nured-Dín Hasan Afnán of Shíráz)

Dr. Yúnis Khán recounts: "All traces of the terrifying dungeon and the chains, the two 'wild dragons', have now been effaced from the surface of Tíhrán, just as gigantic wild animals became extinct after Noah's Flood. However, we should preserve their memories in the museum of our minds." He proceeds to give some of the details of the Síyáh-Chál which will be left unquoted since Bahá'u'lláh testified that, "No pen can depict that place, nor any tongue describe its loathsome smell."⁴⁰

"As for Qará-Guhar," Dr. Yúnis Khán writes, "this is the name of a particular chain which belongs to this subterranean

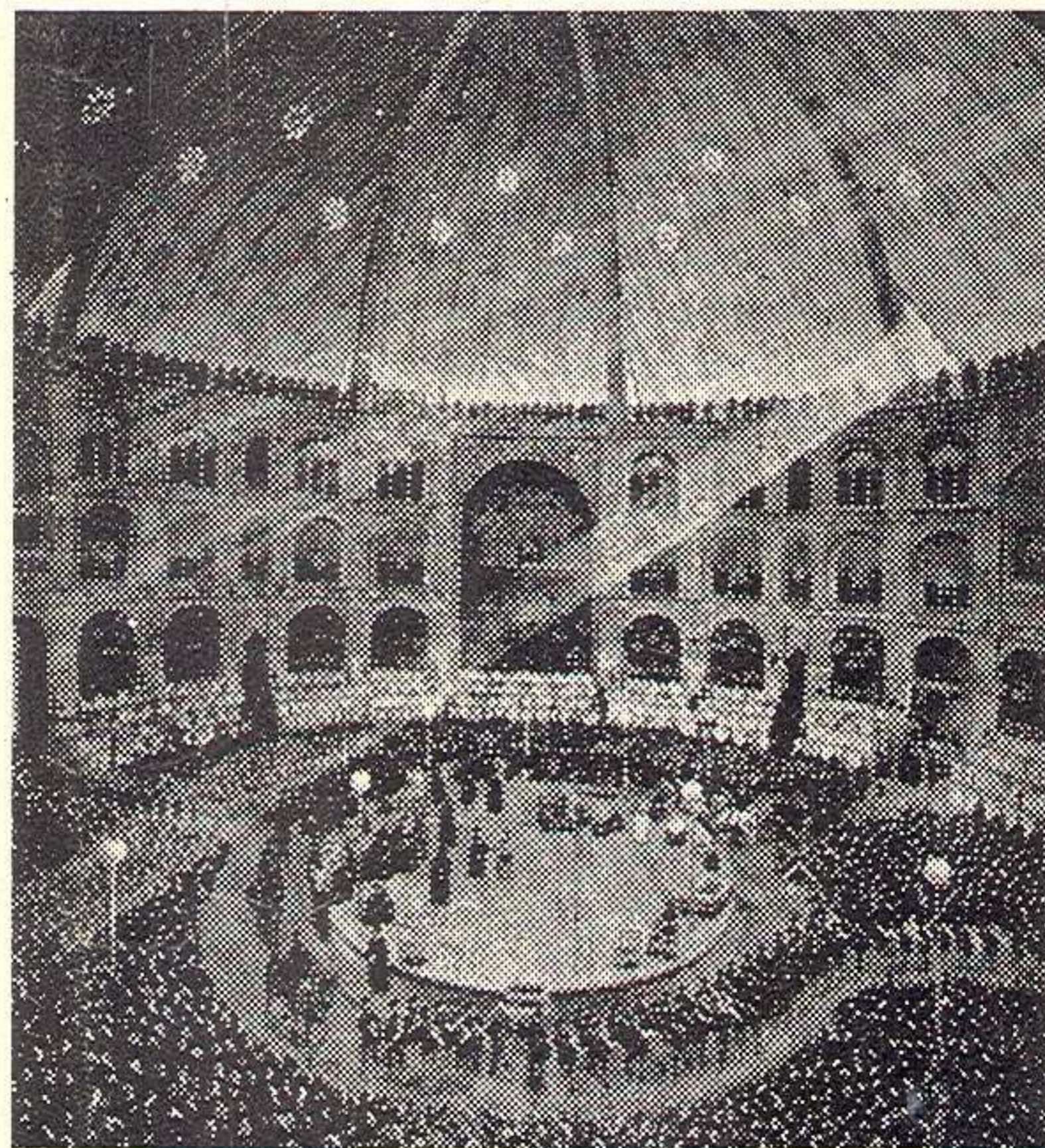
The Hand of the Cause of God Háji 'Ali-Kabli-Akbar Sháhmírzadí (left), known as Hájí Akhúnd, and Háji Abu'l-Hasan (right), known as Hájí Amín, mentioned by Bahá'u'lláh in the Tablet quoted above, were both in the Strong Prison in Qazín when Bahá'u'lláh ascended. Hájí Amín was posthumously appointed a Hand of the Cause by the beloved Guardian.



The Wronged One of the world suffered under the weight of the terrible chains in the Síyáh-Chál



راه روز سید جمال حسین است که مجلس جمال نفس این بوده است



Above left is a view of the Síyáh-Chál, showing what was the original corridor leading to the entrance. The dungeon was filled-in in 1868 and the Tikyíh Dowlat, a canvas-covered center for royal mourning for the Imám Hūsayn, was built over it. Above right is a reproduction of a painting of the Tikyíh Dowlat showing a ceremony for the Imám Hūsayn. The ground floor accommodated 4,000 women. The surrounding rooms were for the Sháh, his family, and dignitaries. The site was used for a convocation of national representatives (Majlis-i-Mu'assisán) in 1925 at which

the fall of the Qajár dynasty was announced. Below are the officers of that historic gathering. A Bahá'í, 'Izzatu'lláh Bakhsháyish, fifth from left in front row, was the chief stenographer recording the event. Thus the downfall of the Qajár dynasty was announced through the will of the promised Hūsayn (Bahá' u' lláh) at the very site of His prison. Believers at the time kept recalling that the Exalted Báb predicted that the Qajár dynasty would fall 1,000 (lunar) months from His Revelation. However, research must be made to find the source.



The Blessed Beauty was laid to rest in the northernmost room of the Mansion of Bahjí.

dungeon. However it was not an ordinary chain but is referred to by this title because of its thickness and heavy weight. . . . It was over 10 meters in length and had five to seven thick steel collars, each with a heavy lock to which the jailers held keys. The chain took seven prisoners in a row. Each prisoner was given a piece of wood shaped like a "Y" (like a cane with two heads). One end was used to carry part of the weight of the collar, while the other end was held or placed on the damp brick floor of the dungeon should the prisoner prefer to sit. Of course not even a man of great strength could stand or walk with this chain. There was no choice for the prisoner but to sit on his knees, hold fast on to the end of the cane with his two hands, lay his chin on the "Y", rest his eyes on the dark ceiling of this foul, loathsome-smelling prison, and await his fate."

Dr. Yúnis Khán continues: "This is a brief account of the Sáyáh-Chál. Why should the believers know the description of the Sáyáh-Chál and the chains? Because the 'Wronged One of the world', the Abhá Beauty, suffered under their weight for a certain period of time. Years later some of His lovers and followers attained the glory of being imprisoned in the Sáyáh-Chál and experienced the same burdens of those heavy chains. You might wonder how I know these details, being unworthy to enter the prison of Bahá'u'lláh, and undeserving to win the glory of bearing the weight of the chain. Fifty-three lunar years ago, when I was a boy, I went to meet my father, Mashhadí Ḥusayn, who was one of the prisoners in the Sáyáh-Chál. Then I witnessed this terrifying scene and the unhealthy conditions of the prisoners. This impressed me so much that it has left its agonizing memory on me all these years and will remain with me for the rest of my life. It is a comfort to recall that in spite of all the terrifying scenes, the imprisoned believers, frail and weak, were joyous that their imprisonment was in the path of their Beloved. It was also comforting to see their suffering was somewhat alleviated when His Majesty Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh had mercy on them, permitting the prisoners two hours of sunshine in the middle of that cold winter so that they might inhale fresh air after 30 days of deprivation. In addition, their spirits were uplifted to hear from me that their families were safe especially since they had heard from the jailers that the mobs in Tíhrán had attacked the Bahá'ís and murdered all the women and children. . . .

"On my visit* to the 100-square-meter courtyard, I found the prisoners weak and sickly, sitting before the sun. My father was

so weak, thin, and yellow in color that initially I did not recognize him, although he called me by name. The late Mullá 'Alí-Akbar Shahrízádí, known as Ḥájí Ákhúnd (Hand of the Cause of God) was chained to my father. . . . Finally, I recognized my father and sat on his trembling knees while the jailers surrounded us and stared. We conversed briefly. I gave the good news of the safety of the Bahá'í families, looked at and touched the collar of the Qará-Guhar chain which, due to the dampness of the prison, had rusted.

"Fortunately, after six to seven weeks, the prisoners** were transferred to a common prison close to the Sáyáh-Chál. In this prison they were allowed to sit on platforms along the corridor at night with every seven prisoners chained together and their legs locked in what is called a Khalílí. The prisoners were permitted light at night. The Bahá'í prisoners among them had secretly taught the Faith to their fellow prisoners (formerly thieves, highwaymen, and assassins) and deepened them in the Cause. After the jailers retired, they chanted prayers and Tablets they had committed to memory and rejoiced in remembrance of their Beloved. . . .

"O, how I envied the nightly celebrations of the prisoners whose sweets consisted of the stories of the chains that bore them down!"⁴¹

Thus it was in the Sáyáh-Chál and under these circumstances that the birth of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh took place—"a Revelation which (according to the beloved Guardian), flowing out, in that extremely perilous hour, from His travailing soul, pierced the gloom that had settled upon that pestilential pit, and, bursting through its walls, and propagating itself as far as the ends of the earth, infused into the entire body of mankind its boundless potentialities, and is now under our very eyes, shaping the course of human society."⁴²

The Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh

The Blessed Beauty's "spirit . . . winged its flight to His 'other dominions,' dominions 'whereon the eyes of the people of names have never fallen.'"⁴³

"The news of His ascension was instantly communicated to

* The meeting between Dr. Yúnis Khán and the prisoners took place outside the prison, during one of the two-hour periods that the prisoners enjoyed the outdoor air.

** His father and others.

*The Master would summon
the pilgrims, anoint each
with rose water, and chant
the Tablet of Visitation with
His glorious voice.*

Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-Ḥamíd in a telegram which began with the words, ‘the Sun of Bahá has set’ and in which the monarch was advised of the intention of interring the sacred remains within the precincts of the Mansion, an arrangement to which he readily assented. Bahá’u’lláh was accordingly laid to rest in the northernmost room of the house which served as a dwelling-place for His son-in-law, the most northerly of the three houses lying to the west of, and adjacent to, the Mansion. His interment took place shortly after sunset, on the very day of His ascension.” (May 29, 1892)⁴⁴

The Exalted Báb had already anticipated in the eighth Váhid of the Arabic Bayán that the Qiblih would be wherever “He Whom God shall make Manifest”⁴⁵ (Bahá’u’lláh) is. The Blessed Beauty had fixed the Qiblih in the Book of Aqdas.⁴⁶

‘Abdu’l-Bahá singled out “the inconsolable Nabíl to select those passages (from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh) which constitute the text of the Tablet of Visitation now recited in the Most Holy Tomb.”⁴⁷

He (‘Abdu’l-Bahá) also arranged for construction of the Shrine.

“Then the supreme ordeal, the great desolation, came upon us. Qulám-‘Alí* took on the carpentry work of the Holy Tomb, exerting all his sure powers. To this day, the glass roof which is over the inner courtyard of the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh remains as the product of his skill.”⁴⁸

The Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh, the Qiblih of the Bahá’í World

Let us now prepare to make a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh, the most precious dust that this planet holds in its bosom; let us fulfill our hearts’ desire which is none other than “the Desire of the Divine Messengers.”⁵⁰

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Visits

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to the Holy Shrine is very moving. Evidently He approached the Shrine from the former road** which passes by the Mansion.

As we reach the bend of the road, the Mansion of Bahjí comes into full view, “a dwelling place which He (Bahá’u’lláh) characterized as the ‘lofty mansion’, the spot which ‘God hath ordained as the most sublime vision of mankind.’”⁵¹ We are moved to recall the touching stories told by dearly loved Hand of the Cause

of God Ṭaráz’u’lláh Samandarí,*** about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Bahá’u’lláh shortly before His passing, also confirmed by Hájí Mirzá Ḥaydar ‘Alí.

“On His walk from ‘Akká to Bahjí, the moment ‘Abdu’l-Bahá approached the bend of the road, He prostrated Himself and laid His forehead on the earth. Bahá’u’lláh turned to those in His presence and told them: ‘The Master is coming. Hasten, go to meet and escort Him.’”

Hájí Mirzá Ḥaydar ‘Alí recounts this story in his marvelous book: “Bahá’u’lláh was sitting in His Mansion. As soon as the light of the beauty of His Branch (‘Abdu’l-Bahá) shone from the garden of Jammál (the bend of the road already referred to) Bahá’u’lláh’s Face beamed with great joy and fragrance. He bade all to hasten to the garden and its vicinity and welcome the Master.”⁵²

Dr. Yúnis Khán writes: “Pilgrimages to the Holy Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh started the very first year of His Ascension . . . Twice on Fridays and Sundays the pilgrims and resident Bahá’ís would go to the Shrine in the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Who chanted the Tablet of Visitation.

“On the second and third year after the Ascension there were celebrations during the Bahá’í Holy Days which attracted the attention of the populace, whether friend or foe, particularly of the military and civil authorities, the Judge, and the Muftí. They were all so impressed with the spirit that surrounded visitation of the Shrine that they longed to accompany the friends on these occasions.

“Outside the House of the Master there was an open area where the coach house was situated. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had two carriages: a big one called ‘American cab’ that carried nine people and another one that carried four. For weekly visits to the Shrine, Isfandíyár, the cabman of the Master, would prepare the carriage for the pilgrims and resident Bahá’ís, the pilgrims being given priority. Isfandíyár would drive the carriage to Bahjí and come back to take another group. However, the Master would walk alone, sometimes with two believers escorting Him. Upon His arrival at Bahjí, He would rest briefly in a room adjacent to the Shrine of

* A resident Bahá’í, “a carpenter and a master craftsman”⁴⁹ from Káshán.

** Before The Universal House of Justice, in their negotiations with the authorities, succeeded in procuring the present access to the main highway.

*** He often shared this story with the Hands of the Cause on that spot, as well as with the beloved friends in America.

Bahá'u'lláh. After summoning the pilgrims and anointing each with rose water in a heavenly manner and with silence, He would chant the Tablet of Visitation with His glorious voice.

“During the Feasts, outside the inner court of the House of the Master, beautiful pots of varied colored flowers were ready to be carried to the Holy Shrine. All the pilgrims and residents, dressed in their best attire, would gather in the House of the Master two hours before sunset, or perhaps earlier if the exceeding heat of the mid-day sun had subsided. Each would shoulder a pot and, two by two, they set out for the Holy Shrine. During my pilgrimage the believers would not start from the House of the Master, owing to the tense atmosphere created by the rebellious Covenant-breakers. Rather they would pick up the pots from outside the Gate of ‘Akká, where the pots were ready for them. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, like the Commander of an Army, while Himself carrying a pot, would pace on their flank or ahead of them, monitoring and controlling their march and commanding two or three whose voices were melodious to chant from the *Mathnaví* of Bahá'u'lláh, from ‘Sáqi’az Ghiybi Baqá’, or from the poems recited by Bahá’í poets. This band of flower-bearers would walk slowly and majestically to the Shrine. As soon as the Shrine came into full view ‘Abdu’l-Bahá bade them to stop, take the pots from their shoulders and put them on their heads while a moving prayer from Bahá'u'lláh was chanted. . . .

“To be brief, the pots were delivered to the Shrine. Another prayer was chanted. All would go for a little rest and after having had tea, some sweets and making ablutions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would chant the Tablet of Visitation and bid them to sit and chant the appropriate passages for the Feasts with melodious voices. Often times, they would chant some of the exhilarating poems of Bahá'u'lláh such as ‘Halih Halih yá Bishárat’.*⁵³

“On the night of the (fifth anniversary Ascension) we had a vigil night in the House of the Master, praying and chanting the whole night. At early dawn we were called by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to head to the Holy Shrine. Each was given a bottle of rose water and a lit candle. We left the gate of ‘Akká at dawn heading for the Shrine with the same ceremony already mentioned. Upon our arrival in the Holy Shrine, following ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s instructions, the rose water was poured at the base of the flowers inside the inner court of the Shrine and the burning candles planted inside the earth of the inner garden. We all stood in great reverence. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá chanted the Tablet of Visitation. It was unbearable for us to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s agony, especially the noticeable tears in His eyes. . . .

“The Feast of Ridván was at hand and again, with the same ceremony as before, we went on pilgrimage to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. . . . The garden was full of flowers. . . .”⁵⁴

“In addition to the vases of flowers which had been brought for the commemoration from ‘Akká, it was necessary to tend the flower gardens around the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. One of the ceremonies which developed consisted of watering this flower garden around the Shrine. About 100 copper pots (called Arabian Jarrih) were secured. During the Feast the pilgrims and residents would fill them from neighboring wells and chant poems and verses from the Writings while watering the flowers. The rapture and devotion with which this task was carried out so deeply impressed Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís, especially when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Himself, would put a copper pot on His shoulder and face the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, that every one would be moved to tears. All the friends would stand with great reverence. Some of the visitors would ask to be given a copper pot so that they too

could water the flowers.

“After chanting the Tablets of the Feasts and other appropriate passages for Ridván, we would all return together to ‘Akká.”⁵⁵

Hájí Mírzá Haydar ‘Alí recounts: “After ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gained His freedom, He resumed visiting the Holy Dust of Bahá'u'lláh and watering the flowers of the garden as was His custom.

“In spite of His frailty and illness, every Friday and Sunday in the presence of the notables of the government, the dignitaries, and some of the inhabitants, He carried on His shoulders 60 to 70 Jarrih of water. While watering, He was attacked by fever several times and became ill. With this illness, His fever was worse than ever. The pilgrims and Bahá’í residents asked His permission to attain His presence. When permission was granted, they all assembled, threw themselves at the knees of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, took the hem of His robe, and in tears beseeched Him, for the sake of His precious health, to stop watering the flowers of the Holy Shrine and leave this job to those devoted believers who longed to be given the bounty of watering the flowers on His behalf. He agreed. However, the grief in His face was so apparent that those who had begged Him to give up this job regretted their act and blamed themselves for having dared to ask ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for this. After two weeks, He invited all the Bahá’ís, showered His bounties upon them, served them tea and sweets, and gave them heavenly food. Then in the most loving and affectionate manner He said, ‘I have agreed to your request and refrained from watering the flowers of the Holy Shrine, but my comfort and the happiness of my heart is in watering these flowers. My physical body and health is not important. The main thing is the happiness of my heart and the healthiness of my spirit. . . . Now please agree with me, from the bottom of your hearts, to water the flowers of the Shrine. All of you may participate in this service to the Abhá Beauty.’ (Here Hájí Mírzá Haydar ‘Alí is moved to express his great admiration, praises the exemplary modesty of the Master and offers to give his life for Him). In response all bowed and joyfully assented. Thus the watering, His permanent custom, was once again resumed.”⁵⁶

Dr. Habíb Mu’ayyad writes similar moving accounts of the early years. The following concerns his visits to the Holy Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh on October 28 and 30, 1914: “We went to make our pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. When arriving there our eyes were illumined by gazing on the beautiful countenance of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Who was there in the garden. His beauty surpasses the beauty and fragrance of the flowers. The beloved Master, in His heavenly radiance, was dressed from head to toe in white, and was working in the midst of the white jasmine and white lillies. We bowed, and He answered, ‘Marhabá’. After a little while ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the well (a water well with a hand pump) and started to pump for 19 minutes. The water was to be held in reserve for the gardens to water the trees and flowers. Incidentally, one of the friends, Badí’ Bushrú’í, counted carefully on his watch. It came to 361 pumps, which came to 19 times 19. Formerly there was no well there and water for irrigation was very scarce. The gardens around the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh had recently been started and needed continuous watering. . . ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would pump twice a day each time for 19 minutes. . . .”⁵⁷ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, ‘I, with the help of a group of believers, carried the soil (for the gardens of the Shrine) on our shoulders and watered the flowers.’”⁵⁸

* In which Bahá'u'lláh in a most glorious, astounding way praises the Glad tidings of His Revelation. The above phrase is repeated in each ode of the poem.

“ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá anointed us with pure attar on our heads and faces, and said, ‘I want to anoint your head and face even as in old times when the prophets did so, so that you will succeed in your services and activities.’ ”⁵⁹

“At night, when we are accommodated in the guest house, with a wall between our room and the Master’s, we hear the melody of the voice of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His prayers. The melody of His voice when He chants the Tablet of Visitation, together with the mood of His reverence and rapture, affects everything, even the stones.”⁶⁰

“Many nights when we walked slowly around the room of the Master, we heard the murmur of His voice, but we did not recognize all the words. Those we could recognize were, ‘O my God, O my Beloved.’ ”⁶¹

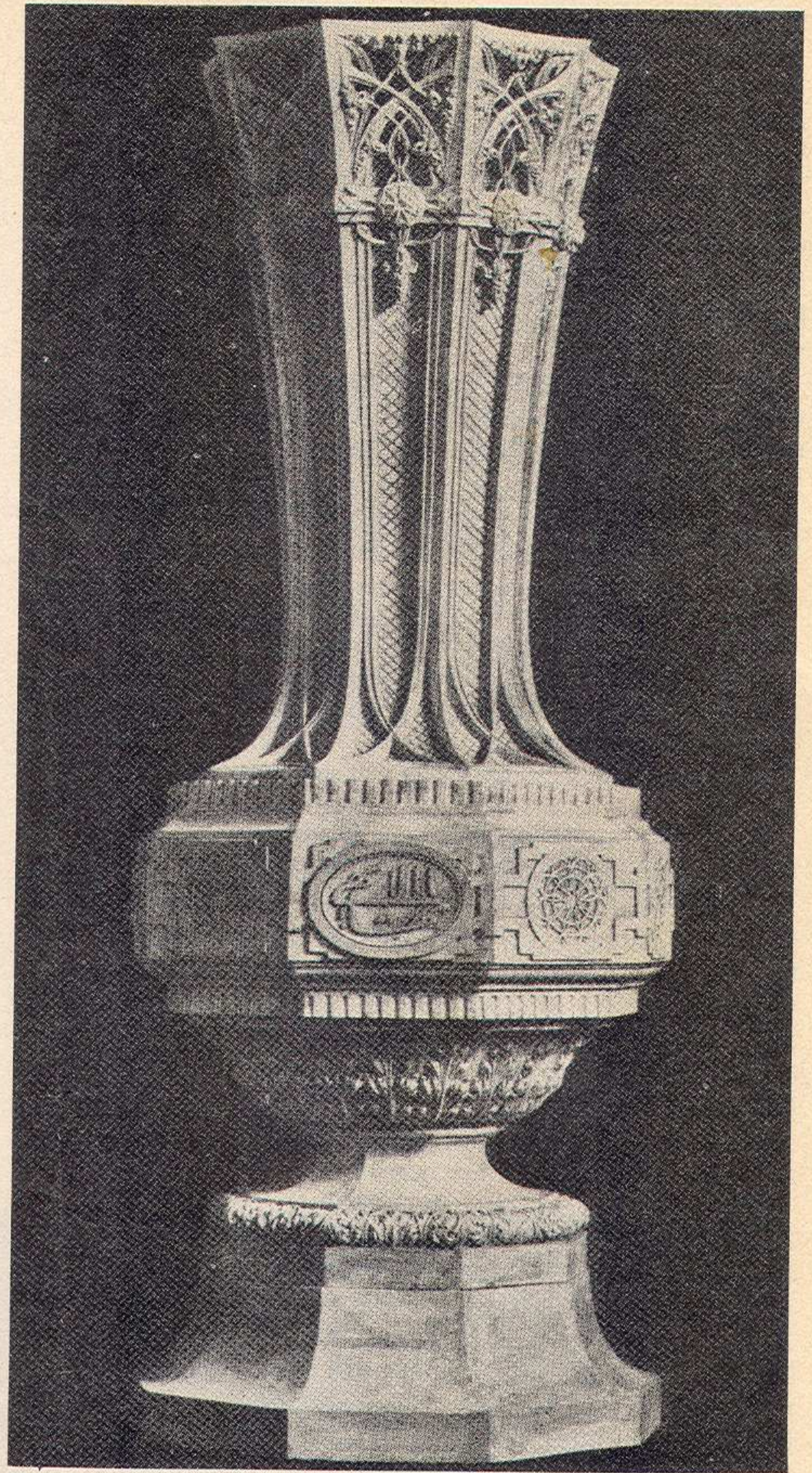
Mary L. Lucas shared with us the experience of her pilgrimage to the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh in the early years: “We got out of the carriage and gathered the flowers, and then proceeded on our way to the Tomb, with the flowers we had plucked. As we entered this Holy Precinct we took off our shoes. The silence here was like nothing I have ever experienced. As we advanced toward the door no one spoke, but we all prayed. I remembered the Master’s wish, and sang part of Gounod’s Sanctus, *Holy, Holy, Holy!* It was the first thing that came to my mind. It seemed as though I was not singing, but the voice of itself was soaring, and had left my body.”⁶²

And of later years we read in an article written in Haifa in July 1922, by G.L.C. under the heading of “The Plain of Acca”: “After we had rested a little while, Fugeta and I went into the Tomb. It was dark by that time, and the lights in the Tomb were lighted. The thing which seemed to me most beautiful about the lighting was that the lights were so placed that they shone out from under a fern in the center of the little inner garden. The light came out soft and green through the fronds of fern. The lights were not all on when we first went in, and I liked it better with the softer light. We stayed there in prayer for perhaps half an hour. . . . Afterward, . . . turned on all the lights, so that I might see them. They turn into a blaze of light, and made me think of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s comment, when he was in America, that Bahá’u’lláh always loved light; that they might be economical about everything else, but that he always told them to have much light about Him. Fugeta also drew my attention to the vase that the American Bahá’ís had sent in memory of the Master’s visit to America. The vase was made by Tiffany, and it is very beautiful. It is of bronze, with insets of jewels and cloisonné work. The latter is of a most exquisite blue, shading off into yellow, as it curves up the slender neck of the vase. It is a very, very lovely thing, as is worthy of such a place.”⁶³

What a glory for the North American Bahá’ís to be so close to Bahá’u’lláh and to His inner Shrine, “The Holy of Holies!”

Dr. Yúnis Khán, commenting further on his visit, in the company of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, to the Holy Shrine, shares with us in a moving way his impressions. He feels inadequate to convey the heavenly experience he had of hearing the melodious voice of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá repeating certain verses in the Tablet of Visitation, and he says:

“Dear Reader, if you are touched by reading these lines, if you are moved with a burning desire for such a visit to the Holy Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh, do not feel sad, do not be depressed. In the presence of the beloved Shoghi Effendi, who stands in the place of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá chanting the Tablet of Visitation, you will feel the rare heavenly experience. Hasten! Hasten! Grasp the oppor-



This vase, a gift of the American Bahá’ís, stands in the Holy Tomb of Bahá’u’lláh. It was made in commemoration of the visit of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to America; it was designed by Louis Bourgeois, the architect of the Mother Temple of the West.

tunity! Grasp the opportunity!”⁶⁴

The Beloved Guardian’s Visits

Let us visit the Holy Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh in the presence of the beloved of all hearts, Shoghi Effendi.

Earlier, the beloved Guardian said the first and most important festival of joy is the Feast of Ridván, the Declaration of Bahá’u’lláh; the second is the Declaration of the Báb; the third, the Birthday of Bahá’u’lláh; the fourth, the birthday of the Báb; and the fifth, the Feast of Naw-Rúz and fasting.

Mine was the great bounty to make a pilgrimage on the Birth-

day of Bahá'u'lláh. It was on February 10, 1940 (Muḥarram 2nd 1359), the lunar anniversary of the birth of the Blessed Beauty, that in the morning, the beloved Shoghi Effendi sent all of us pilgrims in two cars to the Mansion of Bahjí, after we had visited the monument gardens on Mount Carmel. In the afternoon there was a big gathering of all the Bahá'ís, pilgrims and residents, where prayers were chanted in the open space on the ground floor of the Mansion. Everyone waited impatiently for the arrival of the beloved Shoghi Effendi. When the beloved Guardian arrived, he had Ismá'íl Aqá in his presence in the car, as was his custom on such occasions.

A message from the beloved Guardian extended an invitation to all to go to the garden facing the Holy Shrine and hold a big gathering in celebration of the Anniversary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh.

Everyone hastened to attain the presence of the beloved Shoghi Effendi of whom 'Abdu'l-Bahá said:

Salutation and praise, blessing and glory rest upon that primal branch of the Divine and Sacred Lote-Tree, grown out, blest, tender, verdant and flourishing from the Twin Holy Trees; the most wondrous, unique and priceless pearl that doth gleam from out the Twin surging Seas; . . . Well is it with him that seeketh the shelter of his shade that shadoweth all mankind.⁶⁵

Some, because of the greatness of the gathering, sat on the lawn, others carried wicker chairs. The beloved Shoghi Effendi was seated on a wicker chair in the corner of the garden facing the Most Holy Shrine. His majesty and deportment is beyond us. He bade everyone to sit as he showed each pilgrim where to sit. All were seated in a J shape in the small garden surrounding Bahá'u'lláh's resting place. (The entire property was 4,000 meters at that time and is now, according to the beloved Guardian's cable dated November 12, 1952, 155,000 square meters.)⁶⁶ This J shape started from the outer patio of the entrance of the Shrine, leading to the pilgrim house nearby.

The beloved Shoghi Effendi greeted all: "May this Feast be a blessing to you all. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has called these twin Great Feasts (the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh and the Birth of the Báb) because in the lunar calendar they follow one another." A day earlier, the Birth of the Báb had been celebrated on Mount Carmel. "The Blessed Beauty has referred to the Báb as His former Manifestation and Forerunner of His Beauty. He had also referred to Himself as the Báb's Beloved and the Báb as Bahá'u'lláh's Beloved. The twin Feasts are identical, yet the believers must celebrate both." As to the station of the Báb, the beloved Guardian quoted: "Point round Whom the realities of the Prophets and Messengers revolve."⁶⁷ He continued: "In America the Assemblies exchange greetings by telegram. In Bombay, India, the Bahá'ís invite the government authorities to their celebrations. I have received a greeting from America." The beloved Guardian spoke in detail on the significance of the Mansion of Bahjí, its past history, the different stages that the Faith has to pass through before it reaches to the Bahá'í Commonwealth. Gems of knowledge and guidance poured from the lips of the Sign of God on Earth. He assured us that the promises of Bahá'u'lláh will surely be fulfilled. I was overwhelmed when he bade me to chant a prayer. To be brief, this was truly a heavenly reunion.

The beloved Guardian requested that the Tablet of the Feast be chanted and urged that on such occasions the specific prayers and Tablets are to be recited. Then he quoted from Bahá'u'lláh a

passage on the significance of the night journey of Muḥammad and the station of Bahá'u'lláh already referred to. The passage explains that Muḥammad, in His flight, took 70 thousand years (as the Muslims believe) until He reached the Threshold of Bahá'u'lláh. After repeating that passage, He waved his hand, pointing to the Shrine and said, "This is the exalted station of this Holy of Holies, which signifies the glory of this Manifestation." The beloved Guardian then proceeded to the Holy Shrine. When I entered I found him in the entrance way, now the inner court. From a vial of attar of roses, he anointed each one who entered. While being anointed, he said to me in a low voice: "Chant prayer." The beloved Shoghi Effendi proceeded directly along the inner garden of the Shrine, walking around it until he reached the door of the Holy Tomb, where he placed his forehead on the Holy Threshold and bade everyone to sit and directed me to chant. I chanted a prayer in praise and thanksgiving to God that the light of His Sun of Mercy had shed over the world of creation and His blessings are pouring forth their rain. I also chanted a prayer from the beloved Guardian himself. The beloved Shoghi Effendi then rose on his knees. His voice, resonant and haunting, was lifted in the Tablet of Visitation.

The praise which hath dawned from Thy most august Self, and the glory which hath shone forth from Thy most effulgent Beauty, rest upon Thee. . .⁶⁸

He continued chanting the Tablet of Visitation as far as:

Waft, then, unto me, O my God and my Beloved, from the right hand of Thy mercy and Thy loving kindness, the holy breaths of Thy favors, that they may draw me away from myself and from the world unto the courts of Thy nearness and Thy presence.⁶⁹

whereupon he paused. He again continued until:

The remembrance of God and His praise, and the glory of God and His splendor, rest upon Thee, O Thou who art His Beauty!⁷⁰

when he paused again, as if overwhelmed and entranced. After the completion of the Tablet of Visitation, he remained silent for a few moments, proceeded to the Holy Threshold, bent his blessed knees and placed his forehead on the Threshold. Only a few moments passed with the believers standing and witnessing that memorable, precious commemoration.

Then the beloved Shoghi Effendi, without removing his eyes from the Holy Threshold, walked backwards to the door. This completed a circumambulation around the inner court of the Shrine.

Only Bahá'u'lláh knows what passed between Him and His beloved Guardian on these occasions. However, one could feel, within the Shrine in the presence of the beloved Shoghi Effendi, that because of his intercession, every prayer would be answered. How sweet, how very sweet the melody of his voice which rings in the ears till the last breath of life! May we attain his good pleasure! May he ever look compassionately upon us with his exhilarating glance and cheer our hearts!

The Ocean of Light

"The Ancient Beauty" Who "hath consented to be bound with

chains that mankind may be released from its bondage, and hath accepted to be made a prisoner within the most mighty Stronghold that the whole world may attain unto true liberty"⁷¹ is no longer "subjected to the abasement of a dungeon".⁷² He rests in the Haram-i-Aqdas (the Most Holy Sanctuary) in the midmost of Jannat-i-Abhá (Abhá paradise) as designated by the beloved Guardian. God has already fulfilled His promise, the promise Bahá'u'lláh heard in the Siyáh-Chál:

Verily, We shall render Thee victorious by Thyself and by Thy pen. Grieve Thou not for that which hath befallen Thee . . . Ere long will God raise up the treasures of the earth—men who will aid Thee through Thyself and through Thy Name. . . .⁷³

Bahá'u'lláh was from Núr* (i.e. *Light*) and "Bahá" signifies *Light*; thus, "Light upon light"⁷⁴ in the Súrih of Núr in the Qur'án fulfilled in Bahá'u'lláh from Núr.**

His Holy Shrine, the Holy of Holies, is the Ocean of Light (Daryá-yi-Núr),*** so designated by the beloved Shoghi Effendi, which floods the light over the whole creation. "God is the LIGHT of the Heavens and of the Earth."⁷⁵

This Ocean of Light has taken the Mountain of Light (Kúh-i-Núr*** the Shrine of the Báb), under Its shadow. The Queen of Carmel, facing this Ocean, is seated on Her throne of majesty and dignity in the midmost Supreme Paradise (Firdaws-i-A'lá)****, the spot blessed and designated by Bahá'u'lláh Himself. Her face is toward the Qiblih that the Báb Himself anticipated. Her breast is ornamented with the Greatest Holy Name.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Mystery of God, Whose Station is unique and unparalleled in the annals of all religions, rests by the side of the Báb and faces the Ocean of Light (the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh).

Missing in that vicinity is the resting place of the beloved Shoghi Effendi, who, for an unknown wisdom, or perhaps because of his utmost modesty, has rested since his passing in 1957 in London, far, far away from the Holy Land. However, it seems

as if Bahá'u'lláh rewarded His beloved Guardian, since the Centenary Jubilee was held there under his shadow in 1963, right after The Universal House of Justice came into existence, as one of the choicest fruits of his labors and of his Ten Year Crusade.

Again, facing the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, His beloved daughter, the Geatest Holy Leaf; His martyred Son "created of the light of Bahá",⁷⁶ the Purest Branch; and His dearly-loved Consort, who is "His companion in every one of His worlds",⁷⁷ the Navváb, rest in peace and praise in the Monument gardens created in their honor by the beloved Shoghi Effendi fulfilling the promise of God†.

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh is shaking "the world's equilibrium"⁷⁸ before our very eyes. His Ark has set sail on God's Holy Mountain and His Laws are beginning to flow to the whole world. The Seat of Legislation is in process of construction around the Arc already prepared by the beloved Shoghi Effendi and the "people of Bahá"⁷⁹ (House of Justice), the dwellers of the Ark mentioned in the Tablet of Carmel are calling "the people of Bahá"‡⁸⁰ (we Bahá'ís) to participate in that glorious project.

Beloved friends: We are living in the Most Glorious Day, the Day in which the kingdom of God on earth, long ago prophesied by Jesus Christ is taking shape. The vibration of the Revelation of

* The native land of Bahá'u'lláh.

** Istidlaliyyih Na'im p. 68. See also Psalms 36:9.

*** Daryá-yi-Núr and Kúh-i-Núr, the Twin Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb as designated by the beloved Guardian (also the titles of the two biggest diamonds in the world).

**** Designated by the beloved Guardian.

† Isaiah, Chapter 54.

‡ The dwellers of the Crimson Ark "which God hath ordained in the Qayyúm-i-Asmá for the people of Bahá."⁸⁰

The Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, clearly showing the windows all around it just under the roof which was constructed by Qulám-'Alí.



Bahá'u'lláh "has pierced the gloom" of the walls of "that pestilential pit"⁸¹ and has reached to all corners of the world. His love is penetrating deep into the hearts of men from amongst all nations, classes, races, colors and religious backgrounds and "soon will all that dwell on earth be enlisted under" His banner.⁸² This is the Day about which 'Abdu'l-Bahá writes:

The holy realities of the Concourse on high yearn, in this day, in the Most Exalted Paradise, to return unto this world, so that they may be aided to render some service to the threshold of the Abhá Beauty, and arise to demonstrate their servitude to His sacred Threshold.⁸³

What a glory to serve Bahá'u'lláh!

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