

Letters of THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF

Bahiyih Kkanum

Translated from Persian



O my dear sister! I have read what you wrote, and as I became aware of the content, I wept bitter tears. Then I carried the letter itself to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and He read it from beginning to end. These terrible events in Yazd call for cries and lamentation, and the shedding of tears of fire.

Although 'Alí's foes, on the plains of Karbilá, came as a rushing torrent of affliction against the Prince of Martyrs", and even as ravening wolves, tore at the breasts of the favoured ones of the Court of Holiness, and wreaked their hate upon them and lifted their heads onto pikes—they leading out an expedition against the hapless victims, and carrying away all that these possessed—yet the span of that agony at Karbilá was but from the morning until noon, while the ordeal of the martyrs of Yazd lasted one entire month. And further, the companions of the Prince of Martyrs—may the souls of all those killed on the holy Path be offered up for him!—made to defend themselves, and each one of them felled a number of those foes of 'Alí's House, spilled out the others' blood, before being martyred themselves. But these innocent victims of Yazd looked on their murderers with smiles, and gently welcomed them, and in exchange for the swords' blows offered honey and milk. Those set the blade to the victims' throats, but the martyrs presented them with sweets; those cursed and vilified them, while the martyrs implored God to forgive their murderers.

Although the slain on God's path at Karbilá were truly victims, helpless, innocent, so that the Concourse on High wept fiery tears over what the tyrants did in the desert there, still, we know that before every one of those great martyrs, some who battled against them fell down and died. But the martyrs of Yazd, at the onslaught of the foe, and under the tyrant's sword, uttered not even an unseemly word...

Truly the harried survivors of these wronged ones have been subjected to the severest of ordeals, nor can any balm be found to soothe their wound, nor is there any antidote against this lethal drink. For them, every new morning is a new martyrdom.

Praise be to God, through the grace and favour of the Abhá Beauty—may all souls be offered up for those who are slain upon His path—the friends everywhere have arisen to do what they can for these survivors. But whatever we may do in such circumstances and however much we may sacrifice, it is still not enough, and they merit more. I hope that, with the confirmations of the Abhá Kingdom, we may be enabled to offer up our hearts and souls for the children of the martyrs, and think of ourselves as the servants of those noble ones.

Notes:

Dhi'l-Qádir 1321 A.H. (19 January-17 February 1904 A.D.), to a believer in Tíhrán



TRANSLATION

" The Imám Ḥusayn.