

Letters of THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF

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Translated from Persian



'O God, My God! Thou hast lighted the lamp of Thy Cause with the oil of wisdom; protect it from contrary winds. The lamp is Thine and the glass is Thine, and all things in the heavens and on earth are in the grasp of Thy power.'

O servants of the Abhá Beauty's sacred Threshold, O beloved friends of 'Abdu'l-Bahá!

It is well known that from the earliest dawning of the Sun of Revelation, until the setting of the holy Covenant's Orb, the Ark of the Faith has continuously been battered by great waves of affliction, and beaten by calamity's storms. Tempest and whirlwind have ever assailed this holy Tree.

Still, the exalted Star has continued on its destined journey, and despite the piled-up clouds of hate and error, its rays of grace have illumined the whole earth.

The Ark of Salvation was made the safe refuge of the righteous, and the holy Tree was hung with bright, immortal fruit, so that the honeyed yield of the love of God is sweet on the lips of His people. Out of the grace of the Blessed Beauty, eyes began to see, and ears to hear, and through the bounty of 'Abdu'l-Bahá the spirits turned vigilant, and souls awoke, and to the hearts were divine mysteries confided, and individuals became day-springs of light.

And for ever and ever, time without end, the glance of God's bounty and bestowal is, from the hidden world above, unceasingly cast down, and He watches over us with favour and grace. It behoves us, then, to offer up thanks with every breath, and to be blissful at all times.

Although the towering citadel of God's Cause is upraised on foundations of iron, and His Word is founded on authority and power, and the loyal and firm in His Covenant, through the blessings of the Abhá Paradise, stand immovable as the mountains, and are fast-rooted in their love—still, the hurricanes of tests are mighty as well, and from every side comes the thundering roar of violent commotions and bitter trials. From these, at every moment each one of us should beg of God to defend and protect us.

Let us call to mind the clear statements and the warnings revealed by the Blessed Beauty, and the explanations and commentaries of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, particularly as found in His Will and Testament. This Testament was the last song of that Dove of the Rose-garden of Eternity, and He sang it on the branch of the Tree of bestowal and grace. It was His principal gift, indeed the greatest of all splendours that radiated forth from that Day-Star of bounty, out of the firmament of His bestowals. This Testament was the strong barricade built by the blessed hands of that wronged, that peerless One, to protect the garden of God's Faith. It was the mighty stronghold



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circling the edifice of the Law of God. This was an overflowing treasure which the Beloved freely gave, a goodly and precious legacy, left by Him to the people of Bahá. In all the world, no gift could equal this; no dazzling gem could rival such a precious pearl.

With His own pen, He designated as Guardian of the Cause of God, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, the Chosen Branch, and made him the 'blest and sacred bough that hath branched out from the Twin Holy Trees,' to be the one to whom all must turn, the centre and focus of all on earth.

In unmistakable terms did He set forth the obligations and elucidated the nature of the institutions of God's Holy Faith. He laid hold of discord's tree and brought it down. He for ever shut the door on conflicting interpretations and views. With every breath ought we to offer praise and thanks to the God of Grace for this bestowal. It is incumbent upon us to read and meditate on the contents of the Will and Testament at all times, and implore God at His Holy Threshold that He will aid us to carry out whatsoever it ordains.

A few days ago I sent out a general letter. A detailed, and recent, letter from the Guardian to all the people of Bahá was likewise sent out, and it is certain that you will be reading it; it is essential to circulate it among all the friends. What I mean is, that because of my great and spiritual love for you, the steadfast lovers of God and His Covenant, I have now set about writing this present letter as well. I would like to remind the friends of these words from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament, as written down by His pen of bounty: 'No doubt every vainglorious one that purposeth dissension and discord will not openly declare his evil purposes, nay rather, even as impure gold, would he seize upon divers measures and various pretexts that he may separate the gathering of the people of Bahá.' In another Tablet He calls on us to understand the intent of every individual by the course of his speech, and to see through his purpose. And from the Blessed Beauty: 'Place not your trust in every new arrival, and believe not every speaker.'

Over and over, in countless Tablets, do we find the like of these precepts. It is obvious that the purpose behind them is to awaken and warn the people of Bahá, so that the mighty citadel of the Cause will remain safe and secure from the plottings of those with evil intent, and the bright lamp of His Word will be shielded from the contrary winds unloosed by those who follow their evil passions and corrupt desires.

It is irrevocably decreed that whatsoever has been revealed and written down by the Supreme Pen and the holy hand of 'Abdu'l-Bahá will come to pass and be fully realized in this world, wherefore does it behove the people of Bahá, the souls attracted to His Splendour, to become all eyes and ears, and to be in body and soul and limbs and members all sagacity and prudence. Addressing the believers, Christ tells them: 'Be ye harmless as the submissive dove, and wise as the serpent.'

In this momentous matter there must be no laxity, no inattention, for a whisper might become an axe laid to the root of the Tree of the Faith—a word from an ambitious soul could be a spark tossed into the harvest of the people of Bahá. We take refuge with God! May He guard us ever, from the recklessness of the insistent self.

For the harbouring of an evil purpose is a disease which shuts out the individual from all the blessings of Heaven, and casts him deep into the pit of perdition, of utter ruin. The point to make

is that anyone, high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlettered, although to all appearances he may be a jewel among men, and the fine flower of all that is best—if he gives utterance to some pronouncement or speaks some word from which can be detected the scent of self-worship, or a malicious and evil purpose, his aim is to disintegrate the Word of God and disperse the gathering of the people of Bahá. From such individuals it is a solemn obligation to turn away; it is an inescapable duty to pay no heed whatever to their claims.

The clear promises of God, both His tidings of joy and His warnings, are being fulfilled, and it is inevitable that just as the sweet musk-laden winds of the Abhá Paradise are beginning to blow, and the flames of God's love to spread, so too must wintry blasts and icy breaths begin to fill the air. You must therefore exert superhuman powers to guard the Cause of God, and beg humbly and with a contrite heart for help from the Kingdom on High.

Although up to now, because of the dictates of wisdom, the Will and Testament has not been in general circulation, and has been entrusted only to the Spiritual Assemblies of the various countries, at this time a photocopy has been made from the Master's original Text, which is in His own hand, and it will soon be sent out, to increase the spiritual joy of you who are essences of loyalty and trust, that every individual believer, every steadfast one in the Covenant who so desires, may read it and make a copy of it. Upon you be the Glory of the All-Glorious.

Notes:

3 Shawwal 1342 A.H. (8 May 1924 A.D.), to the Friends of God and the Maidservants of the Merciful