

The Invocation “Is There Any Remover of Difficulties Save God...”

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There is an ancient precedent for invocations in the divine religions. In the Bahá’í Faith, too, numerous invocations have been revealed for various occasions, among them “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!” Although this invocation has yet to be found in the available manuscripts of the Báb’s Writings, there are references to it in historical texts, and it is on the basis of the credibility of these references that it has been translated and included in the compilation *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*.

The information we have at our disposal concerning this invocation comes from the letters of Mírzá Áqá Ján, who was among the first to recognize the Promised One of the Bayán in Baghdád (*God Passes By*, p. 119). The gist of the matter, as Mírzá Áqá Ján has described it, indicates that the aforementioned invocation was commonly known to the first Bábís in Baghdád, including Bahá’u’lláh, Who emphatically instructed that it be repeatedly recited by day and by night—and in reality, this practice should be regarded as a reminder to the faithful, especially if we bear in mind that Bahá’u’lláh enjoined it before He withdrew to the Kurdish mountains of Sulaymáníyyih, and that He had not yet written or otherwise disclosed anything whatsoever about His blessed Cause at the time. In those days, the authority of Mírzá Yahyá was unquestioned, and the strengthening support which Bahá’u’lláh lent him was given unconditionally. Yet it was at that very time that, due to various reasons, the Bábís were plundering the wealth and stealing the possessions of pilgrims to the holy Shí’ih shrines in ‘Iráq and the residents of their cities. It can be inferred from Bahá’u’lláh’s remarks to Mírzá Áqá Ján that He disapproved of the behavior of the Bábís, and reminded them that divine relief was contingent on the advent of the Promised One of the Bayán. It is not necessary to explain that, according to Shí’ih belief and the promises of the holy Imáms, the relief of the family of the Prophet Muḥammad is none other than the appearance of the Qá’im, and it is for this reason that the mention of such relief and the supplication that it be granted are especially relevant to entreaties for the Promised Advent to occur.

With this preliminary context in mind, we might consider that, if there had not been any precedent for this invocation, Bahá’u’lláh—Who in spite of all His renown and centrality among the Bábís was not regarded by them in those days as a possessor of authority or a Manifestation of God—would not have placed such great emphasis on it. It is probably the case

that the revelation of a new invocation or prayer [from Bahá'u'lláh] would likewise not have been accepted or implemented, and consequently Bahá'u'lláh would have naturally refrained from so insistently and emphatically instructing that it be adopted.

At any rate, this invocation has gained currency in the Cause of God, and with it the Bahá'ís derive assistance and spirituality in all kinds of situations.