Epistle of the Báb Revealed for Mullá Ḥusayn: Concerning the Practice of Dissimulation, Patience, and the Reward of the Faithful

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Introduction and background:

This profound Epistle of the Báb, revealed for Mullá Ḥusayn, though its precise place and date of revelation remain unknown, stands as a luminous testament to the principles of steadfastness, spiritual discernment, and the guarded exercise of faith under trial. In this remarkable communication, the Báb expounds upon the enduring nature of knowledge, which is wholly the gift of God, and the perpetual presence of His Proof upon the earth, whether manifest yet disregarded, or concealed and veiled in fear.

The Epistle extols the rare and great souls who adhere steadfastly to the guidance of the Imáms, whose lives are disciplined by the precepts of truth and who walk unfalteringly in the path of righteousness. To such chosen souls, knowledge descends as the very reality of faith, their spirits attuned to the guidance of the learned, finding gentleness where others perceive harshness, and taking solace in that from which the deniers recoil and the transgressors spurn.

The Báb emphasizes the necessity of dissimulation—patience and prudence under adversity—as a spiritual safeguard, for it is through such measures that the faithful preserve the integrity of their religion and the security of their souls amidst the dominion of falsehood. He affirms that God's truth is ultimately established by His words, while falsehood is obliterated; and He exults in the patience and longing of the faithful, anticipating the hour when the dominion of Truth shall be fully manifested, and when all the righteous shall be gathered in the Gardens of Eternity.

Embedded within this Epistle are profound quotations from the Imáms themselves, reinforcing the spiritual precepts of endurance, discretion, and unwavering adherence to the Cause. These sayings serve both as a counsel and a warning: that trials and tribulations are inevitable, that hearts may recoil at the discourse of the faithful, and that only those steadfast and discerning shall endure, ultimately sharing in the reward decreed by God.

Thus, this Epistle is at once a revelation of guidance to Mullá Ḥusayn, an exhortation to the followers of the Faith, and a luminous beacon, proclaiming the principles of patience, spiritual insight, and the guarded practice of devotion that secures the soul in the presence of both adversity and divine Providence.

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This provisional translation—based on a manuscript copy preserved in the Iran National Bahá'í Archives (INBA), Vol. 91, pp. 4-6—is attentive to the nuances of the original Arabic, seeks to render faithfully both the letter and spirit of the Báb's words, preserving the elevated diction, scriptural tone, and profound theological insight characteristic of His revelation.

Traditions recorded upon a sheet associated with Mullá Ḥusayn—may God, exalted be He, deliver him[2]

Thus, doth the Báb reveal:

" In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

'Alí—peace be upon Him—hath said: O my God! Verily I know that knowledge is wholly Thy gift, and that its sources are never severed; and verily Thou never leavest Thy earth devoid of a Proof from Thee unto Thy creatures—whether manifest yet not obeyed, or fearful and concealed—that Thy proof be not annulled, nor Thy Chosen Ones led astray after Thou hast guided them. Nay—where are they, and how few are they in number, yet how great are they in the sight of God, glorified be His remembrance, the All-Powerful! They who follow the leaders of religion, the guiding Imáms—they who are refined by their precepts and tread in their path.

Then doth knowledge assail them with the very reality of faith, and their souls respond unto the leaders of knowledge, and they find gentle, in their discourse, that which others deem harsh, and they take comfort in that from which the deniers recoil, and which the transgressors spurn. These are the followers of the learned. They consorted with the people of the world in obedience unto God, blessed and exalted be He, and unto His Chosen Ones.

And they practised dissimulation in their religion, out of fear of their enemy. Yet their souls are suspended in the Supreme Abode. Their learned ones and their followers are mute and silent during the dominion of falsehood, awaiting the sovereignty of Truth.

And God establisheth the Truth by His Words, and He obliterateth falsehood. Ha, ha![3] Blessed are they for their patience in their religion during the time of their truce, and how I long to behold them in the hour of the manifestation of their dominion!

May God gather Us and them together in the Gardens of Eden, together with such as are righteous among their fathers, their spouses, and their offspring.

And Abú 'Abdulláh—peace be upon Him—hath said: He Who is the Possessor of this Cause—none nameth Him by His name save an unbeliever.

And He—peace be upon Him—hath said: By God! Our Cause is more manifest than this sun.

[2] Heading added by copyist or later compiler. While this line appears at the top of the manuscript, it is likely a descriptive note indicating the content of the Epistle rather than part of the Báb's original text.

[3] The interjection "*Ha, ha*" (ها، ها) appearing in this passage is drawn from the corresponding Hadith of ʿAlí—peace be upon Him—cited in al-Kāfī (Vol. 1, p. 30). It is not a scribal error. Rather, it serves as a particle of exclamation and aspiration, expressing profound delight and eager anticipation at the triumph of Truth and the reward of the patient believers. In classical Arabic, such interjections are often used to heighten the spiritual and rhetorical force of a statement. Here, immediately following the assertion that God "*establisheth the Truth by His Words and obliterateth falsehood*," the repeated Ha, ha emphasizes both the certainty of divine justice and the joyful anticipation of the faithful. It should not be understood as laughter, but as a spiritual exclamation conveying longing, approval, and exalted emotion.

And ar-Riḍá—peace be upon Him—hath said: There is none among our Shí'ah who is tested by an affliction, nor who complaineth thereof, yet endureth patiently, but that God writeth for him the reward of a thousand martyrs.

From Abú Ja'far—peace be upon Him—it is reported that He said: Verily, your discourse is such that the hearts of men indeed recoil from it. Whoso acknowledgeth it—augment him therein; and whoso denieth it—leave him be.

For there must needs be a trial, wherein every inner circle shall fall away; it shall penetrate so deeply that even he who splitteth a hair into two shall fall therein, until none remain save Us and Our Shí'ah.

And He—peace be upon Him—hath said: Associate with them outwardly, but oppose them inwardly when the matter is trivial or unworthy.

And He—peace be upon Him—hath said: Guard your religion and veil it through dissimulation, for he who hath no dissimulation hath no faith.

The people were enjoined with two things, yet they squandered them, and thus their insight into them came to naught: Patience and concealment.

And He—peace be upon Him—hath said: God's leave is with thee—therefore do whatsoever thou willest, for He is indeed the All-Aware, the All-Knowing.

This is the Book that hath come unto Me—praise be unto God, the Lord of all worlds."

Epistle of the Báb Revealed for Mullá Ḥusayn
(According to a Typed Copy of the Manuscript)

الاحاديث المكتوبة فی ورقة ملا حسين سلمه الله تعالی

بسم الله الرّحمن الرّحيم

قال علی علیه السلام اللهم و انی لاعلم ان العلم لا یأرزکله و لا ینقطع موادّه و انک لا تخلی ارضک من حجه لک علی خلقک ظاهر لیس بالمطاع او خائف مغمود کی لا تبطل حجتک و لاتضل اولیائک بعد اذ هدیتهم بَلْ أَیْنَ هُمْ و کم اولئک الاقلون عددا و الاعظمون عند الله جل ذکره قَدِیرًا المتبعون لقاده الدین الائمه الهادین* الذین یتادبون بادابهم و ینهجون نهجهم فعند ذلک یهجم بهم العلم علی حقیقة الایمان فتستجیب ارواحهم لقاده العلم و یستلینون فیی حدیثهم ماستوعر علی غیرهم و یانسون بما استوحش منه المکذبون واباه المسرفون اولئک اتباع العلماء صحبوا اهل الدنیا ~~واباه المسرفون~~[4] بطاعه الله تبارک و تعالی و لاولیائه و دانوا بالتقیه عن دینهم و الخوف من عدوّهم فارواحهم معلقه بالمحل الاعلی فعلماهمّ و اتباعهم خرس صمت فی دولته الباطل منتظرون لدوله الحق و سیحق الله الحق بکلماته ویمحق الباطل ها, ها, طوبی لهم علی صبرهم علی دینهم فی حال هدیتهم و یا شوقا الی رؤیتهم فی حال ظهور دولتهم و سیجمعنا الله و ایاهم فی جنّات عدن و من صلح من ابائهم و ازواجهم و ذرّیاتهم فقال ابی عبدالله علیه السلام صاحب هذا الامر رجل لا یسمّیه باسمه الاّ کافر و قال علیه السّلام و الله انّ امرنا ابین من هذا الشّمس و قال الرضا علیه السّلام انه لیس من احد فی شیعتنا ابتلی[5] ببلیّه او یشتکی فیصبرعلی ذلک الاّ کتب الله له اجر الف شهید عن ابی جعفر علیه السّلام قال ان حدیثکم هذه لتشمئز[6] منه قلوب الرّجال فمن اقربه فزیدوه و من انکره فذروه انه لابد ان یکون فتنه یسقط فیها کل بطانه ولیجه حتی یسقط فیها من یشق بشعرتین حتی لا یبقی الاّ نحن و شیعتنا و قال علیه السّلام خالطوهم بالبرانیه و خالفواهم بالجوانیه اذا کانت الامره صبیانیه[7] و قال علیه السلام اتقوا الله علی دینکم و احجبوا بالتقیه فانه لا ایمان لمن لا تقیّه له و قال علیه السلام امر النّاس بخصلتین فیضیعوهما فصاروا منهما علی غیر شیء الصبر والکتمان و قال علیه السلام اذن الله معاک فافعل ما شئت فانه لخبیر الکتاب الوارد علیّ والحمد لله ربّ العالمین

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[4] In a copy of the manuscript preserved in the Iran National Bahá'í Archives (INBA), the phrase **واباه المسرفون** is crossed out, indicating that the scribe likely recognized it as an error. Consequently, this phrase has not been rendered in the present provisional translation.

[5] In a copy of the manuscript preserved in the Iran National Bahá'í Archives (INBA), the word appears as **بتلی** rather than the standard classical form **ابتلی**; the meaning, however, remains "tested."

[6] In a copy of the manuscript preserved in the Iran National Bahá'í Archives (INBA), the phrase **لتشمئز** appears instead as **تشماز**, which is likely a scribal error. The form **لتشمئز** has been adopted in this translation, as it better reflects the intended meaning—namely, "to recoil with aversion"—which is consistent with the context of the Hadith.

[7] In a copy of the manuscript preserved in the Iran National Bahá'í Archives (INBA), the phrase **اذا کانت المراة ظلمانیّة** appears; however, the correct reading, based on authoritative sources, is **اذا کانت الامره صبیانیه**. The former likely represents a copyist's error. The latter has been adopted in this translation, as it faithfully conveys the original meaning intended in the Hadith.