

Epistle of the Báb to His uncles, Haji Mirza Siyyid Muhammad (the Greater Uncle), and Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali (the Greatest Uncle)

(Mohammad Norozi)¹

19 Feb 2025

Introduction and background:

This paper offers a provisional translation of the Epistle revealed by the Báb, addressed to His maternal uncles Haji Mirza Siyyid Muhammad and Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali.

The Báb had three maternal uncles: Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali (Khal-i-'Azam, the Greatest Uncle), who was the middle brother and was martyred in Tehran in 1850; Haji Mirza Siyyid Muhammad (Khal-i-'Akbar, the Greater Uncle), the eldest of the three brothers, who received the Kitáb-i-Íqán, or the "Book of Certitude," in response to questions he posed to Bahá'u'lláh; and Haji Mirza Hassan Ali, the younger uncle.

This Epistle has been published on the page [196](#) in "Ahd-i A'la" (عهد اعلی), a book by Aboulghasim Afnan. In it, he titled this Epistle as the "Will of the Báb" (وصیت نامه حضرت باب). This is incorrect. I have addressed this matter (Will of the Báb) in another paper and the interested readers can access it [here](#).

The Epistle contains several instructions and some very powerful proclamations to His close and dear family members.

Based on its contents, this Epistle must have been written from Búshihr just after the Báb's return from the pilgrimage. This fact can be established from what the beloved Báb states in the Epistle. He says, *"Ask the house if they need help with the maidservants; we will send them from that island (i.e., Búshihr), God willing, soon."* (provisional translation by Mohammad Norozi).

The Báb states in the Khutbah of Jeddah (Sermon of Jeddah) that His pilgrimage to the Holy Land (Mecca) began on the 19 Ramadan 1260 A.H. / 2 October 1844 from Búshihr to Jeddah in the company of Quddus. On the 24 of Safar 1261 A.H. / 4 March 1845, the Báb and Quddus embarked on a ship from Jeddah to Búshihr.

Thus, the entire duration of His pilgrimage (from Búshihr to Búshihr) lasted for 152 days. The Báb states in the Persian Bayan 18:4 that *"the one who knew Him and performed pilgrimage (Hajj) with Him is the one who passed the number of eight unities (8 x 19 = 152)." (provisional translation by Mohammad Norozi)*. This may be a reference to the complete duration of His pilgrimage.

¹ Contact email address: nsm_dist@hotmail.com

The Báb arrived in Búshihr on the 8 of Jumādā al-Awwal 1261 A.H. / 14 May 1845. He stayed in Búshihr for just over a month before departing for Shíráz (Denis MacEoin, Sources for the Early Bábí Doctrine and History, p. 48).

With some degree of certainty, it can be stated that the date of its revelation from Búshihr was sometime between 14 May (His exact arrival date in Búshihr) and the end of June (His departure from Búshihr to Shíráz) 1845.

The **Appendix** contains the Epistle in its original Arabic language.

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Alif. Lám. Mím². Lo! This is the Book, a decree from the Remnant of God (Baqiyyat-Allāh)³, the Just and Manifest Leader (Imam)⁴. Read, O ye concourse of kindred⁵ the decree of innovations⁶, for verily it is the path of absolute certitude. No doubt, the Remembrance⁷ (i.e., the Báb) is a servant of the Remnant of God. By the leave of God, the spirit descends upon His heart (i.e., the Báb) as a proof and a witness over all mankind⁸.

No! by the Qur'án⁹, He is a servant of Who is the Testimony of God (Hujjat-Allāh)¹⁰ with the same proofs that people used to uphold. Is there anyone other than God who can send down similar verses? No! in the name of Sacred Month¹¹, that is the sovereign Truth, so thou may attain certitude in the Cause of God.

² These are disconnected letters and hold profound meaning. In the Qur'án, these letters appear at the beginning of each surah. Bahá'u'lláh states, "In the disconnected letters of the Qur'án the mysteries of the divine Essence are enshrined, and within their shells the pearls of His Unity are treasured." (Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Íqán, p. 202). He also expresses, "Outwardly they signify Muhammad Himself." (Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Íqán, p. 203). If anyone knew the meanings of these disconnected letters, they would have no doubt or uncertainty about the Divinity of Muhammad or the divine origin of His Book. They are "... the supreme instrument of guidance for attainment unto the loftiest summits of knowledge." (Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Íqán, p. 203).

³ Remnant of God (بقية الله) is one of the titles of the 12th Imam in the Shia sect of Islam. They believe that He is in hiding (occultation) and that eventually He will return to this world.

"I am the servant of God, the Manifest signs, the awaited Remnant of God, your Leader (Imam)..." (the Báb, Qayyum Al-Asma, Surah Al- 'Amā, provisional translation by Mohammad Norozi). "... He is but a servant of God and the Gate of the awaited Remnant of God, your true Master..." (the Báb, Qayyum Al-Asma, Surah Al-Huriyyah, provisional translation by Mohammad Norozi). "... O Remnant of God, I have redeemed you entirely..." (the Báb, Qayyum Al-Asma, Surah Al-Huzn, provisional translation by Mohammad Norozi). "O Qurratu'l- 'Ayn (delight of the eye)! Say: Verily I am the "Gate of God" and I give you to drink, by the leave of God, the sovereign Truth, of the crystal-pure waters of His Revelation which are gushing out from the incorruptible Fountain situate upon the Holy Mount. And those who earnestly strive after the One True God, let them then strive to attain this Gate. Verily God is potent over all things...." (selected writings of the Báb). "O Qurratu'l- 'Ayn (delight of the eye)! Say, I am the Bahá (Glory of God) and this is the path of God, call to God alone and to the awaited Remnant of God." (the Báb, Qayyum Al-Asma, Surah Al-Dhikr, provisional translation by Mohammad Norozi).

⁴ A reference to the Báb.

⁵ The Báb is addressing His close relatives.

⁶ The Báb informs and declares to His uncle and intimate family members that His purpose is to bring new teachings.

⁷ Remembrance (ذكر) is one of the titles of the Báb. "A careful study of the earlier writings of the Báb shows that the word *dhikr* is ultimately a reference to the Logos, the Word of God, the Primal Will, and the essence of all the Prophets of God. *Dhikr* simultaneously means "utterance," "making mention of," and "remembrance." But the Most Great *Dhikr* of God is the Greatest Word of God, the Greatest Remembrance of God. This is nothing less than the Word and the Will through which God calls reality into being. In all the stages of the Báb's writings, earlier and later alike, He frequently and systematically stresses that the term "Remembrance" refers to the station of the Primal Will." (Nader Saiedi, *Gate of the Heart*, p. 94).

⁸ Qur'án 16:2 "He sends down this spirit by His command through His angels on any of His servants whom He wills: Warn people that there is no deity but Me; so, hold Me alone in fear."

⁹ The Báb is making a solemn oath or promise, using the Qur'án as a sacred and authoritative source to emphasize the seriousness of His statement.

¹⁰ Testimony of God (حجة الله) is another title of the 12th Imam in the Shia sect of Islam.

¹¹ Muharram (Arabic: الْمُحَرَّم, romanized: al-Muharram) is the first month of the Islamic calendar. It is one of the four sacred months of the year when warfare is banned. "In the name of the Sacred Month" refers to invoking the sanctity of one of the four sacred months in the Islamic calendar.

O Uncle¹², today, nothing is lawful to me even to the extent of a grain of mustard seed except that it is offer up in the path of God. And God, thy Lord, is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. And thou assuredly knowest that I am indebted to My mother and thou art the one who¹³ knoweth its reason. And now I give all that God has written for me to them¹⁴ in the name of religion, to set my heart in God's decree, and I will surely be among those who are steadfast in God's covenant. But I spend my riches according to God's command. There is no God but Him, the Almighty, the Wise. And I am the guest of God's House¹⁵. There is no God except Him, the All-Sufficient, the Most Grateful.

So, O Uncle, settle my account if there is any dispute between me and anyone else, then distribute the money justly and write it down for them¹⁶. For today, I do not own an atom, and God is the All-Mighty the All-Wise. And whatever earthly possessions of this world God has written down for me are the verses of Remembrance from God to all the peoples of the world. The House¹⁷ is a sanctuary of justice, and it will be built one day like the Kaaba in the Sacred Mosque, and it will be a safe sanctuary for all who are humble¹⁸. Thus, this is God's decree for the Land on which I was born¹⁹, and it will be built like the house from what God has written down. That is His decree, and that is the best reward recorded in the divinely inscribed Book.

So, O Uncle²⁰, in the Land²¹, ask My mother if she would be pleased, and command someone to renovate the exterior of the house with the stones by the leave of thy Lord, for it is an old house. Then command whoever has a Naskh script²² to write the Surah of Al-

¹² Afnan, in his book *Ahd-i A'la* (p. 196), identifies this person as the Báb's uncle, Haji Mirza Siyyid Muhammad, titled the Greater Uncle. "Haji Mirza Siyyid Muhammad, traded with the Báb in Búshíhr. He was not a Bahá'í during the life of the Báb but staunchly supported and defended his nephew during his 6 years of ministry." (Nabil Zarandi, *the Dawn Breakers*).

¹³ Afnan, in his book *Ahd-i A'la* (p. 196), identifies this person as the Báb's wife, [K̲h̲ad̲j̲í̲j̲ih-Sul̲t̲án̲ Bagum (b. 1822 – d. September 15, 1882)].

¹⁴ Mother and wife of the Báb.

¹⁵ A reference to the Kaaba, sometimes referred to as al-Ka'ba al-Musharrafa, is a stone building at the center of Islam's most important mosque and holiest site, the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

¹⁶ Mother and wife of the Báb.

¹⁷ A reference to the Báb's house in Shíráz-Iran that was in the Shamsírgarhá (شمشیرگرها) Street, situated between Masjid-i Naw, near the Fath Mosque and the Jewish quarter of Shiraz. The Báb is saying that one day His house, like the Kaaba will be a place of pilgrimage.

¹⁸ "Say that the Sacred Mosque is the mosque in which the Book (i.e., *Qayyum Al-Asma*) was revealed... "(*Book of Recompense*, كتاب الجزاء, provisional translation by Mohammad Norozi).

¹⁹ The Báb was born in Shíráz and His place of birth was at His uncle's (Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali, titled the Greatest Uncle) house.

²⁰ Afnan, in his book *Ahd-i A'la* (p. 196), identifies this person as the Báb's uncle, Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali, titled the Greatest Uncle. "Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali was the guardian to the Báb, after the death of His own father in 1828. He was taught about the faith by Quddus who was the last Letter of the Living." (Nabil Zarandi, *the Dawn Breakers*).

²¹ Shíráz.

²² Naskh (نسخ) is one of the first scripts of Islamic calligraphy to develop, commonly used in writing administrative documents and for transcribing books, including the Qur'an, because of its easy legibility.

Ridvan²³ in twelve²⁴ gilded pages with gold ink, for I intend to replace what is customary²⁵ upon My return from the pilgrimage with verses of Truth. And we are men of trade²⁶, beholding the benefits of wealth, and indeed, that is the unbounded blessings.

And indeed, a letter from Our verses is more precious to Us than the dominion of this world and the next, for it was revealed from the presence of the Manifest Leader.

Ask the house²⁷, if they need help with the maidservants, we will send them from that island²⁸, God willing, soon. Sanctified is God, the Lord of the Mighty Throne from what they impute to Him, and peace be upon His Apostles, and praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds.

²³ One of the revealed works of the Báb. The date of its revelation is sometime between May 22 and September 9, 1844.

²⁴ A symbolic act, given that the number 12 is a representative of the 12th Imam (the Promised One) in the Shia sect of Islam.

²⁵ There are several customs and rituals that are practiced when pilgrims return from it. The family decorates the walls of their house with murals and drawings that inform everyone passing by that one of their members has been honored to perform Hajj and visit the Holy House. The murals depict the pilgrim circumambulating the Haram or standing in Arafat, with phrases are written such as "A blessed Hajj, an appreciated effort, and forgiven sins" and "Welcome to the pilgrims of the Holy House of God." Neighbors compliment him upon his arrival by distributing sweets and sherbet. The pilgrim gains respect in his village and is treated with honor, recognized on various occasions, and the title "Hajj" becomes part of his identity. The Bab is about to change this custom as a symbolic act to initiate a new beginning.

²⁶ The Báb and his family engaged in trade. The Báb says, "Then Thou didst enable Me to go to the seaport [Búshihr] where for five years I was engaged in trading with the goodly gifts of Thy realm and was occupied in that with which Thou hast favored Me through the wondrous essence of Thy loving-kindness." (the Báb, selections from the writings of the Báb). And in another place, He states that *"O merchants who dwell on land and sea, fear God in the most exalted Word and send to the greatest Remembrance whatever He has written with His hands or written with His permission to you in the days of His trade."* [Qayyum Al-Asma, Surat Al-Qaribah (28), provisional translation by Mohammad Norozi]. And *"know, O king, that I am an Ajami (non-Arab) Youth from the sect of just merchants."* (the Epistle of the Báb to Muhammad Shah from Mahku).

²⁷ A reference to His household members.

²⁸ Búshihr (Persian: بوشهر) is a port city in the Central District of Búshihr County, Búshihr province, Iran, serving as capital of the province, the county, and the district.

Appendix

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الم ذلك الكتاب حكم من بقية الله إمام عدل مبين أن اقرؤا يا أيها الملأ من ذوي القربى حكم البدع فإنه لصراط حق يقين أفذكر شك إنه عبد من بقية الله ينزل الروح من إذن الله على قلبه ليكون على العالمين حجة وشهيداً لا والقرآن إنه لعبد من حجة الله بمثل ما كان الناس ينطقون أفغير الله يقدر أن ينزل بمثل تلك الآيات لا والشهر الحرام فإنه لحق مثل ما كنتم في أمر الله لتوقفون

ألا يا أيها الخال إن اليوم لم يحل علي على قدر خردل من شيء إلا أن ينفق في سبيل الله وكان الله ربك لسميع عليم وإنك لتعلم بأن علي دين من أُمي ومن أنت تعلم حكمها وإنني الآن لأهب كل ما كتب الله لي إليهما بعد الدين لتثبت فؤادي من حكم الله ولأكونن في عهد الله لمن القائمين ولاكني أصرف في المال إذا شئت لأمر الله إنه لا إله إلا هو لعزیز حكيم وإنني أنا الضيف في البيت الله لا إله إلا هو لغني شكور

فيا أيها الخال فرق حسابي إن كان بيني وبين أحد من الناس ثم أنصف المال واكتب لهما فإن اليوم ما كنت مالك ذرة والله عزيز حكيم وإن ما كتب الله لي من مال الدنيا تلك الآيات ذكر من الله على العالمين جميعاً وإن البيت حرم العدل وإن له يوم يُبنى مثل الكعبة في المسجد الحرام وإنه حرم آمن للخاضعين جميعاً وكذلك حكم الله لأرض التي ولدت عليها فسوف يبنيهما مثل البيت من كتب الله ذلك الحكم له وإن ذلك أحسن الجزاء في أم الكتاب لمسطور

فيا أيها الخال في البلد أن اسئل من أُمي لو ترضى فأمر لأحد أن يُعمر ظاهر البيت مما يبذل بإذن ربك من حجر البر فإنه لبيت عتيق ثم أمر لمن له خط نسخ أن يكتب بماء الذهب سورة الرضوان في إثني عشر ورقات مذهبة فإني أردت أن تبدل ما يتعارف في رجح الحج بآيات الحق وإنا رجال من التجار نلاحظ نفع المال وإن ذلك لهو الفوز الكبير وإن حرقاً من آياتنا أعز عندنا من مُلك الآخرة والدنيا لأنه ينزل من لدن إمام مبين واسئل البيت أن احتجن بالملوكة نرسل إليهن من تلك الجزيرة إنشاء الله لمن قريب وسبحان الله رب العرش عما يصفون وسلام على المرسلين والحمد لله رب العالمين.