

An Epistle of the Báb to Muḥammad Sháh Qájár, Revealed in Búshihir

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1 August 2025

Introduction and background:

This sacred Epistle, addressed by the Báb to Muḥammad Sháh, was revealed during His brief yet momentous sojourn in the southern port city of Búshihir. “*This is the Letter from Búshihir to the King of Persia,*” He proclaims at the very outset, thereby affirming the place of its revelation in His own words. Composed entirely in Arabic, this Epistle dates from the period following His return from pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and marks a decisive juncture in the early unfoldment of His prophetic mission.

His arrival in Búshihir is recorded as 14 May 1845, as noted by *Denis MacEoin in Sources for the Early Bábí Doctrine and History* (p. 48). He remained there for approximately six weeks, departing for Shíráz on 25 June 1845.² The Epistle, then, must have been revealed between 14 May and 24 June 1845, during the concluding weeks of His sojourn before His return to His native city, Shíráz.

What follows is a provisional English rendering of this Epistle translated with utmost reverence and care. The original text is published in [‘Ahd-i A’lá, pp. 102-103](#).

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² The Báb revealed, in His own hand, a letter addressed to His uncle, Ḥájí Mírzá Siyyid ‘Alí—the Greatest Uncle—(‘Ahd-i A’lá, pp. 120–121, 150) on 24 Jamádí al-Thání 1261 A.H. (30 June 1845), from Konár Takhteh, enroute to Shíráz. In this letter, He records that He had departed from Búshihir on 19 Jamádí al-Thání 1261 A.H. (25 June 1845).

The Báb Reveals:

“This is the Letter from Búshihir to the King of Persia.

And verily God is thy Lord—there is none other God but Him—the All-Powerful, the All-Watchful. Peruse, O King, the Book of thy Lord, that thou mayest be numbered among the victorious.

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

Recite thou the Book of the Remembrance of the Name of thy Lord.³ There is none other God but Him, the Most Exalted, the Most Great. It is; indeed, a Book wherein is no doubt, sent down from the presence of the Manifest Imam (i.e., the Báb).

He, verily, is the Truth in the heavens and on the earth, summoning mankind unto the pure Religion of God, in accordance with the decree of a just and well-balanced Measure.

Verily, it is the Mystery⁴ enshrined in the Scriptures of the Prophets and the Messengers. He reciteth the verses of thy Lord from the Burning Bush on Sinai.⁵ There is none other God but Him! Say: It is Me alone Whom ye must hold in awe!

Indeed, He it is Who doth command in the Word of the Spirit, summoning mankind, by the decree of thy Lord, unto the solemnity of a Day whereof there is no doubt. And on that Day shall all be presented before God. Indeed, He is a Blessed Leaf sprung from the snow-white Tree, then from the yellow, and then from the crimson⁶—reciting the Book of thy Lord in every matter. There is none other God but Him! It is Me alone Whom ye must fear!

³ One of the titles of the Báb.

⁴ A reference to the Báb. In several of His Writings, He refers to Himself as the “Mystery,” the “Mystery of Mysteries,” the “Hidden Mystery,” and the “Mystery veiled within Mystery.”

⁵ The Báb frequently refers to Himself as the “Burning Bush,” a symbol drawn from the Qur’anic and Biblical accounts of Moses’ encounter with the divine on Mount Sinai. In one passage the Báb declares: “I am the Flame of that supernal Light that glowed upon Sinai in the gladsome Spot, and lay concealed in the midst of the Burning Bush.” *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, chap. XCIV.

⁶ Here the Báb is symbolically identified with the various colors of the Leaf, the Branch, and the Tree. These hues signify the synthesis, in His Person, of the four levels of the Divine Covenant. As noted by Nader Saiedi, the Báb employs a distinctive color symbolism in His Writings to represent successive stages of divine creative action: white stands for the Primal Will, yellow for Determination, green for Destiny, and crimson for Decree. This symbolic framework elucidates why the Báb is described, at once, as the Snow-White Tree, the Yellow Leaf, the Green Branch, and the Crimson Leaf of that Tree (*Gate of the Heart*, p. 137).

The likeness of the Light of thy Lord in the Book of God is even as a Robe of the Sun, upon every face of which are servants who have taken their station upon a Throne of Crimson Ruby.⁷

Round about it circle men whose countenances have grown as luminous as the face of snow-white glass. Can any countenance reflect aught save His Countenance? Glorified and exalted is He!

He summoneth none from among them except by His own Self. Even as such did God send forth the Prophets and the Messengers by His Command. Beware! The judgment is God's in every matter, and unto Him shall they all return.

Indeed, We had, in times past, sent down unto thee the Book of thy Lord—unchangeable is His decree—and on that Day shall the people find no refuge save the Remembrance of the Name of God.

Verily, the true believers are they who have believed in God and in His signs, and have followed the wondrous verses revealed from Our presence, upon a straight path.

But whoso turneth away from the Book of his Lord, after the signs have been clearly manifested unto him in truth—such a one, verily, is of the wrongdoers.

And indeed, from the day he heareth but a single letter from Our verses, God—thy Lord—shall accept no deed from anyone, unless he believeth in Our Servant⁸ and be numbered among those who prostrate themselves.

Indeed, they have disbelieved who have said: “The Word of God⁹ borroweth these verses from the Letters of the Qur’án.” Say: Glorified and exalted is He above that which they associate with Him!

Say: Were We to will it, We could assuredly reveal, in all things, that which the knowledge of thy Lord hath encompassed—verses like unto the former Qur’án—without the stir of thought or the movement of the Pen.

⁷ A profoundly symbolic passage, this verse encapsulates the Báb's theology of divine manifestation. The “Light of thy Lord in the Book of God” is likened to a radiant “Robe of the Sun,” signifying the all-encompassing majesty and brilliance of divine Revelation. The “servants” who dwell upon every face of this robe, enthroned upon “Crimson Ruby,” represent sanctified souls who have attained nearness to the Divine through steadfast immersion in His Word. In one passage He declares: “Indeed God hath created everywhere around this Gate oceans of divine elixir, tinged crimson with the essence of existence and vitalized through the animating power of the desired fruit; and for them God hath provided Arks of ruby, tender, crimson-colored, wherein none shall sail but the people of Bahá, by the leave of God, the Most Exalted; and verily He is the All-Glorious, the All-Wise.” *Selections from the Writings of the Báb, Chapter LVII.*

In the cosmological and symbolic framework of the Báb's Writings, “Crimson Ruby” frequently denotes the divine Essence, the mystery of sacrifice, or the apex of spiritual reality. Moreover, in the Báb's color-symbolism, the hue crimson is associated with the station of “Decree” (qaḍā'), the final and most consummate stage in the hierarchy of divine creative Will.

⁸ A reference to the Báb.

⁹ One of the titles of the Báb.

Knowest thou not that God—thy Lord—is, in truth, potent over all things?

Not a single Letter that proceedeth from the Hands of the Remembrance (i.e., the Báb) can be held as inferior to the verses of former times.

What hath befallen this people that they believe so little in the Signs of God?

What sign is greater than the verses of the Qur’án, which hath been sent down from the presence of the Almighty, the All-Wise?

Should all the peoples of the earth combine to produce the like of a single verse of that which We have revealed unto thee in this Book, they would assuredly fail, nor could they ever attain thereto — even were We to assist them with the like of themselves, through a Power Whose decree knoweth no end.

Nay, this is the very Truth, the truth undoubted and assured. And sufficient is God — and He Who hath revealed the verses from His presence — as a Witness between Me and thee.

O King!¹⁰ Follow thou the ordinance of thy Lord, and bear witness, through My verses, unto the Word of Justice,¹¹ that thou mayest be numbered with them that have attained.

Then prostrate thyself before thy Lord for that which We have revealed unto thee from His presence, that thou mayest be of them that are assured. Verily, thy Lord—exalted be He—hath willed that the Romans¹² and the greater part of the dwellers on earth should believe in His signs.

Champion the Cause of God, that thou mayest, on the Day of Resurrection, be numbered among them that have triumphed.

¹⁰ Muḥammad Sháh Qájár.

¹¹ “AL-‘Adl” (The Justice) is one of the Most Beautiful Names of God, conveying the divine attribute of Justice. In a broader sense within the sacred writings, it also signifies “Words from God” or “Divine Utterances.” The Báb previously addressed Muḥammad Sháh Qájár with reference to this name in the Qayyūm al-Asmā’ and in the Sūrat al-Mulk.

¹² The Báb’s reference to “the Romans” (al-Rūm) in this passage—despite the historical reality that cities such as Mecca, Karbala, and Najaf were under Ottoman rule in 1845—draws upon a well-established Qur’anic and literary convention. In the Qur’án, *al-Rūm* originally denoted the Byzantine Empire (cf. Qur’án 30:2–4), and over time came to symbolize imperial powers perceived as spiritually distant or oppositional to the path of divine truth. In Persian usage from the Safavid period onward, the term *Rūm* became a common designation for the Ottoman Empire. This was due in part to the Ottomans’ dominion over the former Byzantine heartlands, including Constantinople and Anatolia, and to the enduring geographical expression *Diyār al-Rūm* (“the lands of the Romans”), which remained current in both Persian and Arabic.

Thus, in the 19th-century Iranian-Shí’ah milieu, *Rūm* could signify not only a geopolitical reality but also a symbolic and eschatological category—particularly when evoked in a Qur’anic register. The Báb’s use of the term in this instance likely refers to the Ottoman authorities who controlled the sacred shrines of the Imáms, including the sanctuary of Imám Ḥusayn in Karbala. His choice of expression subtly intertwines scriptural resonance with contemporary socio-political critique, imbuing the reference with both theological weight and historical immediacy.

Know, O King, that I am but a youth of Persian lineage, from among the company of just merchants—unlettered, yet invested with a Cause whose knowledge none hath encompassed.

Verily, the True One hath chosen Me for His decree. There is none other God but Him, the All-Powerful, the Almighty.

Say: I have not forged a lie against the Truth, nor am I among the false Gates, the fabricators, and claimants, nor have I been remote from all the peoples of the world.

And verily, God hath withheld Me from all that wherein is wrought the work of Satan; never have I been engaged in any matter save by the leave of the Remnant of God,¹³ My Lord and Master.

And indeed, that Book which We have now sent down unto thee sufficeth as a testimony before the denizens of the heavens and the earth. And God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

And were God to send down the Qur’án as but a single verse, it would ill beseem any soul to utter a word concerning it, save he believe therein and be numbered among those who prostrate themselves in adoration.

And when this Book of thy Lord is presented before thee, command that they who have truly recognized the Oneness of God be assembled in the seat of thy might, and say: This is a Book from the Remembrance of God, sent down unto Me.

If ye be able to produce the like of a single verse thereof, then bring it forth. But if ye be powerless—and never shall ye be able—then know, of a certainty, that the Word of God is the Truth, and that He, verily, is upon a Straight Path.

O King! Know thou the decree of God, and be assured that all sovereignty is in the grasp of My Lord, even as a signet-ring in thy hand, which He turneth about as He pleaseth, in whatsoever manner He willeth. None can gainsay the decree of God; and God is, verily, the Almighty, the All-Subduing.

Rule thou with justice in the dominion vouchsafed unto thee, in accordance with the ordinance of thy Lord as revealed in the Book; for the Word of God hath never sought the dominion of this world, nor of the next, nor the seat of judgement assumed by the

¹³ The title *Baqiyatu’lláh* (“Remnant of God”)—traditionally associated in Twelver Shí’ism with the awaited Twelfth Imám, al-Mahdí—is repeatedly invoked by the Báb throughout the *Qayyúmu’l-Asmá*. Shoghi Effendi explicitly identified this designation as a reference to Bahá’u’lláh. In a letter written for Naw-Rúz 101 of the Bahá’í Era (March 21, 1944), the Guardian affirmed that this title—employed by the Báb in passages of pronounced apocalyptic and messianic tenor—foreshadowed the advent of Bahá’u’lláh, “Him Whom God shall make manifest.” In the *Qayyúmu’l-Asmá*, we read the following references to Bahá’u’lláh: “... *O Thou Remnant of God! I have sacrificed myself wholly for Thee: I have accepted curses for Thy sake, and have yearned for naught but martyrdom in the path of Thy love. Sufficient witness unto me is God, the Exalted, the Protector, the Ancient of Days.*” (The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh, p.3).

divines of righteousness. And God verily is Witness unto all things, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

Say: I have desired naught but God, thy Lord—there is none other God but Him, the Ever-Living, the Ancient of Days.

Yea, He hath willed that thou shouldst aid the Remembrance of God, that the East and the West of the earth may believe in the signs of thy Lord and be of them that are rightly guided.

Verily, the decree enshrined in but a single letter of that which hath been sent down from Our presence excelleth the dominion of this world and of the next, for it is a Revelation from One Who is the Almighty, the All-Wise

And verily, the Remembrance of God hath returned, by the leave of thy Lord, from the Sacred Land (Balad al-Ḥarām);¹⁴ and indeed He hath set His gaze upon the Holy Land.¹⁵ Behold, then, what thou perceivest concerning the Remembrance of God in the Holy Land under the dominion of the Romans. And God, verily, is the Almighty, the All-Praised.

We, indeed, have heard this day that the messenger¹⁶ hath been imprisoned in Baghdad. Seek him out at once, for he is, verily, exalted, and mighty.

And if thou findest no cause to concern thyself therein, then We desire the Throne of God to be established in thy dominion. Dispatch, therefore, the decree of reply, for He is, verily, nigh unto those who have descended.

We, moreover, have revealed a Book unto thee, that thou mayest command it to be written in an exquisite Naskh script,¹⁷ with golden ink, even as We have revealed it. Thereupon, dispatch the Book of thy Lord to the King of Rome, and thereafter unto all the kings, that We may discern which among them will believe in the decree of God and which among them will disbelieve.

Then shall We judge between them with justice, for God would never wrong a soul not even to the extent of a single atom. Verily, God is the All-Powerful, the All-Wise.

¹⁴ ‘The Sacred Land’ (al-Balad al-Ḥarām), by which is meant Mecca, and at times, the Sacred Mosque (al-Masjid al-Ḥarām).

¹⁵ ‘The Holy Land’ (al-arḍ al-muqaddasah) refers either to Shīrāz or to Karbilá; in this context, it signifies the sanctuary of Imám Ḥusayn (peace be upon Him) in Karbilá, which, at that time, was under Ottoman (Rūm) rule.

¹⁶ A reference to Mullá ‘Alí Bastámí, the second Letter of the Living, whom the Báb dispatched in August 1844 to ‘Iráq to proclaim the advent of the new Revelation to the people and ecclesiastical authorities of Karbilá and Najaf. There, he boldly disseminated the Writings of the Báb—particularly among the Shaykhís—calling upon them to recognize the Promised One. His fearless proclamation provoked fierce opposition, culminating in his arrest and the confiscation of the sacred texts in his possession.

¹⁷ Naskh: A classical Arabic script characterized by its clarity and legibility, traditionally used in the transcription of Qur’anic texts and Islamic manuscripts.

O King! Strengthen the messengers of the Servant of God,¹⁸ and then honour them; for, according to the decree of the Book, they are verily among the foremost of the near ones—this is indeed inscribed. And the decree of thy Lord is a binding Command.

Respond, then, to the Remembrance of God, in accordance with that which hath been enjoined in the Book, through the hands of those who wield authority in thy realm, without delay.

Glorified be thy Lord, the Lord of the heavens and the Throne, above all that which they ascribe unto Him. And peace be upon the Messengers! And praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds.”

¹⁸ The phrase “strengthen the messengers of the Servant of God” strongly suggests that this Epistle was delivered to the Sháh by one or more individuals who had embraced the Báb’s Cause and had been entrusted with its conveyance. The designation “the Servant of God” (*‘abd Alláh*) is a reference to the Báb Himself.

An Epistle of the Báb to Muḥammad Sháh Qájár, Revealed in Búshihir

(Original Arabic Texts, Transcribed from a Typed Manuscript)

الخط من ابوشهر الى سلطان العجم

و ان الله ربك لا اله الا هو لقوى حفيظ اقر ، يا ايها الملك كتاب ربك لتكونن من الفائزين

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

اقرء كتاب ذكر اسم ربك الذي لا اله الا هو العلي الكبير وانه لكتاب لا ريب فيه قد نزل من لدن امام مبين وانه لهو الحق في السموات والأرض يدعو الناس إلى دين الله الخالص من حكم قسطاس قويم وانه لهو السر في صحف النبيين والمرسلين يتلو آيات ربك عن شجرة السينا أن لا اله الا هو قل إياي فارهبون وانه لهو الأمر في كلمة الروح يدعو الناس بحكم ربك لشأن يوم لا ريب فيه وكل في ذلك اليوم على الله يعرضون وانه ورقة مباركة عن الشجرة البيضاء ثم الصفراء ثم الحمراء يتلو كتاب ربك في كل شأن لا اله الا هو إياي فاتقون وإن مثل نور ربك في كتاب الله كقمص شمس في كل وجه عبيد قد استقر على عرش ياقوت حمراء قد طاف في حولها رجال قد رقت وجوههم كوجه الزجاج البيضاء هل تحكي الوجوه دون الوجه سبحانه وتعالى ما يدعو نفساً منهم إلا من نفسه كذلك قد أرسل الله النبيين والمرسلين لأمره ألا إن الحكم لله في كل شأن وكل إليه يرجعون ولقد أرسلنا إليك من قبل كتاب ربك لا مبدل لحكمه ولن يجد الناس في ذلك اليوم من دون ذكر اسم الله ملتخداً إنما المؤمنون الذين آمنوا بالله وآياته وأتبعوا آيات البدع من لدنا على صراط قويم ومن يعرض من كتاب ربك بعد ما قد علم آياتنا على الحق فأولئك هم الظالمون وإن الله ربك لن يقبل من أحد عملاً من يوم الذي سمع حرفاً من آياتنا إلا أن يؤمن بعبادتنا وكان من الساجدين ولقد كفر الذين قالوا إن كلمة الله يأخذ تلك الآيات من أحرف القرآن قل سبحانه وتعالى عما يشركون قل لو نشاء لننزل في كل شيء قد أحاط علم ربك مثل قرآن الأول من دون فكر ولا سكون فلم ألم تعلم أن الله ربك قد كان على كل شيء مقتدرًا وإن حرفاً مما ينزل من يدي الذكر لم يعدل آيات الأولين فما لهؤلاء القوم لا يؤمنون بآيات الله قليلاً فأية أكبر من آيات القرآن الذي قد نزل من لدن عزيز حكيم ولو اجتمع الكل على أن يأتوا بمثل آية مما نزلنا إليك في كتابك هذا لن نستطيعن ولن يقدرن ولو كنا نمدهم بمثل أنفسهم بما لا نفاذ له من الأمر إلا أن ذلك لهو الحق اليقين وكفى بالله ومن نزل الآيات من لديه علي شهيداً

يا أيها الملك أن اتبع حكم ربك ثم اشهد في آياتي كلمة العدل لتكونن من الفائزين ثم اسجد لله ربك مما نزلنا إليك من عنده لتكونن من الموقنين وإن الله ربك قد شاء أن يؤمن الروم وأكثر أهل الأرض بآياته أن انصر دين الله لتكونن يوم القيمة لمن المنتصرين

أن اعلم يا أيها الملك إنني فتى عجمي من طائفة عدل التجار أمي على شأن لم يحط بعلمه أحد قد اختارني الحق لحكمه وانه لا اله الا هو لقوى عزيز قل ما كنت مفترى على الحق وما كنت بدعاً من الأبواب وما كنت عن العالمين بعيداً وإن الله قد منعني من كل شيء يعمل فيه عمل الشيطان وما كنت في شأن إلا بإذن بقية الله مولاي وإن ذلك الكتاب الذي نزلنا الآن إليك يكفي لدى الحجة أهل السموات والأرض والله سميع عليم ولو نزل الله القرآن آية واحدة فما لأحد أن يقول فيها حرفاً إلا أن يؤمن به وكان من الساجدين وإذا ورد عليك كتاب ربك هذا فأمر أن يحضر الموحدين مقر عزتك ثم قل هذا كتاب من ذكر الله نزل إلي إن استطعتم بمثل آية منه فاتوني وإن لم تقدروا ولن تفعلوا فاعلموا أن كلمة الله حق وأنه لعل صراط مستقيم يا أيها الملك أن اعرف حكم الله ثم اعلم أن كل الملك في يدي مولاي كمثل خاتم في يدك يقبله كيف يشاء كما يشاء ولا مرد لأمر الله والله قوي عزيز أن استقم على الملك بالعدل من حكم ربك في الكتاب فإن كلمة الله ما أراد ملك الدنيا ولا الآخرة ولا حكم الفتوى مثل علماء الحق والله شهيد عليم قل إنني أردت الله ربك وحده لا اله الا هو الحي القديم بلى قد أحب أن تنصر ذكر الله ليؤمنن شرق الأرض وغربها بآيات ربك وكانوا من المهتدين وإن حكم حرف مما ينزل من لدي لم يعدل ملك الآخرة والأولى لأنه تنزيل من عزيز حكيم

ولقد رجع ذكر الله بإذن ربك من بلد الحرام وانه قد أراد أرض المقدسة فانظر ماذا ترى في شأن ذكر الله على الأرض المقدسة في ملك الروم والله عزيز حميد ولقد سمعنا اليوم أن الرسول قد حُبس في البغداد أن اطلبه من قريب فإنه لعلي عزيز وإن لم ترى الشأن فيها نريد عرش الله في ملكك أن أرسل حكم الجواب فإنه لمن النازلين قريباً ولقد نزلنا كتاباً إليك لتأمر بأن يكتب

بمثل ما نزلنا فيه بالمداد الذهب على خط نسخ كريم ثم ترسل كتاب ربك إلى ملك الروم ثم إلى كل الملوك لنعلم أي طائفة منهم
قد صدقوا حكم الله وأي طائفة منهم قد كذبوا ثم نحكم بينهم بالقسط وما كان الله ليضلم نفسه بعض ذرة والله قوي حكيم
يا أيها الملك عزز رسل عبد الله ثم وقرهم فإتهم في حكم الكتاب لمن المقربين الأولين لمسطور وإن حكم ربك فرض أجب
ذكر الله في حكم ذلك الكتاب بأيدي أهل ملكك من قريب وسبحان الله رب السموات والعرش عما يصفون وسلام على
المرسلين والحمد لله رب العالمين