

9th Day of Riḍván Program

By Susan Gammage ¹

Opening Music: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jR9D1muo1cU>

1. Thou didst wish to celebrate the Day of Riḍván with a feast, and to have those present on that day engage in reciting Tablets with delight and joy, and thou didst request me to send thee a letter to be read on that day. My letter is this:

O ye beloved, and ye handmaids of the Merciful! This is the day when the Day-Star of Truth rose over the horizon of life, and its glory spread, and its brightness shone out with such power that it clove the dense and high-piled clouds and mounted the skies of the world in all its splendour. Hence do ye witness a new stirring throughout all created things.

See how, in this day, the scope of sciences and arts hath widened out, and what wondrous technical advances have been made, and to what a high degree the mind's powers have increased, and what stupendous inventions have appeared.

This age is indeed as a hundred other ages: should ye gather the yield of a hundred ages, and set that against the accumulated product of our times, the yield of this one era will prove greater than that of a hundred gone before. Take ye, for an example, the sum total of all the books that were ever written in ages past, and compare that with the books and treatises that our era hath produced: these books, 112 written in our day alone, far and away exceed the total number of volumes that have been written down the ages. See how powerful is the influence exerted by the Day-Star of the world upon the inner essence of all created things!

But alas, a thousand times alas! The eyes see it not, the ears are deaf, and the hearts and minds are oblivious of this supreme bestowal. Strive ye then, with all your hearts and souls, to awaken those who slumber, to cause the blind to see, and the dead to rise. (Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 111-112)

Listen to Story at: <http://sarahperceval.bandcamp.com/track/the-ridv-n-garden>

2. On the ninth day, the River settled down and the flood-waters receded, allowing those in the old eastern side of the City to cross the boat bridge. The family of Bahá'u'lláh moved into the Garden, and the River overflowed a second time. (<https://owen59.wordpress.com/2014/04/29/bahai-festival-of-ridvan/>)
3. Four days before the caravan was to set out, the Blessed Perfection called Abbas Effendi into his tent and told him that he himself was the one whose coming had been promised by the Bab - the Chosen of God, the Centre of the Covenant. A

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little later, and before leaving the garden, he selected from among his disciples four others, to whom he made the same declaration. He further said to these five that for the present he enjoined upon them secrecy as to this communication, as the time had not come for a public declaration; but that there were reasons which caused him to deem it necessary to make it at that time to a few whom he could trust. These reasons he did not state; but they are to my mind suggested by the subsequent events which I shall narrate farther on, and which I think he at that time anticipated, and in view of which he felt that he needed special protection. (Myron Henry Phelps and Bahiyyih Khanum, *Life and Teachings of Abbas Effendi*, p. 30. https://bahai-library.com/khanum_phelps_abbas_effendi)

4. Whilst He tarried in the Riḍván, the appointed time had arrived for the momentous proclamation. Bahá'u'lláh confided to the eldest son, 'Abbas, the Master, that He Himself was "He Whom God shall make Manifest," heralded by the Forerunner, the Báb. As the Master heard the soul-stirring words, and realized that His own beloved Father was He Who should educate mankind in universal conceptions, abolish prejudices, bring unity and the most Great Peace into the distracted world, establish the Kingdom of God upon this sad earth, by making religion again a healing spring for all woes of the world, He understood why the Manifestation had once again become the cause of evil men's hatred and malignant persecution.

As these things were pondered by the Master, His mind, well-endowed with a peculiar receptiveness that was inborn, and strengthened by the education given to Him by His Father, saw, as in a radiant vision, the world of the future, when the divine Message, having become known and comprehended by "men of goodwill," would change the heart of the world, and the Kingdom where God's will shall be done on earth - for which we have been praying for nigh two thousand years - would be established.

Henceforth a new joy and increased devotion to His Father, Bahá'u'lláh (The Glory of God) took possession of Him. He consecrated Himself, body and soul and spirit, to the sacred work of the Bahá'í Cause, spreading abroad the new message of Love and Justice, that message which His Holiness the Lord Christ had brought to man, and which had grown to disregard, forgetting his loyalty to the Lord of Compassion, and, as of old, worshipping the Golden Calf. (Munírih *Khánum* to Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway*, pp. 82-83)

5. From the time when the declaration was made to him at Baghdad Abbas Effendi seemed to constitute himself the special attendant, servant, and body-guard of his father. He guarded him day and night on this journey, riding by his wagon and watching near his tent. He thus had little sleep, and, being young, became extremely weary. His horse was Arab and very fine, and so wild and spirited that no other man could mount him, but under my brother's hand as gentle and docile as a lamb. In order to get a little rest, he adopted the plan of riding swiftly a considerable distance ahead of the caravan, when, dismounting and causing his horse to lie down, he would throw himself on the ground and place his head on his horse's neck. So he would sleep until the cavalcade came up, when his horse would awake him by a kick and he would remount. (Myron Henry Phelps and Bahiyyih Khanum, *Life and Teachings of Abbas Effendi*, p. 31. <https://bahai->

library.com/khanum_phelps_abbas_effendi)

6. In fact it took some time for the news of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration to reach the believers in Persia. In the first place, methods of communication were still primitive. Secondly, the dissemination of such important news had to be carried out with wisdom. Only the insight and devotion of Bahá'u'lláh's disciples could bring this about, which is one of the reasons that Bahá'u'lláh sent a number of the ablest among them to Persia to teach His Cause there. (Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* v.1, p. 286)
7. Inhale the fragrances of the Riḍván from His roses and be not of those who are deprived. Appreciate the bounty of God upon you and be not veiled therefrom – and, verily, We have sent Him forth in the temple of man. Thus praise ye the Lord, the Originator of whatsoever He willeth through His wise and inviolable Command!

Verily, those who withhold themselves from the shelter of the Branch are indeed lost in the wilderness of perplexity; and are consumed by the heat of self-desire, and are of those who perish.

Hasten, O people, unto the shelter of God, in order that He may protect you from the heat of the Day whereon none shall find for himself any refuge or shelter except beneath the shelter of His Name, the clement, the forgiving! Clothe yourselves, O people, with the garment of assurance, in order that He may protect you from the dart of doubts and superstitions, and that ye may be of those who are assured in those days wherein none shall ever be assured and none shall be firmly established in the Cause, except by severing himself from all that is possessed by the people and turning unto the holy and radiant Outlook. (Bahá'u'lláh, *The Tablet of the Branch in Bahá'í World Faith*, pp. 205-206)

About the Riḍván Garden outside of 'Akká', explained by Hand of the Cause Mr. Faizi - Introduction by Hand of the Cause Mr. Khadem:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=Qil2v3DyjLI#!

8. The Festival of Riḍván is come and the splendour of the light of God is shining from the invisible horizon of His mercy. The overflowing grace of the Lord of oneness is pouring down copiously from the unseen world and the glad-tidings of the Kingdom are coming in from all countries. The resplendent morn that betokens the advancement of the Cause of God and heralds the exaltation of His Word is dawning in every region.

Praise be to God that the fame of the Ancient Beauty — may my life be offered up for His loved ones — has been noised abroad in the world and the glory of His Cause is spread far and wide throughout the East and the West. These joyous developments will indeed gladden the hearts of His loved ones. (Bahíyyih *Khánúm*: *The Greatest Holy Leaf*, p. 112)

9. Arise, and proclaim unto the entire creation the tidings that He Who is the All-Merciful hath directed His steps towards the Riḍván and entered it. Guide, then, the people unto the garden of delight which God hath made the Throne of His

Paradise. We have chosen thee to be our most mighty Trumpet, whose blast is to signalize the resurrection of all mankind.

Say: This is the Paradise on whose foliage the wine of utterance hath imprinted the testimony: "He that was hidden from the eyes of men is revealed, girded with sovereignty and power!" This is the Paradise, the rustling of whose leaves proclaims: "O ye that inhabit the heavens and the earth! There hath appeared what hath never previously appeared. He Who, from everlasting, had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come." From the whispering breeze that wafteth amidst its branches there cometh the cry: "He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is made manifest. The Kingdom is God's," while from its streaming waters can be heard the murmur: "All eyes are gladdened, for He Whom none hath beheld, Whose secret no one hath discovered, hath lifted the veil of glory, and uncovered the countenance of Beauty."

Within this Paradise, and from the heights of its loftiest chambers, the Maids of Heaven have cried out and shouted: "Rejoice, ye dwellers of the realms above, for the fingers of Him Who is the Ancient of Days are ringing, in the name of the All-Glorious, the Most Great Bell, in the midmost heart of the heavens. (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 31-32)

Closing Music - Tablet of Riqván <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vyi0P5qIVj8>