

EPISTLE TO THE SON OF THE WOLF

A Study and Discussion Course

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"Finally, mention must be made of His Epistle to Shaykh Muhammad-Taqi, surnamed "Ibn-i-Dhi'b" (Son of the Wolf), the last outstanding Tablet revealed by the pen of Baha'u'llah, in which He calls upon that rapacious priest to repent of his acts, quotes some of the most characteristic and celebrated passages of His own writings, and adduces proofs establishing the validity of His Cause.

"With this book, revealed about one year prior to His ascension, the prodigious achievement as author of a hundred volumes, repositories of the priceless pearls of His Revelation, may be said to have practically terminated."

- SHOGHI EFFENDI, in
God Passes By,
pp. 219-220

INTRODUCTION

The student desirous of becoming intimately acquainted with the writings of Baha'u'llah, and intent on penetrating into their very spirit, soon finds that he must adapt his method of learning to the nature of the particular book he has in hand. Even the relatively few works now available in English manifest a great variety of literary forms and great differences in rhythm and style.

Thus one approaches Hidden Words with one mind and heart, the Iqan with another, and Seven Valleys or Gleanings with still other forms of intentness and appreciation. It is impossible to apply the same method of learning to all. One eventually learns that the text itself, if we freely permit it to influence and guide us, will gradually evoke in us our highest quality of response and bend our minds to the right quality of awareness.

The Epistle to the Son of the Wolf eludes the effort of rational thought to place its contents within any mold or form. We recognize that Baha'u'llah has written a letter to a hostile priest, calling upon him to repent and become obedient to the manifest Will of God, but the letter transcends its immediate object and becomes a repository of selections from Baha'u'llah's previous works, a proof of the Manifestation as He has appeared in previous eras, a door opened upon the inner court of Baha'u'llah's mystical experiences, a proclamation of His Mission to Kings and Priests, a glorification of those souls who suffered martyrdom in love of the Prophet, and a clear exposition of the most profound truths of religion.

This Study and Discussion Course, therefore, seeks most of all to inquire of the text itself how to gather treasures from this vast storehouse of truth. If by the process of consultation the class itself can develop a truly helpful Course on Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, the purpose of this preliminary effort will have been fully attained.

EPISTLE TO THE SON OF THE WOLF

1. A Synopsis

This summary of the contents has been made in order to provide a perspective upon the variety of subjects treated. It is based upon a division of the work into its successive themes.

1. Pp. 1-2, from "Praise be to God" to "of grace abounding". A prayer for the Supreme Mediator.
2. P. 2, from "Give ear, O distinguished divine" to "recite". Counsel to a leading priest.
3. Pp. 3-9, from "O God, my God" to "the All-Wise". Prayer of confession of sin and appeal for forgiveness.
4. P. 9, from "O Shaykh" to "and upon others". The priest is bidden to pray with assurance.
5. Pp. 9-10, from "My God, the Object" to "the All-Seeing". Prayer for quickening the spiritually dead.
6. Pp. 10-13, from "We beseech God" to "all gifts and bounties". Baha'u'llah's power is not from Himself but from God. Why the Divine Messengers have been sent down.
7. P. 13, from "Justice and equity" to "were promulgated". The purpose of God. The essence of His religion.
8. Pp. 13-17, from "Gird up the loins" to "this world and the next". Baha'is exhorted to aid this Revelation and overcome religious dissension. Power of unity. True and false divines.
9. Pp. 17-19, from "O Shaykh! We have learned" to "have wafted". Baha'u'llah has learned of the priest's bitter enmity. He counsels him to turn to God in faith and pray for pardon. Distinction between manmade arts and sciences and true knowledge.
10. Pp. 17-22, from "We deem it advisable" to "could bear to hear". Baha'u'llah recounts to the divine His confinement in Siyyih-Chal and the descent of the Holy Spirit.
11. Pp. 22-28, from "We shall herewith cite" to "endued with discernment". Quotations from Tablets enjoining the Baha'is to be virtuous and exhorting the rulers to uphold the cause of religion.
12. Pp. 28-32, from "It is Our hope" to "acceptable unto Him". Importance of justice. Quotations from Tablets concerning the duty of believers and the Lesser Peace.
13. Pp. 32-36, from "In these days" to "been pleased to spare". His purpose to abolish disputes, war and bloodshed.

14. Pp. 36-44, from "O Shaykh!" to "the All-Knowing, the All-Informed". Sole aim the betterment of the world. Excerpts from Tablet to the Shah. References to Moses, Muhammad, Imam Ali, Husayn.
15. Pp. 44-64, from "Beseech God to grant" to "aware of what I say". Tablets to kings reveal cause of unity and world reconstruction.
16. Pp. 64-68, from "This charge of fomenting" to "nigh unto Him to sigh". Moses and all the Prophets have been denounced as fomentors of discord.
17. Pp. 68-70, from "His Excellency, the late" to "the forgiving, the Merciful". Baha'u'llah in Constantinople.
18. Pp. 70-89, from "O Shaykh! My pen" to "pertaineth unto God". Persecution of Baha'is. Proofs advanced by divines to justify their rejection of the Prophet.
19. Pp. 89-111, from "It is now incumbent" to "that which God hath purposed". Station of kings. All Prophets have been rejected. The standard of virtue. Excerpts from Tablet to Napoleon III. This is the day of disclosure.
20. Pp. 111-113, from "Every one who hath turned" to "or God with it". Divinity and Godhead in Sacred Writings.
21. Pp. 113-115, from "O Shaykh! Ponder upon" to "the Lord of the worlds". Trust in God.
22. Pp. 115-118, from "Ponder a while" to "Lord of the worlds". The presence of God.
23. Pp. 118-119, from "In all the Divine Books" to "deny all the Prophets". Meaning of the Presence of God.
24. Pp. 119-122, from "Reflect, O Shaykh" to "tranquillity of the people". Heedlessness of the Shi'ih sect.
25. Pp. 122-135, from "O Shaykh! We have time and again" to "lost in strange doubt". Proofs of the Manifestation.
26. Pp. 135-137, from "We have admonished" to "increase their loss". Fear of God the source of virtue and action. Trustworthiness.
27. Pp. 137-140, from "O Shaykh! It is incumbent" to "the Mighty, the All-Praised". A world language and a world script. The Crimson Ark.
28. Pp. 140-148, from "O Shaykh! Thou hast heard" to "by the most Sublime Pen". The Bab's references to Baha'u'llah conform to prophecies of Muhammad. The Day of God foretold by Christ, Joel, Muhammad, Jeremiah, David, Isaiah, Amos.
29. Pp. 148-151, from "In the Kitab-i-Aqdas" to "all that is on earth". Baha'u'llah's Tablet on Tihran. Tablets revealing the power of God. All will come to pass as revealed.

30. Pp. 151-158, from "In like manner the Primal Point" to "all proofs and testimonies". The Bab foretells this Revelation. Appeal to the followers of the Bab. Those who turn aside are as the followers of John the Baptist.
31. P. 158, from "John, son of Zacharias" to "not worthy to bear". John's utterances about the Kingdom of heaven.
32. Pp. 158-163, from "Wherefore, hath My Forerunner" to "world of creation". The Bab exalts Baha'u'llah. The Covenant of the Bab.
33. Pp. 163-165, from "O Hadi! The blind fanaticism" to "refuge with the True One". Fanaticism of the Shi'ih sect. Appeal to Hadi not to raise up a new sect.
34. Pp. 165-177, from "Apprehend now the cry" to "His Tablets, is come". Any faithless member of His family will be cut off. Baha'u'llah's retirement for two years from Baghdad. Collection of Tablets of the Bab. Mirza Yahya disobeys Baha'u'llah. Faithlessness of members of the family. Words of the Bab preparing the Babis for the coming of Baha'u'llah.
35. Pp. 177-181, from "In this connection" to end of Tablet. Traditions concerning 'Akka.

For Study and Discussion

- I. Reading: Pages 140-150.
References from Index on Prophecies of the Bab concerning Baha'u'llah.
- II. Reading: Pages 150-163.
References from Index on Station of Baha'u'llah.
- III. Reading: Pages 1-15.
References from Index on Day of God.
- IV. Reading: Pages 15-35.
References from Index on Manifestations.
- V. Reading: Pages 44-64.
References from Index on Justice.
- VI. Reading: Pages 72-90.
Listing of principal themes of the Tablet.